

Diversity management and performance: The mediating role of satisfaction and commitment at work

Gestão da diversidade e desempenho: O papel mediador da satisfação e do comprometimento no trabalho

Lindomar Pinto da Silva¹, Weruska Silva do Rosário² and Miguel Angel Rivera Castro²

¹Federal University of da Bahia, Salvador, BA, Brazil

²Salvador University, Salvador, BA, Brazil

Authors' notes

Lindomar Pinto da Silva is now a full professor at the Postgraduate Center of Administration of the Federal University of Bahia and at the Postgraduate Program in Administration of Salvador University; Weruska Silva do Rosário is now a student at the Postgraduate Program in Administration of Salvador University; Miguel Angel Rivera Castro is now a full professor at the Postgraduate Program in Administration of Salvador University and at the Department of Applied Social Sciences of the State University of Feira de Santana.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Lindomar Pinto da Silva, Avenida Reitor Miguel Calmon, 3rd floor, Vale do Canela, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, ZIP code 41110-903. E-mail: lindomarps@ufba.br

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Abstract

Purpose: This article analyzed the relationship between diversity management and individual performance, examining the mediating role of satisfaction and commitment in this relationship.

Originality/value: Diversity management has received attention from academia and organizations, given the need to promote equal opportunities for groups considered minorities in society. Therefore, it is important to understand the impacts that diversity management practices bring to organizations and individuals. There are few studies that address the impacts of diversity management on performance and even fewer studies that evaluate the mediating role of commitment and satisfaction in this relationship.

Design/methodology/approach: A quantitative method was used, structural equation modeling, to test the hypotheses proposed in the study, with data collected through a questionnaire, applied to Brazilian workers, between the months of May and December 2022, obtaining a non-probabilistic sample of 563 respondents.

Findings: The results showed that diversity management practices positively influence satisfaction and commitment, in addition to having a positive effect on individual performance when mediated by commitment. This means that commitment acts as a mediator between diversity management and performance, indicating that increasing diversity practices leads to increased commitment, which, in turn, raises workers' performance. These are important results both for organizations and for defending affirmative policies towards increasing diversity in organizations.

Keywords: diversity management, performance, commitment, satisfaction, mediation



Resumo

Objetivo: Este artigo analisou a relação entre gestão da diversidade e desempenho individual, examinando o papel mediador da satisfação e do comprometimento nessa relação.

Originalidade/valor: A gestão da diversidade tem merecido atenção da academia e das organizações, dada a necessidade de promoção da igualdade de oportunidades para os grupos considerados minorias na sociedade. Assim, é relevante entender os impactos que as práticas de gestão da diversidade trazem para as organizações e os indivíduos. Existem poucos estudos que abordam os impactos da gestão da diversidade no desempenho e ainda menos trabalhos que avaliam o papel mediador do comprometimento e da satisfação nessa relação.

Design/metodologia/abordagem: Foi utilizado método quantitativo com uso da modelagem de equações estruturais, para testar as hipóteses propostas no estudo, sendo os dados coletados por meio de questionário, aplicados a trabalhadores brasileiros, durante os meses de maio a dezembro de 2022, obtendo-se uma amostra não probabilística com 563 respondentes.

Resultados: Os resultados mostraram que práticas de gestão da diversidade influenciam positivamente a satisfação e o comprometimento, além de afetar positivamente o desempenho individual quando mediadas pelo comprometimento. Isso significa que o comprometimento atua como mediador entre a gestão da diversidade e o desempenho, indicando que aumentar práticas de diversidade leva ao aumento do comprometimento, que, por sua vez, eleva o desempenho dos trabalhadores. São resultados importantes tanto para as organizações quanto para a defesa das políticas afirmativas em direção ao aumento da diversidade nas organizações.

Palavras-chave: gestão da diversidade, desempenho, comprometimento, satisfação, mediação



INTRODUCTION

Diversity management comprises a set of organizational policies and practices for increasing the number of people from the various groups in society that have been excluded from the job market (Fleury, 2000; Dennissen et al., 2018). It has become relevant in recent years, especially since the 2000s, for several reasons (Roberson, 2019; Yadav & Lenka, 2020; Fraga et al., 2022). One of them is the fact that diversity management is positively related to several dimensions of organizations, such as creativity and competitiveness (Nóbrega et al., 2014), organizational culture, organizational trust (Migueles et al., 2021), talent attraction, and, especially, performance (Triguero-Sánchez et al., 2018).

A second reason is that the practice of diversity management is aligned with the United Nations' (UN) 2030 agenda (Nações Unidas Brasil, 2015), which established 17 sustainable development goals (SDG) for promoting social and economic equality, as well as environmental preservation. Among the 17 actions defined by the UN, at least seven address the issue of diversity, like SDG 5 (gender equality) and SDG 10 (reducing inequality). In turn, the World Economic Forum has also addressed the issue of diversity and inclusion through the Lighthouse programme, which "is an annual effort from WEF to bring to light, emphasize, and scale impactful initiatives for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)" (Madner et al., 2023).

Another relevant motivation is that Brazil shows significant inequality in the labor market (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística [IBGE], 2022). Considering the scenario for the year 2022, unemployment for white men was significantly lower than for non-whites or women. In addition, management positions in Brazilian companies are held mostly by white men, although the country has a larger population of women and black and brown people, showing how difficult it is for these groups to get a job in the labor market, in the first place, and then climb to the highest positions in companies, thus limiting their economic and social rise and the inequality between groups.

On the other hand, although governments have created laws and public policies to minimize the problem of outcast groups in the job market, these are insufficient to actually implement diversity in organizations (Rohden, 2023); therefore, convincing managers that diversity is a powerful performance facilitator is particularly relevant in Brazil, where companies still do not appreciate or understand its real value (Tomaz, 2022). It is in this context that this study seeks to contribute to analyzing the effects of diversity



management practices on organizational performance, using job satisfaction and commitment as mediating variables of this relationship (Moon & Christensen, 2020; Li et al., 2021). Few articles address the influence of diversity management practices on organizational performance, and even fewer use satisfaction and commitment as mediators of this relationship (Yadav & Lenka, 2020; Triguero-Sánchez et al., 2018).

The relationship between diversity management practices, satisfaction and commitment, and performance is based on the idea that individuals who belong to society's minority groups and already work in the organization, when noticing that it values hiring and inserting other individuals from these groups, tend to develop a more positive relationship with the organization and see it as a partner, leading to feelings of belonging and gratitude, which increases their satisfaction, commitment, and performance (Migueles et al., 2021; Ju & Li, 2019; Li et al., 2021; Brimhall, 2019).

Therefore, this study investigates the relationship between diversity management practices and organizational performance, with satisfaction and commitment as mediating variables. This study is timely for many reasons. According to Yadav and Lenka (2020), and Triguero-Sánchez et al. (2018), there are few studies that address this set of dimensions simultaneously: diversity management, performance, and employee satisfaction and commitment.

In Brazil, studies on diversity management have not approached these dimensions yet, dealing with the effects of gender diversity on boards of directors and on company performance (Nisiyama & Nakamura, 2018; Costa et al., 2019; Garcia-Blandon et al., 2022); and some examine the effect of diversity on organizational performance (Trigueiro-Sáches et al., 2018). However, we did not find any articles that tackle the dimensions we address here. For Roberson (2019) and Yadav and Lenka (2020), there is a lack of studies on diversity in developed countries, and even more in developing ones, like Brazil. Hence, this paper intends to fill this gap, in addition to helping strengthen the speech towards diversity in organizations, as described by the UN's SDG and the World Economic Forum.

To achieve this goal, this study is structured as follows: after this introduction, we present a theoretical discussion on the main concepts: diversity management, job satisfaction, and commitment. Next, we address the methodological procedures, followed by results and discussion. At the end, we present the final remarks.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Diversity management

Diversity management covers the group of practices and policies for hiring and promoting people who belong to historically marginalized groups (Fraga et al., 2022). For Dennissen et al. (2018, p. 2), diversity management is the “set of specific programs, policies, and practices that organizations have developed and implemented to effectively manage a diverse workforce and foster organizational equity”. Besides the idea associated with diversity management, according to which companies would be responsible for implementing or strengthening affirmative actions, with or without government’s involvement (Cox & Blake, 1991; Fleury, 2000), the definitions and arguments for implementing diversity management carry at their core the relation with improving individual and organizational performance. A group made up of diverse people – reflected in the plurality of knowledge, skills, cultures, and identities – would increase the capacity for creativity and innovation (Yadav & Lenka, 2020).

Diversity management seeks to manage working relationships, employment practices, and the internal configuration of teams, attracting and retaining professionals from minority groups (Fleury, 2000). For Van Knippenberg and Schippers (2007), diversity management must go beyond measures of representation and inclusion, adding training practices and inclusive leadership, developing intercultural competencies, and creating an organizational climate that values differences and fosters collaboration and mutual respect. Diversity management practices involve leaders’ commitment to having people from all groups that make up society in the company’s workforce, as well as the existence of policies and programs that stimulate diversity at the workplace, such as the recruitment of minorities and building awareness toward employee diversity (Choi & Rainey, 2010).

It involves the adoption of administrative measures that use personal or group attributes as resources for improving organizational performance (Dauth et al., 2023). Therefore, managing workforce diversity can bring benefits to employees’ performance, including increased satisfaction and commitment, besides encouraging innovation and creativity (Moon & Christensen, 2020).

Previous studies suggest a positive and significant relationship between diversity management practices and performance in organizations. This is

because these practices allow for the inclusion of people with different skills, knowledge, and competencies (Triguero-Sánchez et al., 2018). Diversity management also fosters creativity, innovation, and problem-solving abilities (Cox & Blake, 1991). In addition, according to Migueles et al. (2021), these practices also give rise to employees' sense of justice and trust toward the organization, leading them to make more efforts on its behalf, which increases performance (Li et al., 2021; Choi & Rainey, 2010). Therefore, we proposed the following hypothesis:

- **H1:** There is a positive relationship between managing diversity in the work team and individual performance at work.

Satisfaction at work and diversity management

Job satisfaction can be described as a multifaceted structure that involves cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects of the worker regarding several elements of the job, both intrinsic and extrinsic (Locke, 1976; Misener et al., 1996). For Spector (1985, p. 695), it is the “representation of a grouping of evaluation feelings about the work; a variable of attitude that reflects how a person feels about work, in general and in its various aspects”. For Karaferis et al. (2022), it is the positive emotional state that results from work evaluation or professional experience.

Regarding the factors present in the organizational environment, Tamayo (2001), Warr (2007) and Misener et al. (1996) describe that job satisfaction is affected by remuneration, career, relationship with colleagues and superiors, organizational climate, job content, hierarchical position, the individual's perception of justice in the organization, and the quality of working factors such as autonomy and support (Karaferis et al., 2022; Düzgün & Çelik, 2023; Moro et al., 2021). In turn, previous studies have analyzed the effects of satisfaction at the workplace, considering that it can affect many dimensions of the organization positively since happy individuals tend to be more productive (Silveira, 2019; Karaferis et al., 2022; Hellín Gil et al., 2022; Ohene Afriyie et al., 2024). However, there are different results of the impact of satisfaction on organizational performance (Bakotić, 2016; Karaferis et al., 2022).

Managing workforce diversity can play an important role in promoting job satisfaction (Migueles et al., 2021; Ju & Li, 2019; Li et al., 2021). With diversity management practices, it is possible that individuals notice that the organization seeks to correct social inequalities inside and outside it, favoring the perception of justice and belonging (Tamayo, 2001; Warr, 2007;



Misener et al., 1996), which leads to increased satisfaction. For Tajfel and Turner (1986), social identification with the work group can influence job satisfaction positively.

In turn, previous studies have sought to identify the mediating role of satisfaction in the relationship between budget participation and organizational performance (Zonatto et al., 2020), between people management practices and organizational performance (Ohene Afriyie et al., 2024), and between emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, and performance (Alwali & Alwali, 2022). As shown before, there is a relationship between diversity management practices, satisfaction, and performance (Migueles et al., 2021; Ju & Li, 2019; Li et al., 2021), as well as between job satisfaction and performance at work (Dudasova et al., 2023; Silveira, 2019; Karaferis et al., 2022; Hellín Gil et al., 2022). Therefore, satisfaction is expected to act as a mediating variable in the relationship between diversity management and performance, which led to the following hypotheses:

- **H2a:** There is a positive relationship between diversity management and job satisfaction.
- **H2b:** There is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and individual performance.
- **H2c:** Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between diversity management and individual performance.

Commitment and diversity management

Commitment at work refers to individuals' links with the organization that lead them to wish to remain there (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer et al., 2013). Hence, individuals with high levels of commitment accept the organization's goals, beliefs, and values, want to make efforts on its behalf and wish to stay there with dedication and involvement (Mowday et al., 1979; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Klein et al., 2014). According to Becker (1960), commitment leads workers to a consistent engagement with the organization.

Organizational commitment has been studied from three foundations, according to Meyer and Allen (1991): affective, normative, and instrumental. However, it is on the basis of affective commitment that it is possible to identify closer relationships with diversity management since it involves feelings of belonging to the organization. The affective base emphasizes the individual's attitude towards the institution, resulting from a positive relationship, and an individual willingness activated by their interaction with it and colleagues (Meyer et al., 2013; Rodrigues et al., 2022).



Previous studies identified the relationship between commitment and various dimensions of organizations, especially work performance (Teo et al., 2020; Donkor et al., 2021; Mowday et al., 1979; Yousef, 2000). These relationships are based on the understanding that committed individuals are more willing to dedicate greater efforts to organizations (Porter et al., 1974; Yadav & Lenka, 2020; Costa et al., 2019; Migueles et al., 2021), leading them to reach higher levels of performance (Ashikali & Groeneveld, 2015).

Other studies sought to understand the effects of diversity management on levels of commitment, such as Gilbert et al. (1999), which analyzed the effects of top management practices, and Celik et al. (2011), which examined the effects of diversity training programs. For Ashikali and Groeneveld (2015), this relationship takes place because diversity management refers to actions for attracting, selecting, retaining, and promoting workers from different social groups, especially from society and organizations' minorities. Therefore, members of minority groups from a company feel appreciated and confident, with a sense of justice and belonging, and are willing to increase their commitment to it (Brimhall, 2019; Li et al., 2021).

On the other hand, some studies have sought to assess the mediating role of organizational commitment between relationships with other variables. Donkor et al. (2021) concluded that commitment mediates the relationship between transformational and *laissez-faire* leadership styles and workers' performance, while Yousef (2000) found that commitment acts as a mediator in the relationship between leadership behaviors, performance, and job satisfaction. Hence, considering the existence of a relationship between diversity management and commitment, and between the latter and job performance, an indirect effect could be expected from the relationship between diversity management and performance, mediated by job commitment. Therefore, we proposed the following research hypotheses:

- **H3a:** Workforce diversity management is positively related to organizational commitment.
- **H3b:** Commitment is positively related to individual performance.
- **H3c:** Commitment mediates the relationship between diversity management and job performance.

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

This was a quantitative survey with a non-probabilistic sample, a technique widely used in research when it is not feasible or practical to select a

random sample from the population. In this method, the elements of the population do not have an equal chance of being chosen for the sample, which can cause some bias to the results. However, even with its limitations, non-probability sampling is still valuable in many contexts (Hair et al., 2014). For the analysis, we used the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method. We collected data between May and December 2022, through a questionnaire sent online using email and social networks, to people working in any type of organization, through the snowball technique, in which one individual passes on the questionnaire to others.

The questionnaire was made available on the Google Forms platform, where participants could answer it directly. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first collected demographic data from the participants, and the second presented statements associated with each of the constructs: diversity management (DIVMAN), commitment (COMPROM), satisfaction (SATISF), and individual performance (PERFORM), with a five-point Likert-type scale for the answers, ranging from 1, “totally disagree” to 5, “totally agree”. Diversity management was assessed by using a three-item scale based on the papers by Choi and Rainey (2010) and Li et al. (2021). The commitment scale contained four items and was based on Klein et al. (2014). We measured employee performance by Yousef’s scale (2000), and satisfaction was measured according to the scale used by Silva et al. (2018). The scales’ items are described in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Questionnaire applied according to the scales

Latent variable	VModel variable	Item description on the scale
Diversity management	DIVMAN1	Supervisors/coordinators in my organization (company) are committed to have a workforce that represents all segments of society.
	DIVMAN2	There are policies and programs that foster diversity at my workplace (such as recruiting minorities and training for awareness on diversity issues).
	DIVMAN3	Managers/supervisors/team leaders work well with employees from different origins (social, political, religious minorities, etc.).

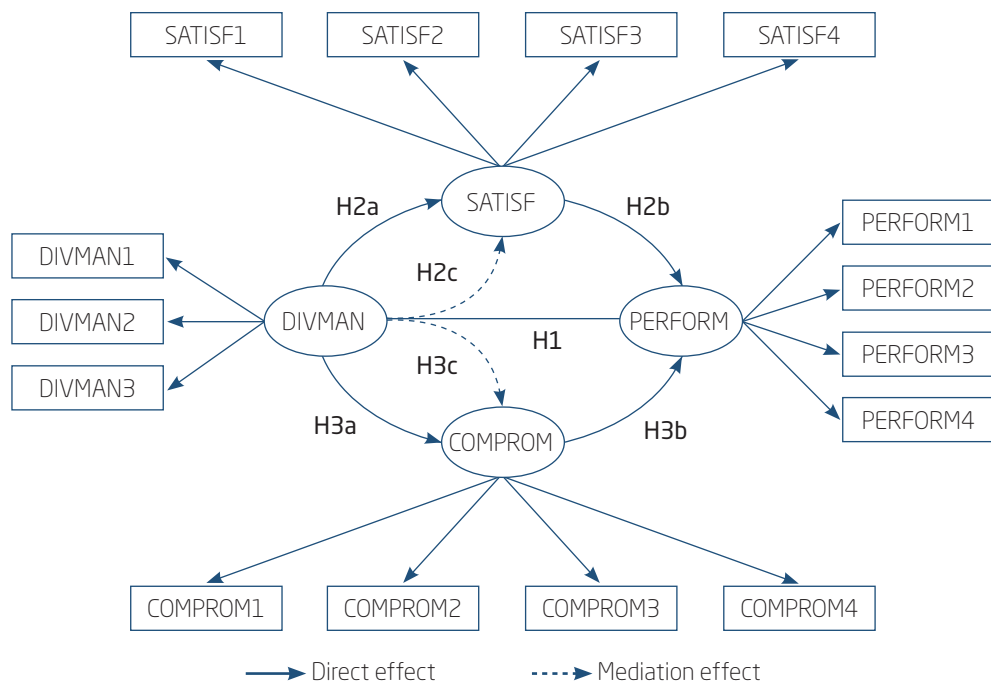
(continues)

Figure 1 (conclusion)**Questionnaire applied according to the scales**

Latent variable	VModel variable	Item description on the scale
Performance	PERFORM1	In general, how do you evaluate the quality of your performance at work?
	PERFORM 2	In general, how do you evaluate your productivity at work?
	PERFORM3	How do you evaluate the performance of your colleagues in their jobs compared to you doing the same type of work?
	PERFORM4	How do you evaluate your performance at work compared to your colleagues who do the same kind of work?
COMPCommitment	COMPROM1	How committed you are to your goals?
	COMPROM2	How much do you care about your goals?
	COMPROM3	How dedicated you are to your goals?
	COMPROM4	To what extent have you chosen to be committed to your goal?
Satisfaction	SATISF1	I believe that people can grow faster here than in other organizations (firms).
	SATISF2	There is little chance of promotion in my job.
	SATISF3	I am happy with my chances of promotion.
	SATISF4	Those who work well in my organization (company) have a good chance of being promoted.

The hypotheses proposed in the previous section were tested through SEM, as shown in Figure 2. First, we carried out a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of the variables. The main indices used to evaluate the model resulting from factor analysis were the χ^2 statistics, which has lower values for the best fits, in addition to the degrees of freedom (g.l), in which $\chi^2/\text{g.l.}$ ratio should preferably be < 5 . Comparative fit index (CFI) and transport layer interface (TLI) values should be higher than 0.9, and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) error indices should be lower than 0.08 (Hair et al., 2014).

Figure 2
Conceptual model



After CFA, the hypotheses were tested according to the model described in Figure 2, by SEM, using the R software, with the lavaan package, version 0.6-9. SEM is a family of statistical models that investigates the relationships between several variables, enabling us to estimate the relationships between the constructs simultaneously (Hair et al., 2014). We used the estimation method diagonally weighted least squares (DWLS). Similarly to factor analysis, model adjustment indices are expected to have the same values described for factor analysis.

Participants

The sample consisted of 563 respondents from Brazilian organizations. Most participants were female (55.24%) and self-declared as white (34.28%) or brown (42.98%); 34.64% have a specialization degree and 25.93% have a higher education degree, with 43.34% having worked at the company for up to five years. Married people account for 50.27%, and 55.60% do not hold leadership or management positions. Also, 39.61% work for companies

with more than 1,000 employees, and 88.81% of the participants are heterosexual. The full characterization of the participants is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Sample characteristics

Categories	Frequency	%	Categories	Frequency	%
Gender			Marital status		
Female	311	55.24%	Married	283	50.27%
Male	251	44.58%	Single	280	49.73%
Other	1	0.18%		563	
	563				
Skin color			Job tenure		
White	193	34.28%	Up to five years.	244	43.34%
Brown	242	42.98%	Between six and ten years.	101	17.94%
Black	108	19.18%	Between 11 and 15 years.	109	19.36%
Other	20	3.55%	Over 16 years.	109	19.36%
	563			563	
Education			Position		
High school (completed)	91	16.16%	Not leadership or management position.	313	55.60%
Higher education (completed)	146	25.93%	Intermediate positions.	150	26.64%
Specialization	195	34.64%	Management positions.	100	17.76%
Master degree	96	17.05%		563	
PhD	35	6.22%			
	563				
Sector			Number of employees		
Public	246	43.69%	Up to 250 employees.	150	26.64%
Private	290	51.51%	Between 251 and 500 employees.	78	13.85%
Other	27	4.80%	Between 501 and 1000 employees.	48	8.53%
	563		Over 1000 employees.	223	39.61%

(continues)

Table 1 (conclusion)***Sample characteristics***

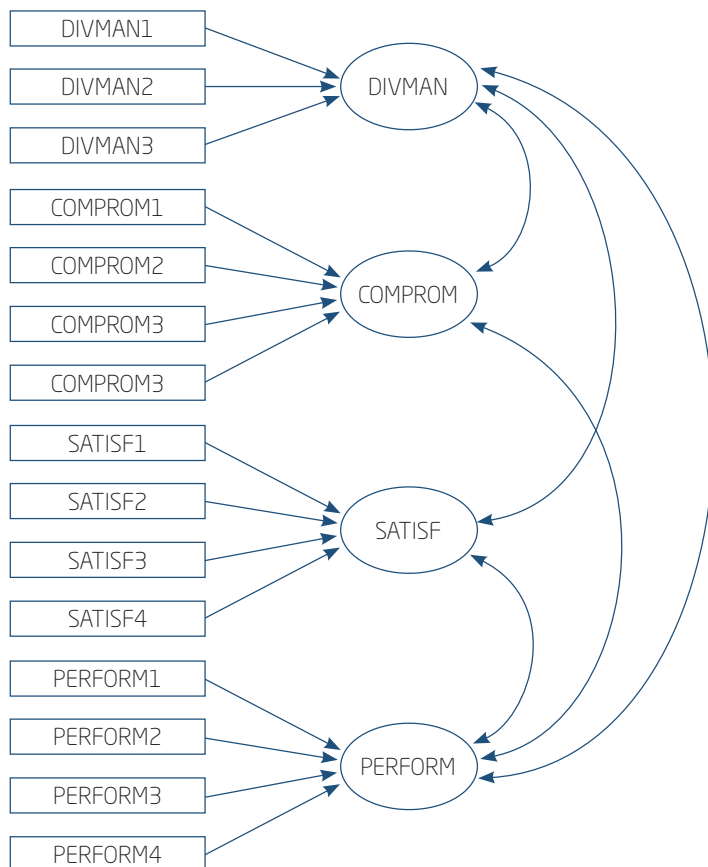
Categories	Frequency	%	Categories	Frequency	%
Sexual orientation			Not informed.	64	11.37%
Heterosexual	500	88.81%		563	
Homosexual	46	8.17%			
Other	17	3.02%			
	563				

RESULTS PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

The first stage of analysis was CFA, and a path diagram was drawn up (Figure 3), in which we can see the interactions between the latent and observed variables in the proposed model.

The model fit indices were satisfactory: $\chi^2 = 150.129$, degrees of freedom (d.f) = 84, with ratio $\chi^2/\text{d.f.} = 1.787$ (preferably < 5), with the best models < 3; CFI = 0.990; TLI = 0.987; RMSEA = 0.037, and SRMR = 0.051. However, reliability tests showed an average variance extracted (AVE) of 0.46 for the individual performance construct, which is below the recommended. Therefore, we excluded item 3 from this construct. Item 2 on job satisfaction was inverted because the meaning of the statement was primarily “negative”: “There is little chance of promotion in my job”, which is why it appears in Table 2 as SATISF2I.

After these procedures, the fit indices of the new model became: $\chi^2 = 49.097$, d.f = 71, with ratio $\chi^2/\text{d.f.} = 0.691$; CFI = 1.000; TLI = 1.005; RMSEA = 0.000; and SRMR = 0.032, which are considered very good. The reliability tests are described in Table 2. Cronbach’s alpha and composite validity must be higher than 0.70. The AVE should be greater than 0.50, which confirms convergent validity. Discriminant validity was confirmed through the square root of AVE, which should be greater than the coefficients of the corresponding correlations (Hair et al., 2014).

Figure 3**Path diagram from the confirmatory factor analysis****Table 2****Validity and reliability tests**

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted	Diversity management	Commitment	Satisfaction	Individual performance
Diversity management	0.7621871	0.7672504	0.5259334	0.725			
Commitment	0.9085792	0.9072536	0.7099999	0.478	0.843		
Satisfaction	0.8708353	0.8742301	0.6387495	0.665	0.318	0.799	
Individual performance	0.8192068	0.8227923	0.6095381	0.366	0.616	0.205	0.781

Note: The values on the diagonal represent the discriminant validity, and below them, the correlations between constructs.

After checking CFA, we carried out SEM. The model's fit indices were $\chi^2 = 72.984$, d.f. = 72; ratio $\chi^2/\text{d.f.} = 0.97$ (preferably < 5), with the best models < 3; CFI = 1.000; TLI = 1.000; RMSEA = 0.005 and SRMR = 0.039. The results indicate good quality of the proposed model. The results of the SEM analysis are shown in Table 3, with the estimates of the regression parameters between the variables.

Table 3
Results of the structural equation modeling

Latent variables	Observable variables	Estimate	Standard error	Z value	$p(> z)$	Std.lv*	Std.all**
DIVMAN	DIVMAN1	0.738	0.030	24.470	0.000	0.738	0.692
	DIVMAN2	0.771	0.032	23.809	0.000	0.771	0.653
	DIVMAN3	0.614	0.027	22.423	0.000	0.614	0.624
	COMPROM1	0.548	0.021	26.246	0.000	0.631	0.878
COMPROM	COMPROM2	0.501	0.019	26.076	0.000	0.577	0.855
	COMPROM3	0.529	0.020	26.061	0.000	0.609	0.884
	COMPROM4	0.515	0.022	23.696	0.000	0.593	0.764
	SATISF1	0.646	0.034	18.832	0.000	0.896	0.793
SATISF	SATISF2	0.574	0.032	18.185	0.000	0.796	0.682
	SATISF3	0.629	0.033	19.123	0.000	0.873	0.780
	SATISF4	0.809	0.041	19.519	0.000	1.122	0.909
	PERFORM1	0.436	0.024	17.670	0.000	0.556	0.812
PERFORM	PERFORM2	0.465	0.027	17.230	0.000	0.595	0.831
	PERFORM4	0.370	0.021	17.180	0.000	0.473	0.688

Note: *Standardized Latent Variables, **Standardized All

Table 4 shows the coefficients, p values, and the significance of the proposed hypotheses tests.

The results for H2a confirmed the positive relationship between diversity management in the workforce and job satisfaction, which is in line with previous studies (Park & Liang, 2020; Lee & Kim, 2020; Migueles et al., 2021; Ju & Li, 2019; Li et al., 2021). Diversity management practices include people from various social backgrounds, especially from minority groups from society, allowing individuals to identify themselves with their groups within the organization (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Fraga et al., 2022; Dennissen et al., 2018).

Table 4
Hypotheses test

Hypothesis expected	Hypothetical relation	Estimated coefficient	Standard error	Z value	p value	Confirmed result
H1	DIVMAN → PERFORM	0.176	0.103	1.712	0.087	No
H2a	DIVMAN → SATISF	0.961	0.068	14.121	0.000	Yes
H2b	SATISF → PERFORM	-0.061	0.057	-1.077	0.282	No
H3a	DIVMAN → COMPROM	0.571	0.030	18.919	0.000	Yes
H3b	COMPROM → PERFORM	0.633	0.055	11.582	0.000	Yes

Hence, workers can associate these practices with an attitude more focused on correcting social inequalities, which leads to a perception of valuing these groups and a feeling of justice and belonging (Tamayo, 2001; Warr, 2007; Misener et al., 1996; Brimhall, 2019; Li et al., 2021; Cambré et al., 2012). Since satisfaction involves affective and emotional aspects (Spector, 1985; Locke, 1976; Brief & Weiss, 2002; Karaferis et al., 2022), this perspective of valuing these groups can make individuals develop a positive and pleasant perception towards the company and work (Hellín Gil et al., 2022), with increasing satisfaction (Miguelles et al., 2021; Ju & Li, 2019; Li et al., 2021).

H2b, which suggests a positive relationship between job satisfaction and individual performance, was rejected. This result strengthens previous discussions about the real effects of satisfaction on productivity, with part of the studies linking satisfaction and improved productivity, such as those by Fogaça and Coelho (2015) and Bakotić (2016), which found a positive relationship between satisfaction and performance, while other studies found no association or a negative one between these constructs, as satisfaction does not always lead to attitudes or behaviors that favor a better performance (Ajzen & Klobas, 2013). In this study, in addition to a non-significant relationship between satisfaction and performance, the sign of the coefficient is negative (-0.061), which raises more questions about the real relationship between satisfaction and performance at work.

The results of H3a confirm the significant relationship between diversity management and commitment. These results prove previous studies that highlight the importance of diversity management for promoting employee commitment (Ashikali & Groeneveld, 2015; Brimhall, 2019; Jyoti et al., 2021).

Our findings advance the discussion on diversity management towards a broader understanding of how organizations can promote diversity mana-

gement practices and, thereby, improve their workers’ level of commitment. This occurs because diversity practices show a company’s concern about attracting and retaining workers from groups with less prestige in society (Fraga et al., 2022; Dennissen et al., 2018), and this can awaken workers’ feelings of belonging and justice towards the firm (Migueles et al., 2021).

This can affect an individual’s commitment, since it relates to their attitude towards the organization as a result of how the firm and colleagues treat them, as observed by Ashikali and Groeneveld (2015). The authors understand that, especially in the affective dimension of commitment, there is an association with diversity management practices, as it involves feelings of belonging towards the organization.

H3b was confirmed, indicating that higher levels of commitment lead to increased individual performance at work. These results are in line with previous studies that suggest that workers’ commitment fosters their individual performance (Yadav & Lenka, 2020; Costa et al., 2019; Migueles et al., 2021). As commitment indicates a person’s willingness to remain in the organization and work harder for it (Porter et al., 1974; Mowday et al., 1979; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Klein et al., 2014), it is possible that the individuals surveyed in this study also show a positive association between commitment and performance, as highlighted by Teo et al. (2020) and Donkor et al. (2021).

Mediation analysis

Table 5 presents the results of the analysis of the mediating effect of satisfaction and commitment on the relationship between diversity management and performance.

Table 5
Mediating effect

Relationship	Indirect effect	Standard error	Z value	p value	Mediation
Diversity management → performance	0.176	0.103	1.712	0.087	
Diversity management → satisfaction → performance	-0.059	0.056	-1.045	0.296	No mediation
Diversity management → commitment → performance	0.361	0.038	9.617	0.000	Total mediation
Total effect	0.478	0.046	10.306	0.000	

Regarding satisfaction, the results did not confirm H2c, which proposed that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between diversity management and individual performance. This result agrees with Van Knippenberg et al. (2004), who suggest that other organizational elements, such as motivation, leadership, and perception of organizational justice, can affect the relationship between diversity management practices, satisfaction, and performance. This result, however, differs from those by Zonatto et al. (2020), Ohene Afriyie et al. (2024), Alwali and Alwali (2022), and Silveira (2019), in which satisfaction played a mediating role between some organizational dimensions and organizational performance.

Regarding H3c, which proposed that commitment mediates the relationship between diversity management and individual performance, the results in Table 5 confirm it. This finding reinforces the importance of the mediating variables suggested by Van Knippenberg et al. (2004) and adds to the results of previous studies that highlight the mediating role of commitment in relation to other variables (Donkor et al., 2021; Yousef, 2000). However, there are almost no studies that analyze commitment as a mediating variable in the relationship between diversity management and performance (Roberson, 2019; Yadav & Lenka, 2020; Nishii et al., 2018; Li et al., 2021). Hence, we offer this contribution

Our findings are based on the understanding that diversity management has a positive effect on commitment (Triguero-Sánchez et al., 2018; Ibidunni et al., 2018; Choi & Rainey, 2010), and this, in turn, has a positive effect on individuals' performance (Porter et al., 1974; Mowday et al., 1979; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Klein et al., 2014). The conclusions reveal that diversity management practices influence performance, directly or indirectly, through incentives for commitment (Morrow, 2011).

Finally, analyzing the result of H1 (Table 5), we could conclude that diversity management is not related to performance, contradicting the initial argument that diversity management practices contribute to increasing employee performance (Fleury, 2000; Costa et al., 2019; Li et al., 2021; Choi & Rainey, 2010). However, this conclusion would not be entirely correct, because, in the mediation process, the analysis is done jointly, seeking to understand how the explanatory variable behaves in relation to the explained variable, in the presence of the mediating variable. If, in its presence, the relationship between the explanatory variable and the explained variable is significant, then, there is partial mediation (Hair et al., 2014). On the other hand, if, in its presence, the relationship between the explanatory variable and the explained variable is not significant, there is total mediation, which is a very significant result and happened in this study.



The results showed a p value of 0.176 (not significant) for the relationship between diversity management and individual performance, suggesting that the relationship occurs only through commitment, configuring a total mediation process. This reinforces that the effects of commitment are relevant in diversity management practices. While these practices affect the level of commitment, they increase performance (Mowday et al., 1979; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Klein et al., 2014). Overall, the effect of diversity management on performance is positive and significant, with a total effect of 0.478, which is a relevant finding, as it strengthens understanding of the importance of diversity in organizations.

Given that result, it is important to consider the contribution of this study to the broader debate on the relevance of diversity practice in organizations. It reinforces the importance of the efforts made by governments and international organizations, such as the UN, by introducing SDG in the 2030 agenda, and the World Economic Forum, through the Lighthouse programme. It is important that governments act to reduce social inequalities by fighting discrimination in the job market. In Brazil, we highlight the implementation of quotas in public tenders and the search for equal pay for men and women in the job market, established by Law 14.611, of July 3, 2023. Despite this government effort, Rohden (2023, p. 4) mentions that laws and decrees are insufficient to really implement diversity in organizations, and it is necessary to convince managers that diversity is a “powerful performance facilitator, particularly in Brazil, where companies still do not appreciate or understand the real value of diversity”. This study contributes in this regard, by highlighting the positive impacts of diversity management practices on individual satisfaction, commitment, and performance.

In turn, SDG 5 (gender equality) is aligned with Law 14.611, for implementing gender equality policies, promoting women in leadership positions, and ensuring equal remuneration for similar work (Fraga et al., 2022). SDG 10 (reducing inequality) highlights: “By 2030, empowering and promoting social, economic, and political inclusion of everyone, irrespective of age, gender, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, economic status, or other [...]” (Nações Unidas Brasil, 2015). Through diversity management practices, it is possible to expand hiring to other groups that have been historically marginalized in the job market. On the one hand, the company contributes to reducing inequalities, and at the same time, it benefits from these practices because they have a positive effect on performance (Rohden, 2023; Tomaz, 2022).

In turn, the World Economic Forum’s Lighthouse programme was designed to identify and disseminate DEI initiatives at any company in the



world, with the goal of providing leaders with ideas and tools to focus on DEI efforts and contribute to a faster and stronger impact. This study seeks to support these efforts by describing the benefits of diversity management.

FINAL REMARKS

This study investigated the relationship between diversity management and performance, with satisfaction and commitment as mediating variables, by using SEM on a sample of workers of Brazilian organizations.

The results confirmed the relevance of diversity management in fostering employee satisfaction and commitment. Above all, we highlight the role of commitment as a mediating variable in the relationship between diversity management and individual performance. On the other hand, satisfaction was not significant, either for performance or as a mediating variable in that relationship, but remains a valuable result itself, since diversity management practices affect workers' satisfaction, and they should not be implemented only for pursuing companies' financial results, but, above all, as social responsibility practices, as a way of expanding government efforts on affirmative policies for minority groups in society.

This paper is a contribution to other studies on diversity management in the Brazilian context, where there are still organizations with biased practices that neglect individuals from society's minority groups. By presenting the effects of diversity on satisfaction, commitment, and the mediating effect of commitment, we show, theoretically and practically, the benefits that organizations can achieve by adopting diversity management practices. Hence, we show that it is possible to go beyond the speech on diversity since our data reveal that diversity management is also important for organizations, as it is for people.

For organizations and managers, the study suggests that, in addition to social responsibility, managers can increase the performance of their employees by adopting diversity management practices, which affect their level of commitment, leading to higher levels of performance. Similarly, these practices can help increase employee satisfaction.

Despite these contributions, the sample was relatively small, considering the Brazilian labor market, besides the fact that it was mostly formed by heterosexual individuals, which can skew the answers. Another important limitation is the absence of questions that consider the perceptions of both people with disabilities (PWD) and those without disabilities. Future studies could try to gather a more diverse sample to test the relationships found in



our study and, also, the effects of control variables on the relationship between diversity and performance and other variables.

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