

ITC (Indian Tobacco Company) Hotel's Human Resource policy for People with Disability: A Comprehensive Review

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ABSTRACT

In the 21st century civilization, a parallel can be drawn between the ancient wisdom of collectivity as reflected in the broad doors of Rajput, Mughal, and Maratha forts, and ITC Hotels' practice of human resource inclusion strategy towards diversity. The spotlight in this agile act falls on disability inclusion, where the employees, irrespective of their physical conditions, become part of ITC Hotels' rich fabric. In this review, we dive deep into the HR policies of ITC Hotels, which play a pivotal role in integrating individuals with disabilities into their workforce. We examine how HR practices of ITC relating to hiring, retaining, training, and retirement accommodate people with disabilities. The barriers and challenges that these individuals might face, akin to the hurdles of ancient architectural designs, are also scrutinized towards finding innovative and practical solutions. This document strives to understand the impacts of the HR policy on disability inclusion, the significance of such inclusion, and the recognizable challenges. More importantly, we will explore the strategic role HR can play in making disability inclusion not just a policy but a culture at ITC hotels, going beyond mere accommodation and towards active inclusion. The study concludes with an assessment of ITC's progress and potential in the hospitality industry in carrying out similar noble initiatives effectively.

Key Words : ITC Hotels, HR policy, disability inclusion, work environment, Ergonomic Workspaces, Receptive employers

Section I : Introduction

This paper aims to comprehensively assess HR policy of ITC Hotels relating to the integration of People with Disabilities in their organisation. For hotel establishments, having inclusive and supportive human resources policies and initiatives is of paramount importance to attract and seamlessly integrate disabled employees. The influence of HR policies on the experiences of individuals with disabilities is underlined by Gröschl. Hotels need to actively tackle challenges that impede the effective assimilation of disabled individuals into their workforce. One such challenge is the absence of customized HR management models catering to this purpose within the hospitality sector. This underscores the necessity for hotels, like ITC Hotels, to embed specific hiring, recruitment, retention, training, and retirement

practices into their HR policies to ensure the seamless integration of disabled individuals. Bridging this knowledge gap is crucial for the successful implementation of disability inclusion initiatives within hotels.

Overcoming these challenges and fostering disability inclusion necessitates creating a work environment that is not only accommodating but also welcoming. Work environments and employers that are receptive to hiring and accommodating disabled individuals display certain attributes, as pointed out by (Gilbride *et al.*, 2003). While the significance of disability inclusion is sometimes overlooked in hotel operations, it's worth noting that ITC Hotels has already taken some steps in this direction. By continuing to adopt and emphasize such qualities, ITC Hotels can further solidify its commitment to disability inclusion, going beyond legal mandates and striving to

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establish an environment that is inherently inclusive and supportive.

Section II : Importance of Including People with Disability in the Workforce:

In India, approximately 5 to 8 per cent of the population of persons suffers from some disability. They continue to face significant obstacles in accessing meaningful employment. Recent reports from the Ministry of Statistics indicate that merely 36% of India's 26 million persons with disabilities are currently employed (Shenoy, 2011). The complex web of challenges is rooted in factors like poverty, limited educational and employment opportunities, and substandard living conditions, leading to compromised health and unmet medical needs among persons with disabilities. Additionally, inaccessible physical environments, lack of transportation options, absence of assistive devices and technologies, communication barriers, service gaps, and discriminatory practices all contribute to perpetuating ableism in workplaces, thus amplifying the disability unemployment gap.

Acknowledging the urgency of the matter, the Indian government has enforced initiatives such as the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016. This is done to ensure equal opportunities, protection, and active participation for people with disabilities. The government's focus on diversity and inclusivity is also evident through policies urging companies to provide reasonable accommodations and ensure non-discriminatory practices in their work settings (Shenoy, 2011). Numerous corporations within India have taken noteworthy steps to foster disability inclusion. Reiterating the value of diverse perspectives, Companies like Infosys and Wipro have established recruitment programs and specialized training to facilitate the integration of people with disabilities in their workforce (Meena and Vanka, 2013). However, ITC Hotels stands as an exceptional exemplar of championing disability inclusion. With a distinguished commitment to the cause, ITC Hotels has revolutionized the hospitality industry by redefining accessibility. Their efforts extend beyond token gestures, reflecting a comprehensive strategy to ensure that persons with disabilities can thrive within their workforce. Through their innovative approaches, they have transformed the very landscape of the hospitality sector, emphasizing that inclusivity isn't just an ideal but an essential practice. Although people with disabilities face substantial hurdles

in securing meaningful employment in India, nevertheless, the combined efforts of the government, corporations, and individuals can surmount these challenges and pave the way for an equitable future. The inspiring journey of ITC Hotels in the realm of disability inclusion serves as a beacon of hope, demonstrating that through proactive measures, it is possible to create a diverse, vibrant, and inclusive workforce that uplifts every individual, regardless of their abilities. Their model may be emulated by other organisations to build a more inclusive society (Gilbride *et al.*, 2003).

Disability inclusion in the workplace is about creating an inclusive environment where people with disabilities feel welcome, valued, and comfortable (Foy, 2021). It involves ensuring that adequate policies and practices are in place in a community or organization. Besides encouraging people with disability, it is about including them in day-to-day activities and inspiring them to have roles similar to their peers (Metts, 2000). It is about embracing differences and valuing all employees for their strengths (Fabian, Edelman, and Leedy, 1993).

Highlighting the significance of disability inclusion at ITC Hotel, this section discusses the profound impact of disability inclusion policies on their business, yielding several notable benefits.

1. **Enhanced Employee Morale and Retention:** Through their commitment to inclusivity, ITC Hotels has not only provided meaningful employment to people with disabilities but has also cultivated an environment that improves employee morale and retention. For instance, their "WelcomAbility" program ensures that employees with disabilities have the necessary support and accommodations to excel in their roles, fostering a sense of belonging and commitment (Baby and Mavoothu, 2019).
2. **Increased Customer Satisfaction:** ITC Hotels' dedication to accessible design and an inclusive atmosphere has translated into heightened customer satisfaction. The ITC Grand Chola in Chennai, for instance, is renowned for its innovative designs that cater to individuals with disabilities. This focus on accessibility has garnered praise from guests, thus driving positive reviews and customer loyalty (Meena and Vanka, 2013).
3. **Positive Brand Image:** ITC Hotels' relentless pursuit of disability inclusion has crafted a positive

brand image. By showcasing its dedication to diversity and inclusion, ITC Hotels differentiates itself from competitors and positions as a socially responsible entity. This commitment was exemplified during the launch of the ITC Grand Bharat, which features accessible architecture and facilities for guests with disabilities (Metts, 2000).

4. **Improved Business Practices:** The disability inclusion efforts at ITC Hotels have instigated improvements in their business practices. By embracing individuals with disabilities into their workforce, the company has harnessed the unique perspectives and skills they bring. For example, ITC Maurya in Delhi provides vocational training to individuals with hearing impairments, offering them opportunities in the hospitality sector while enhancing the hotel's service quality (Fabian, Edelman and Leedy, 1993).

ITC Hotels' disability inclusion initiatives have paved the way for a host of positive outcomes. By nurturing an inclusive workplace and offering opportunities to individuals with disabilities, ITC Hotels has not only engendered better employee morale and retention but also augmented customer satisfaction, cultivated a laudable brand image, and catalyzed improved business practices. In doing so, they set a commendable example for the industry, showcasing that disability inclusion is not only a matter of social responsibility but also a strategic move that drives comprehensive success (ITC, 2010).

Section III : HR Policy at ITC Hotels:

1. **Skill Mapping:** The starting point for integrating people with disabilities into ITC's workforce is to create a skills chart for all existing job positions within the company. If provided with an opportunity to work and become self-sufficient, differently-abled people can significantly contribute to the workplace. ITC Hotels' approach to skill matching for people with disabilities involves identifying skills, providing training and development opportunities, and inclusive hiring (ITC, 2014).
2. **Identifying Skills:** The skills that are required for the job profiles are identified. There is often a mismatch between the skills that the present-day job profiles require and what the special

schools, vocational training centers, and sheltered workshops provide. Therefore, ITC Hotels identifies the skills required for the job profiles and matches them with the skills of people with disabilities.

3. **Training and development:** Once the skills are identified, ITC Hotels provides training and development opportunities to people with disabilities to enhance their skills and prepare them for the job. ITC Hotels also provides classes in sign language for all the employees so that they are able to communicate with hearing-impaired employees (Baby and Mavoothu, 2019).
4. **Recruitment Policy:** To create an inclusive disability policy ensuring fair employment opportunities and preventing discrimination, ITC has incorporated the following steps:
 - 4.1 **Welcoming statements in Job Advertisements:** Job advertisements now incorporate encouraging statements that promote equal opportunities during the recruitment process.
 - 4.2 **Symbolic Representation:** Employers display disability-friendly symbols to demonstrate their commitment to inclusion, making their stance visible to potential candidates.
 - 4.3 **Guaranteed Interview Scheme:** Policies are in place to ensure that qualified disabled candidates are guaranteed interviews, aiming to level the playing field and increase inclusivity.
 - 4.4 **Inclusive Recruitment Process:** Efforts have been made to attract a diverse pool of applicants, including those with disabilities, to enhance overall inclusivity.
 - 4.5 **Reasonable Accommodations:** Employers provide necessary adjustments such as accessibility measures, adaptive equipment, and support to fulfill their commitment to offering reasonable accommodations.
 - 4.6 **Accessible Policies:** Personnel are equipped with access to comprehensive policies that help ensure unbiased decisions, fostering a fair recruitment environment.
 - 4.7 **Embed Non-Discrimination:** Non-discrimination principles are integral to all recruitment and employment activities,

promoting a culture of fairness and equal treatment.

These strategies and policies collectively aim to create a more inclusive and accessible workplace for individuals with disabilities, ensuring that qualified candidates have equal opportunities and necessary accommodations to succeed in both the recruitment process and their subsequent employment. These steps foster an environment of diversity, empowerment, and equal opportunity for all employees (Foy, 2021).

5. Inclusive hiring Policy: ITC Hotels have created an atmosphere of inclusivity by providing special badges for the visually impaired. They have also provided whistles for hearing-impaired employees so that they can communicate in case of an emergency situation. ITC Hotels upholds the principle of universal design and has released a Hotel Accessibility Manual titled 'Universal Design India Principles' – a comprehensive guide to creating accessible spaces for people with disabilities (Fabian, Edelman and Leedy, 1993). ITC has been proactive in ensuring that the interview process caters to the needs of disabled candidates. They make sure to implement reasonable adjustments that prevent any disadvantages. ITC enforces a zero-discrimination policy, ensuring reasonable adjustments are made to level the playing field for disabled individuals. These adjustments could involve task redistribution, flexible work arrangements, and provision of necessary support during interviews. Importantly, ITC evaluates candidates based on their capabilities post the implementation of reasonable adjustments, fostering an equitable selection process (Foy, 2021).

5.1. Specifications and Descriptions: ITC aligns job descriptions and specifications, prioritizing essential requirements. This includes arranging interviews in accessible locations, providing suitable parking options, and educating reception staff on accessibility measures.

5.2. Accessible Advertising: ITC attracts diverse candidates, including disabled individuals, through inviting ads with inclusive logos and policies.

5.3. Inclusive Short-listing: Discrimination-

free short-listing considers reasonable adjustments. ITC also takes steps to modify test formats to accommodate visually impaired applicants. During the application and invitation stage, candidates are asked about specific access needs, showcasing ITC's commitment to inclusivity. Interviewers at ITC undergo disability equality training and are briefed on the company's disability recruitment policy.

5.4. Adaptable Forms: ITC uses adaptable application forms, removing irrelevant questions and accommodating special needs. Throughout the interview process, a uniform set of key questions is posed to all applicants, and detailed records are maintained. ITC's commitment prevents bias and promotes fairness and inclusivity throughout hiring.

6. Induction: ITC Hotels implements a comprehensive induction process for individuals with disabilities, promoting inclusivity and seamless integration. The process encompasses familiarizing new employees with the company's culture, values, and role expectations. It ensures a supportive transition by offering guidance during onboarding and equips them with essential skills. Adhering to best practices, the hotel extends this induction to all newcomers, fostering consistency and an inclusive environment. The approach extends a warm welcome to individuals with disabilities, emphasizing their value. The 'Buddy System' pairs them with experienced colleagues for mentorship. Disability equality training for managers and colleagues sensitizes them to specific needs and reasonable adjustments. Collaborative efforts ensure effective adaptation, underscoring ITC Hotels' commitment to an inclusive workplace (Foy, 2021).

7. Creating an Inclusive Workplace by providing Accessibility and Support Infrastructure: To ensure that the workplace is accessible to all employees, including those with disabilities, ITC has adopted a proactive approach. They extend an invitation to successful candidates to assess their unique requirements for adjustments and collaborate on effective

implementation strategies. The company focuses on three categories of reasonable adjustments: optimizing work arrangements, offering flexibility in working hours, and providing necessary resources like specialized equipment and personal assistance (Fabian, Edelman, and Leedy, 1993).

7.1. Workplace Accessibility Approach and Access Audits: An essential first step in this process is conducting an access audit, which aids in identifying barriers within the physical premises, as well as in external spaces such as parking areas and recreational zones. This comprehensive audit serves as a baseline assessment against which initial recommendations are formulated.

7.2. Role of Assistive Devices: Acknowledging the significance of supportive tools, ITC recognizes the pivotal role played by assistive devices. These encompass various aids like induction loop systems, portable amplifiers, screen magnification tools, large print keyboards, voice recognition software, and screen readers. These devices are instrumental in facilitating optimal performance and functionality for employees with disabilities within the workplace.

7.3. Inclusive Environment: Moreover, ITC places importance on fostering a universally inclusive environment, especially when it comes to potential job applicants with disabilities. The company acknowledges that such individuals might seek employment opportunities within ITC and thus emphasizes creating an accessible atmosphere that caters to their needs.

8. Effective Disability Management: Integrating Performance Factors in Recruitment and Employment

8.1. Prioritizing Performance and Disability Support at ITC Hotels: At ITC Hotels, they prioritize performance management and disability support. Their comprehensive approach integrates disability considerations into recruitment, selection, and performance evaluation. Clear procedures and standards for effective disability management have

been established (Foy, 2021).

8.2. Guiding Line Managers for Effective Disability Management: Recognizing the role of line managers, ITC Hotels ensures they have the necessary guidance. The strategy focuses on identifying how disabilities manifest at work, implementing reasonable adjustments, and evaluating their effectiveness. This approach enhances inclusivity and productivity (Foy, 2021).

8.3. Enhancing Inclusivity through Practical Disability Management: The disability management process involves identifying employees needing support, conducting interviews and assessments, implementing reasonable adjustments, and exploring redeployment if needed. This underscores their commitment to creating an accommodating and diverse work environment while maintaining performance standards.

9. Fostering Career Advancement at ITC Hotels for People with Disability: At ITC Hotels, they recognize the importance of nurturing the careers of individuals with disabilities. Disregarding them for promotions due to specific tasks linked to their impairments is avoided. Their approach involves conducting regular performance evaluations to discuss task feasibility, instilling confidence, and offering specialized training (Meena and Vanka, 2013).

9.1. Guided Mentorship: Within their framework, guided mentorship is offered as a valuable tool for career growth. Their mentors, knowledgeable and reliable advisors, go beyond traditional line management, aiding in enhancing confidence and addressing weaknesses privately. They understand that sometimes, a mentor with similar experiences is beneficial. However, shared disabilities don't automatically guarantee relatability. Therefore, all mentors, irrespective of their disability status, receive disability equality training.

9.2. Supportive Buddy System: Their unique approach includes a supportive buddy system, an alternative form of mentorship. This system pairs designated individuals to

work together during job learning and to provide essential support during challenges. It ensures that individuals with disabilities have a reliable source of assistance, preventing issues from being ignored or escalating unnecessarily. The importance of regular assessments to prevent dependency is emphasized, encouraging a planned phase-out that's thoughtfully monitored. ITC Hotels is committed to creating an inclusive environment that empowers individuals with disabilities to advance their careers successfully.

10. Empowering Differently abled Job Seekers:

Inclusive Training and Immersive Experiences: In their commitment to inclusivity, they embark on Step 8, empowering differently-abled job seekers through immersive experiences and tailored industry training. These initiatives enhance employability and diversify their workforce. Immersive experiences include guided job tours and shadowing, exposing job seekers to roles and environments. This cultivates skills and aligns them with suitable roles. Partnering with vocational centers and NGOs, they craft training programs addressing industry needs, including e-learning modules. Collaborating with Disability Employment Specialists, in-house training modules are developed. These efforts, integral to their HR and social responsibility ethos, engage disability organizations, vocational centers, and experts, tapping into local talent. This synergistic approach upholds core values, fostering empowerment within communities (Fabian, Edelman, and Leedy, 1993).

A comprehensive HR policy has been developed at ITC to promote inclusivity for individuals with disabilities, showcasing the company's dedication to a diverse and welcoming workplace. Disability has been explicitly incorporated into diversity statements, demonstrating the commitment to a disability-inclusive culture. Accessible office spaces have been ensured, going beyond compliance to create a supportive environment. Technology has been leveraged for essential tasks, empowering employees with disabilities. HR has played a crucial role in fostering neurodiverse inclusion through accommodations, adjusted hiring practices, accessibility,

training, and ongoing support. By implementing these measures, not only has the company tapped into an overlooked talent pool, but it has also led to innovation, competitive advantage, and cultural awareness. Ultimately, the well-crafted HR policy supporting people with disabilities has enhanced ITC's inclusivity and success.

Section IV : Effectiveness of Disability Inclusion Strategy at ITC

In evaluating the effectiveness of ITC Hotels' disability inclusion strategy, it is important to consider the impact it has had on both the organization and individuals with disabilities. By implementing inclusive practices and accommodations, ITC Hotels has created a more diverse and welcoming work environment. This has not only increased the representation of individuals with disabilities in their workforce but also fostered a culture of inclusivity and understanding (Jauhari, 2014). Research conducted by Gröschl has shown that nonintegrative hotel organizations often view individuals with disabilities as lacking the necessary abilities and attributes required for the industry. However, ITC Hotels has taken a different approach. ITC Hotels as seen has developed an inclusive HR policy that promotes inclusion and a diverse workforce. This review aims to assess the effectiveness of ITC Hotel's HR policy on disability inclusion. The policy is commendable and demonstrates their commitment to creating an inclusive work environment (Dey, 2018).

1. Firstly, ITC acknowledges the value that individuals with disabilities can bring to the workforce. This is evident from their emphasis on accommodating and supporting human resources policies and programs to attract and integrate employees with disabilities. ITC Hotel recognizes that disability inclusion is not only a moral imperative, but also a business necessity. By recognizing the importance of disability inclusion, ITC Hotel sets itself apart as a forward-thinking and socially responsible organization (UnGender, 2023).
2. Secondly, ITC Hotel's HR policy ensures that individuals with disabilities are not only given equal employment opportunities but also provided with the necessary support and accommodations to thrive in the workplace. This includes disability awareness training for employees, resource groups for employees with disabilities, and

programs targeting specific disability groups to actively recruit and train individuals with disabilities. It shows a commitment to cultivating a supportive and inclusive work environment. Employees are educated on disability issues, fostering a culture of understanding and empathy. Resource groups for employees with disabilities also play a crucial role in creating a sense of community and support within the organization. For example, ITC Hotels provides training opportunities for differently-abled employees through a program called "See, Smile, Greet". The program provides speech and hearing-impaired employees with sign language interpreters and videos to show and teach them how to go about their jobs. Employees with Down Syndrome receive one hour of training in a workday so that they experience no information overload. These Down Syndrome employees also carry whistles, which they use when they feel overwhelmed in any situation. ITC Hotels has also made its design manual for disabled travelers available for free (ITC Hotels, 2022; UnGender, 2023).

3. Additionally, ITC Hotel's HR policy promotes the creation of an inclusive physical environment by ensuring that the hotel facilities are accessible to individuals with disabilities. The inclusion of accessible facilities is a crucial aspect of disability inclusion in the workforce, as it ensures that individuals with disabilities can fully participate in the workplace without facing barriers or limitations.

Furthermore, ITC Hotel's HR policy goes beyond just providing equal employment opportunities. It recognizes the unique needs and challenges faced by individuals with disabilities and provides necessary support and accommodations to ensure their success in the workplace (Mahapatra, 2014). HR policy of ITC Hotel reflects their understanding that disability inclusion not only benefits individuals with disabilities but also enhances organizational performance, service quality, and ultimately customer satisfaction (Gröschl, 2013).

Section V : Impact of an Inclusive HR Policy

ITC Hotels has made impressive strides in embracing

disability inclusion within its workforce, resulting in a range of notable achievements and positive impacts.

1. **Fresh Perspectives :** One significant outcome has been the heightened diversity among their employees. By actively hiring individuals with disabilities, ITC Hotels has successfully injected a fresh array of perspectives and ideas into their organization (Mahapatra, 2014).
2. **Customer Satisfaction:** Perhaps one of the most compelling results of their inclusion efforts has been the palpable enhancement in customer satisfaction. Numerous reports of positive guest experiences in their inclusive environment have led to heightened levels of customer contentment and loyalty. This, in turn, has contributed to the establishment of a more robust and favorable brand image for ITC Hotels. Their commitment to disability inclusion has garnered recognition and commendation, which has played a pivotal role in attracting new patrons and retaining existing ones (Dey, 2018).
3. **Financial Advantages:** In addition to the perceptible benefits mentioned, the initiative has also yielded financial advantages. The reduction in turnover and related costs, stemming from an inclusive workplace that values its diverse workforce, has translated into notable cost savings for the organization. This economic impact, in tandem with the overarching social and ethical implications of promoting disability inclusion, underscores the comprehensive advantages of this approach (Mangwiro, 2018).

A series of accolades and acknowledgments further underscore ITC Hotels' commitment to diversity and inclusion. They have received several prestigious awards, such as the "America's Greatest Workplaces for Diversity 2023" and the "Best Employer National Award for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, 2011". This reinforces their dedication to fostering an inclusive work environment. Their unique recognition platform, Vantage Rewards, serves as an embodiment of their value for diversity within their workforce.

In conclusion, the commitment of ITC Hotels to disability inclusion stands as a testament to their forward-thinking approach. Through this endeavor, they have managed to achieve a harmonious blend of societal benefit, economic gains, and enhanced brand equity. Continuing to prioritize disability inclusion will undoubtedly

fortify ITC Hotels' reputation and contribute to a more inclusive and prosperous business ecosystem (Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India, 2022).

Section VI : Challenges in Implementing an HR-Inclusive Policy:

Implementing disability inclusion in the workforce can be challenging due to various factors. Here are some of the main difficulties:

1. **Lack of leadership support:** Some organisations do not invest in inclusion programs and are limited to complying with quota laws. This lack of support from top management hinders the progress of disability inclusion initiatives and prevents them from being fully integrated into the organization's culture and practices.
2. **Training of disabled professionals:** Despite the increasing recognition of the value that individuals with disabilities can bring to the workplace, there is still a lack of training and resources available to disabled professionals to enhance their skills and abilities. Providing training opportunities and resources can help disabled professionals succeed in their careers (Jauhari, 2014).
3. **Accessibility in the organizational environment:** Many companies struggle to provide accessibility accommodations, such as ramps, elevators, and adaptive technology. This lack of accessibility can hinder the full participation of people with disabilities in the workforce. Ensuring a physically and technologically accessible environment is crucial for disability inclusion (Indian Express, 2021).

These challenges create barriers for individuals with disabilities to fully participate and succeed in employment. Overcoming these difficulties requires a commitment from leadership, investment in training and resources, and ensuring accessibility in the workplace environment. Addressing the lack of leadership support, providing training opportunities for disabled professionals, and ensuring accessibility in the organizational environment are key steps in implementing disability inclusion in the workforce. By overcoming these challenges, companies can create a more inclusive and diverse workplace that benefits both employees and the organization as a whole. ITC holds a perfect case study for solving these challenges

(Jauhari, 2014).

Section VII : Some successful Inclusivity promoting HR Initiatives of ITC Hotels:

1. **Promoting Diversity and Inclusion at ITC Kohenur:** ITC Kohenur, a prestigious luxury hotel nestled in the heart of Hyderabad, India, has set a remarkable precedent in fostering workplace diversity and inclusion through its groundbreaking initiative, "Project Nur." This visionary undertaking aims to enhance employment opportunities and growth prospects for traditionally marginalized groups, including women, people with disabilities, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community. As a testament to its commitment, the hotel now boasts a workforce of approximately 400 associates, each contributing to a rich mosaic of diversity (Hospitality Biz India, 2022). Since the inception of "Project Nur," ITC Kohenur has undergone a transformative journey towards inclusivity. Notably, the initiative has led to the employment of over 100 women, amplifying gender representation across various departments. Furthermore, the inclusion of individuals with disabilities and members of the LGBTQIA+ community exemplifies the hotel's dedication to creating a truly inclusive environment. This highlights the profound impact of "Project Nur" in nurturing a workplace culture that values differences, drives innovation, and champions mutual respect. Through this initiative, ITC Kohenur has not only enriched its workforce but has also set a shining example for other organizations aspiring to build diverse and inclusive workplaces.
2. **Holistic Approach to Diversity and Inclusion:** In the landscape of corporate Diversity and Inclusion (D&I), there need to transcend conventional diversity parameters. With legislation like the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act in place, corporate inclusiveness in India requires a shift from "charity-based" to "rights-based" inclusivity, applicable universally to all diversity facets. Besides hiring diverse talent is insufficient, fostering an inclusive work culture is essential for retention (Piramanayagam, 2019). ITC stands as a

testament to this philosophy. Non-discrimination policies seamlessly traverse diverse operations. From data entry to customer support, ITC integrates persons with disabilities, exemplified in Mangaldeep's "Sixth Sense Panel" of visually impaired fragrance testers. This inclusivity extends to women empowerment initiatives, offering flexible work arrangements, extended maternity/paternity support, and leadership development opportunities. The largest women-run FMCG factory in India, an ITC venture, epitomizes the organization's commitment to diversity across verticals. ITC's comprehensive inclusivity strategy aligns perfectly with India's evolving demographics, making it a model for organizations embracing diversity (Mangwiro, 2018).

3. **Driving Diversity at ITC Limited:** ITC Limited, a prominent conglomerate, embarked on a journey to embrace inclusivity inspired by its publication, the "ITC Handbook on Disability Inclusion". Based on the guidelines outlined in its handbook, ITC Limited constructed a strong framework for inclusivity. Upholding the principle of equal opportunities, ITC ensured that recruitment and career growth were unbiased for individuals with disabilities. The concept of reasonable accommodations was put into practice, with ITC offering assistive technologies, adaptable schedules, and ergonomic workspaces. Through comprehensive disability awareness initiatives and transparent communication channels, ITC cultivated an atmosphere that exceeded accessibility norms, celebrating diversity in its truest sense. This endeavor bore fruit as the workplace flourished, with individuals with disabilities contributing uniquely to ITC's collective strength, leading to heightened employee satisfaction and bolstering the company's overall success. ITC Limited's journey, influenced by insights from its "ITC Handbook on Disability Inclusion," stands as a testament to the organization's commitment to fostering inclusivity. This case study underscores how ITC's strategic implementation of inclusivity principles not only reshaped its operational landscape but also showcased the immense potential that lies within individuals, irrespective

of their abilities (Piramanayagam, 2019).

Section VIII : The Road Ahead:

The future of disability inclusion at ITC Hotels holds immense promise and potential. Building upon the foundation laid by the "ITC Handbook on Disability Inclusion," the company is poised to continue its journey toward creating a workplace that reflects diversity, empowerment, and collaboration. By embracing the handbook's principles, ITC Hotels can further expand the range of opportunities available to individuals with disabilities. This means recognizing and utilizing their unique abilities and interests, fostering an environment where every role is attainable with suitable accommodations. Moreover, as ITC Hotels advances, it can lead the way in exemplifying equal opportunities, reasonable accommodations, and an inclusive work environment. By integrating accessibility into all aspects of its operations, from facilities to technology, and by fostering ongoing disability awareness and dialogue, ITC Hotels can truly become a beacon of inclusivity in the hospitality industry. Ultimately, the future of disability inclusion at ITC Hotels envisions a workplace where every team member, regardless of their abilities, plays an integral role in shaping the success of the company. By translating the lessons from the handbook into tangible actions, ITC Hotels has the potential to transform challenges into opportunities and cultivate an environment that not only welcomes diversity but thrives on it.

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