The Impact of Gender Diversity on Employees’ Work Performance: The Mediating role of Interpersonal Conflict

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BUILDING UPON INSTITUTIONAL, this paper seeks to understand the relationship of gender diversity and employee’s work performance. Specifically, this paper makes a case for interpersonal conflict to mediate the relationship between gender diversity and employee performance. The research is based on survey data from 240 professionals of the Pakistan's private and public hospitals. As per the study’s findings, there is a substantial positive association between gender diversity and employee performance. Further, the study’s results have also established the fact that interpersonal conflict is also a vital intervening mechanism to establish the relationship between gender diversity and employee performance.

Keywords: Gender Diversity, Interpersonal conflict, Employee performance.

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1. INTRODUCTION

There is an ever expanding need to comprehend the significance of workforce diversity in the continually changing worldwide business condition (Curado, Tai, Oliveira, & Sarmento, 2021). More importantly, today workforce is getting more and more heterogeneous on a demographic dimensions and factors such as rapidly changing business conditions, immigrants, women inclusion in the workforce and ageing are the key drivers of this phenomenon (Hundschell, Razinskas, Backmann, & Hoegl, 2021; Parrotta, Pozzoli, & Pytlikova, 2012). Particularly, the developing countries are encountering remarkable gender based diversity and this pattern is likely to be proceed (Amin, Rehman, Ali, & Ntim, 2021; Ilmakunnas & Ilmakunnas, 2011). It has now developed as a main financial driver in the worldwide business in the Pakistan setting (Amin et al., 2021). Along these lines it’s a prime need to utilize diverse workforce to manage well in the current business situations. There is growing evidence that gender diversity relates to an increasingly profitable work environment (Gartzia, 2021).
Although there is some understanding about the role of gender diversity in affecting the employee’s performance, there is little understanding regarding how individual employee performance may be enhanced in the context of gender diversity in the developing countries particularly male dominated societies (Azmat & Boring, 2020; Mousa, 2021). In a nation, for instance, Pakistan which has a half population of females (Worldbank, 2019), there is a need to have more females as a feature of the workforce. To pull in a more extensive ability pool of employees, there is a need to grasp an organization’s culture of diverse workforce. This will upgrade the corporate status and fortified (Vanderbroeck & Wasserfallen, 2017). The increase in gender diversity, involvement of women in knowledge creation and production processes within firms has gain the greater attention of both researchers and practitioners (Ali, Metz, & Kulik, 2007; Genevey, Pachauri, & Tubiana, 2013; Tabassum & Nayak, 2021).

More importantly, the question arises whether this expansion of gender diversity will influence the outcome of organization at group and individual level. In the mid-1990s, the researchers were to larger extent hopeful about the impacts of diversity on the overall organizational productivity. One of two expansive strategies has been used often in the ongoing work (Garg & Sangwan, 2021). One theory claims that gender diversity sends a message to financial experts and other external stakeholders, influencing their perceptions of an organization's worth (Garg & Sangwan, 2021; Roberson & Park, 2007). A second approach centers around role of gender diversity inside the organization and “accentuating both the beneficial outcome of gender diversity in expanding creative capacity and breadth of information and its negative impact in disturbing social cohesion” (Garg & Sangwan, 2021; Hundschell et al., 2021; Richard, McMillan, Yang & Konrad, 2011).

Given the increasing number of research that have used these two methodologies, empirical facts has really been mixed: “some studies have shown a positive influence of gender diversity, while others have found a negative or invalid impact” (Mikkonen, Stenvall, & Lehtonen, 2021; Post & Byron, 2015). It's still unknown how gender diversity affects performance to a large extent. Previous studies, on the other hand, have turned a blind eye to the larger organizational social milieu. Including the institutional context might help to clarify the gender diversity-performance link (Joshi & Roh, 2009; Shore et al., 2009). The Institutional theory asserts that financial activity, organizational structure, and human behavior are all influenced by institutions. And institutions refer to the legal “(e.g., laws, constitutions) and informal (e.g., taboos, customs, cultural-social standards) constraints” that people and organizations face when making decisions (North, 1990). At the end of the day, they form individual collaboration and structure wishes for what people will do (Lin & Nugent, 1995).

Though, the link between gender diversity and employees' work performance is less straightforward and depends upon many factors. Among those, the most important is interpersonal conflict (Roberson et al., 2017; Roh & Kim, 2016). Therefore, the current study makes a significant contribution to the literature while addressing the following research questions, i.e. (1) what is the relationship between gender diversity and employee’s work performance? (2) Does the relationship between gender diversity and employee’s work performance is mediated by the
interpersonal conflict? By answering these questions, the study aimed to extend the previous studies by not only discovering the direct association between gender-based diversity and work performance, but also explores that how this association is indirectly affected by interpersonal conflict. The present study was undertaken to present a baseline to measure the gender diversity in enhancing employee performance through understanding of interpersonal conflict as a vital intervening mechanism and claims that the future victory of any organization depends upon its ability to manage gender diversity.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Diversity is by and large characterized as appreciating, understanding and recognizing the differences among individuals i.e. ethnicity, race, gender, age, physical and mental capacities (Okello, 2015). Campion (2011), argue that diversity provides a source of competitive advantage to the organization. Previous studies on the resource-based perspective of the organization proposed that intangible assets like employee ability and competency are a predominant source for an organization to gain a competitive advantage over its competitors in the market (Barney, 2001). While, gender based diversity may upgrade workers general creativity, imagination and development because of the blend of various abilities, skills points of view and backgrounds (Egan, 2005). Gender diversity is the most important cause of socially unpredictable and intangible resources that will help to furnish a firm with a sustainable competitive advantage by incorporating market understanding, innovativeness, development and enhanced critical thinking or productivity in the organization (Robinson & Dechant, 1997). These resources are important, uncommon, matchless, and non-substitutable. They are profitable in light of the fact that they drive business development and productivity (Matuska & Imińska, 2014).

Further, balanced composition of a workforce may upgrade workers general creativity, imagination, and development as it consists of the blend of various abilities, skills, points of view, and backgrounds (Egan, 2005). Another study conducted in the United States by Adler (2001) discovered that “organizations with a good reputation for utilizing and advancing women had the highest rate of profitability and productivity, leading to the conclusion that women's presence in organizations positively correlates with increased worker and organization profitability and performance”. Moreover, the empirical evidence of some other researches (Cundiff, Nadler, & Swan, 2009; Kundu & Mor, 2017; Peter et al., 2021) confirms that “perception of the male and female employees are significantly different regarding gender diversity via performance i.e. development opportunities, hiring, retaining and promotion and diverse employees with equal representation”.

H1a. Employee perceptions of gender diversity range dramatically between male and female employees.

H1b. Employees in the public and private sectors have vastly different perspectives on gender diversity.

H1c. Employees from diverse categories have vastly different perspectives on gender diversity.
Several studies have looked into the link between gender diversity and employee effectiveness. Those studies have opposing viewpoints on whether or not adding women to the workforce is beneficial to the organization. Campbell and Mínguez-Vera (2008) contended that the acknowledgment and presence of ladies could positively impact their performance and increase the performance of the organization as they bring additional perspectives to work. Randøy, Thomsen, and Oxelheim (2006) highlighted the examples of additional perspectives that “ladies bring, for example, improved advancement ability, better worldwide market knowledge, and more prominent attention to customer needs”. In sum, workplace gender diversity as an intangible asset can provide an organization with superior benefits (Dezsö & Ross, 2012; Gartzia, 2021). The presumption behind the debates is that diversity promotes innovativeness, development and provides competitive advantage by expanding corporate reputation or image. It also provides enlightenment and energizes the cooperation of the females at different levels of management (Chatterjee & Ramu, 2017; Tabassum & Nayak, 2021). Previous findings underpin the argument that gender diversity is positively connected to the employees and overall organizational performance. Accordingly, based on the above-mentioned literature, it is safe to assume that gender diversity leads to workforce productivity.

**Hypothesis 2: Organizational Gender Diversity is significantly related to employee performance.**

**The Mediating role of Interpersonal Conflict (IPC)**

A conflict is defined as a “contradiction in opinion between two or more parties” (Huho, 2012). Interpersonal conflict in the workplace refers to a disagreement between employees or employers (Lee & Spector, 2006). Interpersonal conflict is caused by individual variances in personality, culture, behaviors, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions (Riaz & Junaid, 2012). Conflict has been defined as a vital element in the link between diversity and performance since it has both a good and negative influence on the organization's overall performance (Van Knippenberg, Haslam, & Platow, 2007). Hamilton, Nickerson, and Owan (2003), argued between the cost of grouping, correspondence and the benefits from diverse pool of skills, and knowledge. In some settings, coordination and correspondence costs are probably going to be high (the armed force). Woolley, Chabris, Pentland, Hashmi, and Malone (2010), demonstrate that interpersonal perspectives, for example, friendship, and conflicts that differ with the groups and composition of gender diversity may affecttheir execution. The contradictory nature of conflict as an internal mechanism suggests the need to better comprehend and keep examining this three-section relationship (Wang & Wu, 2020).

Moreover, IPC affects social integration among a diverse workforce. Social reconciliation among people from diverse backgrounds intends to satisfy with and appreciation for different groups of people and the level of harmony among the group/team members (Abad, Lucas-Pérez, Minguez-Vera, & Yagüe, 2017). In an investigation of 545 representatives, Jehn and Chatman (2000) found that when people perceived conflict inside their diverse team, the most disastrous impact would result in low level of cohesiveness and harmony in the group that leads towards poor performance and negative attitude/thinking about the group. In the recent past, many researchers established a
link between conflict and performance in a diverse group of people proposed that conflict at any level negatively impacts the performance (Benitez, Leon-Perez, Orgambídez, & Medina, 2021; Chatman & Flynn, 2001).

On the other hand, Cronin and Weingart (2007) indicated that when various people from diverse backgrounds work as a team, they may perceive tasks unexpectedly. This prompts errors and conflicts between the activities that team members accept as an essential for the group to be fruitful (Ani, Onu, & Anikelechi, 2021).

Based on the literature review, it is hypothesized that:

_Hypothesis 3: Interpersonal Conflict mediates the relationship between gender diversity and employee performance._

Based on above literature review, the study proposed the following research model

**Theoretical Framework**

![Figure 1. Theoretical Framework](image-url)
3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample

For data gathering in Pakistan's health-care sector, the study employed a survey approach. The study's target audience is made up of people who work in Pakistan's private and public hospitals. Six Pakistani hospitals were chosen to gather data; however, due to a lack of desire and a poor response rate in this business, three public and three private hospitals were chosen for the researcher's convenience. On the basis of random sampling, data was obtained from doctors, paramedical employees, and non-paramedical workers. The overall number of doctors employed at the chosen institutions was estimated to be around 20,000. A total of 330 people were asked to take part in the study. The questionnaires were disseminated in such a way that data could be obtained from the maximum number of respondents from the sample hospitals (see Table I). Every third worker entering the hospital was invited to fill out the survey by researchers who individually visited each facility to gather data. The employees' desire to engage in the research study was quite low due to the nature of their jobs in this sector. Out of 350 allocated surveys, 270 were filled out completely. 240 of the 350 polls were found to be appropriate for investigation. Because of the wide range of replies received from the respondents, only 30 were chosen. The data for the present investigation was examined utilizing statistical analysis software (SAS). Table I revealed that the sample consisted of 119 respondents from the public sector and 121 respondents from the private sector. Among those 32 males and 87 female respondents belongs to public while 77 male and 44 female respondents belongs to private sector. Results of Table II showed that Out of the total 119 male respondents, 47 are doctors, 38 are paramedical, and 46 belong to the admin category. Among the 121 females, 48 are doctors, 37 are paramedical, and 24 are admin officers.

Table I: Questionnaire distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the organizations</th>
<th>Questionnaires distributed</th>
<th>Questionnaire received</th>
<th>Response rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public hospitals</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private hospitals</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table II: Frequency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of employees</th>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Designation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measures

To ensure the validity, the study used measures developed by previous studies. The variables of the study were measured on five-point Likert scale. The scale created by Okello (2015) was used to quantify gender diversity. Sample items include “My organization does a good job of attracting and hiring women”. “Interpersonal Conflict is measured by the scale developed by Jehn (1995)”. Sample items include “How much friction is there among members in your work unit? The scale developed by (Kuvaas, 2008) was used to measure the employee performance. Sample items Included “I always perform better than what can be characterized as acceptable performance”.

Statistical tools

The current study employed several statistical tools to analyze the data used by Kundu and Mor (2017), that is “correlations, grand means, mean, ANOVA, confirmatory factor analysis and structural analysis”. A two-way ANOVA was utilized to illustrate the substantial differences between diversity and groups (Lavracas, 2008). Grand mean scores were used to determine the direction and extent of significant differences. For data measurement and reliability, composite reliability and Cronbach’s α values were also estimated. CFA was employed to confirm the discriminate and convergent validity. SEM was also used in the study to see how gender diversity affects employee work performance through interpersonal conflict. The causelmed procedure was used to check the mediation.

Relationships among Variables

The data analysis was broken down in two stages. To begin with, while analyzing the variances, the demographic factors were treated as independent variables to see how they affected the constructs of gender diversity. Second, when screening for structural equation analysis, gender diversity was used as a predictor variable, and employee’s job performance was used as an outcome variable. Moreover, the factor of interpersonal conflict was taken as a mediator between the constructs of GD and IPC.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Discriminate and Convergent Validity

To examine the discriminate validity between gender diversity, interpersonal conflict, information elaboration, and employee’s work performance; the study has performed confirmatory factor analyses using the SAS software. Results of these analysis demonstrated that the fit lists for the four-factor hypothesized model were acceptable (i.e., CFI = 0.93, SRMR=0.04, RMSEA = 0.06, chi-square p<0.05). All of the more constrained models were found to be inferior to the four-factor model in these evaluations. Moreover, all item loaded reliably on its latent construct with standardized loadings ranging from 0.46 to 0.80 for Gender diversity, from 0.73 to 0.77 for
interpersonal conflict, from 0.74 to 0.77 for information elaboration, and from 0.79 to 0.84 for employee’s work performance. The results of ANOVA are given in Tables III. The results include “corresponding significance levels of the main effects that are gender effect, category effect (designation category), sector effect, and the interaction effect”. The non-significant result of F for gender indicates that employees' perceptions of gender diversity are not different based on their gender (see Table III). According to the data, employees in general have a favorable attitude toward gender diversity but their reactions do not differ from one another. As a result, H1a is not approved. The large value of F for sector and designation, on the other hand, indicates that employees' perceptions of gender diversity vary by sector and degree of employment. Hence, hypotheses H1b and H1c are accepted. “The F value is a value on the F distribution. Various statistical tests generate an F value. The value can be used to determine whether the test is statistically significant. The F value is used in analysis of variance (ANOVA)”.

Table III: Results of ANOVA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Gender (main) F-value</th>
<th>Effects</th>
<th>Sector (main) F-value</th>
<th>Designation (main) F-value</th>
<th>Two way interaction F-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender_D</td>
<td>1.97 (0.16)</td>
<td>12.7 (0.00)***</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender_D</td>
<td>1.97 (0.16)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>2.38 (0.09)*</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender_D</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>12.7 (0.00)***</td>
<td>2.38 (0.09)*</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Gender_D=Gender diversity

Further, table IV and V shows the summery of means and grand means of employee responses across sector and designation. Males have a mean score of 3.73, while females have a mean score of 3.89, according to the mean scores table. Employees in the private sector have a grand mean score of 3.71, while employees in the public sector have a grand mean score of 3.91. These findings reveal considerable disparities in employee perceptions of gender diversity in the public and private sectors. The average response score for respondents’ perceptions of gender diversity varies somewhat across the categories (see Table V). Employee responses on the perception of gender diversity vary by industry and designation category, with a p-value less than 0.05. As a result of the differences in employee responses across sectors and hierarchical levels of employment, the H1b and H1c hypotheses are accepted (see Table IV).

Table IV: Means and Grand means Score (sector)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Categories of sectors</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Grand mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender_D</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender_D</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender_D</td>
<td>GM</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Gender_D=Gender diversity
Table V: Means and Grand means Score (designation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories of Designation</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Doctor</th>
<th>Paramedical</th>
<th>Admin</th>
<th>GM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender_D</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender_D</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender_D</td>
<td>GM</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Gender_D=Gender diversity

Table VI shows the VIF and correlation statistics for all of the variables. The variance inflation factor scores are about 2, much below the threshold of 5 (Kutner, Nachtsheim, & Neter, 2004), implying little or no multicollinearity amongst the variables. If all VIF values are equal to or less than 3.3, the model can be considered free of common method biases (Kock, 2015). Correlation results show a strong intercorrelation among the four variables. Most importantly, the current research finds a statistically significant relationship between gender diversity and workforce performance. Thus, hypothesis 2 of the study that gender diversity is positively related to employees` performance is accepted. Now the study will look at the mediation analyses and put the study's hypotheses 3 to the test.

Table VI: Correlation and VIF statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>VIF</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Gender_D</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Intpr_Con</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>0.27**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 work _perf</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.40**</td>
<td>0.49**</td>
<td>0.53**</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Gender_D= Gender diversity, Intpr_Con=Interpersonal conflict, Inf_Elab= Information elaboration, work _perf= Work performance.

Table VII: Mediation Results for Intpr_con and Inf_Elab between IV (Gender_D) and DV (Work_Per)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IV</th>
<th>Med</th>
<th>DV</th>
<th>Direct effect</th>
<th>Thru Mediation</th>
<th>% mediated</th>
<th>Total Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender_D</td>
<td>Intpr_Con</td>
<td>Work_Per</td>
<td>.19***</td>
<td>.08**</td>
<td>32***</td>
<td>.25***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender_D</td>
<td>Inf_Elab</td>
<td>Work_Per</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.27***</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.29***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Gender_D=Gender diversity, Intpr_Con=Interpersonal conflict, Inf_Elab=Information elaboration, work _perf=Work performance.
Table VII shows the findings of the mediation analysis using the proc causelmed methods. The mediating influence of IPC on the association between gender diversity and employee performance was found to be significant at $p \leq 0.001$. The results from the mediation analysis indicate that an average increase in employees’ perceived work performance increase among gender base diverse workforce if they have interpersonal conflict. For example, conflict can benefit individuals by stimulating divergent and innovative ideas and fostering greater cognitive understanding of significant issues. Therefore, hypothesis 3 that interpersonal conflict mediates the relationship between gender diversity and employees’ work performance is supported.

**DISCUSSIONS**

Today, managing workforce diversity is considered an unavoidable challenge in the global competitive business environment (Garg & Sangwan, 2021). The proposed study aims to consider the role of gender diversity in increasing the productivity and performance of individuals and organizations along with the internal and external mechanisms impacting performance behavior among a diverse workforce. The current study was taken by considering the context of workforce diversity in Pakistan. The results were discussed in this study with a caveat considering the contextual setting. Concerning the subjective value attached with employee perception of gender diversity in the organization, the results acquired from the findings highlight that the respondents' preferences do not significantly differ from each other. The non-significant value of “F” which is 0.05, as extracted from the results using ANOVA for gender in the Pakistani health sector, validates the rejection of H1a that is male and female workers' views of gender diversity in the organization are not substantially different. Moreover, the significant value of “F” which is .05: indicates the significant difference among the employees’ mean score concerning their designations and sectors also confirms the acceptance of H1b and H1c. As indicated by Soni (2000), the employee perception of the diversity of gender contrasts from one another. However, the present examination mirrored the comparative example in terms of the perception of diversity among the workers of various classifications (sector and designation). Soni (2000), delineated that the selection effect may be a possible reason behind the insignificant results of the gender perception towards the diversity in the organization. Schaafsma (2008) estimated diversity at diverse work levels, affirming that those with high abilities levels are increasingly responsive toward diversity when contrasted with the less talented individuals.

Also, the literature review suggests that the link between gender diversity and employee performance can be both positive and negative (Mikkonen et al., 2021). The study finds support for the former and not the latter. Empirical research underpins the argument that gender diversity is positively connected to an employee’s performance and considers gender diversity as the prime source in the current globalized business world that can provide a greater competitive advantage to the organizations (Korpinen, 2014; Peter et al., 2021). The findings of the study indicate that IPC increases among a gender-based diverse workforce because of the differences in people’s values, beliefs, attitudes, and work styles (Chan & Goto, 2003; Leung & Chan, 1999; Sauceda,
In contrast to previous findings of the research (Jehn & Chatman, 2000) that IPC decrease employee performance (Benitez et al., 2021), the empirical evidence of the current study indicates that IPC increase the individual work performance among gender base diverse workforce in the health care sector of Pakistan. The potential benefits of conflict can be seen among individuals in terms of increasing divergent ideas or innovative behaviors (Ani et al., 2021; Caesens, Stinglhamber, Demoulin, Wilde, & Mierop, 2018). Whereas the positive relationship between the IPC and employee’s work performance in the context of Pakistan’s health care sector is due to the potential struggle of the workforce from diverse backgrounds (for instance, gender diversity) to be competitive and also ensure their representations and current employment conditions in Pakistani. Whilst, culturally relevant to Pakistan, as a male-dominated society, and now slowly increasingly women in the business environment, therefore there is a need to highlight the practices where improvement is needed to enhance the individual performance among diverse workforce (Amin et al., 2021; Worldbank, 2019).

Furthermore, the present study contends that balanced gender composition of the workforce may help to create synergy prompting positive individual and organizational performance. Researchers have asserted that men and women may likewise have diverse psychological capacities. The combination of different competencies in a gender-diverse team can improve overall “team cohesion, innovation, and development resulting in improved organizational performance (Gartzia, 2021; Asenjo et al., 2017)”.

The current research has important theoretical contributions. Introducing the institutional context in managing gender diversity has important implications for improving employees' work performance. Overall coherence among the diverse workforce to improve individual performance can be better understand by considering a large set of interrelated and interacting institutional arrangements, rather than isolated institutions. Without a doubt, when complementarities happen, the presence of an institutional structure fortifies the presence of the others: this produces a "dynamic stability”(Amable, 2003). Institutional theory influences the human behavior through institutional norms, standards and policies to work more effectively within the organization. More importantly, the institutional theory highlights formal and informal constraints (i.e., laws, constitutions, customs/social norms, and taboos) that limit the individual choices and derive their interactions working among the diverse workforce and build the expectations that people will do (Zhang, 2019).

Thus, the suggested model adds to the theoretical underpinning of diversity literature which is a significant contribution to the current work. It widens the scope of those diversity-related theories (i.e., Institutional theory) and will fortify more research at the strategic level. Additionally, the study’s findings will contribute to the deeper understanding of gender diversity and its particular relevance to employee performance. The findings of this study will serve as a wake-up call to business leaders and employees, allowing them to see gender diversity as a blessing rather than a legal obligation. There is a need to include all stakeholders and bring their consensus on the important issues (i.e., role, responsibilities, career opportunities, advancement, organizational
procedures, policies, etc) in managing diversity within an organization. The managers need to adopt mechanisms to create a supportive environment in their structures in accommodating females in the workforce. The study encourages the managers to conduct diversity assessment initiatives like Diversity Audit Tool (DAT) regularly to evaluate and monitor the composition of the diverse workforce in the organization. The future workplace is getting increasingly diversified as a result of the growing trend of globalization, and gender diversity has gained particular attention to become more successful in a highly competitive business environment around the globe.

5. CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The study's social repercussions are determined by industry, economic, political, legal, and policy decisions that shape diversity as it gets institutionalized. The study's findings may aid in reducing gender inequalities most importantly in the male dominated society where females usually get less chance to interact. The supportive mechanism of information elaboration as a pre-requisite condition of tasks may help to reduce conflict among the diverse workforces. Managers need to study the gender diversity more enthusiastically and mainly to synthesize research findings on individual behavior with macroscopic analyses of industrial political and economic factors that hinder the benefits of gender diversity. In addition, there should be a proper socialization process for gender diversity to be more effective so that employees understand each other’s standards and expectations. This study, just like every other study, has some limitations. First, because of time constraints, the current study employed a limited sample size. However, a larger sample size might lead to more precise results. The present study was limited to the health care sector, which might raise an issue of generalizability. Therefore, the present study encourages other researchers to replicate the study in another industrial context. It is also possible that some other factors may be a possible explanation of the relationship between gender diversity and workforce performance. Future study should look at various interactions and interventions including racial diversity, business governance, age, and education, as well as how to strike a balance between heterogeneity.
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