D&I in employer branding: meaningfulness of diversity in a "Great place to work"

Janina Myrä

Abstract

Author(s) Janina Myrä	
Degree Master of Hospitality Management	
thesis title D&I in employer branding: meaningfulness of diversity in a "Great place to work"	
Number of pages and appendix pages 77 + 6	

Currently, numerous forces have been affecting contemporary work markets forcing businesses to re-think and modify their procedures what comes to their main capital – the people, employees and workforce. Stakeholders of today represent variety of attributes, skills, competencies and needs. This paper is focused on studying the relevance of diversity and inclusion (D&I) in the context of employer branding. How meaningful is D&I to employer branding and how those inter-act together? In globally evolving landscape, it has become more and more difficult for firms to stand out from the competitors, attract and retain best talent and maintain ethically functioning and supportive work culture. Open mindset and appreciation towards differences has undeniably had positive impact on working environment and competitiveness, inside-out. However, diversity is not always easy to manage, or understand in-depth.

The thesis is a qualitative case study research. Research-based approach is favourable when examining an ongoing phenomenon and deepen knowledge in addition to its relatively autonomous style of work. The research concentrates on studying Finnish "Great Place to Work" certified organization via document analysis, since company online data may contribute as an important source in digitally dominating atmosphere. End findings and conclusions aim to assist firms and their professionals to foster their employer brand and re-evaluate the meaning of D&I. At the same time, raising awareness and curiosity of a subject is relevant in order to enhance understanding, also from future studies perspective.

Results of research conducted during Spring–Summer 2022 showed that there seems to be a link between fair practices, equality and internal and external employer branding. Despite of this, there are other components contributing into branding success and great work culture, D&I being only one of them. Generally speaking, D&I seem not to be yet fully exploited and often utilized via minimal and vague dimensions as part of firm's responsibility and sustainability strategies. In all, there lies communications gap in strategical aims, standards and implementation in practice. Managing diverse entities and people elevate the meaning of ethically correct leadership.

Keywords
Diversity and inclusion, employer branding, attraction

Table of contents

1   Introduction

Employer branding is common in modern organizations. Competition has become more intense due to an aging population, post-pandemic implications, and global movement. The globalization has enabled large cross barrier and cross-cultural flow. Global movement being one of the most significant cornerstones, opened trade, the movement of goods, data, people with different background, increased workforce competition and battle for good workers has heavily affected our current working cultures and organizational processes. This has forced firms to re-think their proceedings and adapt. (Franca 2012.) Firms often face challenges in engaging and finding high performers (Keller & Meaney 2017, 2). There might lie a hidden opportunity in diverse workforce and embracing the diversity, whenever openness and awareness are aligned with the business concept. When creating a good work culture and becoming "the employer of choice" the heterogeneous work markets and forces cannot be denied. This makes it important for firms and employers to understand the phenomenon of D&I better and enforce the equity mindset. External and internal employer brand rely on actual experiences and the ability to execute promises rather than only on expectations, yet it is all about the people and human experiences. (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 505.)

Many sources outline nowadays organizations and their cultures as "complex", same applies to diversity & inclusion. Change is something inevitable in rapidly changing business environment, as also competition. Whether the change is pursued by economic, political, cultural, environmental or technological impact the transition is strongly present in our working cultures forcing us to apply and adapt, renew our procedures, update policies, learn and discover new abilities. Accordingly, companies are obligated not only to serve themselves, but the stakeholders, their environment, market needs and at the larger glance our society. (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010, 18–19; Sharma 2016, 1.)

Diversity as a word may indicate several different factors, despite its multilevel nature the concept may vary and be influenced by personal interpretation or views. At the end it might be not about the actual interpretation, as it is about the attitude and perception we have towards the differing features and attributes we hold as individuals. Those influence the inclusion itself and most importantly action and decisions made in business. Building and maintaining good company image and brand is not an easy task as well as retaining and attracting talents and managing diverse workforces, however most of the firms want to be known as good employers, attract the best candidates simultaneously combining their company strategy and main objectives with the visible and attractive employer branding. Naturally, the myriad of components play part in successfully implemented work culture which is the best reflection of employer brand. In the context of work culture and employer branding the D&I may be seen as a valuable "resource". The ability to explore and utilize this resource may lead

into mutual, external and internal benefits as the talent attraction, performance, employee engagement, added value and business competitiveness. (DRI 2015, 17; Okoro & Washington 2012, 57.)

The key research questions are the backbone of the paper as well set the direction in order to reach the aim of the study. This paper seeks to understand and examine the meaningfulness, the relevance of D&I in employer branding, linkage between the diversity and employer branding. How related are they and how relevant to each other? Also, the research tries to find the significance of diversity alongside its multiple facets in context of a good workplace and human experiences. The main objective of paper is to try to enhance employer branding via diversity by trying to explore its significance and role in current changing markets where the competition is high and workforce diverse.

> Q1. How is diversity important for a great workplace?

> Q2. How are D&I and employer branding connected?

The literature review is delimited on diversity aspect within employer branding, as well as focused on the main research questions. Finding the connection between employer branding and diversity is the objective, as their relevance to one another. Following chapter 2 will study how D&I shows itself in branding context, while presenting the main concepts of terms and existing material. The research supported by valuable outcomes might create development ideas, open new insights, approaches how the diversity should be implemented, managed or reflected in company processes, how it should be used and what meaning does it have from employer branding perspective? The research focuses on finding answers to main research questions via theoretical framework categories by studying "Great Place to Work" certified company in Finland.

In all, overall benefit is to provide development suggestions and enhanced knowledge by examining the role of diversity and its meaning in the employer branding. The results may be utilized by companies, service providers, specialists, or other professionals. When becoming great place to work and eventually employer of choice D&I might hold the key features, as well as provide competitive advantage and additional value. The background is not only in relevance and popularity of subject, but the challenges the contemporary markets and trends are setting for the companies what comes to their employer brand. The relevance of the diversity in employer branding is yet to be explored further.

> "Our ability to reach unity in diversity will be the beauty and the test of our civilization"   – Gandhi (Gandhi 2022).

2   Towards diverse and inclusive mindset in employer branding

Currently there are few main drivers which strengthen the role of diversity and inclusion in business and obligate operators to take diverse workforce measurements into account. Those include technology growth and development, globalization, changing demographics as aging population, stricter regulations and expectations towards companies, social and political factors. Avoiding conflicts and managing good reputation from ethical point of view requires inclusion, rather than exclusion which in worst case may lead into business harm resulting conflicts. (Lahiri 2008, 8–9.) Diversity alongside the dimensions of it is a renewing force, motivational tool, "fact of life" and a trend in contemporary organizational atmosphere (Okoro & Washington 2012, 58–59). Alongside the theoretical background and definitions, it is essential to understand the relevance, and why diversity is important trend in modern working environment. Which details are meaningful and highly appreciated by the people in modern work culture and working atmosphere?

This chapter will describe D&I in work environment as well as introduce most common features and layers from company, management, HR and employee perspective trying to embed the phenomenon into organizational structures and explore the diverse workforce. Chapter also discusses the basic concept and origin of employer branding and details that are meaningful and highly appreciated by the people in modern work culture and working atmosphere. What constitutes becoming the employer of choice? What are the impacts and benefits of workforce and work culture that represents diversity and is inclusive? Does diversity matter when becoming employer of choice? Why does employee experience matter and what is behind a good place to work?

As mentioned, diversity holds multiple layers and yet, it is nothing without the inclusion, enforcement, and concrete exemplary actions. As organization is dependent on external forces as directives and social, economic forces legislation sets already many standards for firms in addition to their own procedures, values, and ethical views. Management and HR practices are essential while dealing with people, including building employer branding where the practices and firm values complement each other. The social relations and employment management as essence of HR focuses on delivering the goal through the people. (Armstrong & Taylor 2017, 4–5.) In other words, diversity itself is vehicle for appreciation and equality, where everyone has possibility to shine. Yet, the awareness and acceptance are the key features when discussing human experiences and current labor markets. Those contribute into business success.

Employer branding portrays the company's ability and action taken towards improved competitiveness. Simultaneously, it tests the ability of the firm to market itself as a unique and desirable employer. However, before that companies need to define what makes them different and what they represent and promise in return. It is known that attracting and having good employees benefits the

organization in many ways, in fact the employees themselves can make the company stand out from the competitors and act as ambassadors for the brand. (Wells, Malik & Edmonson 2021, 34, 40.) Attracting diverse personas and skills ensures a workforce that is creative and enhances firm service for its customers (Yadav & Lenka 2020, 901). Internal state, reputation and recruitment measure firm capability to exploit existing workforce potential and represent firm at its best (Franca 2012). More or less, the experienced workforce does not come in one shape and form, it combines a myriad of human attributes and dimensions.

2.1   Defining D&I in work culture

Many of us may have heard the word "diversity", or abbreviation D&I which stands for diversity and inclusion. The real meaning of term, as application might still be not that clear for many organizations and their stakeholders. In terms of awareness, it is important to have a solid understanding of a concept before the actual practices and decision making. The simplified way of describing the diversity is the combination. Combination of demographical features such as age, gender, religion, educational degree, ethnicity, but also individual skills, experiences, interests and even the way of living. The feature may be examined more precisely through the Loden criteria which is divided into two categories, primary and secondary. Primary includes age, gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, mental and physical attributes. Secondary consists of experience and societal status attributes, such as education, working experience, level of income, style of thinking, communicative style and first language, family relations, level of income. (DRI 2015, 11–12.) On contrast, Gardenswartz and Rowe (figure 1) present multiple characteristics within four main layers of diversity as personality, internal, external and organizational dimensions. Those together form an entity, also known as "Diversity wheel". The wheel applies Loden criteria and more in-depth categories. (Gardenswartz & Rowe 2003, 33.)

When observing the wheel, it is noticeable that diversity portrays quite heterogeneous content and dimensions such as work experience, or personality only support the rich nature of diversity. Personality alone holds multiple personal features and styles, so does other dimensions as experiences, skills, attitudes, habits, styles of learning, working and even thinking. That said, the cognitive aspect is present whenever discussing diversity and it is not only demographical attributes. In comparison, diversity may be also defined from individual or collective level. From individual perspective it is in line with personal differences in comparison to others with same components. From group perspective it is more concentrated in demographical dissimilarities among all group individuals. Also, diversity is described as organizational demography in social context, applying mixture of characteristics of age, race, sex, education, and employment length. (Qin, Nuttawuth & Chhetri 2014, 135–136.) Yadav and Lenka (2019), argues multiple levels by dividing diversity into two main blocks, surface and deep-level diversity. On deep level dimensions of skills, experiences, values, attitude, social

status and personality apply. Surface level categorizes the background and tenure within employment and academic area, age, nationality, religion, sex and race. Job oriented variables refer in model to personal skill set, experience and background. Blocks capture pithily the knowledge known so far related to diversity. (Yadav & Lenka 2019, 905.)

Gaudiano (2018) contends that diversity itself is an outcome of inclusive environment, pride and reward from a company effort, rather than layers. Bourke and Dillon (2018, 85) describe it as a feeling of relevance and appreciation at the same time, part of a shared good and common aim. In matter a fact, diversity -concept deepens the complex nature of people and individuality, without concentrating on a single attribute and as mentioned earlier concepts vary. Moreover, diversity alone is like an untapped resource, thus the in-depth concept is not about having the aim of obtaining diverse workforce or minorities. Diversity does not stand alone, this said companies need to focus on inclusive actions, strategical business needs, objectives and understanding the meaning behind D&I. Similarly, to diversity, definition of inclusion is often behind the individual interpretation and there is lack of mutual understanding within the organizations. This may lead to misunderstanding, poor communication and company accountability decrease. Favoritism and inequity are opposite to inclusion, since feeling of inclusion requires fair proceedings and feeling of being valued as individual. Safety in this case does not mean only a physically safe environment. An inclusive environment is psychologically safe, and we are at our best when we feel safe expressing ourselves and accepted as the way we are. (Bourke & Dillon 2018, 85–86.)
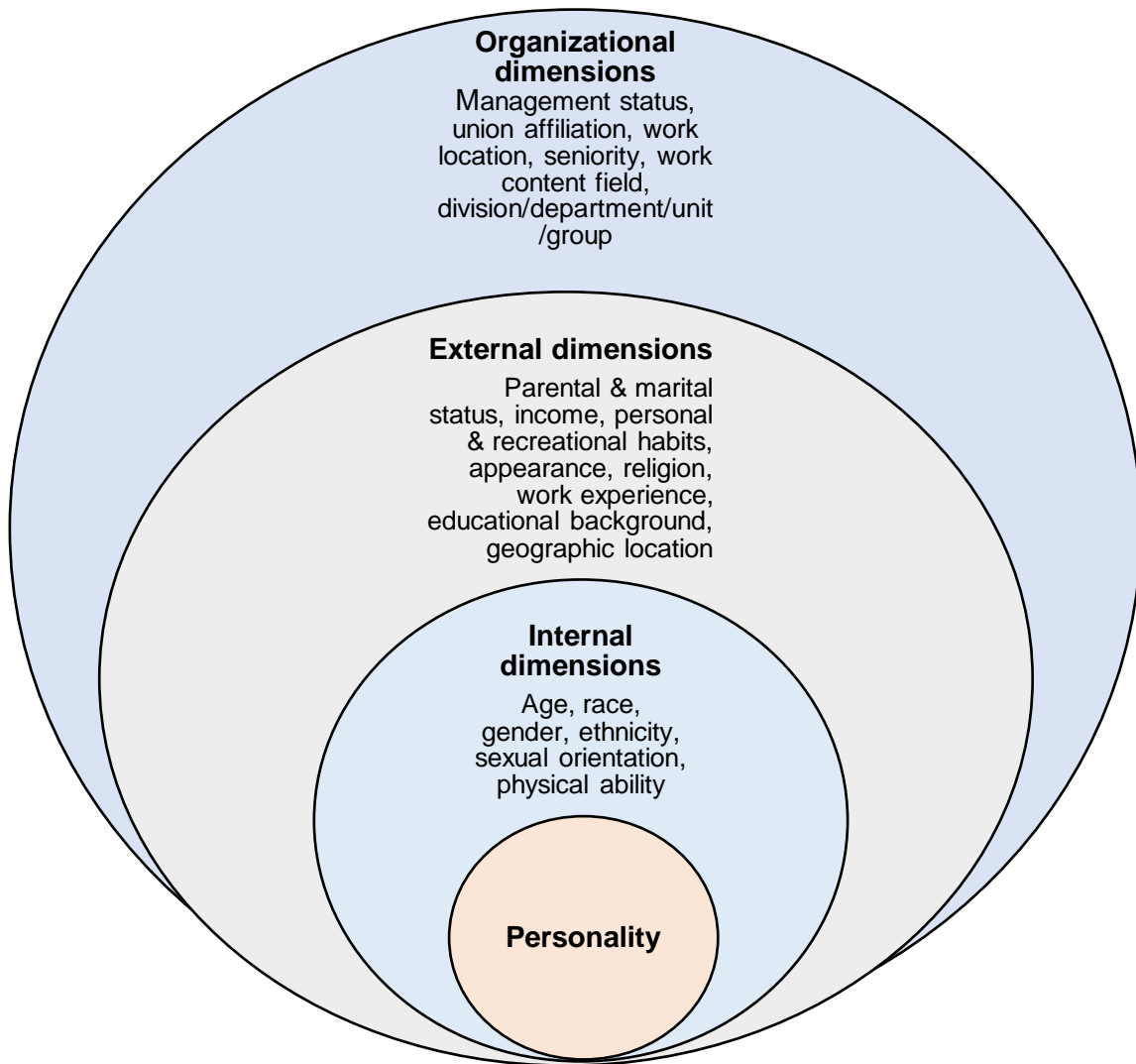
Figure 1. Four layers of diversity (Gardenswartz & Rowe 2003, 33.)

In the more updated concept of D&I, equity is added as empowering attribute alongside inclusion and diversity. Diversity, equity and inclusion and the so-called DEI climate enforces management for more strategical and inclusive diversity practices (Wells et al. 2021, 34.) Researchers and various papers may hold differing concepts of diversity. That said, conceptualization is arguable. However, in general diversity portrays all those characteristics and features that separate us from each other. As noticed some studies present the framework in minimalistic way like gender and age, on the opposite others search for a much deeper meaning including all the variables and layers. On a long term, we may also describe diversity as a mindset in which openness, curiosity and acceptance are present and which aims to minimize the prejudice. (Qin et al. 2014, 135–136.)

The conclusion may be drawn that there exists a lot of components which contribute to the diversity and managing those may create a challenge, since people and managers may hold different perceptions. Multiple attributes stand as key feature when describing diversity and yet, it is every aspect what makes us different (Qin et al. 2014, 135). In business context it is beneficial for firms to hold a coherent view of what diversity means to them, how they define it and what kind of people firm need in order to achieve the main strategic business objectives. Thus, retaining and maintaining diverse workforce becomes relevant. This means building acceptive working environment, which allows different personas to exploit their full potential at work (Roper 2015). Furthermore, the discussion about the diversity definition shall be continued, since the definition may impact the attitudes, views, decisions, perceptions and eventually actions.

Generally, it is significant to absorb that conceptualization itself varies and people might hold separate views. Theories often contain similar variables, but categorization vary. The diversity definition itself was not formed in a moment, it is a result of continuous, step by step exploring and yet, it keeps evolving over time (Qin et al. 2014, 137). We may only ask ourselves; how many variables human beings may hold?

2.1.1   Positive impact and challenges of D&I

Despite the moderately slow progression, D&I is strongly visible in business figures and implications. According to the statistics diversity and inclusion enhances better opportunities in meeting business objectives, financial, social, innovative. (Bourke & Dillon 2018, 85; McKinsey & Co 2020, 3–4.) The positive influence of managing diversity is also reflected in performance, efficacy, productivity (Yadav & Lenka 2020, 902). Fostering diversity minimizes discrimination. Especially for brands and companies operating on international level and holding large customer base D&I may offer a unique factor, which represents current state and promise of organization for its stakeholders. Furthermore, it is not only the issue of increasing customer satisfaction, as it is about becoming a desired employer. This means having a good reputation on the markets, as well as having good company culture and beating the competitors. (Gehlers & Suleri 2016, 65.) Other positive outcomes include enhanced work culture, talent attraction, image, new market opportunities, creativity, reductions in costs, lowered labor turn-over, improved human capital, reputation among stakeholders and society (European Commission 2013, 3, 10, 13).

Among various theories general perception of diversity benefits seems to be coherent. Diversity is viewed as a major factor what comes to productivity, innovation, recruitment and improved competitiveness. When applied strategically, main strengths include everything from enhanced performance, innovation to higher employee engagement. Sharma (2016, 3) argues that diversity is a core element within managing in order to achieve competitive advantage. Employee motivation may rise

when personal needs are met, and individual variables are accepted yet appreciated. On a long-term, we discuss about the competitive advantage, business growth and building successful working culture, which attracts more stakeholders (customers and employees). At the same time, we may see diversity as human and intellectual capital fortifying feature, firm resource which may lead eventually to uniqueness and rarity factor. In terms of communications, inclusion of diversity also helps in breaking the ice, the barriers whether cultural or generational, as well as help individuals to actualize themselves and exploit own abilities. Communications is essential tool within working culture. Competent HR -practices serve good working culture fostering creativity, development, decision making and fruitful ideas. (Okoro & Washington 2012, 58–59; Sharma 2016, 3.)

Moreover, impacts of diverse workforce may be divided into three categories, individual, group and organizational level. Organizational level impacts are competitiveness, performance, financial. Individual impacts turnover, engagement, satisfaction and at last group level creativity, team performance, unity and conflicts. (Yadav & Lenka 2020, 902.) Washington and Okoro (2012, 60) compare the organizational setting into to educational setting, where different individuals and people from diverse backgrounds are put together. This type of diverse environment exposes to innovative style of work and sharing. Even more importantly, it prepares individuals to more complex atmosphere or environment where curiosity, communication skills and unprejudiced attitudes are needed. (Okoro & Washington 2012, 60.) Simultaneously, as all the features mentioned above are important in multi-global organizations, managing, recruiting and utilizing diversity correctly often becomes a challenge and may create tensions. That is why, there is a risk and general debate. From compliance perspective, violations occur by the companies globally and diversity related cases, as discrimination. Those highlight the meaning of respect, mutual understanding, and appreciation. In worst cases violations may lead to lawsuits. (Washington & Okoro 2012, 60).

Hsu (2017) describes the vague origin behind the D&I concept and points out the recent overuse of the term, as complexity in application. The phenomenon of "diversity" is argued as diversity fatigue, which narrows mostly the downsides of D&I rather than strengths. (Hsu 2017). The meaning of diversity decreases when it is exploited on superficial level, without further enforcement or accountability. In some scenarios, downsides of the diversity in organizational setting may occur, such as resistance, conflicts and exclusion due to lack of understanding, or openness. This may lead to higher employee turnover and lowered performance, as also has an impact on employee health and work well-being. (Yadav & Lenka 2020, 902.) HR departments may face not only tensions, but high costs and lack of competence (Edwards & Kelan 2011, 3). More or less, Yadav and Lenka (2020, 901) argue that diverse representation fuels differences. Since diversity appears somewhat as uncertain phenomenon, we may debate on the fact that organizations often pay attention only to a few components, like cultural differences, age or gender. Often employees do not want to be categorized

based on certain features, that said exaggerated concentration on cultural diversity is seen as old-fashioned way of managing people. From an ethics and moral point of view, diversity management may turn phenomenon into business strategy, rather than equal opportunities enabling processes. This means diversity is treated as something that benefits your business as long it does not create costs, or other problems for organizational practices. Inequality and discrimination are legally forbidden, but only if it starts to harm the business as lack of performance, it becomes significant. (Wrench, 76–78; Yadav & Lenka 2020, 901.) Furthermore, Edwards and Kelan (2011, 9) debate on unity and D&I. When the firm values do not meet with the employee values, is the aim to unify the thinking among the firm and the workers and share the same ideology (Edwards & Kelan 2011, 9)? When it comes to the finances, diversity may also be easily seen as a risky cost. It requires expertise, training, involvement, systems, measures, facilities and commitment. The overall process may be time-consuming and has a possibility of a not so successful outcome. (European Commission 2003, 10–12.)

In all, diversity may be referred to a phenomenon, a trend, or a paradox. On the other hand, it is needed as an asset for a company and the business. On the contrary, management may see phenomenon as a challenge creating factor. Generally, companies hold a lack of knowledge of diversity and how to apply it. There exists no coherent understanding in definition, or in implementation. For example, as mentioned, concentrating only on ethnicity and age groups rather than acquiring a larger view. Overusing the term solely for the image or marketing purpose is common in ongoing firm practices. Diversity easily becomes meaningless when it is forced or exploited inaccurately. Whenever a company becomes much focused on embedding diversity and attracting a diverse workforce there exist qualifications related risks. Diversity does not overcome competence. As diverse groups are known for innovative and competence fostering features, they also may attract disorder and conflicts. In fact, it has been recognized through the last decade that diversity enforcement may create resistance, even fear among the people, critical reception towards minorities and stereotypes. From a management perspective it would be crucial to recognize and prevent this type of situation via correct policies. Especially when hiring, recruitment and building an open work culture, but also by clearly defining the values of the company. (King & Welty 2020, 4–7; Onwuameze 2018.)

Forced, or false diversity business measurements may lead into lack of trust towards the company, employer and affect negatively working environment and internal yet external communications, as image. In some cases, those may also expose to questioning employee qualifications. Was someone hired for the correct reason based on his/her competence, or purely from a D&I perspective? Having limited view of D&I is another aspect behind the challenge, as mentioned. It is a formation of several layers, dimensions and attributes. Diversity does not mean simply having a highly diverse workforce.

The purpose is to improve and assure equality, enhance openness and share knowledge, skills and experiences.

2.1.2 Evolving and diversified workforce

Changing markets, globalization, and varying demographics require firms to react and develop. It would be easy to say that daily work or work environment have not evolved during time. Work tendencies of present times put more effort on human factors, meaningfulness, work-life balance, self-actualization. Currently, American research within US markets shows the increased resignation figures, yet this phenomenon has also been visible in the European region. This means high turn-over figures within the companies and so-called era of Great resignation. (Cook, 2021.) Increased worker expectations of future and the matter of resignation since Pandemics sets need of valuing talents and great working culture. Compared to older generations, the youngsters are also more demanding towards their employers and managers. Additionally, generation of Millennials those born after 80's and upwards, and even younger generations of 2000 are believed to be less devoted to their companies. (Keller & Meaney 2017, 4.)

War of talent is a result of global, growing competition and change. The battle among and for workers and firms is continuous. People are constantly looking for new challenges. Therefore, there is a need for innovative aspects, evolution and flexibility. More or less, features that make organizations positively stand out. Talent itself is diverse. Some may describe talent as holding the correct set of skills and knowledge, or simply naturally "performing" individuals who bond with the company and customers. (Gehlers & Suleri 2016, 61; Keller & Meaney 2017, 2.) Finding the connection to the right audience or retaining existing one is not an easy task, as is diversity management. As the workforce becomes more autonomous, trained and qualified by the companies and educational institutions, they naturally become more wanted, also by the competitors. (Forbes 2021; Torricelli & Karg 2002, 14.) But the talent battlefield is not the only issue, as there exists a lack of engagement and commitment among the employees. Although this may vary by industry, the overall result is surprisingly shallow. (Ambler & Barrow 1996, 10.) Especially in ongoing post-Pandemic stage competition has increased. Employees are searching for other opportunities and are more demanding towards their employers. The diversity implications cannot be excluded, as firms lack coherent awareness and understanding in the subject. As mentioned, diversity may also lead to misunderstandings or conflicts, which links to management awareness and management practices. Sometimes it is difficult to filter the best applicants, or for the applicants to select the correct employer. This makes it welcome to maintain unbiased reality than a false image. Most importantly, the procedure requires integrity from both sides, company, the applicants and employees.

Organization setting might be extremely complex, the existing dilemmas must be understood and evaluated by the management. Complexity as well welcomes several views and feelings. Nowadays workforce seeks more than just a workplace. It seeks flexibility, more autonomy, balance between work and personal life, meaning, yet emotional and "humane" boost. There are also generational gaps, as the older population grows, and the younger workforce takes markets. Indeed, there are differences between younger and older workforce, in terms of their needs and what they expect from their employer. In general, younger workforce may be more open-minded towards diversity and even expect employers to act ethically, according to the diversity policies. Diversity and inclusion is described as a crucial factor what comes to attraction and talent. (Forbes 2021). Gallardo-Gallardo, González-Cruz and Dries (2013), argue on inclusive approach where individuals at work hold different, but relevant capacities. They emphasize united work power, rather than personal performance. On the contrary, an exclusive approach demonstrates only those who have certain, high abilities. Those personas may lead a company to competitiveness. (Gallardo-Gallardo, González-Cruz & Dries 2013, 294 – 295.) Either or, diversity is said to be relevant as talent, reputation, attractiveness, innovation and skill set optimizing forte as a whole among the workforce of today.

2.1.3 Integrity within diverse working environment

Diversity and inclusion have a strong link to integrity. Management practices, business ethics and legislation and regulations compliance. Healthy relationship between employee and the leader is based on trust and good communications, therefore we naturally follow and want a reliable employer, or authority. Ethical leadership affects employee engagement, job satisfaction, work performance, and reputation. (McCann, Kohntopp & Sparks 2017, 177–179.) The study of Ely and Thomas (2001), points out the fairness aspect in culturally diverse working environment and discusses "colour blindness" in research results. This refers to company culture where people don't see variances, instead seeing human beings and personas. Although some of the respondents summarized this as an action to avoid conflicts, the general perception is that the objective and intentions are for the common good. At the same building diverse community is supported internally and externally. Meaning enabling fair opportunities what comes to promotions, recruitment procedures, decreasing bias and focusing on discrimination minimizing policies which are seen more as a moral duty, than just a legal obligation of the business. (Ely & Thomas 2001, 245–247.)

As movement of people, goods, services within the European Union has become "borderless" for union citizens. The region serves EU market businesses, as well as promotes equal human rights. The base of the EU and the objective is to fulfill equal opportunities and rights for everyone through their values of freedom, dignity and equality. (EUR-Lex 2012; European Commission 2022a.) The legislation articles and principles contain several policies, covering basic human rights, gender equality, data protection and anti-discrimination policies. Those set organizations and individuals

standards to follow, including Non-discrimination and equality laws regulated by European Commission. Discrimination is the opposite to justice, meaning biased and unfair policies, actions, or procedures towards any individual or groups based on their certain features. As an example, according to the EU the discrimination of an individual based on his gender, age, race, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation, opinions, genetic features, social origin etc. is illegal. Moreover, the European Union supports, maintains and operates the policies within the EU region. They also emphasize raising awareness, since according to the data the majority of European Union citizens are not legally aware of their rights and there are violations, especially when it comes to diversity. (European Commission 2022a; European Commission 2022b.) Statistics show existing discrimination in employment towards ethnic minorities in EU countries. For instance, during hiring process natives and white candidates are in more favorable position compared to non-native, or non-white applicants. (Quillan, Heath, Pager, Midtbøen, Fleischmann & Hexel 2019, 479–480, 486.) The present legislation is quite fundamental, in accordance with EU country-based rules and labor regulations. First, if examining closely basic EU Non-discrimination article covers the diversity external and internal dimensions. Second, those dimensions are also reflected in other articles. However, it must be pointed out that in this context people interpretations and actions may vary, as attributes and enforcement may not be opened in-depth. Variables as for example genetic features may appear in several forms, such as weight, hair color, bone structure, diseases and many others.

D&I is a relevant theme due to the implications concerning the people, trade and businesses as discussed. In addition to legislation, the EU has miscellaneous initiatives concerning D&I focusing on diversity related sharing and united gatherings between the EU countries. The Diversity charters maintained by the EU since 2010 have encouraged countries to share expertise, policies, experiences, knowledge. In addition, countries participating follow diversity protocol with the main aim of promoting equality and diminishing discrimination. For organizations support in diversity issues and D&I learning platforms are provided, especially concerning diversity management and equal operating of human resources. (European Commission 2022c; European Commission 2022d.). Provided procedures originate from business unawareness, lack of responsibility in terms of legislation concerning justice and equity, which in the end may lead to violations.

Finally, it is vital not to forget the role of organizations in the practice and implementation of law. Naturally, this involves company stakeholders and internal yet external procedures, those concerning employees and customers. From organizational, diverse workforce perspective we may summarize that those should be implemented accordingly in company practices, whether HR or other processes. Also, the moral human side defines discrimination as a wrong act. However, as human beings tend to understand things individually, the interpretation is not always coherent and whenever there is possible grey areas or hidden bias the discrimination and prejudice might occur. This

supports the results of numerous data which discuss employee / applicant negative experiences. (Mccann et al. 2017, 180.) As a conclusion, you may say that when managing diverse workforce areas such as legislation, but also ethical side, morals and transparency shall be considered in order to ensure equity and fair practices.

2.1.4   Managing diversity and inclusion

Company management and leaders hold notable responsibility for strategic practices and everything that involves people and stakeholders. Managing employer branding and diversity requires a strong understanding of your own company, markets and environment, yet the people who are a valuable asset for the company. Usually, the company objectives need to be aligned and embedded into a strategy involving HR -practices. Implementation of D&I in the firm may also be viewed as part of sustainable activity, whenever diverse workforce is seen as key driver for reaching the aims and future vision. Therefore, the feature should be respected and rewarded (Gehlers & Suleri 2016, 62). The sustainable human resource management (HRM) framework by De Prins focuses on four main principles, psychological, sociological, strategic, and green perspective, involving the effect of sustainable management on human resources. This includes employee turnover, engagement, work-life balance, diversity, autonomy. Gehlers and Suleri (2016, 62) contend that especially psychological and sociological approaches dive into long-term employee knowledge (drivers, interests) and relation with the company. Those are valuable facets when discussing modern, more holistic views of employee experience and meaningfulness of work, yet the relation between internal experience and external image. (Gehlers & Suleri 2016, 62).

In order to become successful, the company needs good, dedicated employees. It might seem arguable that managing talent and diverse workforce has become vital asset for organizations to improve their business, especially in nowadays evolving working markets. (Gehlers & Suleri 2016, 61.) The management viewpoint narrates diversity as a strategy for retention, recruitment and inclusion. Development in the practices mentioned above considers people with dissimilar backgrounds. (Yadav & Lenka. 2020, 903). Inclusive leadership on its behalf is said to be a set of curiosity, social and cultural intelligence, commitment, courage, adaptiveness, and awareness. Taking action through communication, enforcement and transparency requires brave attitude and in-depth approach rather than systematic but is rewarding on a long-term for company and the people. This transition of mindset should not aim only on a temporary change, but rather on a permanent and lasting one. (Bourke & Dillon 2018, 87–88; McKinsey 2020, 6, 47.) In addition, the strategical process combines close co-operation and communications among the whole company, HR and leaders involving compliance, functional integration and management. This reflects the general view of supporting differences, as business value creating feature. This also means having a workforce, which

is diverse not only demographically but on a deeper level, linking diversity into strategy, managing tensions, ensuring fairness in opportunities. (Bourke & Dillon 2018, 93.)

During history it took quite a long time, before diversity became acknowledged in management. The diverse workforce, however, became more relevant in the early 90s when organizations could not ignore anymore the rising variables. The business strategy applies various practices which consider personas with their characteristics, backgrounds, and other separating features. Main HR- processes include recruitment, retention and development. (Yadav & Lenka 2019, 903.) When managing D&I the strategical execution of practices, as embedding it into whole company culture and main values, accountability and open-minded, diverse management direction are vital. This means having precise metrics, monitoring procedures, flexibility and creativity, awareness and foremost understanding of what diversity stands for, as well as welcoming and acknowledging differences and even diversity-based conflicts. For managers, creating a balanced atmosphere and harmony within diverse work environment and motivating employees is not easy. This said, the previous features would play an important part in operative daily work, if implemented systematically. Basic assessments of what comes to conducting D&I may be necessary, as carefully evaluating strengths, weaknesses, and possible risks. (Gehlers & Suleri 2016, 65; Okoro & Washington 2012, 60.) On the contrary, we may think about impacts in case company makes decision not to embed D&I into strategical policies and company values. How will this be reflected in firm financial outcomes or stakeholder relations? (Gehlers & Suleri 2016, 65–66).

Finally, when discussing diversity management as company strategy the concept of D&I may raise misunderstandings alone, which may lead to miscalculations and exploitation of workforce. As there exists no general D&I management framework, adapting coherent conceptualization would be necessary, although correct D&I managing practices are debatable and there is lack of awareness in the subject. Nevertheless, it is debated that diversity applied strategically, but with the intense sense of humanity sets the best platform for success. Afterall, managing practices affect all company members. Open mindset towards inclusion and diversity has become a major part of the process. Even more certainly, respect for human differences and fostering prejudice become relevant organizational activities (Okoro & Washington 2012, 60; Sharma 2016, 2–3.) The experiences at work not only stimulate work satisfaction and lead to improved performance but support the purpose and meaning of work. Having a continuous, inclusive atmosphere rather than judgmental or exclusive fortifies positive experiences. Simultaneously, the psychological approach discussed previously seeks into depth what stands behind those good or negative experiences, and what could be done more, or differently. Knowing "own" people becomes in this sense the main responsibility of human resources and the company.

2.2   From branding management to employer branding

The employer branding origin lies in basics of branding management firstly introduced by Simon Barrow in early 90s. You may say that the framework is influenced by marketing processes whenever the principles from the branding management were applied and adapted into the human resources (HR). The employer branding involves the external and internal dimensions, these sides simultaneously represent and depend on each other. External dimension is company ability to attract the most suitable, potential employees and maintain the correctly representative employer image, while internal considers the whole employee journey and interactions during employee career lifecycle from the very beginning of the employment. This converts into employee experience. Employee experience in another words is the actual occurrence and reflection with multiple encounters, which either are in line with company standards, values and employee promise also known as employee value proposition (EVP), or not. (Arrow & Barrow 1996, 185–187.) EVP, employee value proposition is a reflection of company promise and effective tool when attracting candidates. EVP defines what it has to offer to the employees and at the same time what the firm expectations from the employee are. Mosley and Schmidt (2017, 63–64) argue that value proposition does not only consider new applicants, or candidates. It plays as engagement sealing factor when working for a company. In the process employers must be able to clarify what their values, mission and benefits are. (Mosley & Schmidt 2017, 63–64.)

Wells et al. (2021, 35) implies that employer – employee relationship may be described as a psychological contract; employer brand represents this contract. Significantly, this contract can affect personal sense of belonging and affect psychological well-being. (Wells et al. 2021, 35.) In this sense, the relationship mentioned requires openness and acceptance, having the ability to be yourself. As relationships may form as positive, or negative depending on company measurements and attitudes, it would be important to remember the psychological, human side. The common theoretical model of employer branding is multidimensional schema consisting of organizational culture, identity, brand loyalty, associations, employer image and attraction, employee productivity. Model is a valuable umbrella from HR -perspective. In this framework by Backhaus and Tikoo (2004), previously mentioned components co-operate, one component leading to another under the hypernym of employer branding (EB). Concept is seen closely in figure 2. (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 505–507, 513.) The aim of internal employer branding is to ensure employee performance, productivity and engagement via good employee experience – creating a great work culture. External proceedings lead into attractiveness for outsiders, with an objective to reach employer of choice status and recruit talents. Well-built employer branding therefore combines several activities and produces benefits for the company internally and externally. (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 503–507.) Final advantage converts

into competitiveness and unique identity, which is reached through most competent workforce and excellent work environment. (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 503–504, 513.)
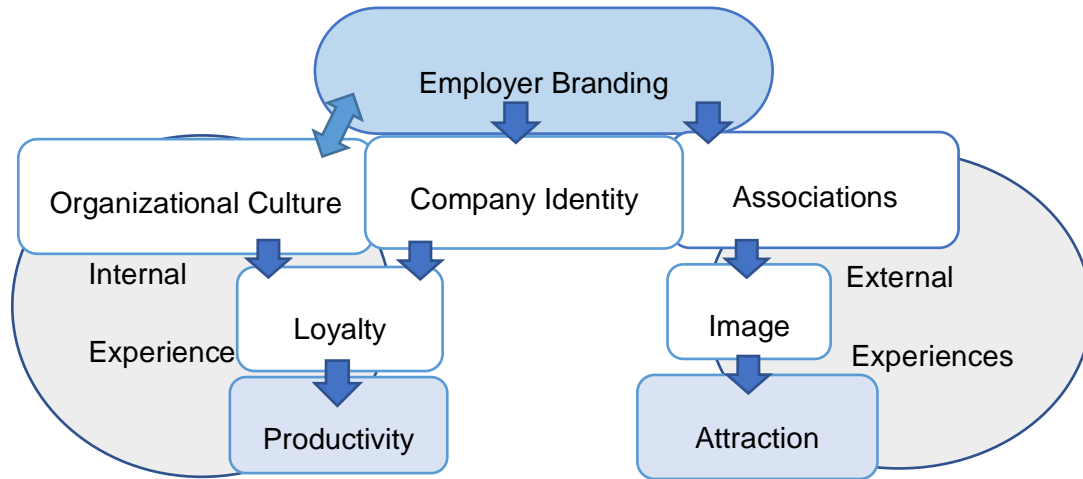

Figure 2. Employer branding conceptual framework (Arrow & Barrow 1996, 185–187; Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 505.)

Mosley and Schmidt (2017) describe employer branding as a strategy for a talent attraction, but first company must establish the positive and well-functioning working environment from inside. After the base has been built, it may be used as an advertisement with the so called "pull" factor rather that "push". The more positive reputation and satisfied employees it has, the more opportunity there is to attract the best employees and market firm as great employer. In all, it is debated that EB has a strong role in many organizational HR-functions which involve people. Those are for example reten-tion, engagement and recruitment. The outcomes may lead into enhanced competitive advantage and reaching leading position compared to the competitors. (Mosley & Schmidt 2017, 8–9.)

Attractiveness of the employer is the key point and objective of employer branding. Jonsen, Point, Kelan and Grieble (2019, 617) borrow the narrative from Ambler and Barrows older description, defining it as a combination of economic, functional as well as psychological advantages. Anyhow, other definitions as dimensions exist. Most common descriptions incorporate firm external and inter-nal attractiveness, fair treatment, sense of belonging and environment where people feel themselves valued. (Jonsen, Point, Kelan & Grieble 2019, 617.) Foremost, it is argued that the core of employer branding lies in the creation of the great workplace and then promoting it to the right people from a business perspective. On a longer run, the main goal is in achieving company strategical objectives and this does not happen without compliant and right employees. Due to the constant development, in education, technology, science some of talents may choose entrepreneurship, instead of

committing to the company, or are not necessarily able to find the "right" employer due to the complex market network, or high competition. In some countries the aging population is increasing, while the birthrate is decreasing. This means that organizations have to retrieve their HR policies and adapt them to correspond to the current trends. (Mosley & Schmidt 2017, 10–12.) Plaskoff (2017, 136) underlines the nowadays firms employee relation approach and needs the modern workplace sets for the employers. In addition, he argues that good benefits are simply not enough in today's markets, therefore deeper understanding is required which applies design thinking into human resource experience perspective as written before. Plaskoff (2017, 136.)

As discussed, employer branding demonstrates the basics of marketing but instead of trying to succeed via meeting the expectations of the customer base it holds employees in high regard. The company service and product quality are strongly dependent on the employees, the ones carrying out the work and representing the company inside and outside. Building continuous, loyal relations with customers is hardly possible without the participation of company workers. Therefore, the aim is to maintain the rapport with main stakeholders and create a principled cycle which implements and represents the quality link between workers and the end service. Figure 3 displays the linkage between best job applicants, hiring the best candidates and having the best employees in the firm, providing quality service/product and at the end utilizing positive word of mouth, which draws new talent and customers to the company (figure 3). In this sense, a good reputation and integrity become relevant when attracting competence, as having the ability to respond to the needs of both firm customers and the employees. This forms a systematic, long-term circle. (Ambler & Barrow 1996, 1–2.)

In all, why does a diverse, talented workforce hold an important role and why it is so essential for companies to invest in these individuals? Simply because their effort provides the top results and improves productivity, yet it is a good image for a company and its competitiveness. It is said that high performers may assist companies in saving costs, due to their high effort and efficiency. Unfortunately, it seems that many companies lack competence in implementing correct measures and rather stick to the existing, old-fashioned processes. Keller and Meaney (2017) argue that managing employer branding and diverse workforce requires action, innovation and real promises, EVP that is not only words but reflects the reality and best of the company. (Keller & Meaney 2017, 2–3, 8.)
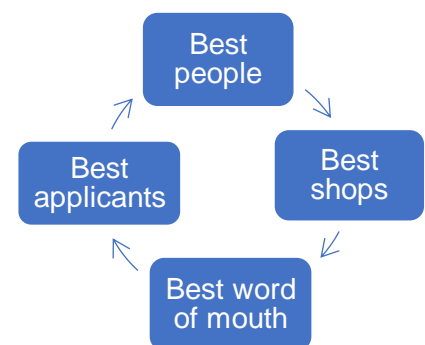

Figure 3. Service quality link (Ambler & Barrow 1996, 2.)

2.2.1 Experiences within employer branding – Do modern companies lack identity?

Whenever dealing with employee experience personal feelings become vital. With the ongoing various workforce more than ever pursued by the cross-border movement and relationships, working cultures have been forced to cope with several effects. Those consider both the hindrances and weaknesses as well as positive opportunities and advantages. Communication, as well as understanding various characteristics, has become the most essential tool when dealing with diversity in working conditions where human interaction is inevitable and all the time present. At the same time, avoiding the issue has become almost impossible, since it has a direct effect on strategic business performance yet attractiveness, reputation and engagement. Management responsibility and internal procedures what comes to integration and embracing equality within the firm, as well as maintaining the functional environment are in strong relation to the human experience at work during whole career path. Impact is seen in employee performance, engagement, motivation. (Hofstede, et al. 2010, 469; Okoro & Washington 2012, 57– 58.) That said, the human approach has become more significant. This includes personal motivation, needs, aims and work meaning. The pandemic era in the working atmosphere has strengthened the importance of employer - employee relationship. Simultaneously, companies have been expected to be more caring towards their stakeholders and secure them with improved opportunities. According to the Deloitte study (2021), there is unsatisfaction among the employees regarding the work-life balance and ability to fulfill oneself. In the future of work autonomy, as employees will become more independent in their work roles, informality, empowerment, and emphasis on strict veil between work and personal life increases. Firms therefore need to evaluate professional connection and its purpose. Finding common purpose in this sense is the connecting driver between the employee – employer. (Deloitte 2021, 3–4,11.) Employees and applicants are more in search of companies that meet their needs and employers try to respond to the needs and moves of employees, markets and competitors as well as understand them. Overall, it is a constant movement and battle for attention from both sides. (Deloitte 2021, 8, 10.)

As people, we create our work culture via our attitudes, manners, communication. Therefore, the concept of human experience may be viewed as a new, modern dimension of employee experience. (Deloitte 2019a, 40.) Despite the conceptual manner, feeling of safety in work environment portrays the human side of employee or applicant at its best. For instance, when discussing work culture, psychological safety, ability to be yourself, acceptance of differences are easily the most vital areas what comes to the employment cycle. Those give individuals capability for improved self-actualization. It is debated that having an open, inclusive, equal environment enables psychological safety. On the opposite, an exclusive and biased environment negatively affects performance, engagement, well-being, ability to exploit own potential and abilities within the firm. (Garvin, Edmonson & Gino 2008.) In support to previous, Ryan and Deci (2000, 68–69) emphasize psychological innate human

needs and their fulfilment for improved motivation. Those are autonomy, competence and related-ness. Needs reflect meaning of control, choice and feeling of belonging. In fact, one of the main aspects in making employee contribution visible is meeting human needs. People in working envi-ronment may have hidden assumptions, or prejudice. Those may affect organizational processes, causing underrepresentation of diverse voice. Despite this, it is said that companies need to aim in making clear strategy to make all the voices heard. This contributes to creating an atmosphere of respect and dignity. (Deloitte 2021, 10–11, 34; Ryan & Deci 2000, 68–69.)

Generally, the main message is in treating the workforce well and fairly as it will be given in return. Human capital is rarely homogeneous. In comparison to older studies conducted by Deloitte from 2019 and 2020, the humanity focus repeats itself from variant aspects, such as humanity alongside the technology development and automation. Despite this, the main social features have remained similar, like job meaning, equity, fairness and creating a rapport. From management and leader per-spective societal impact (inequity and diversity) were high when measuring annual success, along-side employee and customer satisfaction. The previous result implies that diversity has a strong effect on firm performance, whether when observing the reputation or employee retention. (Deloitte Insights 2019; Deloitte 2020, 3.) In accordance, D&I study conducted by the American employer ranking search and employee feedback platform Glassdoor states that when evaluating firms and work offers over 70% of applicants pay attention on diversity. This said, diversity is relevant through-out the recruitment process and in retaining reputation. (Glassdoor 2020.)

As discussed, employee experience is internal, real-life experience of company people throughout their journey, or better said employment life cycle from the very beginning to the end. This cycle contains numerous encounters, interactions, feelings, emotions and perceptions which create per-sonal experiences. Theory originates from user and customer experience within the service industry, which aims to improve customer satisfaction. (Itam & Ghosh 2020, 39, 41–42.) Employee experience is based on feelings, coalition of employee values, needs and expectations, as well as capability of the company to meet and implement those (Morgan 2016). To the question why employee experi-ence matters? The answer has multiple aspects, since the outcomes are reflected either negatively or positively depending on the experience itself. While good employee experience has effect on engagement, satisfaction and may be converted as a reputation advancing advertisement for new candidates, the opposite leads to higher employee turn-over, lack of motivation, decreased perfor-mance or even well-being. The key points of successful employee experience are often reliable leadership, growth opportunities, management support, meaningfulness and good working environ-ment. Accordingly, inclusive and diverse environment and investment in employees are present in model as a positive experience contributing features. (Deloitte 2019b, 5.)

Plaskoff (2017) debates that employees are often satisfied when the personal employee needs are fulfilled, but first the employer must be aware of those needs and values, emotions and even fears. In general, the company aims to engage, retain and innovate existing personnel. Although a lot of companies already have related policies, employee satisfaction requires reframing to be able to understand the employee–employer relationship deeper and establish a more holistic view throughout employee journey. Journey is each experience and interaction employee have in company. (Plaskoff 2017, 137–138.) A theoretical lifecycle or journey consists of stages of pre-employment, employment, and post-employment. In this context, it must be remembered that the employee experience starts already from the stage of information search and the candidate viewing the company as a potential employer. Quite importantly there are several emotions and interactions during the employee journey, which affect employee satisfaction, engagement and performance. (Plaskoff 2017, 138–139, 141.)

Simultaneously, Coyle (2018) points out the relevance of safety when being in a group whether it is work or free-time related activity, as well as being accepted as part of the group. There is a strong impact of communications, interactions forming either positive or the opposite internal dynamics. Group members need to have the ability to show not only their strengths, but weaknesses and vulnerable side in order to create a trustworthy bond with other members. (Coyle 2018, 56–57, 74–75.)

The approach requires knowledge and a certain attitude from management, not only being curious and caring about the company people, but genuine interest and empathy. Employees are no longer treated as just employees, the ones performing daily tasks – they have a more profound relation with the organization and management, most of all they are part of something meaningful, creating and achieving together. The social dimension means forming a bond on an emotional level. Therefore, it is not only strict, systematic professional relation. According to Itam and Gosh (2020, 44) main drivers for employee experience are employee's needs, applying holistic thinking, radical participation, experiment, trustworthiness, and appreciation, making intangible experiences visible, improving procedures at work, leadership, and management. (Itam & Gosh 2020, 44.)

In conclusion, the mission of the company, their people and what they represent is vital. Differentiation may also be applied in the context of branding. Identity is part of EB, as internal and external human experiences. Firms who are somehow able to differentiate their brand from others, are enhancing their possibilities to attract the best candidates and in the longer term win the "war". It is not exaggeration to say that companies have soul and those who lack it become unsuccessful in terms of employer branding. That said, company identity and naming unique attributes, as well as communicating the EVP, firm promise increases brand reputation on the market and becoming employer of choice. This leads to a wider scope of drawing diverse and at the same time competent people.

Furthermore, it is said to enhance employer branding. (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 505; Moroko & Uncles 2008, 1689–1690.)

2.2.2 Measurements of employer branding

Companies are in charge of marketing their status as "Employer of choice" for suitable audience (Franca 2012). From HR perspective investing in talent management, acquisition, retention and attraction of diverse, skilful workforce and level of communications among stakeholders has become vital part of business success and reaching the targets (Wells et al. 2021, 34). We may ask in this context, how we measure the diversity within HR and D&I related development? In this sense, it also becomes measurement of equality, equity and fair practices. It is debated that recruiting phase and all data focused on attraction measures the company competence in meeting set objectives, what comes to diversity and EB. (Ely & Thomas 2001, 247.) Overall, the key here is in openness to various skills, talents and equal opportunities. Not only in hiring diversity but finding the most competent and suitable candidates for the work.

According to Franca (2012), the recruitment process is one of most visible parts what comes to employer branding. Job advertisement alone with career pages can provide a lot of important data regarding the company, the employees, values and EVP. This builds a bridge between firm and applicants, future employees. It is worth mentioning that implementation varies, as some of the companies are much more advanced in their input into maintaining strong employer branding and reputation. On the contrary, other companies may struggle, lacking resources, data or knowledge in their HR work. Additionally, it is stated that good employer profile reflects the reality, real-life employee satisfaction and experiences. This said, employer branding hardly exists without the experiences. (Franca 2012.)

In era of digitalization company online content embeds tons of data – it is a relevant source. This information represents the firm and the way it communicates with the audience, creates attraction. When observing company externally as employer, the data provided by the firm as online information, history, images, career pages, work advertisements, as well as word of mouth, brand visibility / awareness, public image and opinions form the multidimensional schema. Usually, opinions and awareness affect the EB level but, it must be admitted the measures of the employer brand strength vary, depending on the presented model and author. That said, it is not easy to point out only one factor which impacts the EB, but as mentioned the firm ability to communicate well externally and internally and HRM proceedings are relevant in terms of implementation. (Cober, Brown, Keeping & Levy 2004, 624–626, 637, 638; Franca 2012.) Also, it is debated that when D&I is often mentioned in firm online content, even if superficially it appeals more to the candidates, especially when content contains deep level diversity variables. This forms an image of an equal employer and fairness. In

all, firm websites serve as meaningful sources from communications, public relation, competitive-ness and attraction perspective. (Jonsen et. al. 2019, 624–625.)

The level of employer brand may be viewed via brand value pyramid (figure 4) consisting of recognition, consideration and employer of choice -blocks (figure 4). The model captures awareness-consideration ratio. Starting from the bottom level of recognition and moving towards the consideration, and then finally coming to a favourable action and decision. Recognition is this case represents awareness of the brand name and viewing it as employer. Consideration is a positive reaction by the applicant over the company as employer. Top level "Employer of choice" reflects company being primary and favourite choice by the candidate. As a relevant fact to point out, the large size companies and companies with wide networks may have stronger employer brand, due to their visibility, higher potential of becoming noticed by the candidates and exploiting the word of mouth through their stakeholders. On the opposite smaller companies may not hold the same capabilities or resources in terms of visibility and influence. (Franca 2012.)
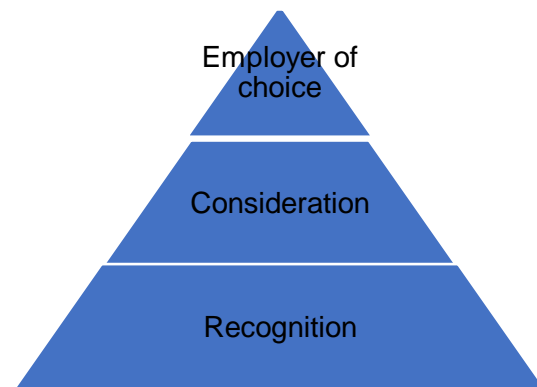
Figure 4. Brand value pyramid (Franca, 2012.)

Currently, there exists "good employer" -ratings, which apply various methods of measurement in different countries and regions. One is example is Great Place to Work -survey, which has become globally popular over time among businesses. Research focuses on studying employee experience and measures the actual opinions and experience of firm employees. The results may be applied in external promoting, as internal development. Thus, the ratings may be beneficial for the company and their reputation. Anyhow, there is not enough study conducted on the topic and certification affects. (Franca 2012.)

2.2.3 Becoming desired employer

What stands behind the success? Why and how are some companies more successful than other in attraction? Which factors contribute to becoming employer of choice? What and which factors are

significant and valuable? According to the Matuska and Salek–Iminska (2014), in contemporary markets the variety of characteristics serve as a competition, innovation improving features in which the talent, knowledge, mutual learning and experiences are combined, but the implementation of those depends heavily on leadership. This has an impact on business operating within its environment and stakeholders, as firms compete with each other and most importantly are observed and evaluated by their stakeholders. Stakeholders in this case especially mean the employees and company customers. It is debated, that attractiveness and brand reputation are reflected positively whenever the brand has a high market rate, meaning the organization is recognized as a good, responsible, and fair employer. Without a doubt the market ranking is also related to the actual services or products provided by the firm. In other words, the benefit is two-sided, but it is valid to remember not to mix the company services/products with the employer branding as they are not the same. For example, while the product itself might be high quality it does not mean directly that the employer brand is well managed, and employees are satisfied. (Matuska & Salek–Iminska 2014, 72–73.)

Most of the companies understand that attracting talent and knowledge workers is crucial from competitiveness and success aspect in a modern data era. Accordingly having a reputation as a good employer contributes to getting the most competent and talented workforce in the house. One of the most significant methods when branding alongside the marketing is the recruitment and talent acquisition. Sutherland, Torricelli and Karg (2002, 13) describe branding of employer of choice as the procedure in which the firm creates and identifies brand message of the organization. The technique applies basic marketing phases, which are market segmentation, correct selection of the market target and offers value positioning development in order to attract the selected market. The last phase refers mainly to the talent workforce in employer of choice branding context. (Sutherland, Torricelli & Karg 2002, 13.) Employer of choice is additionally summarized as a "being", organization which wins the attraction and retention competition within the market and becomes number one choice due its ability to outperform and develop. In all, the referred title of "chosen employer" is the consequence of the certain company status. It is a place in which human beings want to work and are retained as employees. Behind the selection lies the reputation of the firm, as the well implemented employer branding message. Those mentioned are dependent on innovative HR -processes, which manage to communicate well the core of the company for both, existing employees and future employees. (Sutherland et al. 2002, 14.)

Characteristics which contribute to becoming desired employer lie also in learning opportunities, genuine caring, variety in tasks and internal communications. In matter a fact, communications are important feature of successful employer branding, whenever it is carried out well inside out the company and the firm strategy is clear. In this cases, employees of the firm may act as ambassadors, representatives of own company culture and spread the word outside. (Ghadeer 2016, 156;

Sutherland et al. 2002, 15.) This favours the fact, that the employer branding is seldom single sided colliding the external branding with employee experience and internal work culture. The conclusion may be also drawn to the point where exist multiple attributes that support employer of choice and yet, some of them are still to be studied further. As a relevant note, there might be differences between the knowledge and not workers. (Sutherland et al. 2002, 15). Somewhat, the employer branding affecting forces may also be viewed via categories of psychological, economic, functional and organizational features. These contain salary level, work schedules, fairness in reward systems, teamwork, relationships, utilization of skill set, training and development, market position, reputation and management work. (Ghadeer 2016, 156–157; Sutherland et al. 2002, 15.)

Despite the various components, overall, it seems that gaining status of employer of choice depends on fulfilment of promises, firm status and attractiveness ratio, while inclusion of diversity expands opportunities and gives access to uniqueness and myriad of skills. At the same time, openness creates creativity and "safety" platform for those applying and the ones already representing the firm. Employee engagement, productivity and turn-over being partially main measurement tools of HR, define employer branding success as much as gained attraction. (Forbes 2018; Moroko & Uncles 2008, 1690–1692.)

2.2.4 Controversial role of diversity

Connection of D&I and employer branding seem to be best reflected in the way it contributes to how others perceive the company. The relevant aspect of HR – knowing the people, the main stakeholders, and their needs impacts on external yet internal branding. In this case, we may also think how D&I application affects the stakeholders, as employees and applicants. When examining diverse markets also the customers represent variety of people, with different background and needs. In ideal world, it is argued that those should complement one another, and the better company knows its stakeholders, the better it catalogues needs what comes to services, products and employees. (Gehlers & Suleri 2016, 64–65; Moroko & Uncles 2008,1689 –1690.) Accordingly, in contemporary markets heterogeneous workforce seem to represent more realistically the stakeholders, as customer/employee base and can meet better the expectations via ideas and problem-solving resources (Okoro & Washington 2012, 59–60). It is debated that communication of D&I improves firm ability to attract talent, become employer of choice and gain winning position via diverse workforce. By promoting the company's diversity efforts, firm increases the talent pool and its attractiveness. (Jonsen et al. 2019, 617.)

In case of diversity and HR It would be relevant to ask, how it manifests itself in employer branding? First of all, becoming a desirable employer requires a unique climate and promise, the sense of

inclusion where people despite their differences are allowed to grow and develop. Second, attracting and retaining talented workforce demands acknowledgement as being a good employer and a good workplace. Despite the notice that individuals tend to favor and relate to similar personalities, the more diverse dynamics would enable multiple views. Those may lead to problem solving, either innovation. (Wells et al. 2021, 34–35.) Prejudice and stereotypes are always present however those should not determine the competence, skills. Acceptance, openness, psychological safety and D&I in a working environment do often go hand in hand. Sense of belonging is part of humanity, as individuals we have high need to belong. Exclusion, lack of awareness and lack of diversity climate may affect the firm brand in a negative way. More or less, it diminishes opportunities and potential. It is likely that people experiencing exclusion or negative encounters will react by sharing their experiences. This portrays a typical "word of mouth" scenario. (Wells et al. 2021, 35, 41–42.) Referring to previous data, there is a connection to the employee experience throughout the whole employment cycle, yet external stakeholders. This said, D&I has a relevant role simply due to the impact it possesses on employer branding. Despite this link, combining D&I with EB may be paradoxical. As it is debated that EB aims to coherence. (Edwards & Kelan 2011, 1.)

Edwards and Kelan (2011), argue on EB and diversity relation, studying how diversity may contrast the employer branding. Since the objective is to have united branding, the process might involve workforce "cloning", pressuring into the similar mindset and as learned diversity stands for the opposite. Sharing and communicating similar values may generate tensions in this sense. This creates a dilemma and people might think that in order to continue their employment, or become part of the firm, they are expected to hold the same views. (Edwards & Kelan 2011, 1–2, 9.)

Diversity in employer branding may easily become non-holistic, superficial business strategy or a marketing technique. Whether it is a matter of recruitment, or internal procedure, the human experience reflects the basics of employer branding – it is seldom one sided. Actual experience and practice define success or failure. While the diversity and relation of it with company performance is explored via multiple studies and has concrete statistical proof of relation, the branding of D&I is yet to be examined and requires further establishment. Many companies have taken diversity as part of their proceedings, and the concept or term is mentioned in their internet platforms, thus it is not clear how it is utilized as a branding tool. (Jonsen et al. 2019, 61; Yadav & Lenka 2020, 902.) Naturally when discussing diversity, we discuss integration – inclusion. It converts diverse work force into efficient outcomes. (Edwards & Kelan 2011, 14–15.)

2.3 Theoretical framework summary

Change is ongoing and inevitable. For companies operating this day D&I has become strategically as ethically essential. The firm's ability to impress and draw diversity into a workforce reflects modern

society and its people. (Cober et al. 2004, 640). When we are dealing with people, we are dealing with diversity. But the subject also reflects aspects of ethics, morals and law. How do we interpret and perceive diversity and regulations? Diversity may be a more significant force than a material profit. In reference to discussed literature building and having employer branding based on diverse work culture and diversity equals to accountable and good working environment, which allows differences and welcomes not only minority groups, but various traits. This has an overall positive impact on reputation and work culture. (Wells et al. 2021, 32–33.) This statement alone reflects the present-day markets and the meaning of diversity what comes to the employer branding, building a great place to work, especially while considering external, evolving forces. No doubt, the issue might be complex. A paradox that consumes resources and requires deeper knowledge. So far, there exists numerous definitions and theories applicable to diversity and inclusion, employer branding and how to build a good work culture. (Edwards & Kelan 2011, 15). Managing D&I requires awareness, equity, inclusion, not only having diverse labour. Taking care of employees, applying human experience, retaining and treating work force fairly depends on action, sense of belonging not only on communicating well among firm stakeholders. (Washington & Okoro 2012, 60). In all, as D&I might appear as a valuable asset for EB, it also involves risks, which makes it arguable force. Therefore, further dialogue and study, as debate are needed. (Edwards & Kelan 2011, 15).

Right or wrong does not exist when discussing multiple human features and experiences as they all might be valuable and beneficial when exploited and managed correctly. The whole firm workforce may contain talent, and as long there is diversity it maximizes and optimizes the potential of high results. Anyone can evolve, become or achieve when given correct tools and environment, as also anyone holds some sort of skills and potential. (Roper 2015.) A unique workforce combined with outstanding work culture affects not only productivity and attraction but is hard to imitate by others. Therefore, it becomes a relevant competitive advantage. (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 503–505.)

In general, theory implies that creating a good reputation and being a great place to work is sum of various components. D&I alone is not a guarantee of success, but it has positive impact on internal culture, reputation, and attraction. Openness towards diversity optimizes human capital, that is talented and competent. At the end, becoming desired employer is the key objective when discussing external branding, but naturally it tests the quality of internal state. (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 505.) Diverse markets and labor pool substitute the Employer of choice -recognition. A bigger picture leads to increased business success, satisfied employees, improved competitiveness as a good and inclusive work culture.

Figure (figure 5) below summarizes the relation of employer branding, diversity, and inclusion. The framework aims to capture the paradoxical role of D&I in employer branding within diverse markets.

The main goal is to achieve great internal culture as become the chosen employer. This reflects external and internal aspects of the traditionally known EB concept. (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 505.)
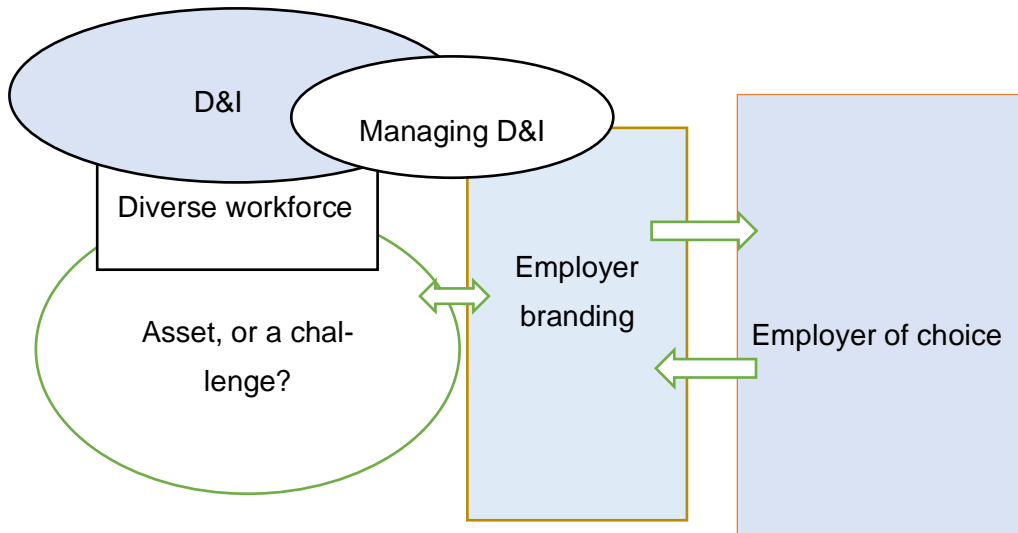
Figure 5. Literature framework summary

3 Methodology

The following chapters discuss a research process. Finding the correct approach, yet tools is vital considering the final outcome. That said, this chapter will describe and examine the selected approach, its suitability, data collection methods, process evaluation and reliability. Since the main questions rely on meaningfulness of a certain occurrence in an organizational context, document analysis-based case study may provide insightful and interesting results. Anyhow, the possible flaws are not excluded due to the several technique formulas. The main reason for choice is in the mission of such a study. It gives opportunity for deeper understanding in certain phenomenon in the real-life, additionally providing insightful data among the boundaries of the context and the phenomenon selected. (Yin 2009, 17–18.) Furthermore, this study is delimited and focused on finding the answers to the main research questions. The study examines solely online content of "Great Place to Work" certified company, Mandatum Life. The end results may provide development ideas, enhanced understanding for companies, their managers and HR -professionals in order to gain a position as a great workplace and eventually improve their attractiveness as employer.

Nowadays, online material contains many relevant and attractive information, and other data such as company values, strategy, mission, images, files, job advertisements and employee value proposition. Generally, online content is an important source of data in our modern era. (Cober et al. 2004, 624–626, 637–638.) This case study aims to study reflection and role of diversity within employer branding in the documented, online firm material, reasons of selected company's success among the employees and a possible relation to attraction. Since this paper is not commissioned conduction of document analysis serves as the most effective and informative method by examining "Great Place to Work" rewarded company operating in Finland. This means examining company online material from the point of view of D&I and related aspects. How relevant and meaningful is diversity to EB and is there a connection? The information found via document analysis may lead into insights, development ideas, new findings, add something valuable to the existing knowledge. There are also a lot of positive aspects in such a method, as it is quite efficient and time saving compared to other tools, the content and material is easily available at the same being cost-effective what comes to the utilizing mostly already existing data. The work of researcher is autonomous and flexible. (Bowen 2009, 31–32.)

3.1 Research approach

In order to achieve wider and deeper understanding the qualitative method appears to be the most efficient. The case study has increased its popularity despite not being that easily defined as a method as suggested in reviews. Case study has numerous definitions, that is why it is ambiguous. Method may be divided into single and multiple case study, both of these containing benefits and

own downsides. Analyzing, exploring, defining and intensive focus into study object are key points of such a study. Research question/s set the direction for collected data. (Gustafsson 2017, 1–3; Schoch 2020, 250.) The case targets may be procedures, events, companies or humans, but the most significant factor is to gain understanding in a selected case and to review it as an entity. Typically research cases are single, despite the variable division. In summary, case study is challenging, in-depth research and the method and is best described via its development focus. The objective may be in the target organization or its defined unit, service, or a process. The aim may lie in problem solving or in producing development ideas and insights, with main questions such as why? and how? As an example, method is suitable when exploring why some companies are better than others in specified area, or implementation. This does not necessarily mean concrete change in practice, since the method is mostly focused on creating ideas, or suggestions in order to solve the problem. Another aspect of specific method and research-based approach is in gaining better understanding when researching real-life situations or behaviors. (Ojasalo, Moilanen & Ritalahti 2015, 10–11, 21–22, 30.) Furthermore, there is a strong linkage between development work and theory, therefore the research cycle starts with familiarizing oneself with the existing literature, data, searching background materials. The usual method phases are having problem or development target, although this may not always be the the first step and more defined and clarified during the process. In other words, there is flexibility when making decision on preliminary choice since it may be modified on the run. The so called second step is focused on searching the existing data, theory and defining the actual purpose, a problem. After this conducting the study with methods chosen, collecting, and analyzing. In the last phase the results are converted into development suggestions, ideas, or models. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 11, 29–33.)

When implementing a case study numerous methods may be utilized, quantitative and qualitative which are the most common two main research categories. In general, the study is usually either or, depending on the purpose of it but mixing both is not excluded in practice. The most popular method applied in the case study however is qualitative, since it reflects better the in-depth character and quality of the examination, therefore the focus is not in producing numbers or statistical data. Thus, it is said to be quite versatile study and combining quantitative with qualitative for enhanced overview is possible. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 31–32; Yin 2009, 17–18.) According to Yin (2009), such a method examines so called occurrences in a real-life, emphasizing extensive understanding, especially in cases when there is uncertainty in connection of phenomenon and the context. Method therefore supports understanding in natural and reality-based environment. Data collection has flexibility well, since various methods may be utilized from interviews, surveys, observation and document analysis. The above features serve as the major factor behind the method choice in this paper. In addition, combination methods may be used, depending on the purpose and abilities, and variations exist.

The case study may also be conducted as multiple research, when it covers more than just one case. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 31–32; Yin 2009 8, 17–19.)

Eisenhardt (1989) points out that case study is somewhat open for design, various instruments and objectives. It can be conducted via single, or a multiple case as mentioned. Similarly, to previous theories he implies that qualitative, quantitative or both methods may be applied to data collection. Research problems may be quite different, as sources and number of researchers. (Eisenhardt 1989, 534–535.) Weaknesses in this type of study include lack of simplicity, as the empirical data may sometimes overpower the theory and become complex. The study ends up having a narrow end result. Since there is a risk of generalization and lack of clear focus in finding the linkage and correct evidence. As the relevant downside, capability of finding the most relevant sources and avoiding generalizations might be difficult for a researcher. (Eisenhardt 1989, 547.)

In a nutshell, Yin (2009, 2–3) defines the process of examination as plan, design, prepare, collect, analyze, share. Strategy is partially in line with other authors, as Ojasalo et al. (2015) argues more simple case study process via 4-steps as follows:

- Preliminary problem, development area
- Familiarizing with the theory, more precise defining of the problem / task
- Data collection and analyze
- Development ideas, models, suggestions

(Ojasalo et al. 2015, 31.)

In all, qualitative research has various descriptions with multiple tools. Shortly is it all study that holds purpose in producing findings via non-statistical tools, avoiding all quantification. The aim is to create findings that take place in "reality", where study object naturally appears, not in producing numerical data. (Golafsani 2003, 600.) More importantly, qualitative study aims to study occurrence via ongoing activity and through experiences, thoughts, feelings, not numbers. This said, it is appropriate to describe as quality over quantity. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 31–32; Yin 2003, 17–18.)

3.2   Data collection – document analysis

One of the strengths of qualitative research is in its ability to apply various methods, one of them being document analysis. This type of analysis relies on documented either printed, visual or electronic company data, which may appear online, in internal firm documents or memos, advertisements, brochures. Document analysis may be easily combined with other methods, providing even larger scope. The analysis studies target organization via reports, pages, memos and other relevant

business documents. Bowen (2009), defines document analysis as "systematic procedure", referring to the specified structure, as well as analytical nature of the method. The data examined does not have to necessarily be written, since for example more creative forms such as drawings, photographs, and even verbal forms, as speeches are accepted as objects of observation in analysis. According to Ojasalo et al. (2015), the main procedure contains data collection and preparations, defining/ limitations, interpretation and at last critical view which should be applied throughout the research. In summary, the data collected is reviewed and organized and this may lead to larger entities. (Bowen 2009, 27–28; Ojasalo et al. 2015, 25, 75–76.) On the contrast, Bowen (2009, 33) narrates process as reading, examining and interpretation.

Since the main paper questions rely on examining phenomenon of D&I in employer branding document analysis may provide valuable results in present time, as also reflect online output of the firm. Mainly, it is important to understand the relevance of D&I, and how it affects employer branding. Therefore, the connection and relevance of diversity is studied via examining online material of a successful company in terms of "great workplace" operating in Finland. In comparison, the quantitative method can produce the data in form of statistics and reach larger group, but in this case the figures and amounts themselves are not that valuable, as the open reflection, appearance, and impact of the phenomenon. Especially when it comes to people in their daily and natural working environment, when human features, experiences and emotions are highly involved. (Yin 2009, 17–18.)

The main weakness of document analysis as a method is that it is a tool, as the many other methods, which does not guarantee reliable, practical ideas or ability to create valuable content. Additionally, the ability to answer the main study questions depends heavily on the implementation and the researcher made decisions. Therefore, this type of research may not always support practical activity and decision making. Often lack of proper conclusions despite the well carried out analysis is the reason behind the failed study, since there is a lot of emphasis on clarity and capability of combining well the observations and findings, as having critical point of view and assessment. The key lies also in the work practice and integrity of the researcher. As mentioned, it is important to maintain proper critical eye what comes to the main research phases and understand the difference between interpretations and conclusion, since they are different parts. To avoid prejudice the procedure shall be described properly and triangulative methods shall be applied in order to support validity of such a study. Another point is that the material selected is not necessarily created for the purpose of the research and may not always be recoverable in terms of access. Accordingly, company material often reflects and markets organizational processes and values but does not necessarily represent the whole truth. (Bowen 2009, 29, 32; Ojasalo et al. 2015, 75–76.) In support of previous Bowen (2009), implies on major imperfections within document analysis:

1. Document motive, insufficiency, and prejudiced selectivity. Why was it produced, for who and for what purpose?
2. Factor of retrievability (temporary nature of data, updates, changes)

(Bowen 2009, 31–32.)

Despite company documents and existing online content being relevant and informative modern source, those should be treated with caution and criticism. In other words, the validity of the documents and the data company inputs may not be necessarily the whole truth, or a fact. (Bowen 2009, 33.) It is also expected that the majority of online content is presented in a positive light. Data aims to represent the firm externally. However, from a researcher's perspective the aim is not to evaluate the actuality of the documents. Mostly, it is the contribution of the documents to the research. Linking data onto study topic, questions and defining the meaningfulness. How relevant are they to this study? Bowen (2009) also states that rather than focusing on amount, quality of the document content and the meaning of it to the studied topic is welcomed. The goal is an objective evaluation of the documents to gain and create an understanding. (Bowen 2009, 33–34.) Additionally, as a qualitative study the amount of samples within case study is usually small. Hence, sampling must be purposeful and carefully selected. (Schoch 2020, 248–249.) However, it is not clearly stated how much is small amount in general or data on precise quantities.

As summary, document analysis is typically utilized collection method among case studies perhaps due its closeness to real-life and context. The process itself depends on the objective of the study, whether it is to understand, interpret throughout the content and meaning of the data, or analyze and produce so called statistical / numerical data. Previous, however, could be combined to support each other. (Bowen 2009, 29; Ojasalo et al. 2015, 75–76, 79.)

3.3 Methods of data analysis

Qualitative method has its own weaknesses when it comes to the evaluation and implementation. The process is vague in this sense. (Dierckx de Casterle, Gastmans, Bryon & Denier 2011, 1; Ojasalo et al. 2015, 24–25.) Wester and Peters (2001, 5) discusses general qualitative analysis phases as collecting data, converting data into readable form, conducting segmentation, selecting the material (reading, coding, incorporation of information into theory) and further analyzing. As mentioned, the qualitative technique has a lot of so called "grey areas" in terms of guidelines and for example how the data should be analysed. You may say it is quite versatile set of tools, abilities and process carried out by the author. This said, various approaches may be applied when examining qualitative data. (Dierckx de Casterle et al. 2011, 1–3.)

Content analysis is a suitable method for analyzing documents and any verbal, written, or visual data and may be used with either quantitative, or qualitative materials. The method emphasizes improving and developing understanding, enhancing knowledge, updating views and insights through replicable and valid information, categorization. Data and the context serve as a source of information. Therefore, there is a connection to theoretical, existing knowledge. The technique itself, however, may be either theory or data oriented. The objective of content analysis is in gaining comprehensive representation of a subject, final analysis results descriptively categorizing the phenomena. (Elo & Kyngäs 2008, 107–108, 113; Ojasalo et al. 2015, 76.) The technique is usually a 3 -step process. However, the implementation of those steps is argued, as there is no exact rule. The process starts with the preparation phase when a decision is made about the content and what should be analyzed. Research questions and the main objective of the study are in key role when making this decision. The second step is in interpreting and exploring the data. After the researcher has gained "sense "of materials, the data is organized accordingly. Here the process depends on the chosen approach within analysis, whether inductive, or deductive. An inductive approach utilizes coding and categorization, while conductive utilizes categorization matrix, tests and compares data with existing hypotheses. The main difference between the previous is in the aim of the study. In deductive method existing and previous information is compared to results in order to conduct testing to the available theories. Inductive on the opposite is utilized when there is not much previous information on occurrence, or the knowledge is limited. Third, the last phase contains reporting of the findings and process analysis. Finally, the main goal of a study determines selected methods. (Elo & Kyngäs 2008, 109–112.) As comparison Ojasalo et. al. (2015, 77) discusses structure formation as a first step, when analysis is theory oriented and used to test previous theoretical data. Basically, this means making division between data that is included and left out. Reducing and delimiting data is made with the help of coding and theming. In practice this means making interpretations of texts among material, writing notes, and categorizing data by codes and key words. Codes reflect the meaning of the examined data. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 77.) In all both processes seem similar but described in different terms.

Despite the flexibility from the researcher's perspective content analysis might be demanding and difficult. Technique is like an umbrella term for multiple tools and strategies. Also, it is laborious and depends on skillset and abilities of researcher. Partially non-structural guidelines of content analysis often lack clarity, simplicity and standards, which does not favour the method. There is no precise formula of what is right and what is wrong in implementation. (Elo & Kyngäs 2008, 113; Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen & Snelgrove 2013, 400.)

One of the commonly used methods within qualitative research is also thematic analysis. The tool is flexible and gives researcher various options, on the other side it has similar hindrances as the

qualitative study itself – lack of common guidelines of application and precise, universally approved description. Despite the vague nature method involves structural phases, which are: data familiarization, coding and organizing relevant data, theme review and search and reporting. (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017, 2, 4–5.) Overall, the collected data will be described, opened and compared to each other in addition to linking it to a theory review. This is necessary step when reaching the objective of the study when coming up to conclusions, insights and views, additionally it is meaningful part of constructive research as previously mentioned.

Phases of content analysis and thematic analysis are implemented in this study, from the point of view of the research questions. Despite the highly qualitative aspect, quantitative element is also present to support the results and the topic's meaning. This method is called content specification when emphasis is in figures, for example counting how many times D&I appears in the documents. Methods do not exclude one another and that said may be used together. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 75.) Generally speaking, from this study perspective document analysis and case study approach complement each other, as both focus on exploring real-life events, phenomena, experiences, gaining better understanding and development. In favor of content analysis, it is suitable for interpreting and breaking down the data, analyzing materials like online data. More or less, the aim is to find out the meaning of the documented data by presenting it verbally via organizing and there is a lot of emphasis on interpretation, which could be a strength or a weakness. (Bowen 2009, 38; Ojasalo et al. 2015, 75–76.)

It was hard to determine which approach is the most suitable and which was implemented more precisely at the end, as no theory has an exact formula and rules are flexible. It was a mixture of both, as methodologies have several similarities, an overlap. As both methods provide quite a flexible overview, it has to be remembered that they are only tools and do not guarantee good conclusions. As an example, there is major critique towards content analysis when the end outcome has failed to deliver success, or relevant data has been lost during the process due to the systematic nature. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 79; Vaismoradi et al. 2013, 399, 404.)

As it seems, there is not that much previous data on D&I in the context of employer branding, how they bond and affect one another. The subject needs further examination. Also, references as fair treatment, equality may be linked to D&I, or used in combination with D&I in context of employer branding. In all, there might be a lot of indirect information, and depending on own skills this may affect the selection of materials, results and conclusions. That said, inductive content analysis supported the nature of research, as examining content, categorizing and establishing relation and meaning among data was necessary. All categories used in research were applied from the theory. Those provided guidelines among selection of the documents and data included and excluded. During the data filtering and examination, it also appeared that there were a lot of similarities among

document data and theory, also in terms of categories and key words. (Elo & Kyngäs 2008, 109–112.)

3.4 Trustworthiness

Qualitative research has many theories as its evaluation criteria. Shortly is it all study that holds purpose in producing findings via non-statistical tools, avoiding all quantification. The aim is to create findings that take place in "reality", where study object naturally appears, not in producing numerical data. (Golafsani 2003, 600.) Study has often received critique on its evaluation, transparency, reasoning behind the chosen methods and risk of individual prejudice. Method lacks punctuality and consensus. In any qualitative study, the assessment of validity is not clear enough stated in existing theory. As noted earlier, the evaluation is not black and white and is dependent on various factors. There is no common rule. This leads mostly to implementation of the whole process, capability of the researcher to capture the entity of studied case, face challenges that may occur, as well as capability to describe, explain choses and carry out the study. Transparency, self-reflection, criticism, and personal understanding are relevant, as also being accurate and trying to avoid personal views, bias. In addition, decisions made during the process, such as selecting the methods, approach, ability to analyze and present data clearly and competence, experience of the researcher. (Noble & Smith 2015, 34–35; Ojasalo et al. 2015, 28.)

Reliability and validity may be observed via multiple perspectives since there are different definitions. However, those may be referred to trustworthiness, accuracy, and quality, with the aim of diminishing prejudice of researcher towards study phenomenon. (Golafsani 2003, 600, 604.) When discussing the validity of the research the aim is to assess the suitability of the chosen approach and methods from the point of view of the study purpose and questions. Reliability on behalf is dependent on the quality of data and information, as work of researcher. One of the purposes is also in ability to conduct comparison among main findings, whether they differ from other existing review findings, or contain similar outcomes. (Noble & Smith 2015, 34–35.) Golafsani (2003, 598) argues over-time consistency, trustworthiness, and accuracy among the results, which can be replicated. This is often used to assess quantitative studies but may be applied in all research. Critique points out the lack of relevance of reliability in qualitative research, the conceptualization being confusing rather than simple. On the contrary, it is also said that researchers should pay attention to reliability and validity when conducting the study and assessing the quality. When it comes to validity, it is in need of reformulation. It is a multiple concept with various terms and contrary in terms of the applicability in qualitative research. The validity may be influenced by the researcher's perceptions and adapted in such a way that is in favor of researchers' understanding. Despite lack of consistency among concepts, the role of generalizability in study findings has been stated to be important quality criteria, as trustworthiness improving element. (Golafsani 2003, 601–604.) Yin (2009) discusses the following

standard quality criteria in case study: credibility, data dependability, confirmability and trustworthiness. The quality tests consist of construct, internal, external validity and reliability. Construct validity refers to various source usage in data collection. Internal validity refers on its behalf onto connection among frameworks. External validity is utilization of theory and replicability (Can results be applied to other cases?) and finally reliability means utilization of case study code in data collection to avoid biases, as study procedure and proper implementation. The aim is in the ability to replicate the same findings via the same proceedings utilized by other researchers. (Yin 2009, 40–41, 44–45.) In accordance, Ojasalo,et al. (2015) discuss amounts and interpretation. Material which contains firm marketing documents, or interviews with amount of 50 cm pile, or 100 pages is said to be related to reliability. Converting this examined material into analyzed information leads to more profound and reliable conclusions. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 75.) Despite previous, no data states clearly what is required exact amount, and as mentioned previously the quantity should not set the major criteria within qualitative research, rather than outcomes and quality of work. (Bowen 2009, 33–34.)

This said, it is not easy to evaluate the reliability and validity of this case study, and perhaps it would be easier to discuss trustworthiness, as part of quality (Yin 2009, 40–41). There were multiple changes during the process and end findings rely mostly on public online data released by the target company. Quality of the data, making decisions and implementation of process are key facets what comes to criteria. (Bowen 2009, 33; Ojasalo et al. 2015, 28.) Since directly similar studies were not found regarding the meaning, or role of D&I in employer branding in Finland the results could not be properly compared with existing data. On the other hand, there were plenty of other elements which could be linked to existing information related to EB and diversity. This affected external validity. (Yin 2009, 43–44). Own understanding and interpretation were necessary, as applying various theories. Document analysis was conducted by one writer, so it is hard to evaluate whether personal prejudice was present. The thesis generally communicates a positive view on a studied subject but pursues to capture other side as well. To avoid misunderstanding or biases, a lot of direct citations were used in the study, as also carefulness when summarizing the text from the original documents. (Noble & Smith 2015, 34–35; Ojasalo et al. 2015, 28, 25.) This action supported objectivity in document assessment (Bowen 2009, 33–34). Each document with a link and date was listed from the beginning of the research process, notes with key words were written down and significant findings listed. Documents used in the study were diverse and accurately selected. Numerous views and forms of material were utilized to improve construct validity, as direct citations. Additionally, screen shots were taken to support the data and to avoid losing the temporarily available data. This is one of the risks when relying solely on online materials. (Bowen 2009, 31–32; Yin 2009, 41.) Figures and statistics were brought up in both theory and methodology to support the aftermath and results (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 75). Despite previous, there exists a risk of seeing "what a writer wants to see". Influence of personal view might affect when selecting material and analyzing, which decreases reliability. (Yin,

2009 40–41.) Overall, online document amount was relatively small in comparison to other existing studies and documents were mainly produced by the company. Thoughts and experiences by few individuals also cannot be generalized, as firm employs hundreds of people. Regardless of this, from perspective of construct validity documentation covered diverse materials in several forms and managed to capture experiences and thoughts in order to gain deeper picture and understanding. It was also not easy to select and filter the documents, since the link between employer branding and D&I was not mentioned clearly. Own perception had to be applied as studied theory when selecting the documents and breaking down the document information. Presenting findings clearly turned out to be challenging and as it is known, that is the main part of case study quality – clarity. In all, systematic formula of qualitative content analysis helped in conducting the research and presenting the findings, as supported autonomous working process. (Bowen 2009, 27–28; Yin 2009, 40-41.)

Evaluation of replicability is not easy since the topic is not researched enough and in need of more study. Nevertheless, many findings of this study were in line with theory which was in favor of reliability. (Noble & Smith 2015, 34–35; Yin 2009, 40–41, 45) In order to find new perspectives and factual evidence, as for example statistics and surveys, some of the non-traditional articles and literature were applied as resources in theoretical framework. This means utilizing business magazines such as Forbes, publications of independent writers, specialist organizations and their studies like Deloitte. Those helped in gaining improved understanding and provided more current data into theory, in addition to current statistics and views concerning the D&I. Generous number of direct citations were included in support of document relevance and to foster unbiases and trustworthiness. Although, this increased the length of findings. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 28.)

Generally, the validity of study was fair (Yin 2009, 40–41). Arguably, discovering the meaning of D&I was problematic, due to the major data between the lines. Stakeholder qualitative survey or interview would have served my aim better in this research. Relying solely on a few company published online documents, and challenges during process increased risks what comes to trustworthiness. The selected research method was qualitative, case study which concentrates on quality of the findings not the figures. The questions of research problem were selected to support the topic of study and current situation in globally evolving work markets. (Bowen 2009, 33–34; Noble & Smith 2015, 34–35.) However, study questions were modified during the process, which is a natural part of qualitative research. One of the main weaknesses of this study was lack of external material, since as mentioned most documents were published by the organization itself. External data would have been an important addition to the research from the point of view of quality, as sole employees' thoughts on D&I and how it affects their employee experience and working culture. Another delivery of new insights or viewpoints. (Bowen 2009, 33.) In addition, the ability to categorize well and retain clarity when presenting the findings turned out to be a risk factor. Although understanding was gained and

many findings were easy to link into theory, the main aim of solving the problem was problematic due to lack of consensus and vague frameworks. (Gustafsson 2017, 2–3, 7, 8.) Finally, company produced online documents provide only single insight into the subject. This said, critical perception is essential, as the fact that each company and culture might be different.

3.5   Analysis process

This study was conducted by examining "Great Place to Work" certified company presented more closely in table 1 via document analysis in order to achieve more informative result based on current, online material (table 1). Mandatum Life is a large financial service provider operating in Finland and Baltics. Mandatum Life was selected due to the positive employee experience and work culture on the Finnish markets. Their success has been continuous, and firm has been named twice as the best workplace in Finland 2020 and 2021. (Mandatum 2021a.) As part of Sampo Group Mandatum also shows good figures in employee satisfaction, engagement, work culture and in recommending firm as a good employer for external stakeholders. Company have been positively recognized for their employee experience many years in a row in "Great Place to Work" survey. (Mandatum Group 2021; Sampo Group 2021, 8.) Mandatum Life values include ethics, transparency, and willingness to be different. (Mandatum. 2022a.) Mentioned success was the main reason behind the selection of the firm for this case study. Documents were examined to find out if D&I has part in this recognition. What is behind good internal culture and is there connection to diversity and inclusion? Success in this case refers to the internally measured attributes mentioned previously, EX, company culture and recommendation as employer. Overall, the linkage and meaning of D&I is explored in the context of internal processes of employer branding.

Certification of Great Place to Work enhances company ability to promote itself as desired employer and market internally good culture for external parties. Firms participate in the Finnish "Great place to work" study with their own decision, study being implemented mainly via internal employee satisfaction and work culture surveys. (Great Place to Work 2021.) The research topic is meaningful, since the current topicality of diversity and struggle of firms in creating good employer branding which starts from within – great work culture. D&I represents todays work force and is in need for more profound understanding when applied strategically into organization. All documents applied in research are public, company online data from present and listed in appendix 1 (appendix 1).

Table 1. "Great Place to Work" Mandatum Life (Mandatum 2021, 19; Mandatum 2022a.)

Company	Employee figure 2022	Firm size	Industry / Focus
Mandatum Life (Subsidiary Mandatum Holding Ltd. part of Sampo Group)	558 Finland 638 Finland + Baltics	Large	Financial services

The process of case study research started in Spring 2022 during April and May by selecting the target company on criteria mentioned above. At this point literature review phase was already started in February 2022, due several changes and uncertainty between multiple and single case study. This covered reading materials, existing reviews, familiarizing with the subject and most of all re-framing the task and problem. Defining the objectives and topic more precisely was required before starting the actual analysis. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 31.) Thus, I was also prepared for future adjusting and changes. The planning phase of the study took place around mid-March, early April. At the end, decision was to focus on one company rather than several due to the complexity of a process and categorization of the findings. Therefore, focus was to select successful Finnish operating firm with the "Great place to work" -certification. As mentioned, the certification relies on implementation of internal employer branding. After the selection was made the online material of the company was examined and documents were filtered according to the criteria, which is typical to the document analysis. This step is also explained in Findings -chapter. Following main phases were followed during the study: preparations, examination of documents, reading, delimiting and categorizing, interpretation. (Bowen 2009, 27–28, 31; Ojasalo et al. 2015, 25, 75–76.)

Documentation is helpful and meaningful from the purpose of the study and helps in answering the research questions. Document data contains relevant linkage to the theoretical framework and presented models. Presented theory also acts as a source for variables and attributes examined in documents. In addition, online content consists of various information forms. This means utilizing not only online -pages with written text in the study, but images, videos, interviews, media releases and articles to achieve better and more reliable results. Effort was also made to find materials which were not produced by the target company, with not much success. At this point, document analysis related risks were acknowledged since the purpose of used materials was somewhat controversial. When conducting the study, it is essential to acknowledge purpose of the documents, the retrievability and involved hindrances in addition to overall critical approach during the phases. (Bowen 2009, 31–32; Ojasalo 2015, 29–33.)

Analysis method being crossing of both, thematic and content technique enabled description, deeper understanding, categorization and producing qualitative data with a minor quantitative element. Decision making and interpretations are significant abilities in document analysis. In early stages especially making the selection among the online materials: which one to select as part of the study and which ones are not relevant (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 77). Delimitation was conducted by making categories of subject related references, which appear in theoretical review. Categories therefore represent elements of D&I and employer branding (tables 2–3). The selection had also to support the research problem and help in finding the answers. Categorization, theming and presenting results turned out to be difficult parts of the study, since there was a lot of data and incoherence. Also, as it

was expected that documents do not necessarily discuss D&I directly therefore, it was a challenge to select righteous categories. In addition, at the end decision was made to include quantitative element of content specification and direct mentions of D&I in documents were counted and marked in appendix 1. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 75.) Appendix also includes each document name, access date, key words and relevant findings, URL link (appendix 1). This documentation file was important source during the study, since it helped to organize documents, keep on track and list key points. As some of the data was known to be temporary, or visual pictures and screenshots were taken to ensure accessibility. Those were work advertisements, images and other relevant sources from research perspective (see appendices 1–6).

After selection was made on documentation, it was important to explore the materials more closely, interpret and compare to one another. Organization of data as familiarization are crucial stages. (Nowell et al. 2017, 2, 4–5; Ojasalo et al. 2015, 31.) How people see their workplace? Why Mandatum has had continuous success as employer, what are crucial elements behind this? How is D&I reflected in material and could it be linked to the previous? All the documents were read and analysed several times. At the same time meaningful citations were captured to remain objective view (Bowen 2009, 33–34). Final steps included conclusions, reporting, comparison into theory knowledge as it is natural to this type of study. Linking findings into theory. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 29–33.) After conclusions were written it was time for development suggestions based on the study and the outcomes. Final phases were conducted during August–September 2022 and finished during October 2022.

4 Findings

In this chapter, study findings will be described based on the variables and themes presented in theoretical framework. Tables 2 and 3 show the diversity and inclusion, and employer branding references (tables 2–3). Many variables in context of this study may be applied to both D&I and employer branding framework. For example, "sense of belonging", or "appreciation" may be applied into inclusive work culture, but also in employer branding, as part of internal culture and employee experience. Each subchapter is named after selected theme and category.

Categories and themes utilized in analysis (table 2) are based on D&I direct, or indirect references in context of internal and external EB. Direct phrases mean mentioning diversity, or D&I directly in document. Indirect references include diversity promoting and related references, such as equality and fairness at work. Employer branding categories include references to experiences, company culture, attraction as main components of employer branding concept. (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 505; Arrow & Barrow 1996, 185–187.) All of the variables are applied from theoretical framework to reflect areas of D&I and employer branding and delimited mostly on internal culture. Diversity dimensions are divided into two categories in table 3: deep and surface-level diversity. (Yadav & Lenka 2019, 905.)

Table 2. Analysis categories. References to EB and D&I.

Categories
Appreciation, openness
Attraction
Diversity and inclusion
Employee experience, human experience
Integrity (legislation, ethics), fair practices, equality
Management practices
Psychological safety, sense of belonging
Work culture, "Great place to work"

Documents examined in study are listed at the end of the paper (appendix 1) in order of timing accessed. Abbreviation displays timing, occurrence of D&I, document and data chosen in association to the research questions and theoretical overview themes. Occurrence of D&I means direct mention of D&I in the document whether in English or Finnish with following words: diversity, inclusion, "moninaisuus", monimuotoisuus", "inkluusio", acronym D&I. Since some of the data was available in Finnish only, as direct quotations exploited in this study, English translations have been made and original Finnish expressions placed in the footer.

4.1.1 Openness and appreciation in work culture

Mandatum Life homepage refers repeatedly on being successful and recognized, what comes to providing services and being an employer. The firm objective is to build an inspiring workplace and community, which has sense of unity – working as one. It is brought up in the beginning of the document, that Mandatum is respected on the markets not only as service provider, but as employer of over 500 employees in Finland. Great Place to Work – certifications, being named as one of the best employers during past eleven years in Finland links to mentioned success. The brief introduction references few key expressions: unity, inspiring community, emphasis and recognition. (Mandatum 2022a.) Careers -content is not far from introduction. The certifications and high ranking among Finnish employers are brought up clearly with statement of employee satisfaction and well-being. Well-being in this context leads to satisfaction. Satisfied employees and customers. Working for Mandatum aims for self-development, success and meaningful achievements. (Mandatum 2022b.) Vice President of HR Mandatum states following: "Trust and caring create an open and supportive environment where each of us can impact our personal work and shared matters" (Gerdt 2022). "We work through positive energy and joy, supporting one another" (Gerdt 2022).

The document data represents the firm as an open, caring, and supportive employer. Personal development and ability to impact work is important, but also mutual support, joy, significant accomplishments, and working as one. "Mandatum is a workplace that strives to create an inspiring work community and to work as one" (Mandatum 2022b). "Trust and caring create an open and supportive environment where each of us can impact our personal work and shared matters" (Mandatum 2022b).

Job advertisements emphasize on possibility to work for a recognized employer. Company was selected as the best workplace in Finland in 2021–22 and certified as responsible employer many years in a row. Positivity and support are mentioned as part of EVP, those being part of a great team spirit. Additionally, capability to be brave to speak up innovative ideas is mentioned in post. (Mandatum 2022c.) Work advertisement underlines rewards and certifications gained by the firm what comes to employee experience (appendix 2).

4.1.2 Managing practices, creating attraction

According to the Mandatum Group responsibility report and Chief Executive Niemisvirta, Petri company culture and employee well-being together with employee satisfaction are an important part of their strategy. Statistically over 90% of employees consider Mandatum a good employer. (Mandatum Holding 2021, 7.) Great place to work -survey includes engagement measurements and annual targets on 100% scales. Categories are divided as follows: recommendation firm as an employer, good workplace rating and engagement index. Mandatum is considered as highly recommended employer

and good workplace via the annual performance, all categories reaching over 90% in 2021. (Sampo Group 2021, 82.)

"It all comes down to people" and "Leading by example" objectives reflect strategical input into personnel, development work and leadership as part of corporate responsibility procedures. Having responsibility in people and practicing HR accountably (Mandatum Holding 2021, 2,12). From personnel point of view notable promises and statements include fairness in practices (fair treatment, benefits, salary, professional development), equality and non-discrimination, well-being and good leadership. The aim for 2022 for example includes eNPS, globally applied indicator for recommendation of firm as employer. (Mandatum Holding 2021, 13, 15.) This is relevant from the point of view of new employees and applicants, since recommendations and recognition as a good employer provides an opportunity to enhance external reputation. From an employee or applicant perspective it is also known that the younger generation is aware of their rights and has high standards towards employers. Those include flexibility as trustful relation with the employer. (Oksanen 2022.)

Managing Director Tolvanen, Tapio brings up cultural yet regional differences in indicators and measurements from perspective of environmental and social targets. As interesting point, he states that for example in the United States of America diversity factor among employees is more emphasized indicator in comparison to Europe, including Finland. Finnish goals and indicators are more carbon footprint and occupational safety focused. Finland is still in "infancy" what comes to D&I. (Tolvanen 2021, 37.) Total CR -report mentions diversity of workforce only one time, when discussing those continental differences among measures (Mandatum Holding 2021, 37). The press release of Mandatum Life magazine states that especially Covid -era has enhanced international markets what comes to global work force. However, this requires a more open attitude, knowledge and acknowledging that international teams have more cultural differences. The introverted culture is often reflected in Finnish organizations. It is also emphasized that it is all about leading practices, how well prepared and aware leaders are. More or less, it is more about the mindset – towards cultural change. Generally, there is a lot for Finnish firms to learn in order to achieve the correct mindset when becoming an international company. (Oksanen 2022.) " Finnish companies in Finland are very Finnish"[1] (Oksanen 2022). "Changing the language alone does not convert company into international"[2] (Oksanen 2022).

Similarly, to the Mandatum CR -report leadership is mentioned as one of the cornerstones from company culture perspective, as commitment into development work and implementation of

---

[1] "Suomalaiset yritykset Suomessa ovat aika suomalaisia" (Oksanen 2022).

[2] "Kielen muuttaminen ei tee yrityksestä kansainvälistä" (Oksanen 2022).

standards. Related risks are managed via internal procedures, programs, employee development and training opportunities. (Mandatum 2021, 25). HR Director Gerdt, Jatta discusses responsible and inspiring leadership in an article by Varpula. Leading practices which lead to motivated and committed personnel. According to her the firm should be led in the way that people see their future in the company. There exist rules, both written and unwritten and everyone holds responsibility in implementing them as reacting and intervening in possible problems. (Varpula 2021.)

The following article quotations represent current way of thinking towards the D&I and how it may affect firm internally. In general, it is presented as a positive "phenomenon", which affects teamwork and the whole company. Diversity is said to be work meaningfulness and teamwork quality enhancing feature. However, diversity in this case is discussed mainly via surface-level diversity, meaning gender, cultural and ethnic diversity. Additionally, data implies diversity related challenges, those negatively affecting company performance due to the raising communication problems and conflicts. (Kallio 2022.) "Equal representation of gender and gender equality produces positive performance and impact of ethnic and cultural diversity into a team is even higher. Especially management level diversity is reflected positively into a whole company"[3] (Kallio 2022). "Increasing diversity solely may lead to decreased performance on a short term due to the growing internal conflicts and common difficulties among communications"[4] (Kallio 2022).

4.1.3 Integrity and fairness

Corporate social report places meaning into creating good working life. Management practices discussed earlier are seen as an essential factor when discussing employee and customer satisfaction. Shortly, according to the report "taking care of personnel ensures customer satisfaction", which reflects importance of personnel satisfaction and well-being. Equality is mentioned as one of the strategic key objectives. Additionally, Great Place to Work survey high results are brought up into comparison of firm commitment to integrity. Equality act and firm responsibility are to conduct equality plans, as well as implement them. (Mandatum Holding 2021, 32, 40.) When discussing equality, it also concerns topics such as payroll and rewards, fair salary and fair benefit policies among the employees. Mandatum Life participates in "Equal work" -project, which aims to enhance equal treatment in payroll. (Valtiovarainministeriö 2021.)

---

[3] "Sukupuolten välinen tasaväkinen edustus ja sukupuolinen tasa-arvo tuottavat selkeän positiivisen suorituseron, ja etnisen ja kulttuurillisen moninaisuuden positiivinen vaikutus tiimiin on vielä suurempi. Etenkin johtotason moninaisuus heijastuu koko yrityksen tekemiseen positiivisesti" (Kallio 2022).

[4] "Pelkkä moninaisuuden lisääminen voi kuitenkin lyhyellä aikavälillä johtaa suorituskyvyn heikkenemiseen tiimien sisäisten konfliktien lisääntyessä ja viestintävaikeuksien yleistyessä" (Kallio 2022).

Another article implies that there is a connection between diversity and good busines figures. Thus, diversity is still not known well enough in Finnish organizations, awareness often being on superficial level. Deeper understanding would support a more profitable outcome. This involves personal values, attitudes, cognitive habits, and inclusiveness – the feeling of belonging in a team. Supported by surveys and statistics diversity is said to be beneficial also for external employer branding. (Oikarinen, 2020.) "Successful diversity practices have positive impact on company reputation and employer image"[5] (Oikarinen, 2020).

Similarly, to corporate responsibility -review, annual report of Mandatum holds principles of fairness and equity, overall strategical input into human capital. Human capital refers to motivation and various skills. The firm aims to create value for all stakeholders via responsible practices. Those hold aspects related to humans, such as non-discrimination, equity, openness, diversity, and responsibility which affect motivation and performance. Individual skills and teamwork are valued by the company management, those create improved services as increase sense of community. (Mandatum 2021 9,13, 25–26.) It is also emphasized multiple times in a document that the company has been rewarded as "Great Place to Work" by the personnel for many years. At the same time firm leaders express gratitude and appreciation towards their employees. "We help one another by drawing on each other's expertise and by working together" (Mandatum 2021, 9).

Responsibility is a key factor in a corporate culture. Internal company environment depends on accountable processes, commitment, creating a workplace where everyone feels safe and being treated fairly. In addition to features mentioned as equality, Mandatum brings up career development, well-being and employee engagement. One of the primary success factors lies in their employees. Personnel that are motivated and hold skillset. On the contrary skillful labor leaving company is considered as a major business risk, also having reputation or perception as an unattractive employer. (Mandatum 2021, 25.) This refers to employees being the key in business operations and acknowledging inside-out relation between existing employees and future candidates. Internal and external dimensions of employer branding. "Losing talent or being perceived as an unattractive employer would pose large risks for the businesses" (Mandatum 2021, 25).

Since the era of the Pandemic the competition in labor markets has increased talents and skillful human force being highly valued. Mandatum rewarding system is one measurement for improved engagement and employee experience. More or less, it contains not only monetary benefits, but actions towards enhanced transparency in processes. Work meaningfulness for example is

---

[5] "Monimuotoisuudessa onnistuminen vaikuttaa positiivisesti yrityksen maineeseen ja työnantajamielikuvaan" (Oikarinen 2020).

described as subjective, meaning for different employees it may mean different aspects within their work. Meaningfulness is significant from engagement and motivation perspective and reflected in company rewarding procedure. Clearly communicating employee proposition (EVP), such as rewards and firm supported opportunities during the recruitment and employment has positive impact on motivation and employer image. In summary, a person has to know what a company has to offer and what are the factors behind the reward policies. (Kallio 2022.)

Employee satisfaction being one of the strategical key features is one of the main reasons why new candidates apply to Mandatum according to CEO Niemisvirta, Petri. Applicants often highlight good place to work -reputation, which is reflected in engagement, great work performances and internally successful work culture. (Trustmary Group 2020, 0:44, 1:18.) Internal personnel satisfaction survey conducted in 2021 shows, that 95% of company employees think that when taking each indicator into account (credibility, respect, fairness, pride and trust) Mandatum Life is a Great Place to Work. Also, 93% of respondents would recommend Mandatum as employer. (Mandatum Holding 2021, 42.) The following citation implies the relation between justice and employee. "The experience of injustice has negative impacts on personnel's commitment and performance, among other things" (Mandatum Holding 2021, 35).

Sampo Group holds a comprehensive code of conduct regarding DEI. Mandatum being part of Sampo Group, the standards are applied accordingly, as also measured and monitored on continuous level within the whole group. The code of conduct is based on legislation, equity and aspect of D&I is directly visible and mentioned in the document. The document in addition describes several dimensions of diversity (deep and surface); demographic dimensions, political views, religion, sexual orientation, but also social background and more personal characteristics, cognitive and physical. The group aims to create an inclusive, fair and open environment. Discrimination and unfair practices are prohibited as cited in the text below. (Sampo Group 2022.)

Measures of D&I are reflected in age and gender, surface-level dimensions. Those have also been well implemented according to the figures within the group. The measured categories consider employees and managers. (Sampo Group 2022.) Non-discrimination is mentioned as an essential part of processes, including recruitment, career development, training and work tasks. (Sampo Group 2022.) "Sampo Group is committed to creating a non-discriminatory, open, and agreeable working environment where everyone is treated fairly and equally" (Sampo Group 2022). "Discriminatory practices regarding recruitment, job assignment, training and development, promotion, remuneration and other benefits, or general conduct in the workplace, are not tolerated" (Sampo Group 2022). "Diversity and equality are key focus areas for the Mandatum Group companies, which are committed to providing a diverse, non-discriminatory, open and agreeable working environment where everyone is treated fairly and equally" (Mandatum 2021, 25).

The sustainability document of Sampo Group emphasizes D&I as one of the main values of Mandatum, D&I is mentioned clearly in report. The objective is to ensure that ideology and practice are in line with the values, and that the main values are integrated into firm procedures. (Sampo Group 2021.) D&I is part of the management training and HR holds responsibility in strategical implementation. Promoting diversity considers all employees and the goal is to enhance creativity, innovation, fairness, self-actualization, and customer orientation via D&I. This means understanding and exploiting differences, capabilities, backgrounds and others. Ensuring equity and fair opportunities Is key factor what comes to promotions, trainings, and recruitment. This is done via transparency, clarity in criteria, unbiased decision making and proper training. (Sampo Group 2022.) "Everyone employed by Mandatum is also encouraged to develop and build on their strengths, to enable employees to develop to their full potential" (Sampo Group 2022). "An important part of inclusion is Mandatum Experience; a three-day inclusive program where new hires meet Mandatum people and management" (Sampo Group 2022).

> "Mandatum strives to promote diversity and inclusion among all employee groups. By tapping into employees' different backgrounds, know-how, and capabilities, Mandatum also aims to create a more innovative, fair, and caring work environment. At Mandatum, diverse teams are seen as more creative and generate more innovation and better customer orientation by reflecting the diversity of the markets" (Sampo Group 2022).

In reference to previous aims, the online ranking page Glassdoor scores D&I at Mandatum with an average of 2.2 score. The figure is low, but the number of reviews is also low, only 2 respondents. There are also no explanations why respondents gave these scores to Mandatum. (Glassdoor 2022.) Appendix 3 shows screenshot of Glassdoor page closely (appendix 3).

Mandatum HR partner Ida, Saarilahti discusses in her employee story how positivity and ability to affect and develop Mandatum to become an even better workplace for everyone have been the most essential feature for her. Through her role she may impact on equality, making sure that people at Mandatum are treated with respect and fairly. The responsible role of Mandatum as business and HR unit is elevated, as organization puts high effort into constant improving and development work. One part of the development process in terms of equality is to maintain transparency in company processes. (Saarilahti 2022.) "I have never tolerated injustice. In this workplace I realized that I can genuinely and concretely impact that everyone is being treated fairly and in a righteous way.

Mandatum really takes effort in this matters and HR and upper management has common vision regarding the implementation"[6] (Saarilahti 2022).

4.1.4 Human experience, psychological safety, sense of belonging

"Why Mandatum Life is the best workplace in Finland?" The video summarizes the essential features contributing to firm success as employer and good employee experience. The attributes are discussed in the document by the company employees and representatives. Those include generally positive atmosphere, input on employee well-being, work autonomy related feature, having pride in own work and employer, mutual trust, and ability to work with different people and personas. Main finding is reference to appreciation of diversity, humanity and psychological safety, ability to be oneself at work. Few company employees say directly "We can be different", which reflects employee experience in the company and answers the question why Mandatum is the best workplace (Mandatum Life 2020a.) Screenshot of one of these statements is seen in appendix 4 (appendix 4). In this case, the differences at work and being accepted have had a positive impact on personal employee experience. Factors mentioned are discussed by two different employees in the document as follows: "We can be different"[7] (Mandatum Life 2020a, 0:58) and "Here we can work with different people"[8] (Mandatum Life 2020a, 0:11). Furthermore, in the short video of "What kind of is Mandatum life -employee?" employees bring up responsibility at work and taking others into account. The document implies that humanity is important, as the human side of appreciating one another is mentioned. Direct quotation from video describes the working atmosphere: "Being human to one another"[9] (Mandatum Life 2020b, 0:42).

HR director implies at Mandatum online pages that importance lies in how well personal professional skill level corresponds to own work tasks, fair treatment, work-life balance and individual ability to affect daily work. Overall, a good working environment enables openness and courage to speak up freely without any fear. (Varpula 2021.) The sentence below summarizes directors view as HR - professional of psychological safety significance at work and appreciation of contrasting views.

---

[6] "En ole koskaan sietänyt minkäänlaista epäoikeudenmukaisuutta. Täällä aloittaessani tajusin olevani työpaikassa, jossa voin aidosti ja konkreettisesti vaikuttaa siihen, että meitä kaikkia kohdellaan reilusti ja oikein. Mandatumissa todella panostetaan näihin asioihin ja HR:llä ja johdolla on jaettu näkemys niiden toteuttamisesta" (Saarilahti 2022).[6]

[7] "Me saadaan olla erilaisia" (Mandatum Life 2020a, 0:58).

[8] "Täällä saa tehdä töitä erilaisten ihmisten kanssa" (Mandatum Life 2020a, 0:11).

[9] "Ollaan ihmisiä ihmiselle" (Mandatum Life 2020b, 0:42).

"Functioning everyday work depends on environment where everyone can also bring up flaws and downsides without fear of further consequences"[10] (Varpula 2021).

Being nominated as best workplace in Finland 2021 in large companies' category external changes, especially during Pandemics Covid-19 have affected a lot on business operations according to Mandatum management. Those have formulated issues and increased development needs when it comes to working culture. Evaluation of needs from employees and business perspective is part of continuous firm operational evolving. Low hierarchy, innovation and creativity being huge values reflecting organizational culture. To the question" What employee experience means to Mandatum Life? " company managers state unity, being as one. "We are like family, workplace is second home for many of us" (Great Place to Work Suomi 2021, 0:30, 2:30, 6:11.) "Without feelings there is no point in meaningfulness. There should be a safe atmosphere at the workplace, where employees may tell how they feel: what I need, what I want to achieve, what we can achieve together"[11] (Kallio 2022).

4.1.5 Quantitative findings

D&I was mentioned directly in 7 documents. The documents were mainly company official and public annual reports, as umbrella company Sampo reports, and Mandatum Life reports seen more closely in abbreviation 1. D&I was in addition clearly mentioned in Life Magazine article published by Mandatum (Oikarinen 2020). Magazine is produced by Mandatum Life. From total 23 documents studied this means less than 50% frequency. Initially this thesis being a qualitative study, the figure alone may not be that valuable. Nevertheless, it may display the significance of a subject and show the consistency, relation between the data and practice. Additionally, figure of appearance does not necessarily show all the truth or answer to the main study questions.

The main finding in this category is, that annual and corporate responsibility reports mention D&I directly in significant light, as one of their essential indicators. Although Sampo Group seems to be more D&I focused, diversity being part of their responsibility work. D&I appears in public documents of Sampo more actively in comparison to the documents of Mandatum. Another relevant point is, that D&I mentioned in the reports does not reflect well the rest of the online content published by Mandatum. This content includes their homepages, management and employee views and from

---

[10] "Toimiva arki edellyttää työpaikalle ilmapiiriä, jossa jokainen voi ja uskaltaa tuoda myös epäkohtia esiin ilman pelkoa seurauksista" (Varpula 2021).

[11] "Ilman tunteita merkityksellisyyspuheet menettävät kaiken merkityksensä. Työpaikalla pitää vallita turvallinen ilmapiiri, jossa työntekijät voivat kokea saavansa sanoa miltä heistä tuntuu: mitä kaipaan, mitä haluan saada täällä aikaan, mitä voimme yhdessä saavuttaa?" (Kalllio 2022).

internal employer branding perspective the online Careers -section. Job advertisements do not directly communicate about D&I, either Careers -introduction section. On the contrast, each of work advertisements displays short overview video at the end. Video "Why Mandatum Life is the best workplace in Finland?" provides a brief introduction of people working for Mandatum and their personal thoughts. The screenshot seen in appendix 4 captures picture shown in every advertisement with the visible subtitles. Visible text emphasizes on differences and different people at work as visible in picture. (Mandatum Life 2020a.)

Many of documents, such as Life Magazine publications and Mandatum management statements similarly capture the aspect of valuing differences and different personas, as well as bring up matter of equality. In this case, the conclusion may be drawn that despite not mentioning D&I directly by the term, it does not mean that it does not appear, or is irrelevant from company culture perspective. The D&I is reflected in indirect expressions and words, as being different, differences and equality. Those represent more subtle terminology of D&I.

4.1.6 Deep-level diversity

Deep-level diversity refers to attributes that are mostly non-visible (Yadav & Lenka 2019, 905). Those are described more closely in table 3. Appreciation of employee skills and individual contribution, in order to deliver value to partners and maintain good working culture is discussed in company report and management narratives. Aspect is also brought up in employee introduction and online interviews. (Mandatum 2021, 26.) "We prioritize our shared goals, and we succeed in this by understanding the importance of each person's contribution to the big picture" (Mandatum 2021, 9).

It is mentioned by personnel that working with different people is an asset, and possibility to collaborate with ones. In this context, it is however hard to say what "different" exactly means. Different people might be referring to deep diversity levels, as the surface ones. Short employee introductions present quite a homogeneous work force, but manifest the importance of personal ideas, views, and thoughts as part of a good working culture. (Kauppi 2022; Roos 2022.) Following citations describe employee thoughts: "I bring a lot of development ideas to the team and company, and good ones are implemented"[12] (Roos 2022). "Here we are allowed to bring up our own ideas and obtain responsibility"[13] (Kauppi 2022).

---

[12] "Minä tuon paljon ajatuksiani tiimin ja yhtiön kehityksen suhteen esille, ja hyvät ideat myös toteutetaan" (Roos 2021).

[13] "Täällä saa tuoda omia ideoita esiin sekä saa myös paljon vastuuta" (Kauppi 2022).

Individual work experience, competence and skills might affect the salary, as other compensations. The theme is discussed in the context of fair practices involving payroll, rewards and benefits. There might be differences in pay among men and women, and the competence level of personnel. That is why it is important to analyze, review and conduct surveys from the point of view of justice. (Mandatum Holding 2021, 35.) As citation below indicates Mandatum practices are organized, measured and systematic when it comes to employees. This is the reason behind the success according to Sampo Group. They seek a good relation from both sides – well treated personnel, better engagement, performance, and satisfaction. The individual voice of personnel is important, that is why several surveys and measurements are applied. However, hearing the voice of an employee is not an infrequent act, but visible in daily work. (Sampo Group 2021.)

> "The cornerstone of Mandatum's success is systematic development of personnel practices. When employees adjust well to the company, they contribute more, build better relationships with colleagues, and stay longer. The company strives persistently to develop practices to increase the personnel's work satisfaction. The employees' voice is heard through formal tools, such as engagement surveys, but most importantly in everyday life" (Sampo Group 2021, 81).

4.1.7   Surface-level diversity

Surface-level diversity contains visible features, demographics in accordance with background and tenures seen in table 3 (Yadav & Lenka 2019, 905). DEI is measured through gender and age distribution within Sampo Group. D&I aims to be reflected in managers and employees. In statistics this means having at least 40% of each gender representing management positions. However, it is pointed out that Mandatum strives always hiring the best applicant for the position and especially women are supported in applying in management positions. (Sampo Group 2021, 84, 92.)

> "In Sampo Group, diversity and inclusion are measured, for example, by age distribution and gender distribution. The gender distribution of all employees in Sampo Group is on a good level, with the share of women and men being close to fifty-fifty, but there are more men in managerial positions. In addition, the age distribution within the Group has historically been well distributed" (Sampo Group 2022).

Mandatum employees in Finland are divided quite equally from gender perspective. "Our equality goal is to have at least 40% representation of each gender at the different management levels" (Mandatum Holding 2021, 40). Also, there has been annual improvements. Male employee figure in 2021 was 55% and female 45 %. Gender equality is mentioned in company annual and corporate responsibility reports as part of strategic aim related to equity and responsibility. Average age of the personnel is 41 years. (Mandatum 2021, 19.) Gender equality plan is mentioned in CR report, as generally good results. The company emphasis is also in employing more youngsters and students.

(Mandatum Holding 2021, 41). "Our goal is to employ young people and students" (Mandatum Holding 2021, 41). "In 2021, Mandatum had at least 32 per cent representation of each gender at different management levels (39% in 2021). Women accounted for 44.4 per cent of the directors reporting to the CEO" (Mandatum Holding 2021, 41).

In 2021 Great Place to Work -survey 94% of personnel considered being treated fairly, despite their gender. In comparison to 2020, the figure was 91%. (Mandatum Holding 2021, 42.)In the same survey equality rate was high as well, 99%. Employees were treated fairly, despite the origins. Statistics overall reflect positive personnel experience in multiple related areas. (Mandatum Holding 2021, 42.) "People are treated equally here, regardless of their origins" (Mandatum Holding 2021, 42). Mandatum marketing video "Why Mandatum is the best place to work in Finland" displays some surface level diversity attributes reflected in the people participating in the video. All of them being Mandatum employees they present some variety what comes to gender, age, ethnicity and language. As mentioned previously, diversity is not indicated directly by the term, but the ability of being different and working with different people. This is stated by a few of the employees. Again, this might mean visible or nonvisible features. (Mandatum Life 2020a.) Accordingly, when observing the company group picture from 2020 social media content (appendix 5) the surface-level variables as ethnicity, race, physical features, religion, nationality does not seem to be much displayed. Personnel in the picture seem to be homogeneous, however slight gender, male and female representation is observable (appendix 5). The picture examined was taken from "Great Place to Work" nomination event. (Mandatum 13 Feb 2020.)

According to online data, firm operations cover all the Baltic countries (Mandatum 2022a). The online content is available in 3 languages: English, Swedish and Finnish. In the beginning of the study, work advertisements and careers were only available in Finnish. However, pages were updates and currently include also English as alternative language. (Mandatum Life 2022.) As noted, being fluent in Finnish seems to be generally one of the requirements in all of their job advertisements. The level of language being from good spoken and written Finnish to advanced. The customer service trainee advertisement states, that applicant has to be perfectly fluent in Finnish (appendix 6). This applies to verbal and written skills. This online application for the intern position emphasizes on "excellent Finnish", as also skills in other possible languages. (Mandatum 2022d.)

Category
Deep-level diversity: personality, values, beliefs, attitudes, skills, experience, abilities, social status
Surface-level diversity: gender, ethnicity, race, age, physical features, religion, nationality, language, tenure (organizational/team), background (education/occupation)

Table 3. Deep-level and surface level of diversity (Yadav & Lenka 2019, 905.)

5 Discussion and conclusions

Following chapter will discuss document-based findings presented in previous chapter and merges results into the theoretical framework. As paper headline suggests, "meaningfulness" refers into something valuable or relevant. Even so the topic might generate controversy, since it involves people and human differences in working environment. This reflects both, the sensitive nature of the subject and human aspect. Mostly, it seems that people are seeking for a fair treatment and ability to be seen and heard as individuals. This impacts the employee experience, work motivation and will most probably be reflected outside as value adding feature. In this case, we are not discussing only the annual firm figures, but feelings, experiences and emotions at organizational landscape. At the same time, narrow presentation of diversity and partial inconsistencies among official annual publications and other online materials were observable among the findings.

5.1 Meaning of D&I in employer branding

Diversity and inclusion appear to hold limited meaning at target company. The categories measured and included as part of the strategical work being mainly superficial-level diversity (age and gender). In comparison to existing criteria, such as diversity wheel and main levels by Yadav and Lenka result demonstrates how minor part of diversity is applied. (Gardenswartz & Rowe 2003, 33; Yadav & Lenka 2019, 905.) It is discussed that perception varies among companies and individuals. As unawareness of D&I, vague definition, and lack of precise models of application are often setting barriers, implementation becomes more challenging. (Okoro & Washington 2012, 60; Sharma 2016, 2–3.) The concept of D&I is still globally evolving, but it is acknowledged through the theory that in fact, diversity is every aspect that makes us different from each other. (Qin et al. 2014, 135–137.) From a management perspective there exist misunderstandings and unawareness within diversity management, since the concept is vague. This alone can increase mistakes and wrong decisions. The starting point is usually in the awareness and diversity mindset, that depends on management openness. (Okoro & Washington 2012, 60; Sharma 2016, 2–3.)

In terms of awareness and application documents also imply that the issue might be cultural, since there are continent related differences what comes to indicators used. Therefore, is D&I and managing D&I still new and undefined in Finnish companies? Similarly, to limited understanding of D&I in Finnish organizations, results show that diversity is usually measured only via main demographical features. Mandatum is good example of this, considering firm is recognized as good employer in Finland. However, many policies including sustainability standards by the company and the parent company (Sampo Group) present broader view of inclusivity, appreciation of differences, fairness, non-discrimination, and openness. All of these factors are visible in the studied company documents. Another aspect is, that documents discussing D&I directly and the importance of it were mostly firm

reports. Those highlighted the meaning of D&I as part of strategy and sustainability. As a surprise, there was more input into the subject in documents presented by the parent Sampo Group. When observing the rest of materials, as management statements, employee stories and views, career site, job advertisements, social media none of these included usage of D&I by term. Instead, other topics close to D&I were mentioned as the reason of being successful as an employer and having a good work culture, those were openness, appreciation and equality. In addition, many of the employees and management members mentioned the importance of being different, valuing different personas, thoughts, and views. Those refer to appreciation and acceptance, as exploiting potential. Findings also imply that there is more "diversity and inclusion" within the company than just official indicators (age and gender). This brings up a more in-depth category where cognitive viewpoint, opinions and thoughts are categorized as one form of diversity. (Qin et al. 2014, 135–136.) Roper (2015) also described phenomenon as establishing environment where each individual is accepted and allowed to exploit personal capacities.

When it comes to inclusiveness, despite the positive views of employees the online career content, as work advertisements for applicants did not perform well from D&I perspective. Limited language availability and strict requirements for fluency in Finnish might limit talented and competent audience. Each of the work ad / application section however included mention of their success as "Great place to work" and promoting video, with employee experiences. The video itself emphasizes differences and appreciation, which was not in line with written content. Work advertisements did not include direct mention of D&I, or related aspects. This said, overall lack of input towards diversity (surface and deep-level) was the downside of this section and did not support the values mentioned in reports. In terms of HR, D&I practices are vital from the beginning of the "work" cycle, as recruitment. Often, an open attitude towards diverse workforce fosters talent pool, attraction, innovation and creativity. Employees representing their diverse stakeholders are more likely to communicate their organization as open, inclusive and fair. This fosters employer branding. (Franca 2012; Yadav & Lenka 2020, 901.)

When conducting a comparison between the viewpoints of employees, management representatives and official reports there was a similarity of thought, what comes to openness and appreciation. Valuing one another. Therefore, not speaking the term D&I does not necessarily mean that company does not have diversity or is not inclusive. On the contrary, it appeared that those have had relevant impact on work culture, engagement and employee experience. In all, what stands behind the great workplace? Briefly, at Mandatum documents imply that it all comes down to leading people – valuable human capital. When exploring employer branding EB the employee journey and encounters during the employment life cycle are crucial factor of external dimension. Encounters contain experiences, emotions and personal thoughts, formulating the employee experience together with the

values and needs. Moreover, it is significant how company can deliver own promise and answer to expectations. (Itam & Ghosh 2020, 39, 41–42; Morgan 2016.) Considering individual factors, as humaine needs, building trustful and appreciative employment relation and implementing fair leadership practices constitute as primary drivers behind the good employee experience. (Itam & Gosh 2020, 44.)

As noted, according to documents Mandatum tries to invest into leadership and HR -practices, development work and human capital. Human capital refers into more of a deep-level diversity categories, various skills and competencies brought into the firm by individuals. Generally, it is discussed clearly in company reports and management online interviews, that Mandatum sees their employees as the main reason behind the success, as also the main asset. This involves appreciation and development of human capital mentioned. Building relationship with applicants, or existing employees is described to be as one of the cornerstones which affects the service they provide for their clients, overall performance, employee engagement and eventually the reputation of the company. Employees are seen as "ambassadors" to outside markets and skilful applicants. (Mandatum 2021, 25; Oksanen 2022.) Human capital may be also viewed through the lens of diversity, since Sampo Group states that all of their companies, including subsidiary Mandatum aim to enhance diversity and inclusion. Naturally, this holds deep-level meaning, as capacities, skills, diverse backgrounds, abilities, not only demographical dimensions. (Sampo Group 2022.) As learned, responsible leadership impacts employee engagement, motivation and performance (Varpula 2021). Wells et al. (2021), described the relationship between employee and employer as a psychological contract. Contract in which psychological human side is elevated. (Wells et al. 2021, 35.) This leads to accountability and implementation, ability to communicate well and built long-term, both side useful relations.

Furthermore, as findings show constant working towards a safe and equal workplace is one of their main objectives. Various processes such as input into well-being, career development possibilities and engagement as part of business leads to healthy, well performing, motivated employees. Those represent the best of the company and may act as a further "ambassadors" for the organization. (Mandatum 2021, 25.) The previous portrays the link of quality service. The cycle where well-maintained employment relation, satisfied employees lead into improved services, as a good external reputation – attractiveness. Healthy environment inside and out. This attracts a more suitable and skilled workforce, especially in the current globalized war of talent. The external and internal relation therefore becomes an asset for the firm and its branding. (Ambler & Barrow 1996, 2.) As a major risk for the business, Mandatum describes to be low engagement and losing their competent employees (Mandatum 2021, 25). This on behalf does not impact positively employer attractiveness, while healthy employee engagement and good employee experience constitutes a great marketing for a

firm. The company currently utilizes employer recommendation as one of their indicators. Indicator measures satisfaction of the employee towards their employer. Initially, it impacts the reputation of the employer. (Mandatum Holding 2021, 13, 15.) Employer of choice is known to be not only the superficial status of chosen employer, but the workplace where people want to work and are taken care of (Sutherland et al. 2002, 14). In all, having a sense of responsibility for the personnel and taking care of them seems to be genuinely communicated and implemented via Mandatum actions and measurements, based on the learned documents. In addition to responsible and strategical management processes, the firm has several standards and activities involving fairness and equality, which are anticipated and strategical. (Mandatum Holding 2021, 32, 40; Valtiovarainministeriö 2021.) Significantly, appreciation of diversity and various skills are described as part of united value creation (Mandatum 2021 9,13, 25–26). The employees of Mandatum often bring up the ability to be "yourself", ability to affect and sense of belonging, and as learned fair treatment and feeling of safety are signs of responsible and good company culture. Employer branding is affected by various forces, main of those being economic, functional, organizational and psychological. This said, on deeper organizational level we discuss fair treatment at work in all the activities, such as career development, rewards and trainings. (Ghadeer 2016, 156–157; Sutherland et al. 2002, 15.)

From attractiveness and reputation perspective the relevant feature is that a company is known to be a responsible and fair employer (Matuska & Salek–Iminska 2014, 72–73). In this case it appears that open comments and experiences provided by the employees mostly support the strategical views and aims, as internal key figures. Figures assess various aspects of internal company state, as employee experience, well-being, engagement and organizational culture. Annual statistics support a good results year by year and improvements what comes to Mandatum as a workplace, the recommendation figures and engagement rates. Generally, personnel feel that the company they work for is a very good place. (Sampo Group 2021, 82.) This is a positive indicator, which together with the case study documents implies that there is connection between firm reports, figures, management and employees' views. Most importantly, it shows the impact of mentioned strategical leadership procedures into the company personnel. Diversity within the personnel is seen as a creativity and innovation uplifting feature according to code of conduct. Component that affects the level of provided service, internal culture and which represents current stakeholders on the market. Diversity in this context refers into deeper dimensions, background, skills, competencies, and it is stated that it has enhancing effect on employer branding and reputation when implemented successfully. (Oikarinen 2020; Sampo Group 2022.) Previous shows, that there is relation among internal and external employer branding processes, as ability to positively impact EB via D&I.

In reference to Mandatum management statements there is indication into globalization caused traits, international aspect and post-Pandemic issues. Change and becoming more global is not

always easy and may increase problems. However, modern global society and movement requires diverse and open mindset from the companies. According to Gehlers & Suleri (2016), diversity holdsa myriadd of competence and potential. It is not only war over talent which makes the topic significant, but the fact that the stakeholders are often diverse. From a business perspective this naturally applies to customers, employees, applicants and other parties. (Gehlers & Suleri 2016, 61.) There is also reference onto cultural aspect that supports slow development of Finnish companies in D&I and Nordic mentality which is often reflected in organizational procedures. (Tolvanen 2021, 37.) In general, there is room for learning and development in this area. This might explain why even successful companies in terms of work culture and employee relations such as Mandatum do not fully exploit D&I. Despite this management also acknowledges that diversity is not only the language or the gender. In addition, Mandatum publishment mentions increased employee / applicant expectations especially from the younger generations. As known, educated, qualified and flexibility seeking labor is in favor of high demand on current markets. (Torricelli & Karg 2002, 14.) This also represents one of the evolving and diverse workforce enabled challenges, known as talent war. (Cook, 2021; Keller & Meaney 2017, 4.)

Is diversity creating adversity, or is there unity in diversity? How does this impact on internal EB, work culture, employee encounters and eventually performance and engagement? Do we have to share the same values with our employer, and how does this affect our employee experience? Upper management and HR are often in the key role when discussing employer branding and the company people. This elevates the fact of being aware, situational evaluation and converting the possible downsides into the strengths. Also, ability to embed diversity and convert it into the favorable advantage, an asset. (Gehlers & Suleri 2016, 61–62, 65.) Creating collaborative, supportive team and unity is visibly mentioned as one of the relevant features of Mandatum working environment. (Mandatum 2022b). But does this imply holding to the same views in sharing the same objective and values, or is it working together towards shared aim through the different human attributes and views? Does unity exist without diversity? Edwards and Kelan (2011), point this out as a common dilemma in diversity management. Do we want people to share the same organization given standards and values, or the opposite? It is acknowledged that people tend to favor similar personas, but this also might lead to a narrowed output and decreased creativity in work culture (Wells et al. 2021, 34–35). Forcing people to think similarly or share same views does not second diversity in this sense, and sometimes intense strive for "unity" may be viewed as pressuring. In other words, you have to be the same as your company and share the same values, or do you? (Edwards & Kelan 2011, 1– 2, 9.) On the contrary, both Mandatum counterparts, management reviews and employee perspective rely on various opinions, personalities and skills being valued and welcomed as part of successful working environment. The overall transition towards more diverse and inclusive culture requires time and effort from management, as strategic clarity from the D&I perspective. Also, ability to

forecast, solve and overcome conflicts. (Gehlers & Suleri 2016, 62.) Therefore, is there enough pre-paredness, openness and willingness?

Successful employee experience consists of coalition of components, such as management prac-tices, opportunities provided to the employees, diverse and inclusive work environment and work meaningfulness. Together those improve the experience of employees or applicants, which in best case may benefit the company and the competitiveness of the firm. (Deloitte 2019b, 5.) Psycholog-ical side is deeply present during employee journey and experiences, as those combine feelings, values, needs and expectations. (Morgan 2016.) Firm aims to hold equal representation of each gender in positions and the current figures show quite even situation, with a slight annual improve-ment. This applies also to the age factor. Despite the objectives, from HR point of view it is stated that this does not mean hiring solely for the purpose of D&I, based on a gender, or age. Company encourages females to take initiative and apply for management positions, but the final decisions are said to be based on a competence. Therefore, the goal is to hire the most suitable person for the role, not to fulfil diversity gaps. (Sampo Group 2021 84, 92; Sampo Group 2022.) This minimizes D&I misconduct, as elevates importance of basic HR rule, which is to match the correct applicants into a right place and a position. Since, on a global level there have been signs of D&I misinterpre-tation, misuse as exploiting the term for the incorrect intentions to promote own business benefits. (Forbes 2021; Torricelli & Karg 2002, 14.) That said, there appears to be a visible link to fairness at the workplace, which in Mandatum case is supported by statistical data as over 90% of employees consider that they have been treated fairly and equally. In accordance, surface-level diversity fea-tures as age, gender, origins and ethnicity were main components behind the results. (Mandatum Holding 2021, 42).

In compliance with Mandatum official statement any unfair treatment or discrimination has impact on engagement, performance, or reputation. Any unfavourable or discriminative behaviour may gener-ate harm to previous processes. (Mandatum Holding 2021, 35). Those indicate on a connection between D&I, internal and external branding. Not surprisingly majority of personnel considers Man-datum as being "Great Place to Work" in terms of being credible, fair and trustable employer. (Man-datum Holding 2021, 42.) In context of legislation companies operating within the European Union are expected to apply institution set practices, equality being one of the basis of EU. That said, anti-discrimination and human rights involving policies in businesses are statutory requirements, rather than voluntary decisions. Of course, it is not denied that the perception and implementation is highly dependent on company management and their ethical views. (European Commission 2022a; Euro-pean Commission 2022b.) Another significant finding is, that it is relevant to understand employees on an individual level – hearing their voices. This means employee thoughts, skills, capabilities, needs. In addition, contribution to the company is highly appreciated as exploiting various

capabilities. (Mandatum 2021, 26; Mandatum 2021, 9.) In other words, although deep-level diversity level is not officially measured or mentioned in majority of the documents, it is not excluded that it does not appear, or is not appreciated. In fact, it seems that it is, based on references into a deep-level dimensions of human capital: skills, personality, attitudes, points of view. Additionally, some of the relevant factors learned from the employees and managers from the non-official company reports are ability to affect, having supportive and open environment, positivity, well-being, autonomy, trustful relationship, acceptance, valuing differences, ability to work with different people, work meaningfulness. All mentioned attributes have been brought up by the Mandatum employees and management as a positive feature behind the "Great workplace" – being openly ourselves and human being to one another. Other components mentioned include a sense of unity, low hierarchy, being as one family, and the possibility to bring up own ideas and views without any fear of consequences in everyday operational work. (Varpula 2021.)

Building great teamwork and culture often requires acceptance and open communication. Personnel ability to show openly their emotions, fears, potential and weaknesses promotes and elevates psychological safety, which serves as a base for a great working culture and achievements. It is a part of building blocks, that humanbeing often perceive as one of the most important features in a working environment. Being able to be yourself at work. (Coyle 2018, 56–57, 74–75.) Meaningfulness is seen as a motivational and engagement enhancing factor at Mandatum. It also requires fair policies and transparency in communications. This is an important part of the employee promise, value proposition (EVP), and whenever it is well communicated and implemented it elevates the external image of the company, yet employee motivation. (Kallio 2022.)

Despite D&I being an important part of the Sampo Group and Mandatum strategy, it is not communicated strongly enough in material, other than official reports and expert articles as noted before. Surprisingly, documents of Sampo Group provide much more profound D&I content, including clear code of conduct, measurements and objectives. However, content utilizes actively "Great place to work" nominations as a marketing tool. Overall, the promise of a great workplace. Work advertisements fail to communicate D&I input as well, more importantly they seemed to be restrictive in terms of skills and language. There is no mention towards unbiased, ethical work, related strategical aims nor the key area – equality. As example, being fluent in excellent verbal and written Finnish is mandatory, which may be perceived as discriminative. Another example is availability of career pages and open vacancies in two languages Finnish and English. This perhaps indicates miscommunication among the recruitment policy and strategical diversity, inclusion, and equality content. In addition to that, the miscommunication may indicate that D&I is not that developed yet in all company activities, excluding the annual age/gender measurement. (Cober et al. 2004, 624–626, 637–638; Franca 2012.) As conclusion, it confirms the statement that D&I is yet to be explored and not that well known

and implemented in Finnish companies, at least yet. It may appear, but on superficial level and via limited dimensions. As a general note, D&I is not mentioned in any of the documents as the main reason behind the good work culture, employee experience, or the success Mandatum has had over the years. A few of the documents by company representatives, however, manage to discuss the link between the well carried out diversity policies and the notable impact of this on the employer branding, company reputation and image. (Oikarinen, 2020.) On the other hand, documents imply various levels of diversity between the lines, such as personality, skills, ideas, views and appreciation of those, which substitute behind the healthy working environment. Ability to be different, work with different personas and bring out own ideas, which adds meaningfulness to work. There are also multiple components close to inclusion and diversity, such as equity, fair practices, appreciation, openness. In accordance, it seems to be undeniable that many of the documents examined leadership and ability to lead people in a "right" and fair way has a large impact on work culture. From an employee perspective equality and fairness seem to be one of the most significant factors, alongside the management input, well-being and the safety people have at work. Some employees consider firm as their "home", where they may be part of evolving process and something meaningful. Moreover, D&I is officially described in reports as an aspect which has a positive effect on business and service quality due to its ability to reflect diversity among the clients. From an employee perspective it improves equality despite the differences or prejudice. (Sampo Group 2022).

5.2   Final thoughts

Due to the influx of implications as constant global movement, search of fresh opportunities, talent battle and grown diverse workforce companies face challenges in becoming the employer of choice, building an attractive employer branding and gain competitiveness on markets. Diversity is examined in the context of EB as a possible value upgrading factor. Considering evolving societal matters and external forces discriminative activity, or exclusion is barely the aim of modern organizations. Simply, because homogeneous representation does not correspond with present stakeholders. Building a good employer branding is based on fairness, equality and transparency, those being implemented both, inside and out. (Ely & Thomas 2001, 247.) Not surprisingly, all the humane features stand out in work tendencies of today. Starting from basic human needs of acceptance and self-actualization and needs leading into a greater good, for individual and the company. As Plaskoff (2017) found all individual features and application of in-depth holistic view throughout whole career -cycle is one of the cornerstones in delivering value, differing from the competitors. (Plaskoff 2017, 137–138.) All in all, successful employer branding requires real-life experiences by the main stakeholders as employees and applicants (Franca 2012).

The findings of this case study have shown, that despite D&I is not reason by itself behind the great workplace, it certainly is reflected in many areas of work life. More importantly, acceptance and

openness towards various human features have become more significant. Not only from productivity and quality point of view, but from human experience perspective. People are generally happy when they are treated fairly, accepted as themselves and being taken care of by the organization. The relation is also somewhat observable via positive figures of the company, especially in fairness and equality measures. Those parts are behind a great work environment, and the more unique and good internal culture becomes the more it has potential to be promoted outside to external stake-holders. This elevates firm reputation, as communicates "identity" of the company to future talents and heterogenous workforces. The initial goal of being selected as "Employer of choice" among competitors is fostered by realistic experiences from inside of the company and precise communi-cations. To highlight, employer branding is a sum of internal and external dimensions. Becoming a great workplace depends on how people are led, not the business. As the core of EB is in movement towards improved competitiveness, uniqueness and capability of being known as good and desirable employer, diversified labour not only fosters external reputation, but internal employee relations, yet more innovative productivity. (Wells et al. 2021, 34, 40; Yadav & Lenka 2020, 901).

In reference to the case study results, D&I has relation to employer branding through positive impact on employee experiences and work culture, creativity and finding new talents, but on the bottom lies strong need for equality, fairness and self-actualization. Generally, equal opportunities among peo-ple – personnel driven by responsible leadership seem to crucial detail from employee experience and internal culture perspective. Implementing not what only organizations are expected to imple-ment legally but having accountability what comes to ethics and genuine care – integrity. Multiple expressions by employees and managers, such as: "diverse teams are seen as more creative and generate more innovation and better customer orientation by reflecting the diversity of the markets" (Sampo Group 2022), "world changes, people change" (GPTW Suomi 2021), "we can all be different" (Mandatum 2020a), underline the meaning of D&I in work culture and employer branding. In addition, it is said that fair treatment, respect and credibility lead into improved employee satisfaction, as per-sonnel willingness to stay at company and promote it as employer. (Mandatum Holding 2021, 42.) Those seem to be an indicator of a caring employer, good communications between management and personnel, which are often linked to Employer of choice -status. Based on materials, Mandatum appears to be a place where people want to work. (Ghadeer 2016, 156; Sutherland et al. 2002, 14–15.)

Finally, D&I is the best way to reflect civilization, contemporary markets, and stakeholders. It should be emphasized from the early stages of career path, hiring and recruitment. Implementation also requires curious, yet acceptive mindset. The meaning focuses not only on age and gender, but much deeper dimensions. Therefore, reframing perceptions is often necessary, as further discussion. Complexity is not excluded. Leaders may face tensions, recognize risks or opposing sides among

D&I and EB, however managers responsibility is to solve and prevent the problems, anticipate. (Edwards & Kelan 2011, 2–3,15.) Since aims are reached through the people, best fit competence often converts into best delivered service – value and competitive advantage. That is why good EB is essential. (Armstrong & Taylor 2017, 4–5.) When personnel are satisfied and equally treated this leads into key promoting element for the company. In all, everything is related.

5.3   Development suggestions

In reference to findings D&I and equality are clearly part of organizational strategy. Pursuing into exemplary leadership, building trustful relations with employees, motivating them and caring for their well-being are spoken to be the basis of a good work culture. According to Jonsen et. al. (2019) D&I is often linked to fairness and equality. When it is mentioned in company material especially via more deep-level dimensions, it elevates firm image as a good employer from external parties' perspective. (Jonsen et. al. 2019, 624.) Firm career material and related content, such as work advertisements may contribute as significant sources and help in establishing relation and positive consideration between the company and suitable applicants. (Franca 2012.)

When implementing D&I it should be visible in all company activity and procedures. Process includes monitoring, setting clear goals and measurement tools, raising awareness of not only positive impact, but possible challenges. (Gehlers & Suleri 2016, 65; Okoro & Washington 2012, 60.) Current content provides mixed feelings regarding the D&I and practice. Therefore, D&I is good to be reflected more precisely among the material, especially in the career and recruitment content as part of firm strategy. Utilizing deeper layers of diversity would communicate to external parties more profoundly about the people of Mandatum, company input, actions and appreciation of diverse "human capital". In addition, D&I material of parent company is more comprehensive, including precise guidelines and practices towards more inclusive environment. The same input is not visible in Mandatum online pages. Subject is not communicated well enough despite the company standards and vision which leads to the question is D&I discussed and implemented clearly in company, otherwise than via the gender and age indicators? As D&I measurements in Mandatum are limited on most common demographical features, speaking about more deep-level diversity as surface-level would advance the awareness and raises curiosity. Simply, because it often starts with basic knowledge and increased discussion, but eventually leads into a better image. (Jonsen et. al. 2019, 624.) More transparent D&I data and discussing the subject, not by only mentioning the acronym itself may provide company with a larger scope of skilful applicants and gaining status of chosen employer. (Forbes 2021.) Employer of choice -status being dependant on multiple elements has a common feature which stands out the most among people and affects positively image, that is equality and fairness. (Ghadeer 2016, 156; Sutherland et al. 2002, 15.)

Altogether, the conclusion is to improve the communications regarding the diversity and provide more exact data on concrete measurements and actions, firm strategy and reports being line in line with the rest of the materials. Also, aligning data better with D&I guidelines and standards of a parent company (Sampo Group). In modern times of platform economy and technology it is vital, that online information reflects well organization identity and differentiates itself with a clear employee promise (EVP). This impacts on attractiveness and firm image. Despite being argued which factor actually contributes the most on good EB, clear communication is often significant. (Cober et al. 2004, 624–626, 637–638; Franca 2012.) The experience also begins from viewing potentially the firm and searching for information (Plaskoff 2017, 138–139, 141). Naturally from ethics perspective published material should reflect real life activity; what is really happening within the company. In accordance with priority fundament of employer branding, communicating clearly and truthfully firm standards, employee promise, vision, the company overall environment and people representing the firm. The intention is not to communicate false promises or provide stakeholders with misleading information. Practice and outcomes are the best indicators of integrity. (Keller & Meaney 2017, 2–3, 8; McCann et al. 2017, 177–179.)

Moreover, although case study serves purpose of problem solving and development it does not always lead into major changes, as enhancing knowledge is essential feature as well. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 21–22.) That said, concrete changes shall be evaluated and assessed before adaptation by the company management in order to gain beneficial results.

5.4   Further studies

In addition to the development nature of a qualitative study, the aim of such a research is often to explore, deepen understanding, and explain certain occurrences. It serves the best papers which combine mentioned, as provide quality over quantity enabling room for the realistic experiences, and views. The insightful nature of such a study would serve most possibly the best also in further studies however with differing approach, or data collection methods. As learned, there exists various methods which are applicable to qualitative research. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 31–32; Yin 2009, 8, 17–19.) This study revealed that there is still a lot to discover and need for further data and understanding.

Conducting multiple case study would allow more comprehensive focus on several companies. Study is described to be a comprehensive, yet laborious method. It would allow more data, a variety of documents, as the ability to conduct comparison among the documents. Comparison among several companies, not just one would generate more depth into the findings, newer aspects, or viewpoints. (Yin 2009, 19–20.) In comparison to a single case study, the method allows the researcher to compare several cases, in addition to across data analyzing. Documentation and findings come from not one, but several sources. Additionally, research questions may be investigated more

intensively. Overall data becomes more reliable, but carefulness is required. (Gustafsson 2017, 2–3, 7, 8.) In summary, multiple case study optimizes understanding of a topic with possibility of comparison (Yin 2009, 19–20). The ethics of study, as reliability rely mostly on researcher and the process of implementation. Although the aim is to maintain neutral, unbiased research, the prejudice and possible flaws are not excluded. This is one of the downsides of qualitative document analysis. Having more than one researcher would enhance ethics and reliability, as possible the outcomes. (Noble & Smith 2015, 34–35; Ojasalo et al. 2009, 28.) Also, exploiting additional perspective and point of view may be beneficial for this type of case study process, its results and ethics perspective. Furthermore, despite the criticism towards qualitative study and exploiting online materials, all the data available online is a significant and interesting contemporary source. From a trustworthiness perspective it would be beneficial to utilize external documents and views. Material which is not only produced by the firm. (Bowen 2009, 31–32.) This said, another suggestion would be to conduct an external stakeholder study, which would reflect the external dimension of employer branding more efficiently. Survey would examine firm reputation as employer through the applicants, or other people outside the company like clients. (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 505.) Emphasis would be in examining role and impact of diversity and inclusion and how people feel about the subject, as whether "phenomenon" has impact on the selection of employer and the perception of the firm. As combining methods is not excluded in theory and practice, for example connecting document analysis with a survey might be effective. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 31–32; Yin 2009, 17–18). This kind of research would most likely be time consuming, require high effort, precise planning and anticipation. In case there is more than one researcher time-management and task division shall be included as major part of overall process management. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 27–28.)

5.5 Evaluation of process and self-reflection

The final phase of a study is the evaluation, which in development research process usually includes input, process of change and main outcomes. It is relevant to reflect on how well objectives were achieved. Other indicators of assessment are clarity, significance, feasibility, neutrality. The ethical side of any research process relies on integrity. The honest and unbiased work of researcher, transparency, and carefulness. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 27–28.) Logically thinking every research should be based on unbiased, neutral standpoint, having so called objective mindset. The transparency and clarity in the process are the key points when measuring the credibility of a study. Accordingly, what comes to the evaluation of the qualitative study, it is debated that on general level there is no precise, existing criteria. In other words, method lacks consensus what come to the evaluation. Therefore, it leaves space for more open application and depends on researcher's approach, choices, and experience. This might be either positive or negative issue, but it is noticeable that there exists risk of

prejudice whenever personal thoughts or experiences are involved, as researcher may have own view which might affect the study and the conclusions. (Noble & Smith 2015, 34–35.)

The main purpose of this paper was to find answers to the main study questions and meaning of D&I to employer branding. Those are valid points what comes to the paper evaluation. Another aspect is workflow analyse, as ability to stay within planned schedule, personal learning and reflection, conducting the research. As known, the main result might be not as expected as there is always a risk, especially when conducting qualitative approach. Nevertheless, rational thinking and analysing the entire process itself combined with learnings would be much more lucrative in order to gain robust understanding. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 15, 19, 27–28.)

As noted, the criteria of assessment in case study is incoherent and there is no consensus on the matter. Anyhow, there is emphasis on producing a valid theory, empirical part supporting the theory and most of all the work of researcher. Ability to sample, collect data, conduct an analysis – overall process. Also, producing new, meaningful insights and fresh views that do not replicate what has been already written. At the end, the reader may assess the procedure and how well selected methods and evidence fit the framework. (Eisenhardt 1989, 548.) It is always a risk to produce work that only repeats the content which has already been written several times before. This risk was acknowledged in the beginning phase and when examining the literature and sources. The goal was not only to examine the relevance of D&I from employer branding perspective, but to write a thesis which reflects current working markets, labor, HR and needs. Furthermore, the people of today – those who are employed by the organizations and represent the companies of the modern era. In all, the aim was to include the shape of work in present and the future. As learned, diversity has become something that cannot be denied by businesses. That said, it is relevant.

Critical phase is crucial in qualitative research as stated earlier and in case studies during the systematic process. Critical viewpoint includes source critique, as reflection, comparison, using variable sources and evaluation since multiple views, facts and opinions exist. Reflection and assessment are essential, not purely criticizing. What is relevant, and what is not? This process may lead to new insights and help in summarizing the main subject. Critical review applies especially to studies which utilize online data, like for example what is the purpose of the data and by whom it has been produced. Without further reasoning information loses reliability, making it less reliable. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 8–9, 18–19.) As this study focused mostly on online data, which was produced by the target company, it lowered trustworthiness. However, carefulness was applied when choosing materials and making decisions during the process. Materials were diverse and reflected views from multiple perspectives. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 25.) Referring to the main critical factors of document analysis, as purpose of document and its retrievability usually all publishments by the company are positive releases, seldom negative. (Bowen 2000, 31–32.) External view, for example how a company is

seen as an employer and how people see the the relevance of D&I would have been beneficial. However, in this case individual stories, thoughts and videos by the firm employees and managers were included. Despite those being published on the company homepage, it would be hardly fair to state whether they are trustworthy or not, and genuinely reflect opinions and feelings. Therefore, it is more about the relevance of documents to study. One major part of criticism is also the change process. During the study, a lot of changes occurred. Starting from modifying the research questions, main headline, study approach and type of sample method. (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 27.) A concrete example is changing the originally planned multiple case study into single case study, since categorizing the data and analyzing it became vague and incoherent. In other words, it would have been impossible to categorize and present findings in a clear way and this is one of the main evaluation criteria in case study. On the contrary to single case study, in multiple study concentration might not be that careful, therefore single case study allows more profound and deeper examination. When selecting which one is better, the choice depends on the context, how much is known and the amount of new data the other cases potentially may produce. Generally, the ability of the researcher to gain understanding, present it in clear matter and link data to the theoretical view is more important than the length of the page, or amount of the cases. (Gustafsson 2017, 2–3, 7, 8.)

Another aspect is that there exists a myriad of inconsistent data, rather than a generally solid one. In other words, many frameworks and theories present multiple views, this said several perspectives may be applied. There is no one truth. This applies to D&I, employer branding and methodology. From a study perspective, this might be a challenge, since the writer has to be able to select suitable data from the study objective perspective and remain objective simultaneously. It is also important to combine sources to achieve balance, quality and a critical point of view. During the theoretical framework writing process, it was challenging to find a new aspect, or new data. D&I and EB are large subjects on their own. That said, more precise delimitation of the study would have enabled more clarity and simplicity (Eisenhardt 1989, 547; Ojasalo et al. 2015, 30–31.) When conducting a study, it was difficult to filter and interpret the data among documents due to the amount of data and indirect references. Also, presenting results clearly according to the numerous categories appeared to be challenging and time consuming. At the end, the purpose of study was not in finding the consensus, rather than learn and explore the subject within the selected context. This leaves room for criticism and diversity of human thought. Significantly, chosen topic supports own professional yet academical progress, and theme selection was also based on personal interest and curiosity.

In terms of time-management the original plan was to start thesis in Spring 2022 and finish by the end of Fall 2022. Since document analysis might be laborious and time demanding it was beneficial to have available, longer time slot. The last chapters of the paper were written a bit earlier than planned, at the end of September 2022. Refinishing took place in October. As a conclusion, the

entire process included thinking, preparations, planning, besides producing the text. This means anticipating, thinking ahead, comparing sources, reading reviews and suitable finding data. From personal perspective interpretations, ability to make decisions and link data was a risk element. Document analysis with related techniques appeared to be much more laborious and accuracy demanding method, than expected. Furthermore, the study should not be perceived as a fact or exact truth, otherwise there would not be so many varying views and theories. As stated above, it is not about seeking the definite consensus, but establishing a better view, enhance learning, raising knowledge and curiosity and further discussion for any operating organization, or a professional who wants to learn more about the D&I relation and its effect on employer branding.

The overall challenges and changes during the process may sometimes affect the outcome, also the work of the researcher (Ojasalo et al. 2015, 27–28). For me, this was my first time conducting a case study and document analysis. Therefore, as a researcher I lack experience. The knowledge comes from existing data, but the practice itself might be more difficult. This is reflected mostly in critical assessment, changes, hindrances, personal experience, ability to find something new. Remaining calm, positive, determined, and also trying to leave out personal views on a subject was an important part of the process. Among myriad of information, it was important not to" lose a sight" and keep focus on objective and main questions, despite the changes. I learned how to conduct a case study and a lot of new data about the techniques, such as document analysis. However, perhaps the specific method is not for me. As a person I value more personal communication and physical presence, like for example interviewing and observing emotions and behavior of people. I also learned that as there are several layers of diversity in people, there is also huge diversity in reviews and theories. There is seemingly lack of general consensus. Despite this, as a leader and hospitality professional it strongly appeared how significant fairness and equal treatment at work is, and how it affects internal culture and respectively company reputation. Leadership requires responsibility and willingness to appreciate and respect diverse features, as well as utilize them for a common benefit. Implementation of such a study was personally evolving experience, as also insightful since the topic is relevant and sensitive in organizational setting at the same time.

References

Ambler, T. & Barrow, S. 1996. The employer brand. Final draft. Journal of Brand Management, 4, 3, pp. 185–206.

Armstrong, M. & Taylor, S. 2017. A Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice. 15th edition. London. Kogan page. Ebook.

Backhaus, K. & Tikoo, S. 2004. Conceptualizing and researching employer branding. Career Development International, 9, 5, pp. 501–517.

Barack, M. E. 2014. Managing Diversity: Toward a Globally Inclusive Work Place. 4th edition. Sage publications. United States of America. Ebook.

Bourke, J. & Dillon, B. 2018. The diversity and inclusion revolution. Eight powerful truths. Deloitte Review. URL: https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/insights/us/articles/4209_Diversity-and-inclusion-revolution/DI_Diversity-and-inclusion-revolution.pdf. Accessed: 02 Mar 2022.

Bowen, G. 2009. Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method. Qualitative Research Journal, 9, 2.

Burke, J. R. & Ng, S. E. 2005. Person organization fit and the war for talent: does diversity management make a difference? Int. Journal of Human Resource Management, 16, 7.

Cook, I. 2021. Who Is Driving the Great Resignation? Harward Business Review. Human resource management. URL: https://hbr.org/2021/09/who-is-driving-the-great-resignation. Accessed: 30 Mar 2022.

Coyle, D. 2018. The Culture Code. The Secrets of Highly successful groups. International edition. Bantam Books. New York.

Cober, T. R., Brown, J. D., Keeping, M. L. & Levy, E. P. 2004. Recruitment on the Net: How Do Organizational Web Site Characteristics Influence Applicant Attraction? Journal of Management, 30, 5. Elsevier.

Deloitte. 2019a. From employee experience to human experience. Putting meaning back into work. URL: https://www2.deloitte.com/za/en/pages/human-capital/articles/from-employee-experience-to-human-experience.html. Accessed: 07 Mar 2022.

Deloitte. 2019b. Is your organization simply irresistible? Creating an organization people will clamor to work for and hate to leave. URL: https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/at/Documents/human-capital/at-is-your-organization-simply-irresistible.pdf. Accessed: 30 Mar 2022.

Deloitte Insights. 2019. Introduction: leading the social enterprise – reinvent with a human focus. 2019 Global human capital trends. URL: https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/focus/human-capital-trends/2019/leading-social-enterprise.html. Accessed: 20 Mar 2022.

Deloitte. 2020. The social enterprise at work: Paradox as a path forward. 2020 Global human capital trends. URL: https://www2.deloitte.com/cn/en/pages/human-capital/articles/global-human-capital-trends-2020.html. Accessed: 20 Mar 2022.

Dierckx de Casterle, B., Gastmans C., Bryon, E. & Denier, Y. 2011. QUAGOL: A guide for qualitative data analysis. International Journal of Nursing Studies. Elsevier. URL: https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/34509511.pdf. Accessed: 05 Mar 2022.

DRI 2015. 2015. Diversity and Inclusion tool kit. URL: http://dri.org/docs/default-source/dri-white-papers-and-reports/2015-16-diversity-toolkit.pdf?sfvrsn=12. Accessed: 05 Mar 2022.

Edwards, M. R. & Kelan, E. K. 2011. Branding and Diversity: Foes or Friends? In Brannan, M.J., Parsons, E. and Priola, V. Branded Lives - The Production and Consumption of Meaning at Work. pp. 168–181.

Eisenhardt, K. M. 1989. Building theories from case study research. The Academy of Management Review, 14, 4, pp. 532–550.

Elo, S & Kyngäs, H. 2008. The qualitative content analysis. Journal of Advanced Nursing, 62,1, pp. 107–115.

Ely, R. J. & Thomas, D. A. 2001. Cultural Diversity at Work: The Effects of Diversity Perspectives on Work Group Processes Outcomes. Administrative Science Quarterly, 46, 6, pp. 229–273.

EUR-Lex. 2012. Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Title 3 . Equality. Articles 21–23. URL: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:12012P/TXT. Accessed: 05 Mar 2022.

European Commission. 2022a. Policies. Justice and fundamental rights. URL:https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights_en. Accessed: 30 Mar 2022.

European Commission. 2022b. Policies. Combatting discrimination. URL: https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combatting-discrimination_en. Accessed: 30 Mar 2022.

European Commission. 2022c. Raising awareness on discrimination. URL: https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combatting-discrimination/tackling-discrimination/raising-awareness-discrimination_en. Accessed: 30 Mar 2022.

European Commission. 2022d. Diversity and inclusion initiatives. URL: https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combatting-discrimination/tackling-discrimination/diversity-and-inclusion-initiatives_en. Accessed: 30 Mar 2022.

European Commission. 2003. The costs and benefits of diversity: A Study on Methods and Indicators to Measure the Cost-Effectiveness of Diversity Policies in Enterprises. Executive summary. URL: https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/library-document/costs-and-benefits-diversity_en. Accessed: 30 Mar 2022.

Forbes. 2018. From diversity to inclusion: three strategies to become an employer of choice. URL: https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2018/03/29/from-diversity-to-inclusion-three-strategies-to-become-an-employer-of-choice/?sh=7ff784b82d08. Accessed: 07 Mar 2022.

Forbes. 2021. Talent Wars: The Post-Pandemic Hiring Race For A Competitive Advantage. URL: https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbeshumanresourcescouncil/2021/06/16/talent-wars-the-post-pandemic-hiring-race-for-a-competitive-advantage/?sh=76b7fa8b5ca4. Accessed: 24 Mar 2022.

Franca, V. 2012. The Strength of the Employer Brand: Influences and Implications for Recruiting. Journal of Marketing and Management, 3, 1, pp. 78–122.

Gallardo-Gallardo, E., González-Cruz, T. F. & Dries, N. 2013. What is the meaning of 'talent' in the world of work? Human Resource Management Review, 23.

Gandhi, M. 2022. Google. Quote on diversity. Google.

Gardenswartz, L. & Rowe, A. 2003. Diverse Teams at Work: Capitalizing on the Power of Diversity. 1st edition. SHRM Society for Human Resource Management. Virginia. Ebook.

Garvin, A. D., Edmonson, C. A. & Gino, F. 2008. Is yours a Learning Organization? Harward Business Review, 86, 3.

Gaudiano, P. 2018. Companies should stop focusing on diversity. Forbes. URL: https://www.forbes.com/sites/paologaudiano/2018/04/02/stop-focusing-on-diversity/?sh=6bf908f96764#288278226764. Accessed: 17 Mar 2022.

Gehrels, S. & Suleri, J. 2016. Diversity and inclusion as indicators of sustainable human resources management in the international hospitality industry. Research in Hospitality Management, 6, 1.

Gerdt, J. 2022. Mandatum. Careers. URL: https://www.mandatumlife.fi/en/company/careers/. Accessed: 15 Apr 2022.

Ghadeer, M. B. E. A. 2016. Employer branding: What constitutes " An Employer of choice? Journal of Business and Retail management research, 11, 1.

Glassdoor. 2020. Diversity & Inclusion Workplace Survey. URL: https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/diversity/. Accessed: 24 Mar 2022.

Glassdoor. 2022. Mandatum Life. URL: https://www.glassdoor.com/Overview/Working-at-Mandatum-Life-EI_IE604527.11,24.htm. Accessed: 20 May 2022.

Golafshani, N. 2003. Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. Qualitative Report, 8, 4, pp. 597–607.

Great Place to Work. 2021. URL: https://greatplacetowork.fi. Accessed: 15 Apr 2022.

Great Place to Work Suomi. 2021. Haastattelussa Mandatum Life. Parhaat työpaikat 2021. URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GC_WfLwBjY8. Accessed: 24 Apr 2022.

Gustaffson, J. 2017. Single case studies vs. multiple case studies: A comparative study. URL: https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1064378/FULLTEXT01.pdf. Accessed: 25 Apr 2022.

Hay, M. 2002. Strategies for survival in the war of talent. Career Development International, 7, 1, pp. 52–55.

Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J. & Minkov, M. 2010. Cultures and Organisations: Software of the Mind. Intercultural Cooperation and Its Importance for Survival McGraw-Hill. New-York. Ebook.

Hsu, H. 2017. The year in diversity fatigue. The New Yorker. URL: https://www.newyorker.com/culture/2017-in-review/the-year-in-diversity-fatigue. Accessed: 15 Mar 2022.

Itam, U. & Ghosh, I. 2020. Employee experience management: a new paradigm shift in HR thinking. International Journal of Human capital and Information technology professionals, 11, 2.

Jonsen, K., Point, S., Kelan, K, E. & Grieble, A. 2019. Diversity and inclusion branding: a five-country comparison of corporate websites. The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 32, 3.

Kallio, K. 2022. Sitoutunut työntekijä seisoo palkitsemisen ja merkityksellisyyden risteyksessä. Life magazine. Mandatum Life. URL: https://www.mandatumlife.fi/life-magazine/2022/miten-palkitsemisella-ja-tyon-merkityksellisyydella-voidaan-vaikuttaa-osaajapulaan/. Accessed: 01 Jun 2022.

Kapoor, B. Impact of Globalization on Human Resource Management. Jims journal. URL: http://www.jimsjournal.org/6%20Bhushan%20Kapoor.pdf . Accessed: 02 Mar 2022.

Kasanen, E., Lukka, K. & Siitonen, A. 1993. The Constructive Approach in Management Accounting Research. Journal of Management Accounting Research, 5.

Kauppi, A. 2022. Anna-Maija Kaupin uratarina. Mandatum. URL: https://www.mandatumlife.fi/yhtio/ura-meilla/anna-maija-kauppi/ . Accessed: 02 May 2022

Keller, S. & Meaney, M. 2017. Attracting and retaining the right talent. McKinsey & Company. URL: https://www.mckinsey.de/~/media/McKinsey/Business%20Functions/Organization/Our%20Insights/Attracting%20and%20retaining%20the%20right%20talent/Attracting-and-retaining-the-right-talent-Nov-2017.pdf . Accessed: 02 Apr 2022.

King, O. & Welty, W. 2020. The Downsides of Forcing Diversity. Rutgers. URL: https://sites.rutgers.edu/nb-senior-exhibits/wp-content/uploads/sites/442/2020/08/Odhran-King-final-pdf.pdf. Accessed: 15 Mar 2022.

Lahiri, I. 2008. Creating a Competency Model for Diversity and Inclusion Practitioners. Coucil Perspectives. Insights from The Conference Board Council on Workforce Diversity. URL: https://www.conference-board.org/pdf_free/councils/TCBCP005.pdf. Accessed: 15 Mar 2022.

Mandatum 13. Feb 2020. Group picture. Facebook post. URL: https://m.facebook.com/mandatumlife/photos/a.175432072480105/2914327818590503/?type=3&locale2=zh_CN. Accessed: 05 May 2022.

Mandatum. 2021. Annual report. URL: https://www.sampo.com/globalassets/year2021/mandatum/mandatum_group_annual_report_2021.pdf. Accessed: 20 Apr 2022.

Mandatum. 2022a. Mandatum. URL: https://www.mandatumlife.fi/en/company/. Accessed: 15 Apr 2022.

Mandatum. 2022b. Careers. URL: https://www.mandatumlife.fi/en/company/careers/. Accessed: 15 Apr.

Mandatum. 2022c. Job vacancies. Development manager. URL: https://careers.manda-tum.fi/jobs/1699250-development-manager-liiketoiminnan-kehitys-ja-ohjaus. Accessed: 15 Apr 2022.

Mandatum. 2022d. Careers. Työharjoittelija. URL: https://careers.mandatum.fi/jobs/1379494-tyo-harjoittelija. Accessed: 20 Jul 2022.

Mandatum Holding. 2021. Corporate responsibility report. URL: https://www.sampo.com/globalas-sets/year2021/mandatum/mandatum_group_corporate_responsibility_report_2021.pdf. Accessed: 20 Apr 2022.

Mandatum Life. 2020a. Miksi Mandatum on Suomen paras työpaikka? URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hFBv0X9vAS8&t=1s. Accessed. 15 Apr 2022.

Mandatum Life. 2020b. Millainen on Mandatumilainen? URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jz7ChZYVmcc. Accessed: 20 Apr 2022.

Mandatum Life. 2022. Careers. Job vacancies. URL: https://careers.mandatum.fi. Accessed: 15 Apr 2022.

Matuzka, E. & Salek–Iminska, A. 2014. Diversity management as employer branding strategy– the-ory and practice. Human Resource Management and Ergonomics, 8.

Mccann, J., Kohntopp, T. & Sparks, B. 2017. Leadership Integrity and Diversity in the Workplace. Research in Economics and Management, 2, 5.

McKinsey 2020. Diversity wins. URL: https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-in-clusion/diversity-wins-how-inclusion-matters. Accessed: 02 Mar 2022.

Morgan, J. 2016. What is employee experience? URL: https://thefutureorganization.com/what-is-employee-experience/. Accessed: 15 Mar 2022.

Mosley, R. & Schmidt, L. 2017. Employer branding for dummies. Wiley & Sons. New Jersey. Ebook.

Noble, H., & Smith, J. 2015. Issues of validity and reliability in qualitative research. Evid based nurs, 18, 2, pp. 34–35.

Nowell, S. L., Norris, M. J., White, E. D. & Moules, J. N. 2017. Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 16, pp. 1–13.

Oikarinen, M. 2020. Pekka Mattila: diversiteetti ymmärretään yrityksissä liian pinnallisesti. Life Magazine. Mandatum Life. URL: https://www.mandatumlife.fi/life-magazine/2020/pekka-mattila-diversiteetti-ymmarretaan-yrityksissa-liian-pinnallisesti/. Accessed: 15 May 2020.

Ojasalo, K., Moilanen, T. & Ritalahti, J. 2015. Methods for Development Work. New kind of competence in business operations. 3rd draft. Sanoma Pro Oy. Helsinki. Ebook.

Okoro, A. E. & Washington, C. M. 2012. Workforce Diversity and Organizational Communication: Analysis of Human Capital Performance and Productivity. Journal of Diversity Management, 7, 1.

Oksanen, A. 2022. Huokoinen työ joustaa ja vaatii. Life magazine. Mandatum Life. URL: https://www.mandatumlife.fi/life-magazine/2022/huokoinen-tyo-joustaa-ja-vaatii/. Accessed: 02 May 2022.

Onwuameze, N. 2018. Unqualified for the job or "Diversity shaming?" American society for public administration. PA Times. URL: https://patimes.org/unqualified-for-the-job-or-diversity-shaming/. Accessed: 17 Mar 2022.

Oyegoke, A. 2011. The constructive research approach in project management. International Journal of Managing Projects in Business, 4, 4, pp. 573–595.

Plaskoff, J. 2017. Employee experience: the new human resource management approach. Strategic HR Review, 16, 3.

Qin, J., Nuttawuth, M. & Chhetri, P. 2014. A Review of Diversity Conceptualizations: Variety, Trends, and a Framework. Human resource development review, 13.

Quillan, L., Heath, A., Pager, D., Midtbøen, H, A., Fleischmann, F. & Hexel ,O. 2019. Do Some Countries Discriminate More than Others? Evidence from 97 Field Experiments of Racial Discrimination in Hiring.Sociological science, 6. URL: https://www.sociologicalscience.com/download/vol-6/june/SocSci_v6_467to496.pdf. Accessed: 15 Apr 2022.

Roper, J. 2015. What do we mean when we talk about talent? HR Magazine. URL: https://www.hrmagazine.co.uk/content/features/what-do-we-mean-when-we-talk-about-talent. Accessed: 02 Apr 2022.

Roos, T. 2022. Tea-Tuulia Roos uratarina. Mandatum. URL: https://www.mandatumlife.fi/yhtio/ura-meilla/tea-tuulia-roos/ . Accessed: 02 May 2022.

Ryan, M. R. & Deci, L. E. 2000. Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being. American Psychologist, 55, 1, pp. 68–78.

Saarilahti, I. 2022. HR partner uratarina. Ida Saarilahti. Mandatum. URL: https://www.mandatumlife.fi/yhtio/ura-meilla/uratarina-ida-saarilahti/. Accessed: 20 Aug 2022.

Sampo Group. 2022. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. URL: https://www.sampo.com/sustainability/sustainable-corporate-culture/diversity-equity-inclusion/ . Accessed: 20 May 22.

Sampo Group. 2021. Sustainability report 2021. URL: https://www.sampo.com/globalassets/year2021/group/sampo2021_sustainability_report.pdf. Accessed: 20 May 22.

Schoch, K. 2020. Case study research. Selected Research Designs and Approaches. Sage Publications. Ebook.

Sharma, A. 2016. Managing diversity and equality in the workplace. Cogent Business and Management, 3, 1.

Shen, J. Chanda., A, D'Netto, B. & Monga, M. 2009. Managing diversity through human resource management: an international perspective and conceptual framework. The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 20, 2, pp. 235–251.

Sutherland, M. M., Torricelli, G. D. & Karg, F, R. 2002. Employer of choice branding for knowledge workers. South African Journal of Business Management, 33, 4.

Tolvanen, T. 2021. Corporate responsibility report 2021. Mandatum Holding. URL: https://www.sampo.com/globalassets/year2021/mandatum/mandatum_group_corporate_responsibility_report_2021.pdf. Accessed: 20 Apr 2022.

Trustmary Group. 2020. Mandatum Lifen kokemuksia Great place to workista. URL: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GYuc9dR-gMA. Accessed: 24 Apr 2022.

Vaismoradi, M., Jones, J., Turunen, H. & Snelgrove, S. 2013. Theme development in qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis. Journal of Nursing Education and Practice, 6, 5.

Valtiovarainministeriö. 2021. Samanarvoinen työ –hanke kehittää töiden vaativuuden arviointia. URL: https://vm.fi/-/1271139/samanarvoinen-tyo-hanke-kehittaa-toiden-vaativuuden-arviointia. Accessed: 20 May 2022.

Varpula, A. 2021. Mistä hyvä arki työpaikalla rakentuu? Mandatum. Life Magazine. URL: https://www.mandatumlife.fi/life-magazine/2021/mista-hyva-arki-tyopaikalla-rakentuu/. Accessed: 24 Apr 2022.

Wells, C., Malik, F. R. & Edmonson, C. V. 2021. The Influence of Diversity Climate on Employer Branding: 2020 and Beyond. IUP Journal of Brand Management, XVIII, 1.

Wester, P.J.F. & Peters, V. 2001. Qualitative analysis: Phases, techniques and computer use. Studies in Qualitative Methodology, 6, pp. 139–164.

Wrench, J. 2005. Diversity management can be bad for you. Race & Class. Institute of Race Relations, 46, 3.

Yadav, S. & Lenka, U. 2020. Diversity management: a systematic review. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal, 39, 8, pp. 901–929.

Yin, K. R. 2009. Case study research. Design and methods. Applied social research methods series. 4th edition, 5. Sage Publications. California. URL: http://cemusstudent.se/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/YIN_K_ROBERT-1.pdf. Accessed: 01 May 2022.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Case study documents

Document	Date accessed	Relevant data and notes D&I mentioned Yes / No	Link URL:
Homepage / Company	15 Apr 22	Best place to work, inspiring community **No**	https://www.mandatumlife.fi/en/company/
Careers / Mandatum as employer	15 Apr 22	Recognitions, Best workplace references, openness, trust **No**	https://www.mandatumlife.fi/en/company/careers/
Job vacancies	15 Apr 22	Only content in Finnish, job advertisements etc. **No**	https://careers.mandatum.fi
Job ad / Development manager	15 Apr 22	Finnish language only, Great place to work certificate, positive (EX) reference, supportive, motivating team spirit **No**	https://careers.mandatum.fi/jobs/1699250-development-manager-liiketoiminnan-kehitys-ja-ohjaus
Video **"Why Mandatum is best work place in Finland?"**	20 Apr 22	Positivity, joy, ability to work with different personas, well-being, trust, autonomy of work, pride. Some variables reflected in people (age, ethnicity, gender) **No**	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hFBv0X9vAS8&t=1s https://careers.mandatum.fi/jobs/1379494-tyo-harjoittelija
CR report 2021	20 Apr 22	Leading by example, strategic focus, well-being, responsibility in HR, equity, gender	https://www.sampo.com/globalassets/year2021/mandatum/mandatum_group_corporate_responsibility_report_2021.pdf

		equality plan, fairness in benefits, payroll, monitoring tools, surveys **Yes**	
Annual report 2021	20 Apr 22	Principles on fairness & equity, gender equality, strategical input in human capital (motivation, skills), creating value for all stakeholders, responsibility: equality, diversity, non-discrimination **Yes**	https://www.sampo.com/globalassets/year2021/mandatum/mandatum_group_annual_report_2021.pdf
Video **"Millainen on Mandatumlifelainen? "**	20 Apr 22	Positivity, responsibility, taking others into account. **No**	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jz7ChZYVmcc
Life Magazine article: "Huokoinen työ joustaa ja vaatii"	24 Apr 22	Trust, flexibility, autonomy of work (Covid impacts, remote work etc.), new generation higher needs, working conditions/tools, cultural barriers, mindset, awareness, slow process **No**	https://www.mandatumlife.fi/life-magazine/2022/huokoinen-tyo-joustaa-ja-vaatii/
Life Magazine article: **"Mistä hyvä arki työpaikalla rakentuu?"**	24 Apr 22	Meaningful work, work-life balance, well implemented values, ability to affect, equity in salary, personal development, psychological safety, every employee input is valuable **No**	https://www.mandatumlife.fi/life-magazine/2021/mista-hyva-arki-tyopaikalla-rakentuu/

Video **"Kokemuksia Great place to workista"**	24 Apr 22	Systematic approach, good reputation among applicants, internally positive culture, low turn-over **No**	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GYuc9dR-gMA
Video **Management interview**	24 Apr 2022	Constant development, global occurrences, adaptation, low hierarchy, innovation, creativity, one family, work is like home → feeling of unity **No**	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GC_WfLwBjY8
Life Magazine article	24 Apr 22	D&I challenges, potential, awareness **Yes**	https://www.mandatumlife.fi/life-magazine/2020/pekka-mattila-diversiteetti-ymmarretaan-yrityksissa-liian-pinnallisesti/
Organization picture, social media	5 May 22	Homogenous presentation of work force, hard to filter diversity **No**	https://m.facebook.com/mandatumlife/photos/a.175432072480105/2914327818590503/?type=3&locale2=zh_CN
Employee introductions and stories **Kauppi, Roos & Saarilahti**	02 May 22 & 20 Aug 22	Meaningful work, community, flexibility, low-hierarchy, support among peers, open communication (feedback, ideas, consultation), equality **No**	https://www.mandatumlife.fi/yhtio/ura-meilla/teatuulia-roos/ https://www.mandatumlife.fi/yhtio/ura-meilla/anna-maija-kauppi/ https://www.mandatumlife.fi/yhtio/ura-meilla/uratarina-ida-saarilahti/
DEI in Sampo Group	20 May 22	Promoting D&I, core values **Yes**	https://www.sampo.com/sustainability/sustainable-corporate-culture/diversity-equity-inclusion/
"Samanarvoin	20 May 22	Equality, payroll, benefits	https://vm.fi/-//1271139/samanarvoinen-tyo-hanke-kehittaa-toiden-vaativuuden-arviointia

en työ" – Mandatum project		**No**	
Glassdoor employer review	20 May 22	Low D&I score 2.2 **Yes**	https://www.glassdoor.com/Overview/Working-at-Mandatum-Life-EI_IE604527.11,24.htm
Sustainability report 2021 **Sampo grp**	20 May 22	DEI, human rights – group level approach **Yes**	https://www.sampo.com/globalassets/year2021/group/sampo2021_sustainability_report.pdf
Intern advertisement	20 Jul 22	Strict language requirements do not reflect D&I **No**	https://careers.mandatum.fi/jobs/1379494-tyo-harjoittelija
Life Magazine article	01 Jun 22	Impact of Pandemics, competition, employer branding (attraction, engagement), meaningfulness of work, motivational factors, rewards, diversity **Yes**	https://www.mandatumlife.fi/life-magazine/2022/miten-palkitsemisella-ja-tyon-merkityksellisyydella-voidaan-vaikuttaa-osaajapulaan/

Appendix 2. Development Manager work advertisement

positiivinen asenne ja olet helposti lähestyttävä. Tuot rohkeasti esille uusia ideoita ja pidät asioiden kehittämisestä.
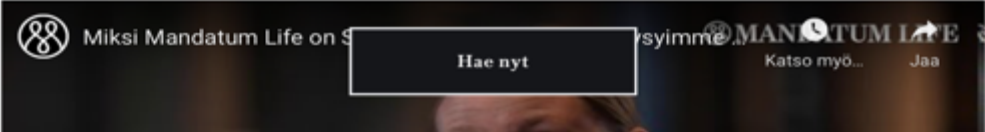
Sinulle tarjoamme

monipuolisen tehtäväkentän, jota on mahdollista muokata valittavan henkilön mukaan.

tilaisuuden työskennellä finanssialan johtavassa yrityksessä, joka on valittu kahtena vuonna peräkkäin Suomen parhaaksi työpaikaksi (2020 ja 2021) Great Place to Work -tutkimuksen suurten organisaatioiden sarjassa. Vuonna 2022 Mandatum ansaitsi Siqni-henkilöstökyselyyn perustuvan Future Workplaces -sertifikaatin tutkitusti kovatasoisesta työntekijäkokemuksesta.

positiivisen, motivoituneen ja ammattimaisen työyhteisön sekä kannustavan ja erinomaisella yhteishengellä varustetun tiimin

työtilat moderneissa tiloissa pääkonttorissamme Helsingin Bulevardilla sekä joustavan hybridityön mallin

suuren ja vakavaraisen Sampo-konsernin edut sekä kehittymistäsi tukevia mahdollisuuksia

Hae tehtävään su 8.5. mennessä. Liitä mukaan ansioluettelosi, vapaamuotoinen hakemus sekä palkkatoiveesi. Lisätietoja tehtävästä saat kehitysjohtaja Sami Piiroselta p. +358 50 426 7296 pe 22.4. 11.30-13.30 ja ma 25.4. klo 13-15

Lue lisää yrityksestämme ja katso viimeisimmät kuulumisemme some-kanavissamme sekä osoitteessa www.mandatumlife.fi.

Miksi Mandatum Life on S... ysyimm... MANDATUM LIFE   Katso myö...   Jaa

Hae nyt

Screenshot of EVP Development manager work ad (Mandatum 2022c)

Appendix 3. Glassdoor review D&I at Mandatum

Diversity & Inclusion at Mandatum Life

2.2 ★★★★★ (2 Reviews)

Mandatum Life Interviews

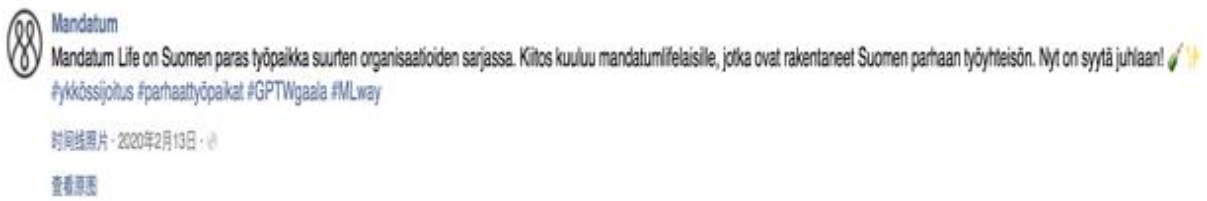| Experience	Getting an Interview	Difficulty
Positive 100%	Applied online 100%	3.0 Average
		Hard
		Average
		Easy

D&I in Mandatum Glassdoor review (Glassdoor 2022)

Appendix 4. Screenshot of Mandatum video

Screenshot of Mandatum job advertisement page "Why Mandatum is best workplace?" (Mandatum 2022d)

Appendix 5. Group picture

Screenshot of Mandatum group picture in social media (Mandatum Facebook 13 Feb 2020)

Appendix 6. Intern advertisement

Työharjoittelija - Mandatum

Tarjoamme työharjoittelupaikkoja Business College Helsingin oma-aloitteisille ja asiakaspalveluhenkisille merkonomiopiskelijoille. Tarjoamamme harjoittelujakson pituus on viisi kuukautta ja harjoittelu on palkatonta. Laadimme työharjoittelijoiden kanssa henkilökohtaisen perehdytyssuunnitelman. Saat tueksesi työpaikkaohjaajan ja perehdyttäjän koko työssäoppimisjakson ajaksi. Työpaikkaohjaaja tukee ja ohjaa myös tarvittaessa opinnäytteen aiheen valintaa ja toteutusta.

Odotamme sinulta merkonomin opintoja (esim. finanssipolun tai myynnin koulutusohjelma) sekä aktiivista halua oppia. Lisäksi edellytämme erinomaista suomen kielen suullista ja kirjallista taitoa, sillä kaikki tarjoamamme työharjoittelupaikat sisältävät asiakaspalvelua. Tarjoamme työharjoittelupaikkoja pääsääntöisesti Asiakas- ja korvauspalvelun tehtävissä. Työharjoittelijan tehtävänkuvaan kuuluvat monipuoliset vakuutusten neuvontaan ja hoitoon sekä korvauskäsittelyyn liittyvät tehtävät. Työtehtävät antavat hyvän käsityksen vakuutusalan toiminnasta. Taloushallinnon tehtäviä ei tällä hetkellä ole tarjolla.

Saat tilaisuuden työskennellä finanssialan johtavassa yrityksessä, joka valittiin Suomen parhaaksi työpaikaksi vuoden 2020 Great Place to Work -instituutin tutkimuksessa suurten yritysten sarjassa.

Hae työharjoittelupaikkaa kaksi kuukautta ennen työharjoittelun alkua täyttämällä hakulomake alla olevasta linkistä. Otamme kaikkiin hakijoihin yhteyttä ja kutsumme haastatteluun ne henkilöt, joille voimme mahdollisesti tarjota harjoittelupaikkaa.

Hae

Lisätiedot:

Screenshot of Intern ad (Mandatum 2022d)