

Diversity Management and Organizational Performance in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Purpose:

The main purpose of research is to examine the relationships between diversity management and organizational performance along with the fostering role of leadership dimensions.

Methodology:

Diversity management practices have been measured using the EPDMP scale on a sample of 514 employees from organizations across Pakistan and data were collected from employees of universities. The PLS-SEM was used as the main technique for data analysis.

Findings:

Results show that higher workforce diversity does not automatically produce inclusive climate-specific diversity inclusive leadership dimensions are required to support diversity environment where employees feel valued and appreciated. Further, the results confirm that the diversity-inclusive leadership dimensions moderate the relationship between diversity management and organizational performance.

Conclusions:

The study concluded that diversity management has a positive and significant direct impact on organizational performance. Therefore, policymakers need to devise human resource statutes, rules, regulations, policies, and practices that promote a heterogeneous workforce in organizations and offer equal opportunities to all employees unrestricted by individual employee identities such as gender, race, ethnicity, education, religion, function, and abilities.

Practical implications:

The findings are very helpful for HR managers for effective diversity management to enhance their organizational performance.

Originality/value:

The study explains the association of diversity management practices and organizational performance and moderating role of diversity leadership dimensions.

1. Introduction

Workforce diversity, without a doubt, is a highly significant asset of organizations in Pakistan. Globally, organizations are becoming more diverse which necessitates the incorporation of diversity management practices by the HR managers in their respective organizations. Organizations are facing challenges in managing a diverse workforce in general and gender and ethnicity (The Biggest Challenges Companies Face in Making Diversity and Inclusion Successful, n.d.). That is why diversity management has become a critical element for organizational leadership to manage workforce diversity to enhance organizational performance (Nguyen et al., 2022). The growth of gender and ethnically diverse employees has achieved successful management of workforce diversity as a business case for organizations (Roberson et al., 2017). Consequently, corporations are developing strategies, rules, regulations, and policies to manage their diverse employees to avoid the resulting challenges of conflict and lack of coherence of diverse employees in their teams, etc. Thus, there is considerable scholarly important consideration on how to efficiently manage the diverse employees in organizations and its possible consequences on organizational performance (Nguyen et al., 2022). This leads to the growing interest of professionals, and academicians in identifying the controllable factors for efficient diversity management in Pakistan.

Diversity is the combination of differences and similarities of employee dimensions, including gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, socioeconomic background, education level, tenure, and other characteristics within an organization (Choi & Rainey, 2010; Hoang et al., 2022). Diversity management refers to the organization's rules, regulations, policies, programs, and practices to promote a heterogeneous workforce at the workplace and to offer equal opportunities to all employees unrestricted by individual employee identities such as gender, race, ethnicity, education, religion, function, and abilities. There are different views of diversity management. The first view of diversity management is traditional, which undertakes affirmative action (AA) and equal employment opportunity (EEO) in the recruitment and selection process. The main objective of this type of diversity management is to ensure the adequate representation of all groups including women and minorities in organizations. The next stage of diversity management focused on different management approaches regarding diverse employee collaborations, retention, and performance. The third and more comprehensive approach includes all the elements of affirmative action (AA), equal employment opportunities (EEO), employee collaborations, retention, and performance. This approach considers all workforce diversity-relevant systems, processes, and programs under the comprehensive diversity management system (Pitts, 2009). Diversity Management includes all those rules, regulations, policies, guidelines, policies, and practices that work as performance enhancers of the organizations through increased acceptability, recognition, innovation & creation, positive image, thinking style, and behavior of employees. Therefore, Diversity Management acts beyond the traditional rules and changes the overall organizational environment to effectively manage its diverse workforce from the perspective of Strategic Human Resource Management (Thomas, 1990).

The employment scenario is changing very speedily in Pakistan due to the increasing trend of a diverse workforce (Ahmed, 2020). Therefore, there is a need to know the effects of workforce diversity management on organizational performance to focus on this emerging area of human resource management. Further, to satisfy them in every phase of the economic cycle, diversity management is an integral element of strategic human resource management (HRM). The rules, regulations, and policies that add up to the diversity

management role vary among organizations, including family-friendly regulations, training programs, mentoring, and coaching opportunities (Pitts, 2009). The private and public sector organizations need to develop and implement diversity management rules, regulations, and policies to recruit, retain and develop a diverse workforce to increase organizational performance.

There are two different theories of diversity and inclusion i.e., Social Categorization Theory (SCT) and Optimal Distinctive Theory (ODT) As per Social Categorization Theory, individuals raise their social identity through the social categorization process that supports the demographically similar group and team members and show biases towards other demographically divergent group members (Moon, 2018; Moon & Christensen, 2020). The SCT advocates that an individual tends to maintain a higher level of self-esteem attained via social comparisons with other members of the group (Williams, K. Y., 1998). Based on these social comparisons, individuals classify & distinguish themselves from others into social categories according to their demographic's attributes of ethnicity, gender, race, and, religion and show favoritism and support towards similar members of their group but defamation and degradation towards other non-similar group members and results in intergroup bias and conflicts in the organizations (Choi, 2009). The major premise of social categorization theory is that individuals classify based on the social information each other. Ethnicity, age, and sex are the main dimensions of the social categorization premise (Stolier & Freeman, 2016). The major assumption of SCT is that diversity is harmful to employee performance due to severe relational conflicts arising from the dissimilarities among diverse employees (Moon & Christensen, 2020).

On the other hand, diversity and inclusion are supported by ODT. As per ODT, all individuals have opposing needs that activate simultaneously, i.e., belongingness and uniqueness, and tend to grow their perception of one's inclusion (Oberfield, 2016) in a social group. Inclusion is the concept to which an individual employee feels that she or he is a valuable and respectable member of the team. Belongingness means an individual's desire to establish and maintain interpersonal relations with other individuals in a team. Uniqueness means, the desire of an individual to be distinctive from other relevant individuals. Individuals need to balance these two opposing necessitate to feel a sense of inclusion to achieve an ideal level of their social identity. Therefore, ODT proposes that organizational leadership can manage their employees having different characteristics by forming a work environment in which the employee feels included (Shore et al., 2011). The major assumption of information/decision-making theory (ODT) is that workforce diversity may be a human resource capital of different perspectives that enhances decision-making quality and employee performance (Moon & Christensen, 2020). Further, the ODT proposed that diverse employees outperform their similar counterparts. The most important assumption of ODT is that diverse team composition may offer a substantial pool of task-related resources, including knowledge, skills, abilities, and unique inspirations that enhance organizational performance (King et al., 2009). The existing research on diversity management practices has primarily been focused on advanced countries like Australia, the UK, the USA, Netherlands European countries, etc., (Yadav & Lenka, 2022) but has paid less attention in Pakistan to how gender and ethnic diversity-related differences are managed effectively to enhance organizational performance. In this paper, we study the associations of diversity management practice and organizational performance with moderating role of leadership in Pakistan.

Managing diversity improves an inclusive environment, leading to increase organizational performance. Leaders face continuous pressure to ensure gender diversity in organizations

(The Biggest Challenges Companies Face in Making Diversity and Inclusion Successful, n.d.). Diversity literature shows less research on diversity management and leadership dimensions to improve organizational performance in Pakistan. Hence, it needs investigation, of the role of leadership, in impacting diversity management practices that enhance organizational performance. The study investigates the impact of diversity-inclusive leadership dimensions as moderators between diversity management practices and organizational performance. This research assumes that workforce diversity management human resource practices with effective leadership play a very critical role to enhance organizational performance in Pakistan. Presently there is a huge gap in Pakistani organizations concerning the ratio of men and women employees. There is also very less empirical research regarding effective diversity management processes, and policies. systems and structures of effective diversity management to impact organizational performance (Shen et al., 2009). Moreover, Otake-Ebede (2018) recommended further testing of the EPDMP scale done in other countries to determine more authoritative evidence of its reliability and validity by including other dimensions of workforce diversity of age, religion, etc. along with gender and ethnicity. Therefore, leaders can instigate such a sense of inclusion by engaging in two different dimensions and behaviors: stimulating all members to fully express their unique viewpoints and perspectives (Leroy et al., 2021). Leadership has been argued to be vital in fostering inclusion (Ohunakin et al., 2019) but an understanding of which certain leadership behaviors and dimensions nurture inclusion is lacking in the literature (Leroy et al., 2021). Therefore, we based on the above recommendations, we decided to conduct this research in Pakistan with the following objectives:

1. To study the existence of the perception of diversity management practices in organizations in Pakistan.
2. To measure the demographic diversity in organizations.
3. To study the impact of workforce diversity management human resource practices on organizational performance.
4. To investigate the moderating role of cultivating diversity benefits dimension of leadership concerning the relationship of diversity management practices and organizational performance.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. Theoretical Contribution

Based on the Social Identity/Category Theory (SCT) and Optimal Distinctive Theory (ODT), this research is being conducted to investigate the impact of diversity management on organizational performance with moderating role of leadership dimensions. After studying the relevant literature, this study used ODT theory and SCT and provided theoretical support to understand diversity management. Furthermore, the OD theory is enormously used in diversity management research. These theories are briefly explained in the next section for a better understanding of this research.

Workforce diversity refers to any kind of differences, including demographic and other characteristics in which employees categorize themselves and others into subgroups which has a major impact on the group and team interactions and subsequent consequences in the organizations (DiTomaso et al., 2007). Women's participation and inclusion in education and services both in public and private sectors have been on the speedy increase in Pakistan since the last decade, taking the university graduates and workforce to a more diverse in

the universities, workplace, and all profit and non-profit organizations (Ahmed, 2020). Those organizations that will embrace the women component of the labor market will be more able to benefit from their employees' full potential to improve organizational performance. In this way, their employee base will be stronger, and these organizations will be more capable to respond efficiently and effectively to the changing population needs (Pitts 2009). The total population of Pakistan is 207,774,520. The ratio of males to females is 1.06 females (Wazir & Goujon, 2019). The above statistics show that males and females are more or less equal in Pakistan in their numbers. The total number of men in Pakistan is 106,449,322, while the number of women of all ages is 101,314,780. It is evident from the above statistics that there is diversity in the existing workforce and the potential workforce in Pakistan. Therefore, it needs to be managed properly as workforce diversity is a double-edged sword in organizations (Guillaume et al., 2017). Workforce diversity is a great source of a wide range of innovations, skills, and ideas that can enhance the organizations' abilities to resolve organizational managerial issues and make more better decisions (Jehn & Bezrukova, 2004). Therefore, workforce diversity is an important factor where organizations can manage their diverse employees effectively to enhance their organizational performance.

2.2. Social Identity/Category Theory (SCT) and Optimal Distinctive Theory (ODT)

This Social identity theory focused mainly on inter-group relationships. Social identity theory is a theory of conflict and collaboration among groups, and it attributes how groups of people view and behave toward each other to the opportunities available to a team and its members to protect and promote their positive uniqueness (Hogg et al., 2017). According to the theory of social identity employees incline to categorize themselves in their organizations and others into several social categories, such as religion, gender, age, ethnicity, etc., (Ashforth & Mael, 2016). The social identity theory and optimal distinctive theory show the extent to which diverse workforce experience openness and the valuing of the differences of the employees in the organizations. The social category theory describes the connection between social constructs and personal identities that individuals assign to their affiliation with specific identity teams and groups (Mor Barak et al., 2016). The social category theory suggests that people have an inherent aspiration to fit into groups that provoke a constructive and distinctive identity and resultantly exclude those who are different from them due to such features (Hogg et al., 2017).

According to optimal distinctiveness theory, people instantaneously seek out resemblances with others while thinking about the need for distinctiveness. As per this theory, the individual feels the necessity to stay faithful to their original identities while also feeling regarded as a respected partner of the group at the same time. The inclusion depends on maintaining the balance between a shared identity and distinction from the group members (Randel et al., 2018). Social identities result from different factors including ethnicity and cultural background. Ethnic and cultural diversity refers to people that are from socially distinctive groups in the population. Their distinctiveness is either connected with evident biological, physical, and stylistic attributes or with less evident customs, beliefs and values, therefore ethnic and cultural diversity is more significant than less evident differences (Mayo et al., 2016). As per Social Categorization Theory, individuals raise their social identity by practicing social categorization processes that support demographically similar group members and show biases against other demographically dissimilar group members (Moon, 2018; Moon & Christensen, 2020). The SCT advocates that individuals are likely to maintain a higher level of self-esteem achieved through social comparisons with other

members of the group (Williams, K. Y., 1998). Based on these social comparisons, individuals classify & distinguish others and themselves into social categories according to their demographic attributes of ethnicity, religion, gender, and race and show favoritism and support towards similar members of their group but defamation and degradation towards other non-similar group members and results in intergroup bias and conflicts in the organizations (Choi, 2009).

2.3. Hypothesis Development

2.3.1. Diversity Management Practices

Diversity management literature reveals that the ODT theory proposes that organizations can manage their employees having different characteristics by forming a work environment where they feel included (Shore et al., 2011). It is very crucial to develop effective workforce diversity management policies and practices in Pakistan. It needs more efforts to adopt internationally developed human resource diversity management practices to manage a diverse workforce as compared to keeping the existing human resource rules and regulations intact. This emphasizes the importance of effective workforce diversity management in Pakistan. Several research reviews and meta-analyses have examined the impact of workforce diversity on teams and organizational performance and revealed that the connection between workforce diversity and its conclusions is complex, mixed, and equivocal (Guillaume et al., 2017). One of the reasons for the mixed and equivocal findings explained by diversity management scholars is the lack of a dependable and valid scale of measurement of the diversity management practices construct (Carstens & De Kock, 2017). Although there are certain measures of workforce diversity management, they lack precise scale development procedures concerning reliability and construct validity (Richard et al., 2013). The reliability and validity of the scale are essential to ensure that it measures the same concept as what is meant to measure by it in the study. Only one scale in the diversity management field was deemed essential for the measurement factors. Furthermore, if organizations have to establish a fairer and more inclusive workplace environment, they have to evaluate how their diverse employees perceive diversity management practices in their organizations. Existing research on human resource management focuses on organizations, instead of employee-focused research which is also a major limitation in the previous research (Godard & Delaney, 2000). Whereas perceptions of employees of reality are likely to affect their performance more than factual practices and policies of the organizations. Therefore, Lilian Otaye-Ebede (2018) developed a valid and reliable measure of workforce diversity management practices from the perspective of employees which was adopted for this research study, as the focus of this study is employee-centric.

As per ODT, all individuals have opposing needs that activate simultaneously, i.e., belongingness and uniqueness, and tend to grow their perception of one's inclusion (Oberfield, 2016) in a social group. Inclusion is the degree to which extent an individual employee feels that she or he is a valuable and respectable member of the team. Belongingness means an individual's desire to establish and maintain interpersonal relations with other individuals in a team. Uniqueness means, the desire of an individual to be distinctive from other relevant individuals. Individuals need to balance these two opposing desires to feel a sense of inclusion to achieve the ideal level of their social identity. Therefore, ODT proposes that organizations can manage their diverse employees by having effective diversity management practices in place. (Shore et al., 2011). Hence, based on the above literature, it can be assumed that workforce diversity management

policies and practices are related to organizational performance. Hence, we hypothesize that:

H1: Diversity management practices positively associate with organizational performance.

2.3.2. Moderation Impact of Diversity Inclusive Leadership Dimensions

This study advances the prior theory on inclusive leadership. Diversity inclusive leadership dimensions are the main constructs to better understand two leadership behaviors i) stimulating diverse employees to fully express their unique viewpoints and perspectives (harvesting benefits of diversity) and ii) facilitating beliefs about the value of differences (cultivating value in diversity beliefs) (Leroy et al., 2021). As per Guillaume et al. 2017, leadership has been observed to be an important contextual and circumstantial variable to support our knowledge of the workforce diversity to outcome association (Joshi & Roh, 2009) but very few research studies exist that investigated leadership dimensions as a moderator in Pakistan. Most of such studies investigated work team diversity impacts and a limited number of them looked at relational workforce demography and organizational outcomes. The role of leaders in the effective diversity management has been increasing (Guillaume et al., 2017; Paluch & Nishii, 2017). The literature has also shown that the value in workforce diversity beliefs generates more encouraging perceptions and responses to differences among group members (van Knippenberg et al., 2013) and as a result, group members notice and value the differences among them (Nishii, 2013). Similarly, more significant exchanges among the employees occur and the exploration of diverse feedback is increased (Kearney & Gebert, 2009).

Furthermore, it is the common belief that differences intrinsically embrace benefits and openings for the employees due to diversity of experiences, viewpoints, and perceptions which enhances the resources for adaptive change to work with differences, describe and learn from diverse perspectives and integrate different inputs (Mayo et al., 2016; Nishii, 2013). The SCT predicts the negative relations between workforce demographic diversity and organizational performance, which can be improved through the effective moderating roles of leadership and HR diversity management practices of the organizations. Hence, leaders can instigate a such sense of inclusion by engaging in two behaviors: stimulating all members to fully express their unique viewpoints and perspectives (harvesting benefits of diversity) and facilitating beliefs about the value of differences (cultivating value in diversity beliefs) (Leroy et al., 2021). How these two dimensions of leadership independently moderate the association of diversity management and organizational performance is the main focus of this study as the leaders are vital actors in shaping the workplace environment and motivating diverse employees to do the creative contributions to enhance organizational performance (Qu et al., 2015).

Harvesting benefits of workforce diversity necessitates vigorously welcoming all diverse employees to provide their distinct perspectives, strengths, and attributes by fostering the expression of ideas and crucial viewpoints (Leroy et al., 2021). It is more universal in nature than previous theories of inclusive leadership in that way that it denotes to appealing diverse employees to not only the expression of different views but also performs so in such a way that empowers them to be the words of their uniqueness rather than separated from their understanding. It entails that leaders elicit employees' distinct personal attributes and experiences that establish their full selves. This distinction is particularly important in the context of diversity management practices by pleasing everyone's voice, talents, and characteristics across manifold lines of difference as the leaders set the stage

for diverse employees' insight of being the insider and valuable member of the team (Shore et al., 2011). Research on leading a diverse workforce has recognized that when various identity categories are significant, leaders need to generate a possible social basis for diverse employees to benefit from their open exchange of different ideas and perceptions (Homan et al., 2020). Therefore, we propose that the positive influence of diversity management practices and organizational performance is conditional on leadership dimensions of harvesting the diverse beliefs and cultivating the value of diversity beliefs also. We contend that for stimulating organizational performance, leaders also have to encourage shared beliefs that differences between the diverse workforce imply an advantage (Buengeler et al., 2018)

Hence, leaders also should aggressively position differences as a genuine and positive view of the diverse workforce and cultivate diversity beliefs that personal differences are an advantage for the organizations (Dwertmann et al., 2016). The value of cultivating diversity beliefs has been demonstrated to produce better positive perceptions and reactions to differences among diverse employees (Homan & Greer, 2013; Mayo et al., 2016). Consequently, diverse employees are more expected to observe, be open, and value differences there (Nishii, 2013). Similarly, more important exchanges occur, in-depth information improves, and the evaluation of diverse feedback is motivated (Kearney et al., 2009). Furthermore, the collective belief that differences integrally embrace rewards and occasions for diverse employees as the variety of perspectives, experiences, and perceptions enriches them and proposes resources for the adaptive change, therefore, it assumed that there is an interactive relationship between harvesting the benefits of diversity and cultivating value-in-diversity beliefs with the team- derived inclusion such that the relationship between harvesting the benefits of diversity and team-derived inclusion is positive when cultivating value- in-diversity beliefs is high and negative when it is low. Hence, we hypothesize that:

H₂: Cultivating diversity benefits the dimension of diversity inclusive leadership positively associates with organizational performance.

H₃: Harvesting benefits of the diversity of diversity inclusive leadership positively associates with organizational performance.

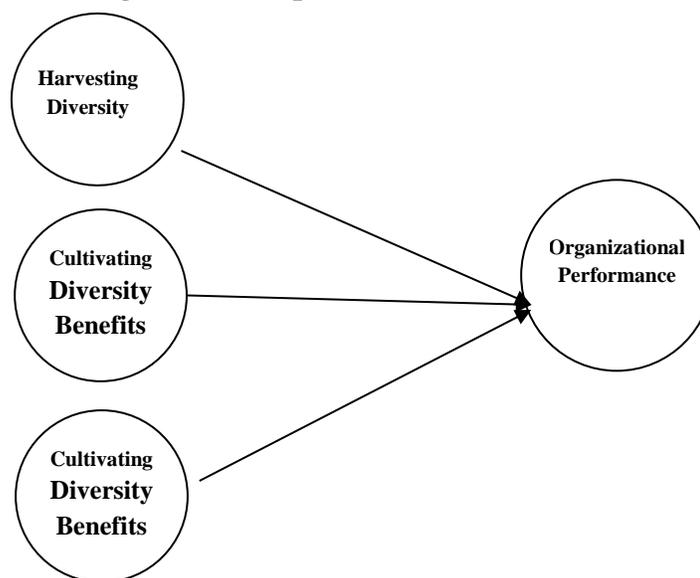


Figure.1. Conceptual Model of Study

Source: Author's own elaboration

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The research philosophy for this study is positivism because positivist scientist strictly focuses on scientific and empiricist methods to produce accurate knowledge, data, facts, and figures without any kind of influence of human biases and interpretations (Saunders et al., 2007). The research approach for this study is deductive as it tests the hypotheses. The research methods of this study are quantitative. Moreover, this study is a cross-sectional that utilized purposive sampling. The Probability sampling technique could not be used in this study because the universities did not share the complete list of their employees due to certain legal and confidentiality issues. Therefore, the non-probability technique of convenience sampling is used with precautionary measures as proposed by. Further, the population frame is the individual employees of universities in Pakistan, the sample size is 514 individual employees and the data collection tool is a structured questionnaire.

3.2. Survey Design

This study used a questionnaire for the data collection. Further, this method is very widely employed to understand individual behaviors in social sciences (Jamal et al., 2022). Moreover, our conceptual model consists of various societal variables that are very difficult to assess with the other methods, for example, case studies and experiments.

3.3. Sampling and Data Collection

Accordingly, data were gathered, through a survey questionnaire from the employees of the top five universities of all provinces and the federal capital of Pakistan including the top ten universities of Pakistan as per HEC ranking. According to Kim and Qu (2020), the questionnaire items of research are suited to the respondents. Normally for nonprobability sampling, a large sample size is required. As recommended by Hair, et al. (2013), a larger sample size is much better, therefore, to accomplish a bigger sample, this study adopted the procedure as recommended by Krejcie and Morgan, (1970), which employs a 3.5% of the error to determine the maximum sample size. Thus, the sample size for the current study was determined to be 514 for achieving significant results Since respondents of the study were employees of universities, the researcher decided to develop an online google form as the best possible solution to collecting data more efficiently and effectively. Therefore, for the collection of data for this study, the questionnaire was converted into google forms to save postal costs, reduce delivery time, and increase accuracy and reliability. The link to the questionnaire was forwarded to the employees of the universities including Vice Chancellors, Directors, Deans, Chairpersons, Registrars, Treasurers, Controllers of Examinations, Faculty members, and other employees of the universities in Pakistan, through emails and WhatsApp messages with follow-ups through friends and colleagues. The responses to the questionnaire in google form were made mandatory except for the name of respondents due to the issue of confidentiality. Therefore, the chances of the unfilled incomplete questionnaires and missing values were reduced to zero as google Forms did not allow the form submission unless the responses are made to each item of the questionnaire. The link to questionnaire, developed in google form, was circulated via email/WhatsApp to a total of 900 respondents. 550 filled questionnaires were received. However, 36 questionnaires were rejected as they look improperly filled with non-serious attitudes. The required sample of 514 responses was found satisfactory which took almost a year for this data collection. There were 514 filled questionnaires, and all responses were usable for data analysis. As the response rate is higher than 50%, therefore, it is deemed to be reasonable for the current study (Bell & Bryman, 2019). See Table 1.

Table.1. Validity of Instrument for Measurement Scales for the Study

Construct	No. of Items	Source	Reliability
Diversity Management Practices	10	(Otaeye-Ebede, 2018)	Factor Loading >.60 Cronbach alpha .93
Leadership Dimensions	10	(Leroy et al., 2021)	Leadership Diversity Dimensions
Perceived Organizational Performance Questionnaire	09	(Kundu et al., 2019)	Factor Loading >.60 Cronbach Alpha .89

Source: Author's own elaboration

3.4. Sample Description

It shows that out of 514 respondents, 25.7 % were from the private sector and 74.3% were from the public sector. Further, 49.2% from management and 50.8% from faculty. Concerning gender diversity, 75.1% were male, .4% were transgender and 24.4% were female. Regarding religious diversity, 99.2% were Muslims, .4% were Hindus and .4% were Christian. In connection with ethnic diversity, Baluchi was 3.5%, Pashtun were 13.2%, Punjabi was 73%, Sindhi was 6.4%, Kashmiris were 2.7% and Others were 1.2%. The age of the respondents was ranging from 19 to 60 years (mean age was 33.73 years and the Std. Deviation was 10.312 years). The number of years worked ranges from 18 to 60 (mean number of years was 8.28). It shows that the current study sample is well spread over all demographic categories and therefore is a true representative of all demographic categories in Pakistan. As the collection of data was made from universities of Pakistan; hence, the level of education of respondents was very high. The Ph.D. degree holders were 31.7%, MS/MPhil (18 years' education) degree holders were 34.2%, BS/Master (16 years' education) degree holders were 30.2% and BA (14 years' education) degree holders were 3.9%.

3.5. Data Analysis

Partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was applied through Smart PLS 3.0 to identify the structural model and measurement model. The main reason that the Smart PLS 3.0 is chosen is that the analysis of the Smart PLS is considered one of the best statistical procedures for the structural equation modelling, which can analyze both measurement model and structural model simultaneously (Hair et al, 2013). Smart-PLS is much better to measure the complex models. The study supported the Smart-PLS due to its model verifiability, reliability and validity (Jamal et al., 2022). The analysis of the Smart PLS is considered one of the best statistical procedures for the structural equation modelling, which can analyze both structural model and measurement model simultaneously (Hair et al, 2013).

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Common Method Bias (CMB)

The CMB happens when the instrument establishes a bias and the bias in the data collection due for the overlapping among the constructs (Jamal et al., 2022). We used the VIFs (collinearity variance inflation factors) procedure to examine the VIFs. The data have the CMB issues if the values of VIFs are more than 3.3 (Kock, 2015) and our results showed no issues of CMB.

4.2. Measurement Model

The Convergent validity, discriminant validity and factor loading of indicators of the construct were performed in measurement model with SmartPLS 3.0. The average variance

extracted, composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha, are used to determine the convergent validity (Jamal et al., 2022). The convergent validity establishes similarity in theoretical concepts.

Table.2. Composite Reliability (CR), Cronbach's Alpha and AVE

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Diversity management practices (DMP)	0.9176	0.919	0.932	0.6045
Cultivating diversity belief (CDB)	0.9197	0.92	0.9397	0.7571
Harvesting diversity beliefs (HDB)	0.9237	0.925	0.9425	0.7663
Organizational Performance (OP)	0.9324	0.934	0.9428	0.623

Source: Author's own elaboration

Table 2 shows that the Cronbach's alpha of the constructs was 0.9176 and 0.9324, AVEs of the constructs were 0.6045 and 0.623 and the corresponding CR values were also 0.932 and 0.9428, respectively. The values of Average Variance Extracted ≥ 0.50 (Hair et al., 2019), Cronbach's alpha > 0.70 , Ramayah (2011) and Composite Reliabilities > 0.70 , (Hair et al., 2019). Therefore, it fulfils the criterion of Cronbach's alpha, convergent validity, and reliability of instruments of this study.

Table.3. Measurement Model (Outer Loadings)

Constructs	Indicators	Factor Loading
Diversity Management Practices (DMP)	DMP1	0.7389
	DMP2	0.7062
	DMP3	0.7844
	DMP4	0.7994
	DMP5	0.854
	DMP6	0.7957
	DMP7	0.786
	DMP8	0.7268
	DMP9	0.7955
Leadership Diversity Dimensions		
Harvesting Diversity Beliefs (HDB)	HDB1	0.8433
	HDB2	0.8797
	HDB3	0.8837
	HDB4	0.8935
	HDB5	0.8759
Cultivating Diversity Benefits (CDB)	CDB1	0.8638
	CDB2	0.855
	CDB3	0.8962
	CDB4	0.8655
	CDB5	0.8694
Organizational Performance (OP)	OP1	0.8146
	OP2	0.7916
	OP3	0.7756
	OP4	0.752

OP5	0.7214
OP6	0.8143
OP7	0.8277
OP8	0.7438
OP9	0.7967
OP10	0.8464

Source: Author’s own elaboration

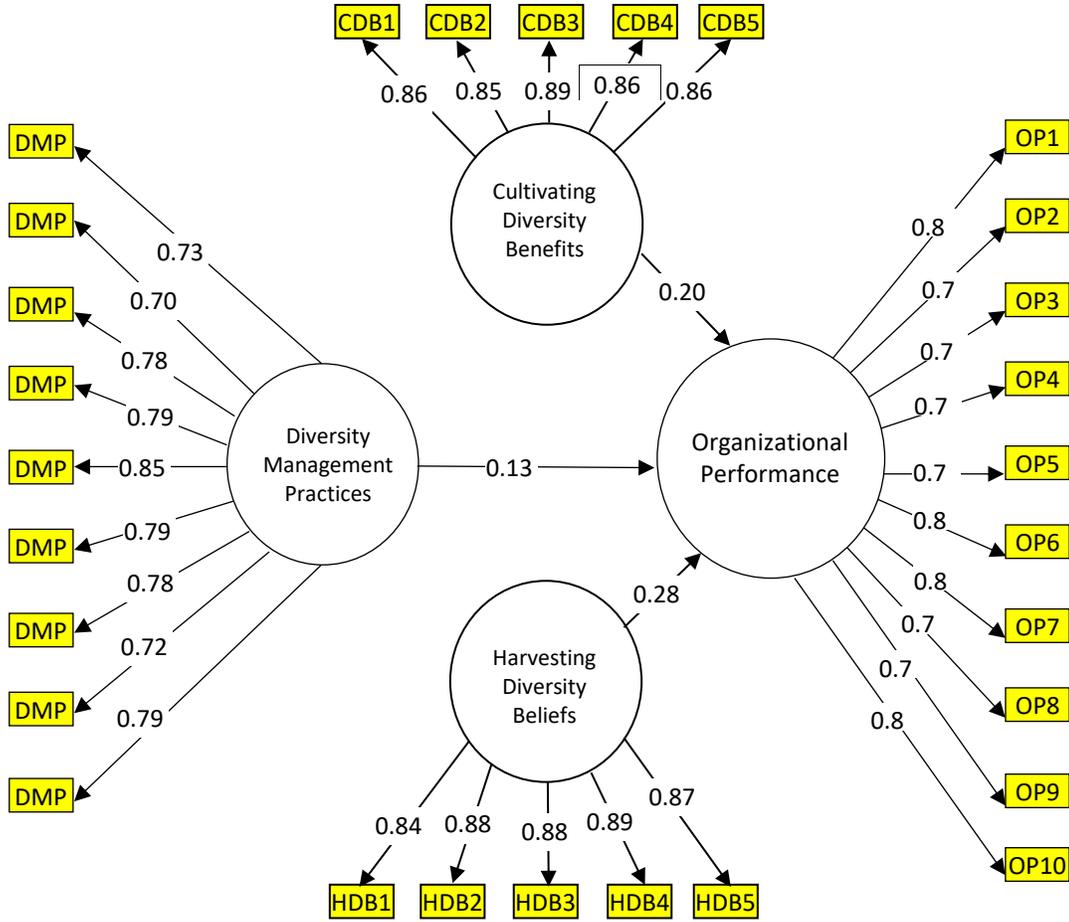


Figure.2. Measurement Model
Source: Author’s own elaboration

Table.4. Fornell–Larcker Criterion Indicates

	Cultivating Diversity Benefits (CDB)	Diversity Management Practices (DMP)	Harvesting Diversity Beliefs (HDB)	Organizational Performance (OP)
Cultivating diversity Benefits (CDB)	0.8701			
Diversity Management Practices (DMP)	0.5409	0.7775		
Harvesting diversity Beliefs (HDB)	0.848	0.493	0.8754	
Organizational Performance (OP)	0.653	0.5041	0.6542	0.7893

Source: Author's own elaboration

Discriminant validity is used for identification of the constructs that does not correlate with each other. It may be examined by Fornell Larcker criterion which is widely recommended by the researchers to establish validity of latent variables (Benitez et al., 2020). In this criterion, the AVE values are compared with the correlation of squared inter construct in the structural model. The shared variance of all constructs of model should not be higher than their AVE values (Hair et al., 2019). Table 4 indicates the results of Fornell-Larcker criteria indicated that diagonal values of the square root of average variance extracted are greater than the other values in their relevant rows. Table 4 shows that with respect to the measurement model, there is no issue of discriminant validity between the constructs in this research study.

4.3. Structural Model

After evidence that data has no issue of convergent and discernment validity, we examined the hypotheses. Table 5 shows the results of structural model from Smart. Result indicates that Diversity management practices (β 0.1377, $p < 0.000$) is positively associated with Organizational Performance. Result indicates that CDB (β 0.2025, $p < 0.000$) and HDB (β 0.2829, $p < 0.000$) positively and significantly moderate the association of Diversity management practices (DMP) and Organizational Performance (OP). Therefore, H1, H2 and H3 are accepted.

Table.5. Beta Overall

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
Direct effect					
Diversity management practices (DMP) -> Organizational Performance (OP)	0.1377	0.1433	0.0524	2.6287	0.0043
Cultivating diversity benefits -> Organizational Performance (OP)	0.2025	0.2021	0.0676	2.9968	0.0014
Harvesting diversity beliefs (HDB) -> Organizational Performance (OP)	0.2829	0.2808	0.0634	4.4651	0.000

Source: Author's own elaboration

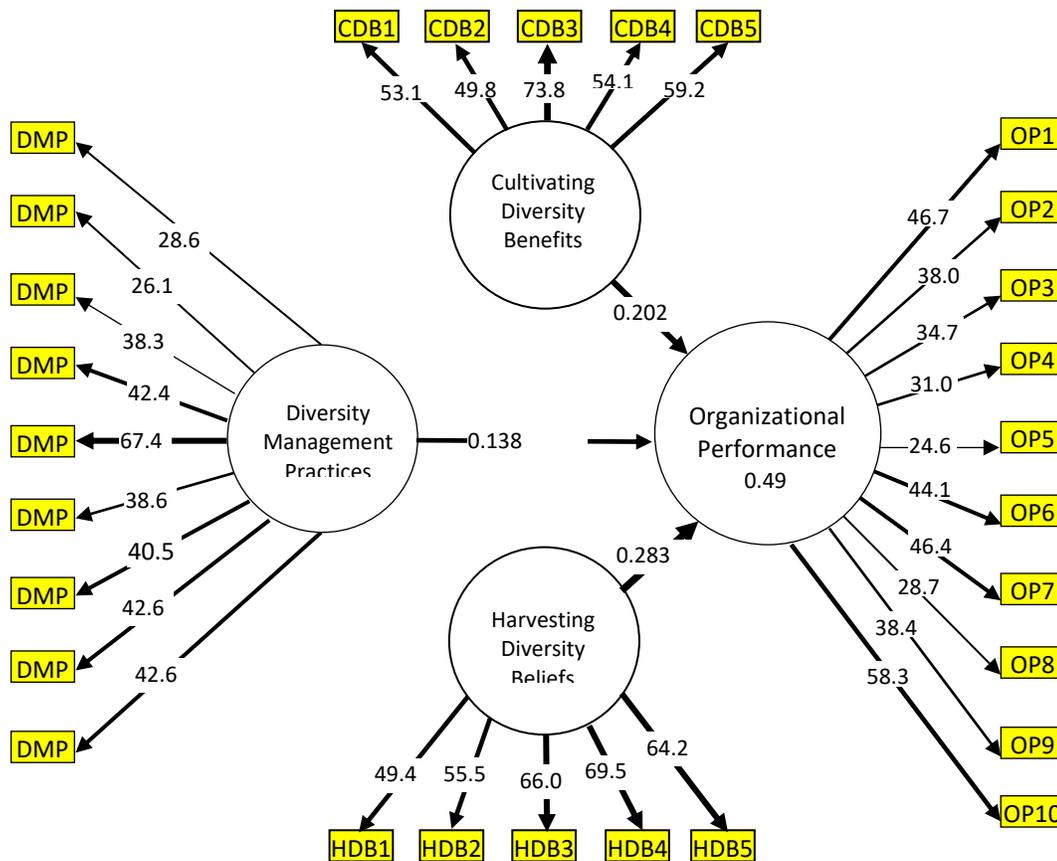


Figure.3. Structural Model
 Source: Author’s own elaboration

4.4. Discussion

To meet research objective 1, frequencies for demographic variables of the research study shows that with respect to the gender diversity, 75.1% were male and 24.4% were female. Regarding religious diversity, 99.2% were Muslims, .4% were Hindus and .4% were Christian. In connection with ethnic diversity, Baluchi was 3.5%, Pashtun were 13.2%, Punjabi were 73%, Sindhi were 6.4%, Kashmiris were 2.7% and others were 1.2%. As the data was collected from universities of Pakistan, therefore, the level of education of the respondents was very high. The PhD degree holders were 31.7%, MS/MPhil (18 years’ education) degree holders were 34.2%, BS/Master (16 years’ education) degree holders were 30.2% and BA (14 years’ education) degree holders were 3.9%.

Research objective 2 for this research was to study the existence of the perception of diversity management practices in organizations in Pakistan. As per the results of the present study, it was confirmed that not only the perception about the stated above diversity management practices exists in the sampled organizations of Pakistan but also, they have significant and positive impact on organizational performance in (Nguyen et al., 2022; Otaeye-Ebede, 2018). It was found that when employees observe that their organizations value workforce diversity through its effective implementation in their organizations, they provide high-quality services to the customers and resultantly increase in overall

organizational performance. Moreover, the results of this study also recommend that diversity management practices have effects on how employees identify with their organizations, such that they are more expected to stay in their organizations when they understand that the diversity management policies & practices are implemented fairly and effectively. Therefore, the results of this study can help leaders to evaluate DMP with respect to their own performance and to recognize their shortcomings with respect to the diversity management in their organizations. This research made a significant and major theoretical contribution to achieve the research objective number 2 of this research study by strengthening the research and awareness on diversity management practices in Pakistan and extends & complements the UK, Netherlands, USA and European countries-based literature on diversity management.

The Research objective no.3 for this research study was to investigate the relationship of diversity management practices and its effects on organizational performance. Results indicates that (β 0.2025, $p < 0.000$ and t -value is 5.1395) and satisfies all the criterion of path analysis. Hence, H1 for the current research study has been accepted and the study recognized the positive and significant relationship between diversity management practices and organizational performance. Moreover, the findings of this research study can guide human resource managers in evaluating and advancing the diversity management practices in their respective organizations, thereby, enhancing organizational performance. Our study supports the finding of previous studies (Nguyen et al., 2022; Otaye-Ebede, 2018). Hence, results of our study are fully consistent with previous research studies. Further, the results of this study are also in consistent with previous research studies which said that diversity management has proved positive links with organizational performance (Ashikali & Groeneveld, 2015; Groeneveld & Verbeek, 2012) thereby challenging administrators to manage a diverse workforce in their organizations effectively. Moreover, the results of present study also enlightened that the relationship of workforce diversity management practices and organizational is significant in higher education sector in Pakistan. This indicates that diversity management is a very important factor for organizational performance. The relationship of diversity management and organizational performance is explained by information decision theory and optimal distinctive theory for effective diversity management. It is therefore very important for organizations to formulate effective diversity management practices to enhance their organizational performance. Furthermore, diversity management is a very critical factor especially in higher education sector in Pakistan, where there more diverse students and faculty in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, etc. The results of present study indicate that the diversity management practices effect the workforce diversity with respect to the organizational performance. Further this study results add a new path for more research in this regard. In addition, the conclusions recommends that diversity management practices may have different impacts in other sectors like IT sector, manufacturing sector with different environments in Pakistan. Moreover, the findings of this research study can guide human resource managers in evaluating and advancing the diversity management practices in their respective organizations, thereby, enhancing organizational performance.

The Research objective 4 for this research study was to investigate the moderating role of cultivating diversity benefits dimension of diversity inclusive leadership on association between diversity management practices and organizational performance. Results indicates that (β 0.2025, $p < 0.000$ and T -value 2.6269) and satisfies all the criterion of path analysis. Hence, H2 for the current research study has been accepted it recognized a positive and significant moderation impact and supported that cultivating diversity benefits

dimension of diversity inclusive leadership positively moderates the association between diversity management practices and organizational performance. Our study supports the finding of previous studies stimulating workforce inclusion which claimed leaders need to clearly promote mutual values and beliefs that differences among the employees involve a benefit for the (Leroy et al., 2021; Van Dick et al., 2008). Further, the results of this study are also inconsistent with earlier research studies which said leaders need to enthusiastically position diversity as a positive aspect of the group and cultivate beliefs therein that such personal differences are assets for the organizations (Greer et al., 2012; Van Knippenberg et al., 2004). Moreover, results are also inconsistent (Mor Barak et al., 2022) (Nishii, 2013) who contended that leadership is not only restricted to team leaders but can also be institutionalized in organization, such as, the overall environment for inclusion in organization. Therefore, as per results stated above, it is proved that leaders stimulate diverse workforce inclusion, promote mutual values, and cultivate diversity beliefs to enhance the organizational performance in Pakistan. This shows that this dimension of leadership is very important factor for diversity management and organizational performance. It is therefore very crucial for organizational leadership in Pakistan to adopt this behavior of cultivate diversity beliefs to improve the organizational performance. Thus, leader's inclusiveness and conceptualization of cultivate diversity beliefs are very important to improve the organizational performance.

The Research objective 5 for this research study was to investigate moderation impact of harvesting diversity belief dimension of diversity inclusive leadership on association of diversity management practices and organizational performance. Results indicates that (β 0.2829, $p < 0.000$ and T-value -value 2.8714) and it satisfies all the criterion of path analysis. Hence, H3 has been accepted and study recognized a positive moderation relationship and supported that harvesting diversity belief dimension of diversity inclusive leadership (HDB) positively moderates the association between diversity management practices and organizational performance impacting the OP higher when the HDB belief is stronger as opposed to less strong. This shows that these dimensions of leadership are very important factor for diversity management and organizational performance. It is therefore very crucial for organizational leadership in Pakistan to adopt these behaviors of cultivate diversity beliefs to improve the organizational performance. Therefore, H1, H2 and H3 are accepted.

4.4.1. Theoretical Contributions

By examining the associations of workforce diversity management human resource practices and organizational performance with moderating role of leadership, the authors contribute to the prevailing body of knowledge greatly. The authors of this research study made a significant and major theoretical contribution by strengthening the research regarding diversity management practices in Pakistan and extends and complements the UK and US based literature on diversity management. Moreover, the outcome of this research directs the human resource manager in assessing and advancing the diversity management practices in their respective organizations, thereby, enhancing organizational performance. Based on the findings of this study, the organizational leaders can decide what diversity management human resource factors, policies and practices need to be addressed by them to enhance their organizational performance. By showing the effect of workforce diversity management policies and practices on organizational performance, we enable the human resource managers and the leaders and policy makers to devise such human resource statutes, rules, regulations, policies and practices with respect to the workforce diversity to helps organizations to enhance their organizational performance in

the shape of creativity, innovation, visibility, quality of decision making, productivity and employee satisfaction, which have already been proven in USA and UK, the benefits of diverse workforce such as gender, race, ethnicity, education, religion, function and abilities. The results of the present study concluded that the diversity management has positive and significant direct impact on the organizational performance. It has been concluded that higher workforce diversity does not automatically produce an inclusive climate, but a specific working environment is required to be created by the leadership to support workforce diversity where diverse employees feel valued and appreciated. Therefore, policy makers need to devise such human resource diversity management statutes, rules, regulations, policies, and practices to promote heterogeneous workforce at workplace and to offer equal opportunities to all employees unrestricted by individual employee's identities such as gender, race, ethnicity, education, religion, function, and abilities.

5. Implications

5.1. Theoretical Implications

The findings of present study offer various theoretical implications. For the present study, various relationships have been examined in the context of social categorization theory. The effects of workforce diversity management practices and moderating role of leadership on organizational performance were discussed. Research on diversity management has been done in different methodological contexts. Nevertheless, the present study offers a review and proper synthesis of workforce diversity and diversity management practices, leadership dimensions and organizational performance. This literature is very useful to understand the strengths and unpredictability of the relationships under various study conditions and environments. Further, the current study has implications for social science researchers who apply the survey data to describe diversity management. The theoretical implications can be summarized as 1) Research supports results of contemporary research in leadership and diversity management and 2) Research supports Optimal Distinctive Theory for inclusive environment in Pakistan.

5.2. Practical Implications

The findings of this study provide important perceptions to practitioners as well. Diversity management and leadership have proved to have some positive links with organizational performance thereby challenging administrators and organizational leaders to manage the diverse workforce in their organizations to bring value addition to increase the organizational performance. The effectiveness of workforce diversity management is reflected in the shape of increased performance due to creativity, innovation, visibility, quality of decision making, productivity and employee satisfaction. The current study will help leaders to formulate strategies for the diversity management practices in their organizations. The organization with strong diversity management rules, regulations, policies, programs and practices to promote their heterogeneous workforce by offering equal opportunities for all employees unhindered by individual employee's identities such as gender, race, ethnicity, education, religion, function and abilities will only survive in today's highly diverse workforce as the organizations are continuously getting flooded with diverse workforce with respect to gender in Pakistan. Therefore, the organizations leaders need to build the strong diversity management rules, regulations, policies, programs and practices and leaders need to implement them in true letter and spirit in their organizations.

6. Conclusion

6.1. Limitations and Future Research Directions

There are also certain limitations that need to be recorded for interpreting the results of this study. First, this study was conducted in higher education sector of Pakistan. The focus of the current study is on workforce diversity and diversity management. Secondly, the focus of this study is only the employees of universities recognized by HEC. Moreover, the research model is restricted to assess impact of diversity management practices and organizational performance. Fourth, the sample size is also restricted to a specific number of respondents for the current study. Although the data was not restricted to specific gender, age, education level, ethnicity, religion. However, during the collection of data, several factors dominated the others. For example, more than 75% of the respondents were male, whereas 24.4% were female, 49.2% were from management side and 50.8% were from faculty. As the data was collected from universities of Pakistan, therefore, the level of education of the respondents was very high. The PhD degree holders were 31.7%, MS/MPhil were 34.2%, BS/Master were 30.2% and BA were only 3.9%. Therefore, generalizability of this study needs a great attention. For its generalizability, the findings of this study need to be validated in other sectors of Pakistan like manufacturing sector for cross sector validation. Fifth, although the data was collected from all provinces as Baluchi were 3.5%, Pashtun were 13.2%, Punjabi were 73%, Sindhi were 6.4%, Kashmiris were 2.7%. but more than 73% were Punjabis, therefore, the results of the study could be different if the data is collected with equal number of respondents from all provinces of Pakistan. Last of all, the data is cross-sectional in nature and collected within a certain time period.

Based on the above said limitations of this study, the directions for future research work can be proposed. The present study is concentrating on higher education sector of Pakistan. The future studies can concentrate on other sectors of Pakistan. Secondly, the focus of the present study is only the employees who are working in universities in Pakistan. Future studies might focus on employees from manufacturing and other sectors of Pakistan. Thirdly, the research model in this study was designed to examine the impact of diversity management practices and organizational performance. Future studies should focus on other factors with moderated moderation impact of leadership and workforce diversity. Fourthly, the respondent for the existing study is also limited to a specific sample size mostly from the Punjab province of Pakistan. Future studies can also focus on other provinces of Pakistan with an equal number of respondents from each province. Moreover, future studies may also concentrate on generalizing the findings of the present study in other countries for more validation in a cultural context. Lastly, the data for this study was cross-sectional and collected within a specified period, the future studies can focus on longitudinal data in the same or different contexts. This study adopted the available questionnaires with a small number of modifications therein. Therefore, in addition to the questionnaire method used in this study, future research may consider the assessment of the constructs in alternative ways, including interviews and observations, which might contribute to the understanding of different characteristics of diversity management and organizational performance.

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and contributed to all sections including the introduction and overall structuring of the paper.

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