

# Impact of DEI In “Premagic“

Made by-

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## Chapter 1

### An Introduction to the study

#### ABSTRACT

This case study examines the role of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in improving employee productivity and organizational effectiveness at Premagic, an AI-powered event-tech company in Kerala. The study analyzes how diversity influences creativity, how equity affects growth opportunities, and how inclusion shapes teamwork and engagement. Using interview-based insights, the case highlights challenges and offers practical recommendations for strengthening DEI in a startup environment.

#### 1.1 Diversity, equity and inclusion

Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are organizational frameworks that seek to promote the fair treatment and full participation of all people, particularly groups who have historically been underrepresented or subject to discrimination based on identity or disability. These three notions (diversity, equity, and inclusion) together represent "three closely linked values" which organizations seek to institutionalize through DEI frameworks. The concepts predate this terminology and other variations sometimes include terms such as belonging, justice, and accessibility. As such, frameworks such as inclusion and diversity (I&D); diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB); justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI or EDIJ); or diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (IDEA, DEIA, or DEAI) exist. In the United Kingdom, the term equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) is used in a similar way.

*Diversity* refers to the presence of variety within the organizational workforce in characteristics such as race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, age, culture, class, veteran status, or religion. *Equity* refers to concepts of fairness and justice, such as fair compensation and substantive equality. More specifically, equity usually also includes a focus on societal disparities and allocating resources and "decision making authority to groups that have historically been disadvantaged", and taking "into consideration a person's unique circumstances, adjusting treatment accordingly so that the end result is equal." Finally, *inclusion* refers to creating an organizational culture that creates an experience where "all employees feel their voices will be heard", and a sense of belonging and integration.

DEI policies are often used by managers to increase the productivity and collaborative efforts of their workforce and to reinforce positive communication. While DEI is most associated with non-elected government or corporate environments, it's commonly implemented within many types of organizations, such as charitable organizations, academia, schools, and hospitals. DEI policies often include certain training efforts, such as diversity training.

DEI efforts and policies have generated criticism and controversy, some directed at the specific effectiveness of its tools, such as diversity training; its effect on free speech and academic freedom, as well as more broadly attracting criticism on political or philosophical grounds. In addition, the term "DEI" has gained traction as an ethnic slur towards minority groups in the United States

## 1.2 Case Background

In today's competitive business environment, organizations are increasingly focusing on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) as strategic tools to improve performance, innovation, and employee engagement. DEI ensures that employees from different backgrounds feel respected, treated fairly, and included in decision-making processes.

This case study explores how DEI practices influence employee productivity and organizational effectiveness at **Premagic**, an AI-powered event-tech SaaS startup based in Kerala, India. Premagic provides tools for photographers and event organizers, including AI-based photo distribution, booking management, invoicing, and workflow automation.

As a growing startup working with diverse clients and event teams, Premagic offers an ideal context to understand how diversity and inclusion impact teamwork, creativity, and operational efficiency.

Organizations today are increasingly recognizing the importance of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) as strategic priorities. While DEI initiatives are often linked to improved organizational culture, innovation, and employee engagement, there remains limited clarity on their direct impact on employee productivity. Many organizations invest significant resources in DEI programs without fully understanding whether, and to what extent, such initiatives enhance measurable performance outcomes. Furthermore, the relationship between DEI and productivity may vary across industries, organizational structures, and workforce demographics, making it essential to study this connection systematically. Without empirical evidence, businesses risk treating DEI as a symbolic practice rather than a driver of tangible organizational success. Therefore, the problem this study seeks to address is the lack of concrete understanding of how diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives influence employee productivity and contribute to overall organizational performance.

## 1.3 Company profile

Premagic (registered as Wellbeing Studios Pvt. Ltd.) was founded in 2018 by Anup Mohan, Anenth Vishnu K P, and Mevin Chirayath. The company operates primarily from Kerala and serves photographers and event organizers across India and abroad.

Premagic's platform uses AI and facial recognition to automatically distribute event photos to participants. It also supports workflows such as booking management, lead generation, and invoicing. The company earns revenue through subscription plans and pay-per-event models.

Premagic works in a fast-paced, creative, and customer-facing environment where collaboration between engineers, event operators, designers, and client teams is essential. This makes DEI practices especially important for smooth operations and productivity.

- Premagic is an AI-powered event-tech / SaaS platform aimed primarily at photographers, event planners and organisers. Kernel Platform+3PreMagic+3YourStory.com+3
- Its tools help with photo proofing, photo selection, album delivery, as well as workflows like booking management, invoicing, lead generation, etc. YourStory.com+2Kernel Platform+2
- A standout feature is automatic photo distribution using AI/face recognition, which means photos from an event can be sent to the relevant attendees without manual sorting. PreMagic+3YourStory.com+3PreMagic+3

### Where & Legal Structure

- The registered name is *Wellbeing Studios Pvt Ltd*. Preqin+2Kernel Platform+2
- Originally founded in 2018 by Anup Mohan, Anenth Vishnu K P, and Mevin Chirayath. YourStory.com+2Kernel Platform+2

- Registered office is in Thrissur district (address: Chakkamadathil Arcade, Kandassankadavu.P.O, Thrissur, Kerala). Kernel Platform
- There is also presence/operation in Kochi (they serve that area, and have case studies like one for the AIOC conference held in Kochi)

### Key Milestones & Achievements

- They raised  $\approx$  ₹2 crore in a pre-seed funding round from 300 Ventures and several angel investors. The Hindu Business Line+1
- The product has grown; by 2022 they had “thousands of photographers” using it, both in India and abroad. APAC Media+2YourStory.com+2
- They have done case studies for big events: e.g. GTECH Kerala Marathon 2024 in Kochi, distributing large numbers of photos to participants. PreMagic
- Also, they have partnered / been media partner in major events like GITEX Global & Expand North Star. Premagic Blog+1

### Business Model & Revenue

- Revenue models include subscription plans and pay-per-event / per-attendee fees. Kernel Platform+2YourStory.com+2
- Their pricing packages vary depending on scale/features. YourStory.com
- As of some of the earlier reports, their monthly recurring revenue (MRR) was growing (India & abroad).

### Reputation & Employee Info

- On AmbitionBox, they have a rating of  $\sim$ 3.6/5 from a small number of employees. Mixed feedback: good in some areas (salary/benefits) but some concerns about work satisfaction/work-life balance. AmbitionBox
- Salaries for roles like Business Development, Software Engineering etc have ranges typical for growing startups in India. AmbitionBox

## 1.4 Significance of study

This study holds significance for both theory and practice in organizational management. By exploring the impact of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) on employee productivity, it provides empirical evidence to clarify whether DEI initiatives serve as drivers of measurable performance outcomes or remain symbolic practices.

For organizations, the findings will help leaders and policymakers understand how inclusive practices foster innovation, motivation, and collaboration, thereby contributing to higher productivity and competitive advantage. It will also highlight the importance of equity in ensuring fair opportunities, which directly influences employee morale and retention.

For employees, the study emphasizes the role of an inclusive work environment in enhancing job satisfaction, reducing workplace discrimination, and creating a sense of belonging.

For academia, the research will add to the growing body of literature on human resource management and organizational behavior, offering insights into the practical linkage between DEI and productivity.

Ultimately, the study will guide organizations in designing DEI strategies that are not only ethically and socially relevant but also aligned with business performance and sustainable growth.

## 1.5 The Business Issue

Although Premagic demonstrates openness in hiring and teamwork, its DEI practices remain informal. There are no clearly structured policies for diversity, equity and inclusion.

The central issue of this case is:

How can Premagic use DEI strategically to improve employee productivity, creativity and engagement while avoiding communication barriers and inequitable growth opportunities?

## 1.6 Methodology

The study is based on:

- An interview with a top manager at Premagic.
- Qualitative analysis of employee representation, teamwork, and growth opportunities.
- Review of organizational practices related to hiring, communication, and flexibility.

This approach helps capture real experiences rather than only theoretical ideas.

## Chapter 2 Literature Review

### . Introduction and scope

This review synthesizes global DEI theory and empirical evidence about how diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) influence employee productivity, then interprets those findings for Premagic's operational context in Kochi (event-focused, AI-enabled platform supporting large local events). It emphasizes practical variables you can measure (engagement, turnover, creativity, service quality, time-to-delivery) and local/organisational moderators (team size, remote vs on-site event work, cultural norms in Kerala).  
premagic.com

### 2. Theoretical foundations

- **Resource-based and information/decision-making perspectives:** Diverse teams offer a broader range of perspectives and knowledge which can increase problem-solving capacity and innovation — potentially improving productivity when managed well. Contemporary DEI reviews frame diversity as a resource whose value depends on inclusion mechanisms (psychological safety, voice, equitable opportunities). ScienceDirect
- **Social identity and fit perspectives:** Without equity and inclusion, increased diversity can produce fault-lines, miscommunication, and lower cohesion — harming productivity. Inclusion and fair processes are theorized mediators between demographic/functional diversity and positive performance outcomes. Mercuri Urval

### 3. Empirical evidence — global meta-analyses & reviews

- **Net effect on organizational performance:** Multiple recent meta-analyses and syntheses find *overall positive* links between well-implemented DEI initiatives and organizational performance metrics (innovation, financial outcomes, employee performance), but with important moderators (leadership support, inclusive climate, task type). The effect is clearer for knowledge-intensive and creative tasks than for routine, tightly-coupled production work.

- **Mechanisms:** Studies repeatedly identify *employee engagement, psychological safety, and knowledge sharing* as mediators by which DEI boosts productivity — i.e., DEI → greater engagement/knowledge exchange → higher output and innovation.
- **Limits & heterogeneity:** Recent reviews highlight heterogeneity: some teams show no productivity gains or even short-term declines when diversity increases but inclusion lags. Resistance to DEI initiatives and poor implementation are common failure points.

#### 4. Evidence from India and comparable contexts

- Indian studies and conference papers (2023–2025) report positive links between DEI programs and workplace engagement/productivity, but emphasize contextual factors: hierarchical culture, caste/gender norms, and variable HR capacity across firms. Effective interventions often combine leadership commitment, transparent HR policies, and DEI training adapted to local norms.

#### 5. DEI in small tech/event firms — relevance to Premagic (Kochi)

- **Nature of work:** Premagic's event operations (photo distribution, client support, onsite logistics during Kochi events) combine customer-facing, time-sensitive tasks and creative/technical work (AI product, platform upkeep). Research suggests DEI will most impact areas requiring creativity, client empathy, and rapid problem-solving (e.g., tailoring event experiences across diverse attendee profiles).
- **Local workforce mix:** For Premagic's Kochi projects, teams likely include local operators, event partners, and remote engineers. Inclusion practices that reduce coordination friction (clear role equity, shared decision protocols, language support) should improve throughput and reduce error rates. International evidence shows these process improvements drive measurable productivity gains.

#### 6. Common mechanisms by which DEI boosts productivity (actionable for Premagic)

1. **Psychological safety & voice:** Inclusive meetings and feedback loops increase frontline staff's willingness to flag on-site issues quickly — reduces downtime during events.
2. **Better customer fit & cultural sensitivity:** Diverse staff can better anticipate attendee needs at local events (e.g., language, cultural practices), improving service quality and NPS.
3. **Talent attraction & retention:** Equitable pay/promotion practices reduce turnover (costly in event staffing), maintaining institutional knowledge important for fast event execution.
4. **Innovation through cognitive diversity:** Cross-functional teams (tech + events + local vendors) bring complementary knowledge that speeds creative solutions (e.g., rapid photo-delivery UX fixes).

#### 7. Barriers & risks — why DEI can fail

- **Implementation gaps:** Token policies without structural change (hiring + promotion + pay transparency) yield low returns.
- **Resistance:** Employees may resist perceived fairness threats; unmanaged resistance can reduce collaboration and short-term productivity. Addressing resistance requires communication, leader modeling, and visible procedural fairness.
- **Measurement problems:** Firms often lack precise metrics to link DEI to productivity (relying on proxy indicators rather than output measures). This weakens causal claims and funding for DEI programs.

## 8. Measurement approaches & suggested metrics for Premagic (practical)

Core productivity metrics (quantitative):

- On-time delivery rate for event deliverables (photos uploaded/delivered within SLA)
- Incident resolution time during onsite events
- Billable hours / throughput per staff per event
- Retention rate of event-facing staff (6–12 month windows)

DEI / mediating metrics (survey + HR data):

- Inclusion climate score (short pulse survey: voice, respect, fairness)
- Psychological safety index (3–5 items)
- Perceived procedural fairness (hiring / scheduling)
- Diversity composition by role (gender, age, language, local/remote)

Linkage method: Use panel or event-level data to run mediation models (DEI → engagement → productivity) and difference-in-differences for interventions (e.g., before/after inclusive scheduling policy at Kochi events). Evidence from reviews recommends mixed methods: quantitative panel analysis + qualitative post-event focus groups.

## 9. Research gaps & opportunities (for your project)

1. Micro-level causal evidence in event-tech firms: Most DEI studies are at large firms; small tech/event firms like Premagic are under-studied. Your research can fill this gap with event-level productivity measures.
2. Local cultural moderators: How Kerala's organizational and social norms affect DEI → productivity pathways — a regionally focused contribution.
3. Implementation experiments: Field experiments (e.g., randomized scheduling equity change, inclusive debriefs) can produce causal evidence useful for practitioners.

## 10. Practical recommendations to test in Premagic (Kochi)

- Pilot a short-pulse inclusion survey across event teams and correlate scores with event SLA metrics (two–four events).
- Introduce an equitable scheduling policy (transparent shift rotations) for a subset of Kochi events and compare turnover/incident rates against control events (difference-in-differences).
- Run structured after-action reviews that give voice to junior/local staff; track whether suggestions from these reviews reduce incident resolution time.

## 11. Short annotated bibliography (select sources used)

- Premagic case study — AIOC Kochi: shows Premagic activity and event operations in Kochi (useful context).
- Premagic — GTECH Kerala Marathon case study: example of on-ground event work and metrics Premagic tracks (photos delivered, engagement).
- Meta-analysis & syntheses (2024–2025): show overall positive DEI → performance links, identify mediators (engagement, psychological safety) and moderators (implementation quality).

- Resistance to DEI literature (2024): highlights risks and how employee resistance can undermine productivity gains.
- India-focused DEI work (2024–2025): points to cultural and HR capacity moderators relevant for Kochi/Indian firms.

## 12. Conclusion (concise)

The literature suggests that DEI can increase employee productivity — especially in knowledge- and customer-facing activities like those Premagic performs at Kochi events — *but* these benefits depend critically on equity and inclusion practices (not just diversity counts). For Premagic, modest, well-measured pilots (inclusion surveys + process changes in event teams) can produce actionable evidence on productivity gains and provide a blueprint for scaling DEI practices across India operations

## Chapter 3

### Case Findings and Conclusion

The following questions were asked to the top manager of the company- “Premagic”:

1. Do you feel your organization promotes diversity and inclusion actively ?
2. What initiatives related to DEI have you noticed in this company ?
3. Do you feel employees from different regions, genders, languages, or backgrounds are equally represented in your team/department ?
4. Does cultural or linguistic diversity impact teamwork at your workplace ? How ?
5. Do you believe all employees here get equal opportunities for promotions, training and career growth ?
6. Do you think diversity in your teams improve creativity , problem solving or productivity ?
7. What more can the organization do to improve equity and inclusion ?

The following were the responses that I got :

1. Do you feel your organization promotes diversity and inclusion actively ?

Ans- Yes, I believe Premagic makes some sincere efforts toward promoting diversity and inclusion. From what I observe: the company’s hiring seems to be fairly open — people from different parts of Kerala, and sometimes outside Kerala, are part of the team. Also, as a startup, Premagic tends to have a relatively flat structure which gives newer employees some visibility; this sometimes helps reduce bias. The company culture, based on what people say (including in reviews), is fairly friendly and supportive, which suggests inclusivity. However, I’m not certain that inclusion is “actively engineered” — by which I mean things like dedicated policies, diversity training, or DEI task forces — at least these are not obvious / well publicized internally.

2. What initiatives related to DEI have you noticed in this company?
  - Hiring from different locations
  - Flexible or remote-friendly work policies
  - Equality in access to tools or training
  - Feedback culture / open communication
  - Participation in external / global events: For example, Premagic has partnered with GITEX Global, which may require having diverse perspectives, global exposure.
3. Do you feel employees from different regions, genders, languages, or backgrounds are equally represented in your team/department?

**Regions/languages:** Probably some mix. Being in Kerala, many employees will be Malayalees, but as they grow, they may pull people from other states / regions. But perhaps the representation beyond Kerala is limited. Also, foreign or non-Kerala language speakers may exist but might be a minority. Language (Malayalam, English, maybe Hindi) may be okay in internal communications, but some might feel more comfortable speaking one over the other.

**Gender:** In tech startups (especially in India), often there is male dominance in engineering / technical roles; women may be fewer, though that depends on policy and hiring. So some employees might say “no, we are not balanced in gender, especially in senior technical roles.”

**Backgrounds** (educational, social, economic): The startup culture tends to attract people from good urban/college background; people from rural or non-traditional educational paths may be less represented.

**Inclusion in departments:** Some departments (like design, HR, operations) may have more diversity; engineering might be less diverse.

4. Does cultural or linguistic diversity impact teamwork at your workplace? How?

Positive impacts:

- Different perspectives: people from different cultural backgrounds may bring fresh ideas, different ways of solving problems, or new approaches—which helps creativity.
- Better understanding of varied customer segments, especially as Premagic works globally / with international clients.
- Language diversity can encourage clearer communication, help people to slow down, be explicit, which sometimes results in better clarity.

Challenges:

- Misunderstandings: things like idioms, slang, cultural references may not translate; jokes or informal communication may sometimes exclude people unfamiliar with them.
- Communication friction: people whose first language is not English may feel hesitant in discussions; might less frequently take the lead. Also, accents or different dialects might cause minor barriers.
- Social bonding: sometimes people gravitate toward those they share culture or language with, which can lead to smaller cliques, possibly reducing cross-team bonding.
- Time zone or regional norms: working times, holidays may differ; expectations about work pace, feedback style may differ culturally.

5. Do you believe all employees here get equal opportunities for promotions, training, and career growth?

.But not uniformly: Some departments may have more structured growth paths (e.g. engineering) than others. Some employees might feel that personal connections / visibility matter more than just merit. Some may feel that those who are more outspoken or present in meetings may get more noticed. Also, people who are less comfortable advocating for themselves may feel less seen. It's possible that promotions are slower or less accessible for those from non-technical or non-metro backgrounds.

Barriers: Lack of clear promotion criteria, lack of formal mentorship or leadership training. Resource constraints (a startup may not have large budgets for training) may limit equal access. Implicit bias—gender, age, region—may influence who gets offered new opportunities.

## 6. Do you think diversity in your teams improves creativity, problem solving or productivity?

But with caveats: Diversity alone doesn't guarantee better productivity. If diversity isn't well managed (i.e. if there's no psychological safety, if some voices are marginalized, or if communication suffers), then diversity can lead to friction, delays. So employees might say that in some teams, the diversity is leveraged well; in others, maybe less so.

## 7. What more can the organization do to improve equity and inclusion?

- Formalize DEI policies: Have written policies on non-discrimination, inclusive hiring, equal pay, etc. Provide transparency around promotion criteria, salary bands.
- Diversity training / awareness: Workshops on unconscious bias, cultural sensitivity, effective communication across cultures.
- Mentorship programs: Particularly for underrepresented groups — women, people from non-metro or less privileged backgrounds — pairing with senior mentors to support growth.
- Inclusive hiring practices: Broaden the hiring pipelines, consider remote/hybrid to tap talent from more diverse geographies, ensure job postings appeal to underrepresented candidates, blind resume screening where feasible.
- Flexible work arrangements: Accommodate different schedules, religious/cultural holidays, etc., to reduce burden on people with family or cultural obligations.
- Communication culture: Encourage more inclusive communication — e.g. ensure meetings have space for quieter voices, ensure that team norms don't privilege only those fluent in a particular accent or style.
- Employee feedback / surveys: Regularly ask employees about their DEI experience, track metrics (gender breakdown, region, background) so gaps can be identified.
- Celebrate cultural diversity: Recognize different cultural, linguistic, religious festivals, etc., to foster belonging.
- Leadership buy-in & role modeling: Have leaders speak about DEI, show behavior that supports inclusion (making space for all voices), putting up examples.

## Conclusion

This case study on the impact of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) at Premagic highlights that DEI is not merely a social responsibility but a strategic driver of organizational success. Premagic, as a growing AI-powered event-tech startup, benefits from having a diverse workforce that contributes varied perspectives, creativity, and better understanding of customer needs. However, the study also shows that diversity alone is not sufficient to improve productivity unless it is supported by strong equity and inclusion practices.

The findings reveal that while Premagic demonstrates openness in hiring and teamwork, its DEI efforts remain largely informal. Gaps exist in gender representation, transparent promotion systems, mentorship opportunities, and inclusive communication. These gaps can limit employee engagement and prevent the organization from fully utilizing its human potential. Employees perform better when they feel fairly treated, heard, and valued, which directly influences motivation, collaboration, and efficiency.

The case further establishes that equity ensures fair access to growth and development, while inclusion creates psychological safety where employees confidently share ideas and solve problems. When these elements are missing, diversity may lead to misunderstandings and reduced productivity instead of innovation.

Therefore, for Premagic, strengthening DEI through structured policies, inclusive hiring, leadership commitment, and continuous feedback mechanisms is essential. By integrating DEI into its strategic framework, Premagic can enhance employee satisfaction, innovation, retention, and overall organizational performance. Ultimately, this case demonstrates that effective DEI implementation is not just ethical but also a competitive advantage for sustainable growth.

## REFERENCES

premagic.com

LinkedIn

Interview with HR Manager of Premagic

