# A Study on Talent Acquisition Practices and Policies with Special Reference to LGBTQ+ in the Indian Engineering Industry

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## ABSTRACT

*This study explores the landscape of talent acquisition practices and policies with special reference to LGBTQ+ inclusion in the Indian engineering industry. Despite growing awareness of DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion), many LGBTQ+ individuals continue to face systemic challenges in the recruitment and hiring process. The research analyzes existing policies across engineering firms to assess the extent of inclusivity and fairness in their talent acquisition frameworks. Data was collected from 150 respondents through structured surveys and interviews, representing HR professionals, LGBTQ+ employees, and industry stakeholders. Findings reveal that while some organizations have adopted inclusive hiring guidelines, many still lack formal policies or sensitization programs. Discrimination, unconscious bias, and lack of representation remain significant barriers for LGBTQ+ candidates. The study also evaluates how workplace diversity impacts recruitment outcomes and employee retention. It highlights best practices, such as diversity training, gender-neutral job postings, and inclusive employee resource groups. Based on the insights, strategic recommendations are proposed to enhance LGBTQ+ hiring in engineering Industry. These include policy standardization, mandatory sensitization training, and leadership accountability. The study aims to contribute to building a more equitable and inclusive engineering sector in India.*
***Keywords:*** *Policies, LGBTQ+, Challenges, Recruitment, Hiring Process, Individuals, inclusive, engineering, enhance and Industry.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the conversation around diversity and inclusion in workplaces has gained significant momentum, particularly regarding the rights and representation of the LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, and others) community. While sectors such as information technology, media, and services have made some strides toward inclusive hiring, core industrial sectors like engineering still lag behind in implementing equitable and inclusive talent acquisition policies. This research attempts to examine and evaluate the existing talent acquisition practices in the Indian engineering industry with special reference to LGBTQ+ individuals. Despite global calls for equity and representation, the engineering industry in India remains largely heteronormative, male-dominated, and traditionally rigid in its organizational structure. Talent acquisition strategies, which are critical to shaping the workforce and organizational culture, often fail to consider the unique needs and challenges of LGBTQ+ candidates. There exists a gap between policy formulation and actual execution, which results in underrepresentation, unconscious bias, and missed opportunities to tap into diverse talent pools. This study is therefore essential in not only identifying the barriers faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in entering the engineering workforce but also in analyzing the extent to which current recruitment frameworks promote inclusivity. By focusing on talent acquisition—a crucial entry point for all professionals—this study aims to shed light on how the Indian engineering industry can become more inclusive, equitable, and forward-thinking in its hiring practices. Across the globe, multinational corporations and leading firms are progressively adopting LGBTQ+ inclusive hiring practices, guided by ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) goals and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) frameworks. The presence of inclusive job descriptions, use of gender-neutral language, recruitment from LGBTQ+ organizations, and inclusive onboarding practices have shown to improve talent attraction and retention, workplace satisfaction, and innovation.

In India, the landmark Supreme Court judgment in Navtej Singh Johar v. Union of India (2018) decriminalized homosexuality, marking a turning point in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights. Since then, some Indian corporations have introduced progressive policies such as gender-neutral restrooms, same-sex partner benefits, and internal diversity councils. However, such initiatives are more prevalent in the tech and services sectors, while core industries like engineering have yet to catch up. The Indian engineering industry, which includes infrastructure, civil, mechanical, electrical, and manufacturing sectors, is a significant contributor to the nation's GDP and employment. However, its rigid hiring processes, lack of sensitization, and limited human resource innovation have hindered progress in terms of LGBTQ+ inclusion. This has created invisible barriers for LGBTQ+ individuals, from application screening to interviews and onboarding.

## Issues in Talent Acquisition for LGBTQ+ in Engineering

Talent acquisition in engineering is often influenced by traditional recruitment pipelines, such as hiring through engineering colleges or apprenticeships, where discussions on gender diversity and inclusion are minimal. LGBTQ+ students may face discrimination even before entering the workforce, as engineering colleges themselves are not always equipped with inclusive environments. As a result, many LGBTQ+ candidates either hide their identity, settle for less inclusive job environments, or leave the field altogether. Even when LGBTQ+ professionals are qualified and capable, the lack of inclusive hiring practices—such as using binary language in job descriptions, unconscious interviewer bias, and a lack of representation in promotional materials—results in a loss of opportunity. Often, LGBTQ+ individuals are underrepresented or entirely absent from engineering hiring databases, diversity outreach programs, and graduate training initiatives. Moreover, companies seldom provide sensitivity training to hiring managers, and recruiters are not equipped to address queries or concerns related to gender identity or sexual orientation. This further discourages LGBTQ+ candidates from applying or fully engaging with the recruitment process. Most existing literature and corporate diversity efforts focus broadly on workplace inclusion—such as employee resource groups or internal anti-discrimination policies—without giving sufficient attention to the recruitment stage, which is the gateway to employment. Studying talent acquisition is crucial because if LGBTQ+ candidates are excluded at the hiring level, they cannot benefit from inclusive practices that may exist post-employment. Inclusion must begin with equitable access to opportunities. Thus, understanding how job advertisements are framed, how interviews are conducted, how HR teams are trained, and what onboarding processes look like for LGBTQ+ individuals is essential to achieving systemic change. Furthermore, this study will help identify structural and attitudinal gaps within engineering firms and highlight the role of proactive HR policies in shaping an inclusive workforce.

## Relevance to Engineering Sector and National Development

The engineering sector is a pillar of India's economic and infrastructural development. As India advances its "Make in India" and digital infrastructure initiatives, there is a growing need for innovation, creativity, and a diverse workforce that can meet the challenges of the 21st century. Marginalizing LGBTQ+ individuals from participating fully in this sector is not only a human rights concern but also a loss of economic and intellectual potential. Creating inclusive talent acquisition policies is not just about social justice—it is a strategic business imperative. Inclusive hiring leads to better employee engagement, lower turnover, broader market reach, and enhanced corporate reputation. It also aligns with global best practices, which are increasingly being adopted by Indian companies competing on international platforms.

## 2. NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF STUDY

Underrepresentation of LGBTQ+ individuals in the Indian engineering sector remains a significant issue, with minimal data and acknowledgment in recruitment policies. The engineering industry in India is traditionally male-dominated and often conservative, making it difficult for LGBTQ+ individuals to feel welcomed or represented. While legal progress has been made (e.g., decriminalization of homosexuality in 2018), actual workplace practices—especially hiring policies—have not evolved at the

same pace. There is a lack of empirical research specifically focusing on how LGBTQ+ individuals experience the recruitment and hiring process in engineering-related fields. Educational institutions and engineering colleges also lack formal sensitization programs, affecting placement policies and LGBTQ+ students' ability to enter the workforce confidently.

The study offers a focused lens on a neglected issue in a critical sector of the Indian economy—engineering—which contributes heavily to national development and innovation. It contributes to building evidence-based insights into how LGBTQ+ professionals perceive and navigate recruitment in engineering companies. By understanding existing gaps, the research encourages companies to introduce LGBTQ+-friendly recruitment strategies, helping in employer branding and talent retention. The study adds value to academic literature, filling the gap in scholarly work on LGBTQ+ employment in India's industrial sectors

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a descriptive and exploratory research design, relying primarily on primary data collection and analysis to understand the talent acquisition practices and their inclusivity towards LGBTQ+ individuals within the Indian engineering sector. The methodology focuses on capturing real-world experiences, perceptions, and challenges faced by both LGBTQ+ job seekers and HR professionals involved in the recruitment process. A sample size of 150 respondents was selected using stratified random sampling, ensuring representation from HR professionals, LGBTQ+ employees, and recruitment consultants. A structured questionnaire was designed to gather data on recruitment strategies, inclusivity policies, hiring biases, and organizational culture. The questionnaire included multiple-choice, Likert-scale, and open-ended questions for both quantitative and qualitative insights. Data collection was conducted via digital platforms and personal outreach over a six-week period. Informed consent and confidentiality protocols were maintained to ensure ethical compliance. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, percentage, standard deviation) to identify key trends. Cross-tabulation and ANOVA tests were used to determine relationships between demographics and inclusivity practices. Thematic analysis was applied to open-ended responses to extract qualitative themes. The study findings were benchmarked against best practices in inclusive hiring and compared with global LGBTQ+ talent acquisition frameworks.

## 4. LITERATURE REVIEW

**Dutta & Srinivasan (2024),** This study adopts a practice theory approach to explore inclusion strategies for LGBTQ talent within organizations. It emphasizes how daily workplace practices influence inclusion beyond formal policies. The research highlights challenges faced by LGBTQ employees and suggests practical interventions. It contributes to understanding inclusion as an ongoing social process. The findings support more dynamic, practice-oriented inclusion efforts. This work enriches literature by linking theory with workplace realities.

**Vohra et al. (2015),** This paper reviews theoretical and practical perspectives on creating inclusive workplaces. It synthesizes lessons from diversity management theories and real-world organizational experiences. Key themes include barriers to inclusion and strategies to overcome them. The authors stress the importance of leadership commitment and cultural change. The study provides actionable insights for HR practitioners. It remains foundational for understanding workplace inclusion dynamics.

**Truitt, Williams & Clarke (2022),** This report focuses on enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the energy efficiency workforce. It analyzes workforce demographics, identifies gaps, and recommends inclusive recruitment and retention strategies. The research underscores the role of policy and education in fostering DEI. It highlights industry-specific challenges and best practices. The study offers a roadmap for building a diverse and equitable workforce in energy sectors. It serves as a practical guide for industry stakeholders.

**Heydari et al. (2024),** This systematic literature review examines DEI efforts in the Architecture,

Engineering, and Construction (AEC) industry. It categorizes existing research themes and identifies knowledge gaps. The review discusses challenges unique to AEC, such as gender imbalance and cultural norms. It proposes future research directions to advance equity and inclusion. The paper contributes to expanding DEI discourse in traditionally male-dominated industries. It calls for integrated approaches combining policy and organizational culture change.

**Byington, Tamm & Trau (2021),** This article maps research on sexual orientation within management studies, highlighting trends and gaps. It reviews the evolution of LGBTQ-related workplace research and identifies underexplored areas. The authors propose a future research agenda to deepen understanding of sexual orientation dynamics in management. They emphasize intersectionality and inclusivity in organizational practices. This work advances the academic conversation on sexual orientation and management. It offers a structured framework for ongoing research.

**Mahajan et al. (2022),** Presented at a national conference, this paper discusses challenges and opportunities related to gender equity. It highlights systemic barriers, cultural influences, and policy interventions. The study examines both organizational and societal dimensions of gender equity. It identifies best practices and innovation in promoting equity. The paper contributes empirical evidence from Indian contexts. It encourages multi-sector collaboration for sustained progress.

**Akbari et al. (2024),** This systematic review explores gender equality within operations and supply chain management. It identifies key research themes such as leadership, decision-making, and organizational culture. The authors analyze barriers to gender parity and propose future research directions. The review emphasizes the need for gender-sensitive policies in supply chains. It integrates global perspectives and industry-specific insights. This work guides scholars and practitioners toward inclusive operational practices.

**Patel & Feng (2021),** This study investigates the relationship between LGBT workplace equality policies and customer satisfaction. It finds that inclusive policies enhance marketing capability and positively affect customer perceptions. The research highlights the moderating effect of demand instability on this relationship. It contributes to marketing literature by linking internal equality with external business outcomes. The paper stresses the strategic value of inclusion in competitive markets. It offers empirical support for integrating DEI in marketing strategies.

**Chathuranga (2024),** This paper examines how institutional isomorphism and logics influence the development of LGBTQIA+ policies in Sri Lanka. It analyzes the interplay between global norms and local institutional pressures. The research provides insight into policy adoption processes in a socio-cultural context resistant to change. It highlights tensions between conformity and innovation in policy making. The study contributes to institutional theory in diversity management. It offers context-specific recommendations for policy advancement.

**Farrell, Cross & Hughes (2022),** This chapter explores the meaning and future directions of queering STEM culture in U.S. higher education. It critiques dominant STEM norms and advocates for more inclusive environments. The authors discuss strategies to challenge heteronormativity and foster belonging for LGBTQ students. It emphasizes intersectionality and systemic change within academic institutions. The work enriches DEI literature by focusing on STEM-specific challenges. It calls for transformative practices to create equitable educational spaces.

## 5. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

1. To analyze the existing talent acquisition policies in the Indian engineering industry concerning LGBTQ+ inclusion.

2. To identify the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in the hiring process.

3. To assess the impact of workplace diversity on recruitment and retention.

4. To evaluate best practices adopted by organizations to ensure inclusive hiring.

5. To recommend strategies for improving LGBTQ+ talent acquisition in engineering firms.

## 6. DATA ANALYSIS

The present research study data analysis is carried out based on the collected from the select 150 respondents working in Indian Engineering Industry at different locations in India. The collected data is further analyzed and interpreted using statistical techniques like correlation, frequency tables and ANOVA one-way method.

**Analysis on Demographic Variables:**

**Table-1:** Demographic Variable

| Variable | Category | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age (Years) | 21-30 | 35 | 23.3 | 23.3 |
| | 31-40 | 80 | 53.3 | 76.7 |
| | 41-50 | 23 | 15.3 | 92.0 |
| | 51&Above | 12 | 8.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 150 | 100.0 | |
| Education Qualifications | Diploma in Engineering | 12 | 8.0 | 8.0 |
| | Bachelor's in Engineering | 61 | 40.7 | 48.7 |
| | Master's in Engineering | 57 | 38.0 | 86.7 |
| | Other | 20 | 13.3 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 150 | 100.0 | |
| Experience (in Years) | 1-5 | 21 | 14.0 | 14.0 |
| | 6-10 | 23 | 15.3 | 29.3 |
| | 11-15 | 70 | 46.7 | 76.0 |
| | 16-20 | 24 | 16.0 | 92.0 |
| | 20&Above | 12 | 8.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 150 | 100.0 | |
| Location | Delhi | 40 | 26.7 | 26.7 |
| | Kolkata | 40 | 26.7 | 53.3 |
| | Bangalore | 35 | 23.3 | 76.7 |
| | Pune | 35 | 23.3 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 150 | 100.0 | |
| Designation | Executive | 28 | 18.7 | 18.7 |
| | Entry-level Engineer | 60 | 40.0 | 58.7 |
| | Mid-level Engineer | 37 | 24.7 | 83.3 |
| | Senior Manager | 25 | 16.7 | 100.0 |
| | **Total** | **150** | **100.0** | |

The explores majority of respondents 53.3% fall within the 31–40 age group, indicating a workforce primarily in their mid-career stage. Only 8% are aged 51 and above, showing limited senior age representation. Most participants hold a Bachelor's 40.7% or Master's 38.0% degree in Engineering, indicating a highly qualified technical workforce. A smaller portion 8% has only a diploma, and 13.3% have other qualifications, suggesting some diversity in educational backgrounds. Nearly half of the respondents 46.7% have 11–15 years of experience, reflecting a seasoned workforce. Only 8% have over 20 years of experience, aligning with the lower percentage in the 51+ age group. Work locations are

evenly spread between Delhi and Kolkata 26.7% each, and Bangalore and Pune 23.3% each, indicating balanced geographical representation.

Entry-level engineers make up the largest group (40%), suggesting strong early-career participation in the sample. Executives 18.7% and Senior Managers 16.7% form smaller groups, pointing to fewer respondents in higher positions. Overall, the data reflects a predominantly mid-career, well-educated engineering workforce spread across major Indian cities with a concentration in technical and junior-to-mid managerial roles.

**Analysis on LGBTQ+ inclusion policies clearly communicated during recruitment process**

**Table-2:** LGBTQ+ inclusion policies clearly communicated during recruitment process

| Factor | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Always | 34 | 22.7 | 22.7 |
| Often | 32 | 21.3 | 44.0 |
| Sometimes | 28 | 18.7 | 62.7 |
| Rarely | 26 | 17.3 | 80.0 |
| Never | 30 | 20.0 | 100.0 |
| **Total** | **150** | **100.0** | |

The table numeric values confirms, Only 22.7% of respondents stated that LGBTQ+ inclusion policies are always communicated during recruitment. Another 21.3% reported that these policies are often communicated, indicating moderate awareness. A combined 18.7% sometimes receive information about inclusion policies, showing inconsistency. Nearly 17.3% said policies are rarely communicated, highlighting gaps in transparency. Alarmingly, 20% reported that LGBTQ+ inclusion policies are never communicated during recruitment. Overall, only about 44% experience frequent communication of such policies. This suggests a need for better and more consistent communication of LGBTQ+ inclusion during hiring.

**Analysis on level of bias do you believe LGBTQ+ individuals face in the engineering hiring process**

**Table-3:** Bias do you believe LGBTQ+ individuals face in the engineering hiring process

| Factor | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Very High | 38 | 25.3 | 25.3 |
| High | 26 | 17.3 | 42.7 |
| Moderate | 31 | 20.7 | 63.3 |
| Low | 26 | 17.3 | 80.7 |
| None | 29 | 19.3 | 100.0 |
| **Total** | **150** | **100.0** | |

A significant 25.3% of respondents believe LGBTQ+ individuals face very high bias in the engineering hiring process. Another 17.3% perceive a high level of bias, indicating that over 40% see substantial discrimination. 20.7% rated the bias as moderate, showing that many acknowledge some level of prejudice. Conversely, 17.3% believe bias is low, and 19.3% think there is no bias at all. This distribution suggests mixed perceptions about bias but leans toward recognizing considerable challenges. Nearly two-thirds of respondents 63.3% perceive moderate to very high bias, highlighting ongoing concerns. The presence of nearly 20% perceiving no bias may indicate variability in individual experiences or awareness. Overall, the data points to a pressing need to address and reduce bias against LGBTQ+ candidates in engineering recruitment.

**Analysis on LGBTQ+ candidates are in disclosing their identity during interviews**

**Table-4:** Analysis on LGBTQ+ candidates are in disclosing their identity during interviews

| Factor | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Very Open | 32 | 21.3 | 21.3 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Somewhat Open | 38 | 25.3 | 46.7 |
| Neutral | 31 | 20.7 | 67.3 |
| Not Open | 19 | 12.7 | 80.0 |
| Prefer to Hide Identity | 30 | 20.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 150 | 100.0 | |

It is clarified form the table above, Only 21.3% of LGBTQ+ candidates are very open about their identity during interviews. A slightly higher percentage 25.3% are somewhat open, indicating some comfort in disclosure. About 20.7% remain neutral, neither fully open nor closed about their identity. 12.7% are not open about their LGBTQ+ status during interviews, reflecting caution. Alarmingly, 20% prefer to hide their identity, suggesting fear of discrimination. Combined, over 30% of candidates are either not open or actively conceal their identity. This shows a significant hesitation among LGBTQ+ candidates to disclose their identity in the hiring process. Overall, the data reveals a need to create safer, more inclusive interview environments to encourage openness.

**Analysis on LGBTQ+ inclusion affect employee retention Process**

Table-5: LGBTQ+ inclusion affect employee retention Process

| Factor | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Significantly Improves Retention | 30 | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| Somewhat Improves Retention | 31 | 20.7 | 40.7 |
| No Impact | 35 | 23.3 | 64.0 |
| Slightly Reduces Retention | 25 | 16.7 | 80.7 |
| Greatly Reduces Retention | 29 | 19.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 150 | 100.0 | |

20% of respondents believe LGBTQ+ inclusion significantly improves employee retention. Another 20.7% feel it somewhat improves retention, showing positive support overall. However, 23.3% think inclusion policies have no impact on retention, indicating mixed opinions. A notable 16.7% believe inclusion slightly reduces retention, suggesting some concerns. Additionally, 19.3% feel it greatly reduces retention, highlighting significant apprehension in nearly one-fifth of respondents. Combined, around 36% see either a slight or great reduction in retention due to LGBTQ+ inclusion. This polarization suggests varying perceptions about the effect of LGBTQ+ inclusion on workforce stability. Overall, while many see benefits, there remains considerable skepticism about its impact on retention.

**Analysis on Best practices are followed in your organization for LGBTQ+ Employees**

Table-6: Best practices are followed in your organization for LGBTQ+ Employees

| Factor | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Multiple inclusive hiring practices adopted (e.g., anti-bias training, diverse panels) | 25 | 16.7 | 16.7 |
| Few inclusive practices adopted | 27 | 18.0 | 34.7 |
| Policies exist but not implemented | 36 | 24.0 | 58.7 |
| No inclusive practices | 27 | 18.0 | 76.7 |
| Not aware of any practices | 35 | 23.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 150 | 100.0 | |

The table values notices that , Only 16.7% of respondents report that multiple inclusive hiring practices, like anti-bias training and diverse panels, are actively adopted. A slightly higher 18% say their organizations have adopted a few inclusive practices. However, 24% acknowledge that policies exist but are not implemented, indicating a gap between policy and practice. Another 18% state there are no inclusive practices at all in their organizations. Alarmingly, 23.3% are not aware of any inclusive practices being followed. Combined, nearly 42% of respondents either have no practices or are unaware

of them, showing limited inclusivity awareness or action.

The data suggests that while some organizations are making efforts, many are lagging in implementation and communication. Overall, there is significant room for improvement in adopting and enforcing LGBTQ+ inclusive best practices in the workplace.

**Table-7:** Analysis on what kind of initiation required to improve LGBTQ+ talent acquisition in the engineering sector

| Factor | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Stronger policy implementation | 35 | 23.3 | 23.3 |
| Awareness and sensitivity training | 29 | 19.3 | 42.7 |
| Inclusive employer branding | 23 | 15.3 | 58.0 |
| Mentorship and support systems | 25 | 16.7 | 74.7 |
| Government or legal reforms | 38 | 25.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 150 | 100.0 | |

The highest priority identified is government or legal reforms, with 25.3% of respondents emphasizing its importance. Stronger policy implementation is also critical, highlighted by 23.3% of participants. Awareness and sensitivity training are seen as necessary by 19.3%, indicating a need for cultural change. Mentorship and support systems are valued by 16.7% as key to improving LGBTQ+ talent acquisition. Inclusive employer branding is important to 15.3%, showing the role of external image in attracting talent. Together, these results reflect a multifaceted approach combining policy, training, support, branding, and legal changes. The focus on legal reforms suggests systemic barriers currently hinder LGBTQ+ inclusion in engineering. Overall, comprehensive efforts across multiple areas are needed to foster better LGBTQ+ talent acquisition.

**Analysis on Mean Values of Talent Acquisition Practices of LGBTQ+**

**Table-8:** Mean Analysis on LGBTQ+ Talent Acquisition Practices in Indian Engineering Industry

| Variable | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|
| LGBTQ+ inclusion policies clearly communicated | 2.91 | 1.449 |
| Bias do you believe LGBTQ+ individuals face organization | 2.88 | 1.461 |
| LGBTQ+ candidates are in disclosing their identity | 2.85 | 1.422 |
| LGBTQ+ inclusion affect employee retention | 2.95 | 1.399 |
| Best practices are followed in your organization | 3.13 | 1.398 |
| Initiation required to improve LGBTQ+ talent acquisition | 3.01 | 1.524 |

The mean score for clear communication of LGBTQ+ inclusion policies is 2.91, indicating moderate effectiveness. Perceived bias against LGBTQ+ individuals in organizations is slightly lower at 2.88, reflecting moderate bias awareness. Openness of LGBTQ+ candidates in disclosing their identity has a mean of 2.85, showing moderate comfort levels. The impact of LGBTQ+ inclusion on employee retention scores 2.95, suggesting a near-neutral to slightly positive perception. Best practices adoption in organizations has a higher mean of 3.13, indicating a somewhat better implementation level. Initiatives required to improve LGBTQ+ talent acquisition score 3.01, showing recognition of the need for improvements. Standard deviations around 1.4–1.5 across variables reveal considerable variability in responses. Overall, the data suggests moderate progress but highlights the need for enhanced efforts in policy communication, reducing bias, and improving inclusion practices.

**Graph-1:** Mean Analysis of Talent Acquisition Practices
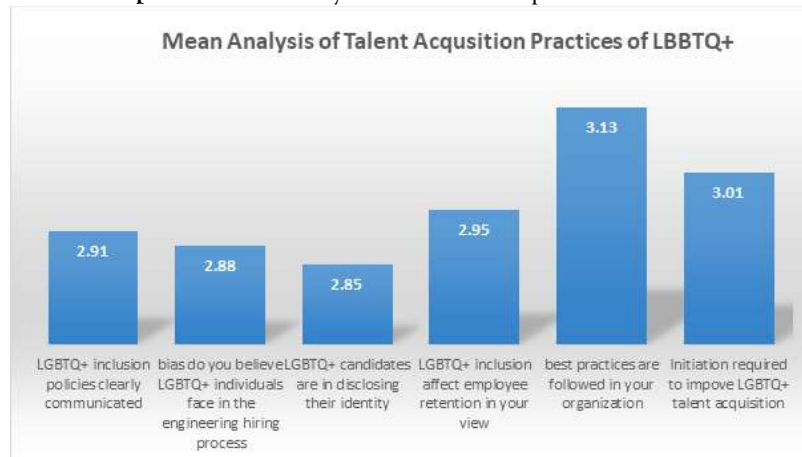


**Analysis of Correlation Between LGBTQ+ Talent Acquisition Practices and Key Demographic Variables**

**Table-8:** Correlation Table

| | | Age | Education Qualification | Experience | Work Location | Designation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LGBTQ+ inclusion policies clearly communicated | Correlation | -.165* | -.029 | -.011 | -.037 | -.069 |
| | Sig. | .044 | .729 | .894 | .653 | .403 |
| bias do you believe LGBTQ+ individuals face in the engineering hiring process | Correlation | .057 | .018 | -.110 | .024 | -.084 |
| | Sig. | .487 | .828 | .181 | .773 | .304 |
| LGBTQ+ candidates are in disclosing their identity | Correlation | -.108 | .058 | .041 | -.004 | -.009 |
| | Sig. | .190 | .484 | .621 | .958 | .909 |
| LGBTQ+ inclusion affect employee retention in your view | Correlation | -.025 | -.073 | .000 | .053 | -.024 |
| | Sig. | .762 | .377 | .996 | .516 | .772 |
| Best practices are followed in your organization | Correlation | .031 | -.043 | -.113 | -.123 | -.117 |
| | Sig. | .708 | .603 | .167 | .134 | .152 |
| Initiation required to improve LGBTQ+ talent acquisition | Correlation | -.074 | -.129 | .013 | -.019 | -.107 |
| | Sig. | .366 | .115 | .874 | .816 | .191 |

**Interpretation:** Age shows a significant negative correlation ($-0.165$, $p = 0.044$) with the clarity of LGBTQ+ inclusion policies communicated during recruitment, suggesting younger employees perceive

policies as clearer. No significant correlations are observed between education qualification, experience, work location, or designation with LGBTQ+ inclusion policies communication. Perceived bias against LGBTQ+

individuals in hiring shows no significant correlation with any demographic variable, indicating bias perception is consistent across groups. Openness of LGBTQ+ candidates in disclosing their identity is not significantly correlated with any demographic factors, reflecting similar disclosure levels regardless of background. The belief that LGBTQ+ inclusion affects employee retention does not significantly vary by any demographic variable. Adoption of best practices shows weak, non-significant negative correlations with experience, work location, and designation, implying no strong demographic influence. The need for initiatives to improve LGBTQ+ talent acquisition also has no significant demographic correlations. Overall, demographic factors have limited influence on perceptions and experiences related to LGBTQ+ talent acquisition practices. Age is the only demographic factor with a meaningful impact, affecting how clearly inclusion policies are perceived. Conclusion: Efforts to improve LGBTQ+ inclusion should focus broadly across all demographics rather than targeting specific groups, with attention to policy communication especially for older employees.

### Analysis of ANOVA Between Talent Acquisition Practices and Age

$H_0$: There is no significance relation between LGBTQ+ Talent Acquisition Practices and Age

$H_1$: There is no significance relation between LGBTQ+ Talent Acquisition Practices and Age

**Table-9:**

| ANOVA | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sum-of-Squares | df | Mean-Square | F | Sig. |
| Between Groups | 21.968 | 3 | 7.323 | 3.300 | .022 |
| Within Groups | 324.005 | 146 | 2.219 | | |
| Total | 345.973 | 149 | | | |
| Dependent: LGBTQ+Talent Acquisition Practices Independent: Age | | | | | |

**Interpretation:** The table above presenting the test result of ANOVA one-way analysis between the tested dependent variable LGBTQ+ talent acquisition practices and age of respondent. It is observed from the above table the significance i.e., 'p' value between the tested dependent and independent variables obtained a numeric value 0.022 at 5% LOS i.e., Level of Significance. Here the $p < 0.05$ this states both the dependent and independent are significant to each other this can be further interpreted as the dependent variable is influenced by the independent variable. The result can be concluded as the talent acquisition practices associated to LGBTQ+ in engineering is industry is varied according to age of LGBTQ+ employees working organization.

### 7. CONCLUSION

The study clearly indicates that LGBTQ+ individuals face systemic barriers in talent acquisition within the Indian engineering sector. Although some progress has been made, only 22.7% of organizations consistently communicate inclusive policies during recruitment, showing a significant awareness gap. Bias remains a critical issue, over 42% of respondents believe LGBTQ+ individuals face high to very high bias during hiring. This climate of uncertainty results in over 30% of LGBTQ+ candidates either hiding or being hesitant to disclose their identity during interviews. Many HR teams lack formal training, and inclusive hiring practices like gender-neutral job descriptions or diverse panels are minimally adopted. A mere 16.7% of organizations have multiple inclusive hiring practices, while 24% have policies that exist only on paper and are not implemented. Retention is also affected, with divided opinions 41% feel inclusion improves retention, while 36% believe it reduces it, indicating a need for more cultural integration. Age was found to be a significant variable—older employees are less likely to perceive inclusion policies as clearly communicated, emphasizing the need for targeted awareness. Other

demographic factors like education, location, and designation showed no significant correlation, suggesting these issues are widespread across all groups. Respondents cited stronger policy implementation, government and legal reforms, and awareness training as the most critical interventions needed.

The lack of visible LGBTQ+ representation in hiring teams and promotional content further reinforces exclusion. Many LGBTQ+ individuals are discouraged from applying or continuing in engineering due to discriminatory educational and early career experiences. While global firms are adopting DEI frameworks, core engineering sectors in India lag behind due to rigid work cultures and outdated recruitment strategies. The study emphasizes that inclusive hiring is not only a matter of social justice but a business necessity for innovation, retention, and competitive growth. Therefore, engineering firms must prioritize comprehensive, measurable, and accountable LGBTQ+ hiring policies to build a future-ready and diverse workforce.

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