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Diversity management and organizational performance: Mediation and moderation of commitment, person-job fit and empowerment

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Abstract

Purpose – This article aims to identify the effect of diversity management on organizational performance in the Brazilian context. It also aims to assess the role of commitment and person-job fit as mediators, as well as empowerment as a moderating variable, in the relationship between diversity management and performance.

Theoretical framework – We present and discuss the concepts of diversity management, person-job fit, structural empowerment, and commitment and their relationships.

Design/methodology/approach – This is a quantitative study using structural equation modeling, mediation and moderation between variables. Data were collected through a questionnaire administered between April and November 2022. The sample obtained was 568 individuals.

Findings – Diversity management positively affects organizational performance, and commitment acts as a mediating variable in this relationship. Empowerment positively moderates the relationship between diversity management and performance. Diversity management was also found to positively impact both commitment and person-job fit.

Practical & social implications of research – Organizations can benefit from greater performance by increasing both diversity management practices and practices that increase employee commitment and empowerment, since in the presence of higher levels of empowerment, the relationship between diversity management and performance is increased.

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Revista Brasileira de Gestáo de Negócios

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Originality/value – This study provides relevant suggestions about the role played by both diversity management and empowerment, which working together can improve organizational performance, especially in Brazil, where studies of this nature are rare.

Keywords: Diversity management, performance, empowerment, commitment, person-job fit.

1 Introduction

Organizational performance is a critical indicator of success for any organization (Son et al., 2020). Le and Le (2021) consider the constant search for improvement essential, while researchers and managers investigate its predictors (Son et al., 2020). Among these, Le and Le (2021) and Son et al. (2020) highlighted the role of transformational leadership, Le and Do (2023) emphasized the influence of knowledge-oriented leadership, and Le and Ha (2023) highlighted the role of knowledge-based people management practices, knowledge sharing, and organizational support. However, few studies seek to understand the influence of diversity management practices on organizational performance.

Diversity management represents a set of practices, policies, and programs that aim to recruit people from minority groups and train and raise awareness among organizational members (Choi & Rainey, 2010). It is widely discussed as society has increasingly demanded actions from companies and governments to reduce social inequalities (Fleury, 2000; Fraga et al., 2022). It has also gained relevance on the world stage, especially as it is part of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Seven of the 17 goals directly and indirectly address this issue, such as SDG 5 – Gender equality and SDG 10 – Reducing inequality. The World Economic Forum also established the Lighthouse Program, which according to Madner et al. (2023) "is an annual effort of the World Economic Forum to surface, highlight and scale impactful diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives" to help focus DEI efforts and ultimately contribute to a faster, scalable DEI impact.

In particular, Brazil has pronounced gender and racial inequality. According to the IBGE (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 2022), in the second quarter of 2022, the unemployment rate for whites was 7.3%, while for blacks and browns it was 11.3% and 10.8%, respectively. Likewise, men have an unemployment rate of 7.5% and women have an unemployment rate of 11.6%. Furthermore, although the majority of workers in the country are black or mixed race, only 29.5% of management positions are occupied by these groups. Therefore, studies on this topic are relevant in Brazil.

Previous studies have investigated the influence of diversity on creativity, competitiveness, organizational culture, trust, and talent attraction (Migueles et al., 2021). In Brazil, studies on diversity have mainly focused on qualitative studies (Fraga et al., 2022) or, if quantitative, on gender diversity and its effects on the performance of companies' administrative and executive boards (Costa et al., 2019). In turn, Roberson (2019) and Yadav and Lenka (2020) state that there is a lack of studies on diversity in developed countries and even more so in developing countries such as Brazil, while Li et al. (2021) say that there is a lack of studies relating diversity management to person-job fit, empowerment, and commitment and their impacts on organizational performance. These are gaps that this study aims to fill by testing the proposed theoretical model and the assumptions that categorically state: "[…] the adoption of the principle of inclusion and diversity is a crucial factor in increasing companies' revenue […]" (Rohden, 2023, p. 2), including the mediating effects of commitment and person-job fit and the moderating role of empowerment. In a practical sense, it also strengthens arguments in favor of diversity, which can help expand the hiring of people from minority groups in society, as it is necessary to convince managers that diversity is a "[…] powerful facilitator of performance, particularly in Brazil, where companies still do not value or understand the real value of diversity […]" (Rohden, 2023, p. 4). Furthermore, managers can use these results to increase organizational performance, expand diversity, and empower their workers.

Previous studies argue that diversity favors individual and organizational performance (Cox & Blake, 1991) by promoting the incorporation of different knowledge, skills, and abilities, fostering creativity, innovation, and problem-solving abilities (Migueles et al., 2021; Choi & Rainey, 2010). Commitment, in turn, constitutes the bond that individuals have with the organization, which leads them to decide to remain there (Mowday et al., 1979; Meyer & Allen, 1991). Previous studies have shown that diversity

management practices influence workforce commitment levels (Celik et al., 2011; Ibidunni et al., 2018), both at the individual and group level (Yadav & Lenka, 2020). This relationship occurs because individuals who belong to minority groups tend to be more committed to the organization when they see other individuals from the same group within the company (Brimhall, 2019).

Commitment is seen as an important antecedent of organizational performance. This relationship is based on the understanding that committed individuals are more willing to exert greater effort on behalf of the organization (Mowday et al., 1979; Porter et al., 1974). Thus, as diversity management practices influence commitment and there is a positive relationship between the level of commitment and work performance, commitment is expected to act as a mediator in this relationship. Previous studies have analyzed the role of commitment as a mediator in the relationship between transformational and laissez-faire leadership styles and worker performance (Donkor et al., 2021) and in the relationship between leadership behaviors, performance, and job satisfaction (Yousef, 2000). However, there is little literature that uses commitment as a mediator in the relationship between diversity management practices and organizational performance (Ibidunni et al., 2018). Therefore, a first research question is proposed.

Research question 1: Do diversity management practices positively influence organizational performance and does commitment mediate this relationship?

Person-job fit refers to the match between the worker and his or her job (Kristof, 1996). Studies have highlighted the effect of diversity on person-job fit, understanding that it allows for the inclusion of people with varied profiles, preferences, skills, knowledge and competencies, who can be allocated to activities aligned with their profiles (Pink-Harper et al., 2017). In turn, it is argued that the greater the person-job fit, the higher the level of performance will be (Goetz et al., 2021; Edwards, 2008). This relationship would occur because person-job fit positively influences the individual's attitudes (Hackman & Lawler, 1971).

Previous studies have investigated the mediating role of person-job fit in the relationship between satisfaction and stress levels (Bright, 2021) and between entrepreneurial leadership and work engagement (Cai et al., 2018). However, few studies have analyzed the mediating role

of person-job fit in the relationship between diversity management and organizational performance. Pink-Harper et al. (2017) argued that when individuals perceive a culture of diversity in the organization, they use their skills more effectively in carrying out their work, leading to increased organizational performance. Therefore, the second research question is proposed:

Research Question 2: Is the relationship between diversity management practices and performance mediated by person-job fit?

Empowerment is the practice of delegating power, authority and autonomy to individuals at lower levels of the organizational hierarchy, including making decisions about how they work (Menon, 2001). This can increase diversity within organizations since minority groups within the company can attract other workers from their representative groups (Akinola et al., 2018; Kaya Özbağ & Çekmecelioğlu, 2022). Studies have highlighted the effect of empowerment on workers' performance, concluding that companies that practice empowerment achieve better results (Juyumaya, 2022; Spreitzer & Doneson, 2005)

Previous studies have investigated the moderating role of empowerment between the importance and implementation of religious and gender management practices (Elkhwesky et al., (2019), between workplace bullying and nurses' work outcomes (Kang & Han, 2021), and between multi-stakeholder value co-creation activities and new product development success (Wu et al., 2023). However, there is little literature investigating the moderating role of empowerment in the relationship between diversity management and performance.

Empowerment favors performance (Spreitzer, 1995), in addition to providing autonomy to attract and hire more workers from different groups, thereby increasing diversity (Akinola et al., 2018; Alfalih, 2022). Thus, we investigated whether empowerment amplifies the impact of diversity management on organizational performance by acting as a moderator in this relationship. Therefore, a third research question is proposed:

Research Question 3: Is empowerment a moderating variable in the relationship between diversity management practices and organizational performance?

To investigate the relationships between diversity management and performance, and the mediating role

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of commitment and person-job fit and the moderating role of empowerment, this study was carried out with 568 participants from companies in Brazil, using structural equation modeling.

2 Theoretical framework and hypotheses

2.1 Diversity management

Diversity is understood as "[…] a mix of people with different group identities within the same social system […]" (Knomo & Cox, 1996, p. 335). Although the concept was initially more restricted to gender and race (Fleury, 2000), it later incorporated other dimensions of individuals, such as age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, education, functional specialty, length of service in the organization or position, nationality, etc. (Fraga et al., 2022; Triguero-Sánchez et al., 2018).

Weber et al. (2018) highlight that within the organization, individuals have social identity characteristics that vary depending on demographic variables (age, gender, race and ethnicity), values, beliefs or cultural origins, while Williams and O'Reilly (1998, p. 81) consider diversity as "[…] any attribute that people use to declare to themselves that another person is different from them."

Diversity management, in turn, is the set of company practices and policies for hiring and promoting people from historically marginalized groups (Fraga et al., 2022). Fleury (2000) had already argued that in addition to the inclusion of excluded groups, diversity management proposes to add value to the organization. In the view of Dennissen et al. (2018, p. 2), diversity management is understood as "[…] the set of specific programs, policies, and practices that organizations have developed and implemented to effectively manage the diverse workforce and promote organizational equality."

In addition to the idea associated with diversity management that companies would be held responsible for strengthening or replacing affirmative action along with or instead of governments (Cox & Blake, 1991; Fleury, 2000), the definitions and defenses of the implementation of diversity management bring at their core the relationship with the improvement of individual and organizational performance. A group composed of diverse people – reflected in the plurality of knowledge, skills, cultures and identities – would enhance the capacity for creativity and innovation (Yadav & Lenka, 2020).

Diversity management brings together a set of practices that promote equal opportunities within the organization, so that injustices due to differences between its members are not found and the full exercise of the skills of these individuals is favored. In Choi and Rainey's (2010) view, diversity management practices involve the commitment of leaders to include people from all groups that make up society in the company's workforce, as well as the existence of policies and programs that promote diversity within the workplace (such as the recruitment of minorities and women and diversity awareness training for employees).

Several authors argue that a team composed of individuals from different backgrounds favors organizational performance by promoting the incorporation of different knowledge, skills and abilities (Triguero-Sánchez et al., 2018). Moreover, diversity favors creativity, innovation and problem-solving skills (Cox & Blake, 1991), as well as perceptions of fairness and trust in the organization (Migueles et al., 2021). In this way, diversity management practices are seen as positive for generating better performance of individuals at work (Li et al., 2021; Choi & Rainey, 2010). Therefore, the following research hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Diversity management has a positively impact on organizational performance.

2.2 Commitment at work

Commitment constitutes the bond that the individual has with the organization, a bond that leads him or her to decide to remain in it (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer et al., 2013). This is in line with what Mowday et al. (1979, p. 228) consider as commitment practices: "acceptance of the organization's goals, beliefs and values, willingness to make efforts for the organization, and willingness to remain in it with dedication and involvement".

Traditionally, studies on commitment have focused on the multidimensionality of the commitment concept, based on Meyer and Allen's (1991) categorization, which distinguishes three dimensions of commitment: affective, normative and instrumental. It is in affective commitment that the connection with the aspects arising from diversity can be seen, as the individual perceives practices that value his or her specific group, which generates in him or her the desire for loyalty to the organization (Ashikali & Groeneveld, 2015; Mowday et al., 1979).

Previous studies have concluded that organizational commitment is positively related to organizational performance (Mowday et al., 1979; Yousef, 2000). It is assumed that these relationships are based on the understanding that committed individuals would be more willing to exert more effort in favor of the organization (Porter et al., 1974), leading organizations to present higher levels of performance (Ashikali & Groeneveld, 2015; Hur & Perry, 2019).

Studies have sought to find relationships between diversity management and commitment levels (Ibidunni et al., 2018). Gilbert et al. (1999) concluded that workers' perception of the existence of diversity practices on the part of top management favors commitment, while Celik et al. (2011) concluded that diversity training programs are positively related to affective commitment. From the perspective of Ashikali and Groeneveld (2015), this relationship occurs because diversity management refers to the actions of attracting, selecting, retaining, and promoting workers from different social groups. Thus, members of minority groups within the company feel valued, confident, have a sense of justice and belonging, and are willing to increase their commitment (Brimhall, 2019; Li et al., 2021).

Another relevant aspect of this study is the mediating role of organizational commitment. Donkor et al. (2021) concluded that commitment mediates the relationship between transformational and laissez-faire leadership styles and worker performance, while Yousef (2000) identified that commitment acts as a mediator in the relationship between leadership behaviors, performance, and job satisfaction. So, considering the existence of a relationship between diversity management and commitment, and of the latter with job performance, it is expected that there is an indirect effect on the relationship between diversity management and performance mediated by job commitment. Therefore, the following research hypotheses are proposed:

H2a: Workforce diversity management is positively related to an individual's job commitment.

H2b: Employee commitment is positively related to organizational performance.

H2c: Employee commitment positively mediates the relationship between diversity management and job performance.

2.3 Person-job fit

Person-job fit is a concept that seeks to understand the alignment between an individual's preferences and the work he or she does (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Person-job fit is one of the dimensions (types) of a broader concept called person-environment fit, which also includes person-vocation and person-group fit (Kristof, 1996). However, this study focused on the level of person-job fit, as the focus is on understanding the individual level as used in the studies of Sylva et al. (2019) and Goetz et al. (2021). In Edwards' (2008) view, person-job fit involves two basic conceptualizations: one concerns the alignment between skills and demands, which refers to the fit between the individual's knowledge and skills and what the job the individual is performing demands. The other conceptualization refers to the relationship between the employee's needs, desires, or preferences and the work he or she performs.

So, the concept includes individual characteristics such as biological needs, goals, values, personality and skills that relate to the characteristics of the work that the individual performs. Thus, the closer the individual and job characteristics are, the greater the person-job fit. The idea underlying the concept is the assumption that the fit between the individual's needs and what he or she gets from doing the job influences his or her attitudes towards work performance, which makes him or her satisfied and improves his or her performance in the job (Hackman & Lawler, 1971; Li et al., 2020).

Previous studies have found positive relationships between higher levels of fit between individuals and the work they do and other aspects within the organization, such as commitment, stress reduction, lower turnover, organizational engagement, career management and, more recently, diversity management, in addition to the most relevant relationship: individual and organizational performance (Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Sylva et al., 2019). Studies reinforce the argument that the greater the fit between the person and their job, the better their performance (Goetz et al., 2021; Edwards, 2008; Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001). Therefore, people who are better matched in terms of their skills, competencies and preferences tend to perform better.

On the other hand, studies seek to identify the effect of diversity on person-job fit. As organizations develop diversity management practices, especially in the selection of employees, people with different profiles, preferences,

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skills, knowledge and competencies are included. This provides the organization with a variety of people who can be allocated to activities aligned with their profiles. This can even facilitate the allocation of non-minority individuals, since they can be directed to tasks that are also aligned with their preferences (Choi & Rainey, 2010; Sylva et al., 2019; Li et al., 2021). This is consistent with the conclusions of Pink-Harper et al. (2017), who argued that when individuals perceive a culture of workforce diversity in the organization, they tend to use their skills more effectively to get the job done.

The role of person-job fit has been studied as a mediator between variables such as satisfaction and stress levels, entrepreneurial leadership and work engagement, job redesign and engagement, and training and performance (Bright, 2021; Porto et al., 2019). Given this understanding, it is expected that there is an indirect relationship mediated by person-job fit between diversity management and organizational performance (Li et al., 2020, 2021). Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3a: Diversity management positively influences person-job fit in organizations.

H3b: Person-job fit positively influences organizational performance.

H3c: Person-job fit positively mediates the relationship between diversity management and individual job performance.

2.4 Structural empowerment

Structural empowerment refers to the degree of freedom and autonomy provided by the organization to individuals at lower levels of the hierarchical chain, so that they can make decisions regarding their own work. The term empowerment refers to the notion of granting decision-making authority to employees in order to improve performance (Menon, 2001). Along the same lines, Magalhães and Saraiva (2018, p. 165) believe that this construct "[…] recognizes and seeks to value workers in power relations, especially those who are marginalized in organizational spaces." This process exists when employees are perceived to have access to information, support, resources and opportunities to learn and grow within the organization, especially in decision-making processes (Kaya Özbağ & Çekmecelioğlu, 2022).

Taking a broader view of life in society itself, Spreitzer and Doneson (2005, p. 4) conclude that "[…] at the most fundamental level, liberal democracy and the concept of constant progress require the emancipation of workers and their empowerment." This statement coincides with the idea discussed within organizations, as it is understood that empowerment can favor the development of various areas of the individual and the organization, thus improving the performance of both.

Several studies have sought to highlight the consequences of employee empowerment within organizations. Among them, the following stand out: higher levels of satisfaction and motivation, creativity, flexibility, employee self-efficacy and commitment (Kaya Özbağ & Çekmecelioğlu, 2022), high-quality work (Oldham & Hackman, 2010), better coordination of tasks, greater productivity and reduced workload for managers (Akinola et al., 2018). Empowerment also has a positive effect on workers' performance due to the perception of autonomy, freedom, and control over decision making (Menon, 2001). Spreitzer and Doneson (2005) state that companies that practice delegation of authority to their employees achieve innovative and effective performance. In turn, Li et al. (2021) believe that worker empowerment can translate into more consistent performance in the organization. Greco et al. (2006) found that employee empowerment creates positive attitudes and leads to the achievement of organizational goals. Juyumaya (2022) found evidence that empowerment has a positive impact on task performance in a sample of Latin American textile industry employees. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Empowerment is positively related to organizational performance.

Previous studies have investigated the moderating effect of empowerment in the relationship between the importance and implementation of gender and religious management practices (Elkhwesky et al., 2019), the relationship between workplace bullying and nurses' work outcomes (Kang & Han, 2021), and the impact of multi-stakeholder value co-creation activities and new product development success (Wu et al., 2023). Empowerment favors better performance (Akinola et al., 2018). It can also provide the freedom to attract and hire more workers from diverse groups, which expands diversity, especially when these empowered individuals belong to minority groups

(Akinola et al., 2018; Triguero-Sánchez et al., 2018). This is in line with Alfalih (2022), who states that empowerment is one of the most important factors in expanding diversity skills within companies. Thus, it is expected that in environments where empowerment is greater, the effect of diversity management on organizational performance will be more intense than in contexts where there is a low level of empowerment (Akinola et al., 2018; Li et al., 2021). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

> H5: Empowerment positively moderates the relationship between diversity management and organizational performance.

3 Methodological procedures

The data were collected through questionnaires applied online, sent via email and made available on the Google Docs platform between May and November 2022. The sample is a non-probabilistic convenience sample, composed of 568 respondents from different types of organizations and cities in Brazil (see Supplementary Data 1 – Database). It is also a diverse sample in terms of skin color, time in the company, education, and sector in which the respondents work, as described in Table 1. The search for a sample with respondents from different regions of Brazil was aimed at achieving greater regional and organizational diversity. The sample size proved to be adequate, considering the recommendation of Hair et al. (2010) that the sample must have at least five times the total number of observed variables. In this case, there are 21 x 5 = 105. However, the sample has 568 respondents.

The questionnaire contains items measuring diversity management, organizational commitment, person-job fit, empowerment, organizational performance and demographic characteristics. For all alternatives, a five-point Likert scale was used, ranging from 1, "I completely disagree," to 5, "I completely agree." It is important to note that the type of scale used in this study, which treats different organizations and contexts in the same sample, has been used in research in this field, as can be observed

Table 1
Descriptive statistics

Categories	Frequency	Percentage %	Categories	Frequency	Percentage %
Gender			Marital Status		
Female	311	54.75	Married	289	50.88
Male	256	45.07	Unmarried	279	49.12
Others	1	0.17			
Skin Color			Time in the Company		
White	193	33.8	Up to 5 years	250	44.01
Brown	248	43.66	Between 6 and 10 years	100	17.61
Black	108	19.01	Between 11 and 15 years	109	19.19
Other	20	3.52	Over 16 years	109	19.19
Education			Position		
High school	91	16.02	No position	313	55.12
University education	146	25.71	Intermediate positions	150	26.41
Specialization	200	35.21	Senior positions	105	18.47
Master's degree	96	16.90			
Doctorate degree	35	6.16			
Sector			Number of Employees		
Public	246	43.31	Up to 250 employees	155	27.29
Private	295	51.94	Between 251 and 500 employees	78	13.73
Others	27	4.75	Between 501 and 1000 employees	48	8.45
			Over 1000 employees	223	39.26
Sexual Orientation			Did not inform	64	11.27
Heterosexual	505	88.90			
Homosexual	46	8.10			
Others	17	3.00			

Source: Elaborated by the authors

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in the works of Choi and Rainey (2010), Ashikali and Groeneveld (2015), and Triguero-Sánchez et al. (2018), who focused on analyzing respondents' perceptions of the variables studied.

Diversity management was assessed using a 3-item scale based on the work of Choi and Rainey (2010) and Li et al. (2021). The organizational performance construct was measured using a 4-item scale adapted from Hackman and Lawler (1971), Kull and Narasimhan (2010), and Hassan and Jiang (2019). This study used an organizational performance scale instead of an individual performance scale, in contrast to some of the works analyzed here, as it was believed that advocating for the implementation of diversity management is aimed at improving organizational performance (Cox, 1994; Fleury, 2000). The person-job fit scale was composed of 3 items developed by Mulki et al. (2006). In turn, the empowerment scale was composed of 7 items adapted from Lee and Kim (2020) and Li et al. (2021). The commitment scale contained 4 items and was based on the work of Klein et al. (2014). The items used in the scales are listed in Appendix A (see Supplementary Data 2 – Appendix A).

The English questionnaires were translated into Portuguese by a professional translator, and after being evaluated by three researchers to assess the comprehension of the Portuguese version, it was applied to 12 respondents to verify the adequacy of the language and the understanding of the content. The theoretical model proposed to test the hypotheses is presented in Figure 1.

4 Results

4.1 Confirmatory factor analysis

The confirmatory factor analysis of the variables was performed to assess the consistency of the scales, given that they were originally developed and validated in other countries, and to validate the constructs and their factors. The main indices used to evaluate the model resulting from the factor analysis are the χ^2 statistic for model fit, which shows lower values for the best fits, and the degrees of freedom (df) of the model, where the χ^2/df ratio should preferably be < 3. The CFI and TLI values should be greater than 0.9 and the RMSEA and SRMR error indices should be less than 0.05 for the best models (Hair et al., 2010). Data were analyzed using the statistical software R version 3.1.1 and the Lavaan (latent variable analysis) package version 0.5-20 (Rosseel, 2012) (see Supplementary Data 3 – R script).

The first analysis of the confirmatory factor analysis with a proposed model including all items of all variables produced a poor model in the fit indices: $\chi^2 = 652.89$, df = 179, χ^2/df = 3.65 > 3.00, CFI = 0.92, TLI = 0.91, RMSEA = 0.06, and SRMR = 0.06. After using the index modification option, item 1 of the commitment scale, item 4 of the organizational performance scale, and items 2, 6, and 7 of the empowerment scale were excluded. A new model was then proposed. The analysis performed with the
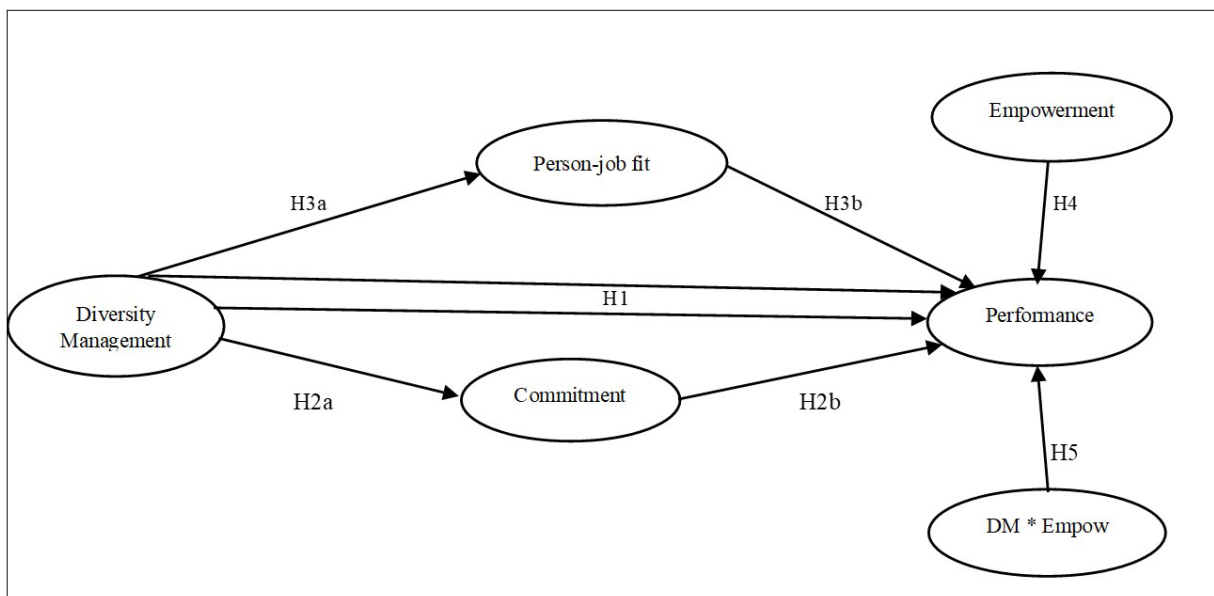

Figure 1. Theoretical research model

constructs, after the adjustment in the model, generated the indices: $\chi2 = 176.67$, df = 94, $\chi2$/df = 1.88 < 3.00, CFI = 0.98, TLI = 0.97, RMSEA = 0.039, and SRMR = 0.031, indicating a good fit of the model (Hair et al., 2010). For all scales, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, average variance extracted, and discriminant validity indicate a good degree of internal consistency of the data (Hair et al., 2010), according to Table 2

4.2 Structural model and hypotheses

The hypotheses were tested from the structural equation model to verify the relationships between the constructs, as previously proposed. The results of the goodness of fit index of the model resulted in the following measures: $\chi2 = 679.87$, df = 335, $\chi2$/df = 2.03 < 3.0, CFI = 0.96, TLI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.043, SRMR = 0.048. Considering the fit parameters of the model, this model can be considered good (Hair et al., 2010). The model is shown in Figure 2.

The results indicated that diversity management is positively related to performance ($\beta = 0.499$, p < 0,001), job commitment ($\beta = 0.436$, p < 0,001), and person-job fit ($\beta = 0.627$, p < 0,001), confirming hypotheses H1, H2a and H3a. On the other hand, the results indicated that person-job fit is not related to organizational performance (p > 0.05), refuting hypothesis H3b, while commitment is positively related to organizational performance, supporting hypothesis H2b ($\beta = 0.195$, p < 0.001). Empowerment is positively related to performance ($\beta = 0.145$, p< 0.05), supporting hypothesis H4.

4.3 Mediation analysis

For the mediation analysis, two initial hypotheses were proposed. The results showed that there was no mediation between diversity management and organizational performance through person-job fit (p = 0.778 > 0.05), refuting hypothesis H3c. On the other

hand, organizational commitment partially and positively mediates the relationship between diversity management and organizational performance (p < 0.001), confirming hypothesis H2c. Partial mediation is confirmed because in the original model, before inserting all the variables, the relationship between diversity management and organizational performance proved to be significant and positive ($\beta = 0.622$, p < 0.001), greater than the direct effect (DE) of the relationship between diversity management and performance in the structural model ($\beta = 0.499$) (Hair et al., 2010). The mediation results are presented in Table 3.

4.4 Moderation analysis

First, the interaction factor between the diversity management and empowerment construct items was constructed using the latent variable method proposed by Schoemann and Jorgensen (2021) and Marsh et al. (2004). The product of the items from the diversity and empowerment management scales was used to create a variable with 12 items. The Cronbach's alpha for the generated factor was 0.88, which is higher than what is considered adequate in the literature (Cronbach's alpha > 0.70) (Hair et al., 2010). The results indicate that there is a moderating effect of empowerment on the relationship between diversity management and organizational performance ($\beta = 0.182$, p < 0.001), presented in Figure 2, confirming hypothesis H5. The analysis was performed using the concept of evaluating the interaction considering the Johnson-Neymann approach, taking into account one standard deviation above and below the mean of the moderator variable (Schoemann & Jorgensen, 2021). The slopes of the lines show the moderating effect of empowerment on the relationship between diversity management and organizational performance.

In Table 4, where the coefficients of the lines for values of empowerment below and above the mean of the

Table 2
Reliability and validity analysis

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted	Diversity management	Performance	Commitment	Person-job fit	Empowerment
Diversity management	0.762	0.768	0.527	0.726				
Performance	0.78 1	0.789	0.561	0.623	0.749			
Commitment	0.894	0.897	0.744	0.355	0.469	0.862		
Person-job fit	0.755	0.766	0.525	0.482	0.506	0.463	0.725	
Empowerment	0.825	0.829	0.555	0.505	0.519	0.306	0.670	0.745

Notes: Values in the diagonals are the square root of the AVE; values below the diagonals are correlations.

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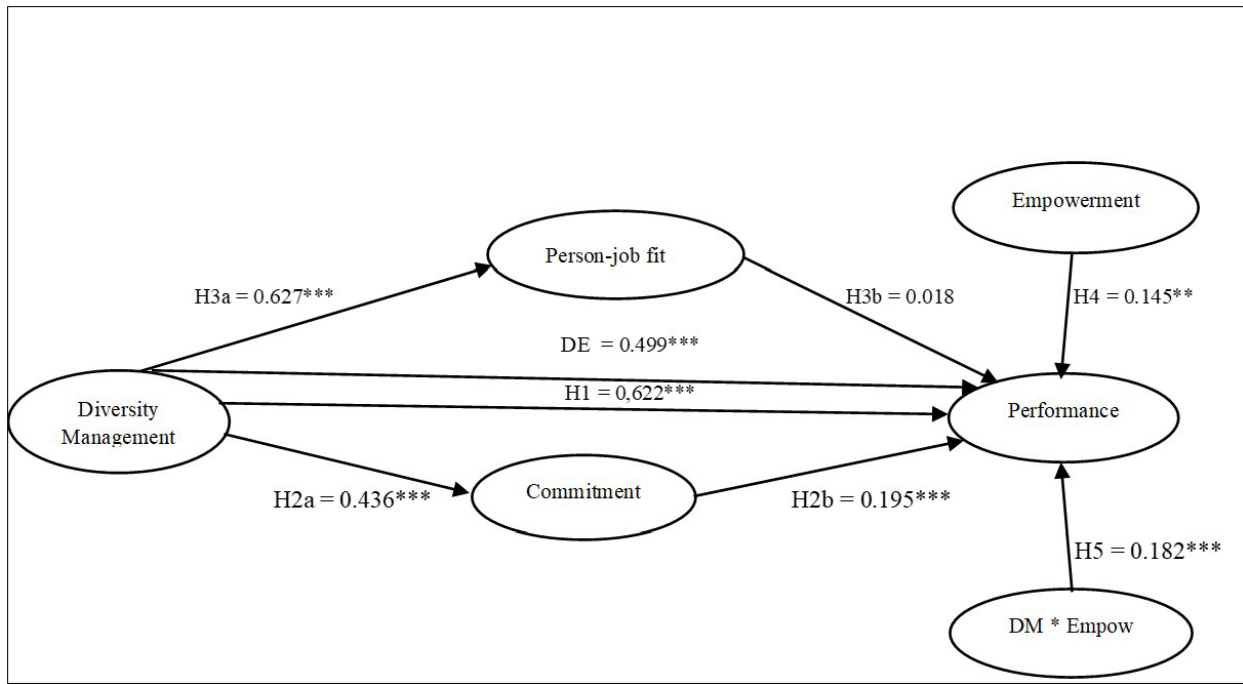R. Bras. Gest. Neg., São Paulo, v.26, n.4, e20230150, 2024

Figure 2. Structural model

Notes: DE = direct effect; CM * Empow = Diversity Management * Empowerment; ***p < 0.001, **p < 0.05*

Table 3
Mediation analysis

Relationship	Indirect Effects	Direct Effects	Total Effects	Result	p
Diversity Management > Person-job Fit > Performance	0.011	0.499	0.510	No mediation	0.778
Diversity Management > Commitment > Performance	0.085	0.499	0.584	Partial mediation	0.000

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Table 4
Slope of the lines of organizational performance predicted by diversity management

Standard deviation	Coefficient	SE	P
-1	0.78	0.08	p < 0.001
0	0.85	0.07	p < 0.001
1	0.93	0.08	p < 0.001

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

moderating variable are presented, it can be seen that for values above the mean, b = 0.93, while for values below the mean (-1 standard deviation), b = 0.78. This difference in slope indicates that the existence of higher levels of empowerment further favors the relationship between diversity management and organizational performance.

In Figure 3, it is possible to verify that for values above the mean of the empowerment variable, the effects of diversity management on organizational performance are more intense than when there are lower values of empowerment, as shown by the curve indicated below one standard deviation.
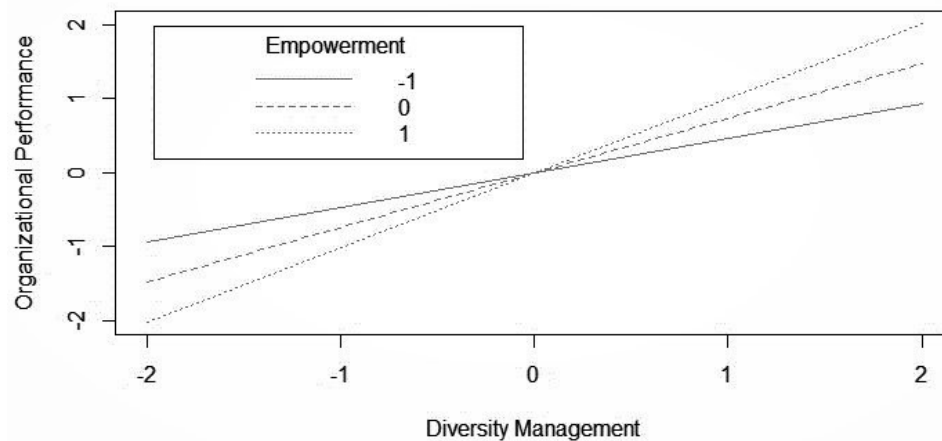
Figure 3. Curves of the relationship between empowerment and organizational performance predicted by diversity management
Source: Elaborated by the authors

5 Discussion of results

5.1 Theoretical implications

Studies on the impact of diversity management on performance are scarce (Roberson, 2019; Yadav & Lenka, 2020; Nishii et al., 2018). The findings of this study advance the discussion about diversity to broaden the understanding of how organizations can promote diversity management practices and foster organizational commitment and performance. Thus, this study aligns with previous studies (Triguero-Sánchez et al., 2018; Ibidunni et al., 2018; Choi & Rainey, 2010) that maintain that diversity management practices that promote increased commitment can be useful for enhancing organizational performance, which is one of the most important dimensions of organizations (Son et al., 2020; Le & Le, 2021).

Furthermore, commitment has been presented as an important predictor of organizational performance (Porter et al., 1974; Hur & Perry, 2019). Commitment has also been found as a mediator in the relationship between transformational and laissez-faire leadership styles and worker performance (Donkor et al., 2021) and in the relationship between leadership behaviors, performance, and job satisfaction (Yousef, 2000). However, there are almost no studies that investigate commitment as a mediator between diversity management practices and organizational performance (Roberson, 2019; Yadav & Lenka, 2020; Nishii et al., 2018; Li et al., 2021). Therefore, this study makes an important theoretical contribution by deepening the understanding of the mediating role of commitment in the relationship between diversity management practices and organizational performance. The findings reveal that diversity management practices influence performance directly or indirectly through commitment incentives.

The findings also reveal an important contribution regarding the effect of diversity management practices on person-job fit, despite not confirming a mediating effect of this construct in the relationship between diversity management practices and organizational performance. In line with studies that indicate a positive effect of diversity on person-job fit (Choi & Rainey, 2010; Sylva et al., 2019), the findings of this study deepen the understanding of the importance of diversity and of placing individuals in functions of their skills, competencies, and preferences, which have important effects on other dimensions of the organization (Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Sylva et al., 2019).

Finally, concerning empowerment, the findings provide empirical evidence of a positive moderating effect of empowerment on the relationship between diversity management practices and organizational performance. These findings significantly contribute to advancing the literature on diversity management practices and organizational performance by highlighting empowerment as a variable that interacts with diversity management practices to positively influence organizational performance, as such studies are lacking (Roberson, 2019; Yadav & Lenka, 2020; Nishii et al., 2018). This means that empowerment

can be a relevant variable to consider when intending to expand diversity management practices to increase organizational performance, as evidence indicates that high levels of empowerment tend to further expand the positive effects of diversity management on performance.

5.2 Practical implications

Among the practical contributions of this study, first of all, the strengthening of the discourses used by different actors in favor of expanding diversity in organizations, especially in Brazil, stands out due to the social inequalities that are significant between the different groups that make up society. As Rohden (2023, p. 4) states, it is necessary to convince managers that diversity is a "[…] powerful performance facilitator, particularly in Brazil, where companies still do not value or understand the real value of diversity." Thus, non-governmental organizations, governments, civil society, and organizations such as the UN and the World Forum can use this study to convince managers to increase diversity in their organizations, which would also contribute to achieving the goals of the SDGs and the Lighthouse Program.

Another noteworthy contribution of this study is its potential for managers to enhance organizational performance. By using the study's findings, managers can promote and expand diversity management practices while also empowering their workers. For instance, managers can incentivize decision making, particularly during the recruitment and selection process, by encouraging the consideration of candidates from underrepresented groups. This approach can contribute to increasing diversity within the organization. However, "it is crucial to maintain a certain degree of error tolerance" (Le & Do, 2023, p. 15) in order to instill trust in individuals regarding the autonomy process (Kaya Özbağ & Çekmecelioğlu, 2022).

5.3 Limitations and future studies

This study has some limitations. A relatively small sample was used considering the size of Brazil, which limits the possibility of generalizing the results. There is also a concentration of respondents in the service segments. Future studies can seek samples from other market segments to check whether there are differences in the results. The study also used a cross-sectional sample, which raises questions about respondents' opinions, which may vary over time. Future longitudinal studies can expand the understanding of the phenomena analyzed

here. Despite Brazil's relevance on the world stage, the research context includes all the cultural, social, and political characteristics present in it, which may affect the perception of the variables studied here. Studies in other countries and regions can strengthen the results of this research.

6 Conclusions

This study aimed to verify the relationship between diversity management and organizational performance, with commitment and person-job fit as mediating variables and empowerment as a moderating variable. The results showed a positive effect of diversity management on the variables person-job fit, commitment, and organizational performance. It was also found that the commitment variable was a mediator between diversity management and performance, while the person-job fit variable was not significant. On the other hand, empowerment emerged as a positive and significant moderator between diversity management and organizational performance.

We reiterate the importance of the findings of this work, especially for realities similar to Brazil, characterized by accentuated inequalities – economic, racial, gender, etc. – and requiring efforts that promote diversity and reduce inequalities. Often, in these contexts, such efforts have collided with political and ideological disputes and debates, realities to which the findings of this study can contribute by adding theoretical and empirical arguments that reinforce the importance and positive effects of actions to promote diversity.

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SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

Supplementary Data 1 – Database
Supplementary Data 2 – Appendix A
Supplementary Data 3 – R script

Supplementary material for this article is available online at https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/FNYN0D

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Conflicts of interest:
The authors have no conflict of interest to declare

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