

EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN TERMS OF THE MEDIATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL TRUST AMONG EMPLOYEES AT MASHHAD COLLEGE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES

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Abstract

In the past, the issue of diversity was completely ignored in NGOs and non-governmental organizations. However, with the changes brought by organizational globalization, diversity management attracted much attention and many researchers and experts started to study it from different angles and perspectives. In this regard, this study was conducted with the aim of investigating the impact of diversity management on employee engagement by considering the mediating role of organizational trust among employees of Mashhad College of Medical Sciences. This research is applied in terms of purpose. On the other hand, this study is a descriptive survey based on structural equation approach. The statistical population of this study was all employees of the College of Medical Sciences. Based on the calculations, the sample size of this study corresponds to 373 professionals and the samples were selected using the stepwise cluster random method. The standard questionnaires by Al-Shabani et al. (2022) with 22 items were used to collect the field data. In addition, structural equation modeling with SmartPLS software was used in this study to measure and analyze the data obtained. The results of the research show that diversity management has an impact on participation (0.557) and organizational trust (0.804) among the employees of Mashhad Faculty of Medicine. Moreover, trust in the organization mediates the effect of diversity management on employee participation. Moreover, organizational trust has a significant effect on employee participation.

Keywords: Diversity Management, Employee Participation, Organizational Trust.

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEMS

In the past, the issue of diversity was completely ignored in NGOs and non-governmental organizations. However, with the changes brought by the globalization of the organization, "diversity management" attracted a lot of attention and many researchers and experts started to study it from different angles and perspectives (Al-Shabani et al., 2022). Regarding its definition, researchers have mentioned that this concept is a general and broad concept that can hardly be defined in a single and concrete terminology (Cullen 2021). For this reason, Saba et al. (2021) have pointed out that diversity is the differences in personal characteristics between people working in similar groups, and these characteristics usually include (age, gender, race, etc.). These differences have such an impact on the atmosphere of an organization that the issue of diversity management, simply put, has become the concern of management and organizational researchers and is mentioned as a serious activity that managers should pay attention to (Ghanbari and Sharifi, 2019).

Lenka and Yadav (2020) added that diversity management is a perspective to "improve the performance of a heterogeneous workforce and the inclusive development of people with differences in gender, ethnicity, nationality, cultural and educational background". In addition, Ganji et al. (2020) defined it as a practice that involves the implementation of diversity through effective changes in the organization that have a positive impact on promoting the achievement of planned educational goals. Furthermore, many authors have introduced this concept to promote teacher employment and professional development and to combat discrimination based on race and gender (Cullen, 2021). Diversity thus encompasses two dimensions: the visible dimension such as age, class, race, gender, physical ability; the intangible dimension such as work experience, beliefs and values, mental habits, thinking styles, language, professional level, skills, etc. The close interaction of these factors affects organizational performance and benefits (Lenka and Yadav, 2020). In this context, Moon and Christensen (2020) identified correct diversity management as a foundation for organizational creativity and innovation and incorrect diversity management as a cause of dissatisfaction and conflict among an organization's employees; Dashwal and Kodhari (2012) also considered successful diversity management measures as effective for overall organizational productivity and employee communication, and Ozman and Ardil (2013) considered both effective and ineffective diversity management as a positive and negative factor for organizational innovation. Shen and his colleagues believe that the negative effects of diversity are not really the result of diversity itself, but that ineffective diversity management causes this factor. The key to achieving the benefits and reducing the disadvantages of diversity lies in effective diversity management. This is because the main purpose of diversity management is to bring the heterogeneous workforce together in the form of work teams (Shen et al., 2009). In general, the proper management of diversity, on the one hand, results in no separation in strong communication within the organization, reduced conflict, increased communication and greater continuity (Al-Shabani et al., 2022). Accordingly, it can be assumed that diversity management forms the basis for improving the quality of teamwork (Ganji et al., 2019). Therefore, a diverse workforce brings different mental models to the organization, which, if managed properly, generates new ideas (Thomson et al., 2019) and leads to creativity, innovation (Ranieri, 2018) and knowledge creation (Al-Alshabani et al., 2022). Moreover, based on broad perspectives, many studies have investigated how diversity management is related to organizational commitment (Benderson and Sutcliffe, 2002; Prieto et al., 2009; Al-Shabani et al., 2022). Some researchers have shown that the fairness and equity created by diversity management in the workforce leads to high levels of employee performance (Casper et al., 2013; Joo and Lee, 2019; Moon and Christensen, 2020). Others report an insignificant impact of diversity management on organizational and employee performance (Horwitz and Horwitz, 2007; Li et al., 2020). These inconclusive results suggest that more research is needed on the management of diversity and the relationship between professional engagement.

The literature on participation states that employee engagement is considered a very new topic. In 2000, the authors reviewed the literature on participation in depth and presented several definitions to conceptualise it (Al-Shabani et al., 2022). Furthermore, Kahn (1990), who first introduced this concept, added that employee engagement occurs when "people engage and

express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally while performing their role". In this context, researchers can say that the goal of employee engagement is to increase performance, independence, respect for diversity, honesty and personal development (Al-Alshabani et al., 2021; 2022). Very few studies have linked diversity management to employee engagement, such as Downey et al. (2015), who conducted a survey of healthcare employees and confirmed that clear diversity management practices and policies play an important role in promoting engagement. It has employees. Similarly, Shabani and Bendik (2018) sent an online questionnaire to 202 employees of Middle Eastern nationality working in Western countries and reported that some diversity management practices, such as training, performance evaluation and recruitment, play an important role in increasing engagement.

In addition to these variables, in some other studies, researchers have highlighted the importance of organizational trust in increasing employee engagement. Therefore, organizational trust is considered a critical factor for improving employee performance, organizational commitment and work engagement (Jenna et al., 2018)

Accordingly, Jansen and Zack found that employee engagement can be increased thanks to trust in the organization, which promotes knowledge sharing. Thus, there is a direct positive effect between organizational trust and employee engagement (Johnson and Zak, 2021). In this context, trust has been found to help employees perform their tasks and fulfill their duties to the organization in which they work (Al-Alshabani et al., 2022). Most researchers explained this relationship with social exchange theory, which states that employees who trust that the organization will treat them fairly tend to reciprocate (Johnson and Zak, 2021).

On the other hand, in recent studies, many researchers have attempted to investigate the mediating role of organizational trust between many variables such as corporate social responsibility and employee engagement (Zambrano et al., 2022). In addition, organizational trust has been examined as a mediator between corporate social responsibility and organizational commitment (Georg et al., 2021). Other studies examined organizational trust as a mediator between diversity management and other variables such as knowledge sharing (Zhou and Fan, 2022), turnover intention (Lee et al., 2020), and destructive behaviors (Thomson et al., 2019). However, this study examines the mediating role of organizational trust between diversity management and employee engagement. It is obvious that diversity management and trust in organizations can be very closely linked. This can be explained by the fact that diversity management involves not only the employment of different people, but also their inclusion in the organization (Al-Shabani and Rudnak, 2020). . It is very important that employees feel that they are needed in the decision-making process of the organization so that they automatically show a positive attitude and participate more. However, this type of environment cannot be solved without the concept of trust (Zambrano et al., 2022).

Previous studies show that there is a need to investigate the mediating factors between diversity management and employee engagement. Based on the available literature, the relationship between diversity management and job involvement has been well studied, especially in organizational and behavioral psychology (Al-Alshabani et al., 2022). Although some studies have examined the effects of diversity management on organizational variables (e.g., Al-

Shabani et al., 2022), there is a lack of empirical research examining the relationship between diversity management and employee engagement. Several previous studies show that diversity management has a direct impact on employee engagement behavior (Downey et al., 2015). In addition, while some studies have examined the impact of diversity management on engagement and the relationship between diversity management and trust (e.g., Lee et al., 2019), the indirect effect of diversity management on job engagement through organizational trust has not yet been examined. Not examined. Even though the literature suggests that diversity increases employee engagement (e.g. Ju and Li, 2019), there is a research gap of empirical studies to conceptualize the direct impact of diversity management on employee engagement.

Following the above, the researcher attempts to answer the main question: What role does organizational trust play in the impact of diversity management on employee engagement at Mashhad College of Medical Sciences?

Experimental background

Qureyshi et al. (2022) conducted a study entitled "The relationship between diversity management and organizational growth from the perspective of employees of sports and youth departments in Ardabil province". The research results showed a positive and significant relationship between diversity management and organizational growth (individual dimension, professional dimension and educational dimension) and there is a significant positive relationship between the dimensions of diversity management (using the benefits of diversity, positive contribution of diversity to the progress of the organization, lack of discrimination, respect, creating cultural measures of respect, appreciation to achieve better results, appropriate diversity, designing a policy to eliminate discrimination) and organizational growth (individual dimension, professional dimension and educational dimension).

Khayyat (2021) conducted a study titled "The impact of diversity on human resource management (case study: school principals in Birjand)". The research community consisted of school principals in Birjand city. The results indicate that there is a significant and positive relationship between organizational diversity and human resource management and its components. The results show that greater diversity in the organization improves human resource management.

Tendro Samskandeh and Bahnia (2021) conducted a research titled "Investigating the relationship between diverse human resource management and organizational performance of Mazandaran General Department of Education employees". The statistical population of the research consists of all employees of the General Directorate of Education of Mazandaran. The results of the research show that there is a significant relationship between diversity management of human resources and organizational justice, organizational commitment, career advancement, organizational culture and organizational knowledge in the General Directorate of Education of the province. Finally, there is a significant relationship between diversity management of human resources and organizational performance of human resources in the Provincial General Department of Education.

Ghanbari and Sharifi (2019) conducted a research titled "Providing a framework for managing the diversity of human resources in a broadcasting organization". In this research, a framework for managing diversity in the organization was proposed based on a theoretical review and a review of previous research and related models of diversity management. This framework includes team-organizational culture as a supporter of diversity, four principles of diversity management, and dimensions of diversity, an active diversity management strategy, four components of diversity management, and its consequences. This framework objectifies a way to plan for active and effective diversity management in the organization.

In a study entitled "The impact of diversity management on employee participation: the role of organizational trust and job insecurity", El Shabani et al. (2022) show that diversity management has a positive and significant effect on employee participation and that organizational trust and job insecurity are actually and significantly mediated through this communication. Furthermore, our findings help to confirm that by implementing appropriate diversity management practices and ensuring a trusting environment and excellent working conditions, organizational knowledge is highlighted and managers perform better.

Cullen (2021), in a study titled "Diversity Management: A Critical Review and Agenda for the Future", describes how this management method has emerged and been implemented, and critically identifies and discusses two important areas of disagreement or ambivalence in the discourse on diversity management. The first is about the dimensions of diversity management and the second is about its legitimacy. The first issue is about the prioritization of some dimensions, the difficulty in distinguishing one dimension from another, and the uneven attention to the specific effects of each dimension.

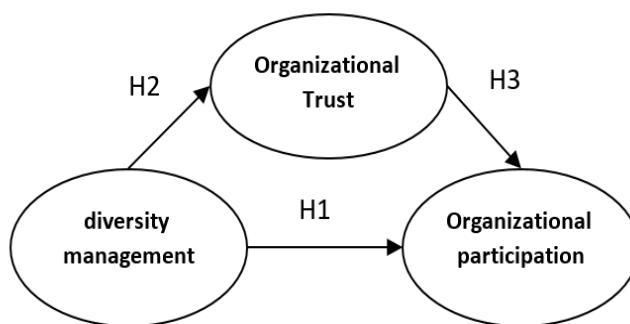
Li et al. (2021) in a research entitled "Managing Diversity in China's Organizational Context: The Impact of Workforce Diversity Management on Employees' Job Participation" examined the impact of workforce diversity management on employee job participation in the Chinese organizational context. The findings of this study showed that workforce diversity management has a positive and significant effect on employee job participation. In addition, the results showed that person-job fit and employee commitment partially mediate the relationship between workforce diversity management and employee job performance.

Khuram and Gianjilo (2019) in a research entitled "Ethnic diversity and knowledge sharing: an organizational perspective" using a qualitative research method including in-depth interviews show that organizations that are known as ethnically diverse require different knowledge. In addition, ethnic diversity is related to organizational knowledge sharing.

Ingbedion et al. (2019) in a research entitled "Diversity Management for Organizational Efficiency" sought to find the impact of diversity management on organizational efficiency through conflict management, cultural diversity, and employee perception, as well as teamwork and employee work attitude. The results show that cultural diversity management significantly affects diversity management through employees' perception of conflict. In addition, managing diversity and teamwork significantly affects organizational effectiveness.

Josefo Weeks (2017) in a research entitled "Managing Diversity and Trust: A Systematic Literature Review" Findings: First of all, the results of this study conclude that very few publications ranked as business and social sciences, diversity management And they form trust together. Therefore, the analyzed area seems to be an attractive field for further research. Among the existing literature, seven key research areas were identified that represent different approaches to the relationship between trust and diversity management.

According to previous internal and external researches, the relationship between diversity management, job participation, organizational trust and job insecurity is a fully accepted issue. However, many academic studies have not been conducted in the country regarding this topic, and on the other hand, no study has been conducted in the country that has investigated the relationship between the four variables at the same time. Therefore, in the current research, after reviewing the subject literature and determining the conceptual model of the research, the correctness of this model is investigated in a field study and using an experimental experiment. In this way, the findings of such a research have higher reliability and become practical.



Research purposes

Identifying the impact of diversity management on employee participation with regard to the role of organizational trust in medical science employees of Mashhad

Identifying the impact of diversity management on employee participation

Identifying the impact of diversity management on employees' organizational trust

Identifying the impact of organizational trust on employee participation

Hypotheses

Diversity management has an effect on employee participation, considering the role of organizational trust in Mashhad medical science employees.

Diversity management has an effect on the participation of Mashhad medical science employees.

Diversity management has an impact on the organizational trust of Mashhad medical science employees.

Organizational trust has an effect on the participation of Mashhad medical science employees.

RESEARCH METHOD

The purpose of this research is in the field of applied research. Also, based on the nature and method, the current research is a descriptive-survey research with a structural equation approach. The statistical population was all the employees of the University of Medical Sciences, and 373 people were selected as the sample size using the stepwise cluster random sampling method. Library resources such as books, articles, theses, internet, documents and digital texts were used to collect information on theoretical foundations and research literature. In order to obtain general information about the society, including age, educational status, etc., the method of examining documents has been used. Also, other information in the field of subject literature, determination of theoretical framework and indicators will be used from the resources available in the library which contains books, magazines, theses and scientific reports. A questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire used in this research is the standard questionnaire of Al-Shabani et al. (2022) with 22 items. The questionnaire consists of two parts: the first part includes demographic questions to identify the demographic characteristics of the sample. The second part includes specialized questions. The general questions include three questions about the respondents' personal characteristics. These questions include: gender, age, level of education and work experience. To check the validity of the questionnaire, the content validity method is used; this means that the questionnaire has been studied by a number of experts and professors in the field, and the necessary adjustments have been made in accordance with their opinions. Table (1) shows the number of questions and scales of the questionnaire:

Table 1: variables, factors and value of factors in the questionnaire

Source	Scale	The value of the criteria	Number of questions	Number of questions	Variable
(2022) .Al-Shabani et al	sequential	likert	1-6	6	Diversity Management
(2022) .Al-Shabani et al	sequential	likert	7-15	9	Job Participation
(2022) .Al-Shabani et al	sequential	likert	16-22	7	Organizational Trust

The pattern of answering the questions is a five-point Likert scale. If the subject chooses the option I completely agree, he will be awarded a score of 5, I agree with the option, score 4 for the option neither agree nor disagree (I have no opinion), score 3 and I disagree with the option, score 2 and completely disagree with the option score 1 It is given to him. The reliability coefficient of the subscales of this questionnaire has been reported based on Cronbach's alpha for diversity management 0.81, job participation 0.79 and organizational trust 0.93. Al-Shabani et al. (2022) reported the validity of this questionnaire with confirmatory factor analysis method as favorable. Also, in his research, the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire using the Cronbach's alpha method for the components of diversity management, employee participation, and organizational trust was obtained as 0.83, 0.86, and 0.77, respectively, and confirmatory factor analysis indicators showed that all items, had a significant factor load on their factors, which indicates the favorable validity of this questionnaire.

It should be noted that in order to comply with ethics in the research, all the participants were assured about the confidentiality and protection of information and the purpose of the research was explained to them. After gaining trust, the questionnaires were distributed among the participants. Also, to examine the causal relationships between the variables in a consistent way, the structural equation technique of SmartPLS software has been used.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The results of the analysis of the data obtained from the statistical sample of the research show that most of the respondents are male (63.3%), the average age is between 31 and 35 years, the average years of employment is 9.71, 56% are single and 44% were married and most of the respondents had a bachelor's degree. Now, the fit of the conceptual model of the research is examined according to the model analysis algorithm in the PLS method. In this method, the fit of the research model is evaluated in three parts: the measurement model, the structural model, and the general model according to the indicators specific to self-evaluation.

The fit of the measurement model: The fit of the measurement model will be examined using three reliability criteria of the index (factor loading coefficient, Cronbach's alpha coefficient, and composite reliability), convergent validity and divergent validity. The results of Cronbach's alpha coefficients, composite reliability and convergent validity are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Fit of measurement models

AVE	R ²	Composite Reliability CR	Communality	Cronbach's alpha	Redundancy	Variables
0/552	-	0/881	0/552	0/881	-	<i>Diversity Management</i>
0/564	0/884	0/920	0/564	0/919	0/523	<i>Job Participation</i>
0/556	0/646	0/900	0/566	0/905	0/578	<i>Organizational Trust</i>

In order to achieve the reliability and validity of the second-order hidden variables, these values have been manually calculated. The results indicate that Cronbach's alpha coefficients, composite reliability and convergent validity for the diversity management variable are 0.881, 0.881 and 0.552, respectively, for the employee participation variable 0.919, 0.920 and 0.564 for the variable Organizational trust is 0.905, 0.900 and 0.566. As can be seen, Cronbach's alpha values, combined reliability and convergent validity for the research variables were calculated higher than 0.7 and 0.5, respectively, which indicates the appropriate reliability and validity of the models. Finally, in order to measure divergent validity, Fornell and Larcker state that the AVE for each construct should be greater than the shared variance between other constructs.

Table 3: Fronel and Larcker matrix of the research model

Employee Participation	Diversity Management	Organizational Trust	Variable
		0/752	<i>Diversity Management</i>
	0/743	0/721	<i>Organizational Trust</i>
0/751	0/612	0/635	<i>Job Participation</i>

The square root of AVE reported for each construct (principal diameter) is greater than its correlation with other constructs of the model, which indicates acceptable divergent validity for measurement models. After ensuring the measurement models through the reliability test, convergent validity and divergent validity, the results of the external model can be presented.

Fit of the structural model and the general model of the research: the relationship between the investigated variables in each of the research hypotheses has been tested based on a causal structure with the PLS partial least squares technique. According to the data analysis in PLS software, all significant coefficients were reported greater than 1.96, which shows the significance of the relationships. These values are presented below to confirm the research hypotheses (Figures 1 and 2).

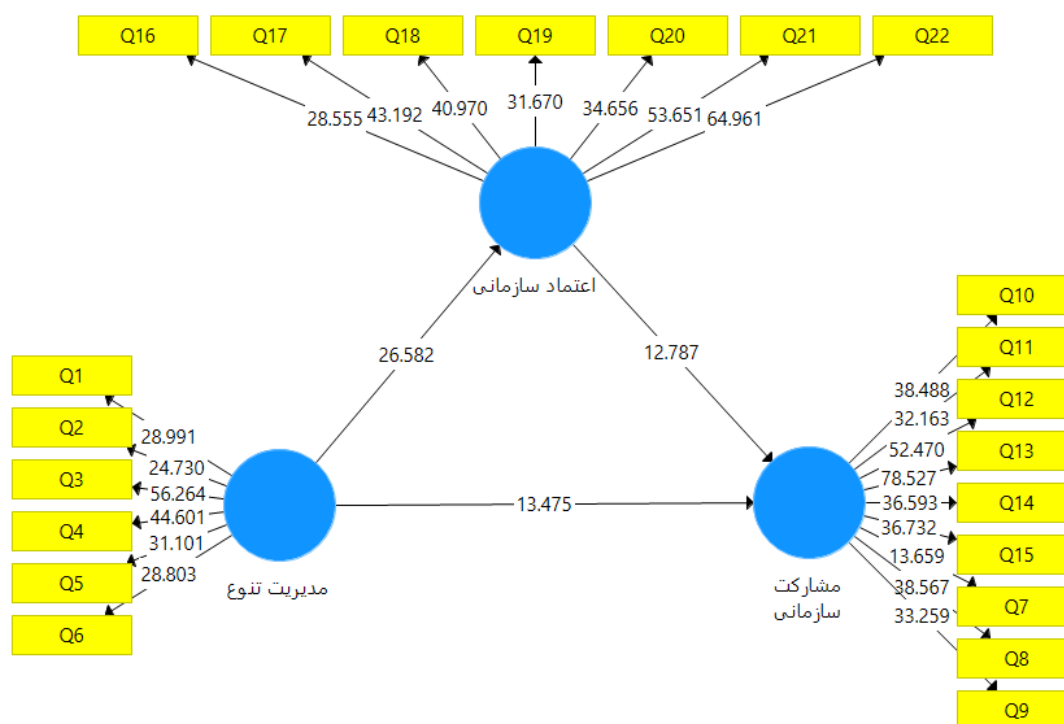


Figure 1: Structural equation modeling of research hypotheses; Significance mode of path coefficients

After checking the significance of research hypotheses, it is time to check the intensity of these effects. Figure 2 shows the standardized path coefficients between the variables.

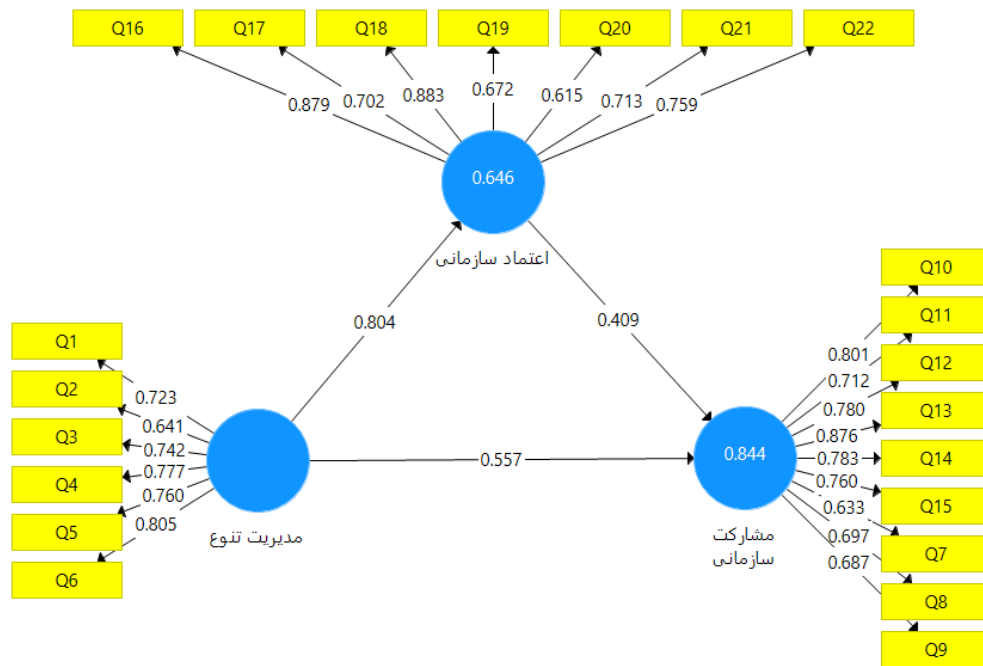


Figure 1-4: Structural equation modeling of research hypotheses; mode of path coefficients

The second criterion for checking the fit of the structural model is the R2 coefficients related to the endogenous hidden variables of the model.

The third criterion is Q2, which determines the predictive power of the model and is calculated for all the endogenous structures of the model. Unlike covariance-based models, the PLS model lacks multiple fit indices. But according to Amato et al. (2004), the GOF index in PLS can act like the general fit indices of the model and used it to check the validity or quality of the PLS model in general. This index is between one and zero, which values are close to a suitable quality indicator of the model (Vinzi et al., 2010).

GOF is equal to the geometric mean of the average redundancy index and the average coefficient of determination (R2), which is calculated using the following formula:

$$GOF = \sqrt[2]{0.561 \times 0.745} = 0.647$$

Wetzles et al. (2009) introduced three values of 0.01, 0.25 and 0.36 respectively as weak, medium and strong values for GOF. The calculated GOF for the current research model is equal to 0.647, which indicates the strong fit of the model.

The summary of the results related to the hypothesis test is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of hypothesis testing

Test result	t statistic	Path coefficient			The dependent variable	Mediator	independent variable	Hypothesis number
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Proving A Theory	475/13	0.736	0.329	0.557	Employee participation	Organizational Trust	Diversity Management	First
Proving A Theory	475/13	0.557	-	0.557	Employee participation	-	Diversity Management	Second
Proving A Theory	582/26	0.804	-	0.804	Organizational Trust	-	Diversity Management	Third
Proving A Theory	787/12	0.409	-	0.409	Employee participation	Organizational Trust	-	Fourth

The results of structural equation modeling show that since the direct path of diversity management on employee participation, the absolute value of the t statistic is 13.475, and diversity management on organizational trust and organizational trust on employee participation, respectively, with the values of the t statistic, 582. 26.787 And 12.787 are significant (t value is greater than the 1.96 level), so diversity management has an impact on the participation of Mashhad Medical Sciences employees either directly or indirectly. In addition, the direct effect of diversity management It is equal to 0.557 on the participation of Mashhad medical science employees and also the indirect effect of diversity management on the participation of Mashhad medical science employees through the mediating variable of organizational trust is equal to $(0.804 * 0.409 = 0.329)$ which according to the values The significance of these coefficients, it can be concluded that the mediating role of organizational trust is confirmed, so the researcher's main hypothesis is confirmed with 95% confidence.

Also, in the path of diversity management on employee participation, the absolute value of the "t" statistic, 13.475, is significant (the t value is greater than the level of 1.96), so the zero hypothesis is rejected and the one hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, diversity management has an effect on the participation of Mashhad medical science employees. In addition, the effect of diversity management on the participation of Mashhad medical staff is equal to 0.557, which is a positive and direct effect. Therefore, the researcher's first sub-hypothesis is confirmed with 95% confidence.

In the way of management of diversity on the organizational trust of employees, the absolute value of the "t" statistic, 26.582, is significant (the value of t is greater than the level of 1.96), so the zero hypothesis is rejected and the one hypothesis is confirmed. So diversity management has an effect on the organizational trust of Mashhad medical science employees. In addition, the effect of diversity management on the organizational trust of Mashhad medical staff is 0.804, which is a positive and direct effect. Therefore, the researcher's second sub-hypothesis is confirmed with 95% confidence. In addition, in the path of organizational trust on employee participation, the absolute value of the "t" statistic, 12.787, is significant (the value of t is greater than the level of 1.96), so the zero hypothesis is rejected and the one hypothesis is confirmed. So, organizational trust has an effect on the participation of Mashhad

medical science employees. In addition, the effect of organizational trust on the participation of Mashhad medical staff is 0.409, which is a positive and direct effect. Therefore, the researcher's third sub-hypothesis is confirmed with 95% confidence.

DISCUSSION

In our research, we were able to propose several theoretical and managerial concepts. By applying this study, we managed to go beyond the up-to-date conceptualization of diversity management and cover the theoretical and empirical gaps in the literature that links employee engagement with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and leadership styles. And where previous researchers, despite the changing world and the increase of migration movements, highlighted the importance of diversity management, which currently does not exist in most governmental and non-governmental organizations and in some managers' cultures. First, we were able to successfully confirm the significant impact of diversity management not only on employee motivation and satisfaction, but also on their engagement. Second, we showed that organizational trust can be considered as a mediating variable between diversity management and employee engagement, because diversity management is the best way to ensure fairness, respect and appreciation, which can also help to increase the level of organizational trust. Slow it is then highly regarded as an important factor for employees to focus on their work, to feel concerned about the issues of the whole organization, and to feel motivated and engaged. We managed to confirm that the lack of diversity management can lead to higher levels of job insecurity, job injustice and less fair pay, which in turn negatively affects employees' organizational citizenship behaviors and their engagement towards their jobs and roles.

Decreases

In addition to the theoretical contributions mentioned earlier, managerial implications were also accessible and it is important to highlight them. First, it seems obvious that managing diversity in the workplace today is an important and growing concern, and it is widely cited from managerial perspectives that most managers should strongly consider it in their organizational culture. However, this is less common for managers, which is why our study opens up a good development field for this topic. We suggest that managers working in service organizations increase their general awareness of diversity in the workplace by creating diversity during the hiring process, by hiring people of different backgrounds, ages, genders, and cultures, etc., and after Strengthen those working relationships. In addition, internal policies should be implemented with the aim of minimizing violations and ensuring the principles of equal treatment. We believe that providing appropriate training in conflict management, teamwork and collaboration is critical to the engagement and flourishing of a diverse workplace. Second, we pointed out how organizational trust can be important for dealing with diversity in Hungarian service companies and how it can affect employee engagement. It is absolutely important to know that the implementation of trust in the organization is not only the responsibility of the managers but also the responsibility of the employees.

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