

THE WAY TO BUSINESS COMPETITIVENESS: THE IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT AND TEAMWORK CLIMATE IN STABILIZING OF EMPLOYEES

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Abstract. Focusing on utilization of employees strengths at workforce brings companies benefit to the diverse workforce and creates a competitive advantage in a turbulent and dynamic business environment. The intention of this research is to fill a significant research gap in the in-depth exploration of relationships and support mechanisms for diversity management. The research is focused on teamwork climate as a mediating variable, moderating the effect of best practices in the implementation of diversity management and on its potential level of influence on the employee turnover in the company. It was applied the correlation to evaluate connection r among criteria of three areas: best practices in diversity management, teamwork climate and employee turnover rates. The control variables were age, gender, education and length of manager practice. The dependency between best practices in diversity management and employee turnover, which is mediated by teamwork climate, has been confirmed. However, partial mediation was found, where only part of the effect is mediated. The rate of turnover is influenced by the gender of the manager, age and length of practice. All variables (age, length of experience and gender) are significantly related to the variables of best practices in diversity management and teamwork climate.

Keywords: diversity, management, teamwork climate, employee turnover, mediation, best practices.

JEL Classification: M10, M12, M14.

Introduction

Currently, managerial thinking and action are increasingly focused on the effective use of diverse potential of human resources, which are becoming an important factor in the competitiveness of the company in the domestic and foreign markets (Davis et al., 2016; Otaye-Ebede, 2019). Leveraging the strengths of each employee brings value to the workforce and creates a competitive advantage in a turbulent and dynamic business environment. The main

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thesis of Japanese management, based on the philosophy of Confucianism, is that everyone has his or her strengths, and it is just necessary to find right place where strengths can be applicable. At present, based on demographic trends, this thesis is still relevant to the new challenges of the world of work. The workforce is diverse, not only in terms of age, gender, nationality, education, but also in terms of different experiences, skills, abilities, ways of thinking, beliefs about what is right or what is wrong and also differs in how they see different employees the world around them (Van der Vegt et al., 2006; Tran et al., 2011; Egerova et al., 2013; Otaye-Ebede, 2019). Therefore, there is a growing scientific interest in examining the effectiveness of managing a diverse workforce. Because a diverse workforce is an intangible capital of the company, value creation through this type of capital is indirect, often ambiguous, and based on many authors ideas (Kaplan & Norton, 2004; Yang & Konrad, 2011; Guillaume et al., 2013) it is a result of interconnected relationships, causes and consequences. As reported by Singh et al. (2013), diversity is not a new construct, but with increasing globalization, growing societal pressures for integration, and a changing demographic environment, managing diversity is becoming increasingly challenging. It consists of a set of formalized procedures originated and implemented by organizations to manage diversity effectively among all stakeholders in the organization (Yang & Konrad, 2011). Traditional views on diversity management, which have been limited to fewer forms and less presence of diversity, now appear to be ineffective (Kaplan et al., 2011). For effective diversity management, scientific research has focused on diversity climate (Gonzalez & DeNisi, 2009; Luring & Selmer, 2011). Diversity climate is the perception of employees as to the extent to which an organization values and integrates diversity and promotes it through fair employment practices (Singh et al., 2013; Kaplan et al., 2011). Yang and Konrad (2011) argue that diversity management generates resources that are scarce and arduous for competitors to imitate, thus focusing on developing a lasting competitive advantage. Ozbilgin and Tatli (2008) provided significant empirical evidence that successful diversity management and subsequent progress in organizational performance are positively correlated. Jelínková and Jiřincová (2015), Jiřincová (2013) confirmed the effectiveness of the practical use of diversity management tools in conjunction with the intellectual capital of companies in creating value and improving business performance. Ashikali and Groeneveld (2015) report the findings of diversity management in relation of individuals behavior to the company. Mamman et al. (2012) point out that the use of diversity management tools leads to greater employee belonging and engagement. However, Otaye-Ebede (2019) argues despite of many studies about the conclusive effects of diversity on business performance, there are some ambiguous findings that dispute the positive effects. The study shows that the positive impacts of diversity management are influenced by the intention with which the company applies this approach. If the motivation is legal aspects or political correctness and not an interest in employees, positive effects may not appear. Even many more meta-analyzes have yielded ambiguous results, where the positive effects of diversity management are linked to the characteristics of teams in terms of their sustainability (Joshi & Roh, 2009; Holmes et al., 2021). According Hulsheger et al. (2009), the positive impact of diversity management itself on results is lower than the impact of using other support processes. Therefore, it is a trend in recent years to examine the conditions under which diversity could have an impact (positive or negative)

on business performance (van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007). Leadership style (Kearney & Gebert, 2009), corporate culture and trust (Olsen & Martins, 2012), organizational commitment (Mamman et al., 2012), information sharing (Kooij-de Bode et al., 2008), deep beliefs about diversity (Van Dick et al., 2008), but also psychological aspects and emotions (Mackie et al., 2008; Singh et al., 2013; Tufan et al., 2019) were identified as moderating variables in the studies. Based on the arguments above, the intent of our research is to fill a significant research gap and create deeper look into relationships and support mechanisms for diversity management. We are interested in whether the implementation of diversity management procedures is related to the degree of employee turnover in companies. We have called these practices, used to varying degrees in companies, best practices in diversity management, and we have chosen the perceived quality of teamwork as a support tool for the direct relationship analyzed. Research is focused on teamwork climate as a mediating variable, transmitting and moderating the effect of best practices in the implementation of diversity management to the degree of employee turnover in the company. The core hypothesis follows from the above: The dependence between best practices in diversity management and employee turnover is mediated by the teamwork climate. In this research study, first will be clarified the role of diversity management in the context of teamwork climate and its importance for company results. Based on the previous studies and research findings is created the theoretical concept of research and three hypotheses are formulated. The results of the research are analyzed by using the mediation method and finally the implications and future possibilities in this research area are presented.

1. Theoretical background

The theory defines diversity management as a multifaceted concept, involving management activities that encourage diversity of the workforce, recognize diversity as an important company's goal, develop cultural awareness, and finally apply formal company's programs focused on diversity (Sabharwal et al., 2018; Davis et al., 2016; Otaye-Ebede, 2019). Diversity creates a competitive advantage because it helps companies attract and retain the best employees and increase creativity and improve decision-making (Foster & Harris, 2005; Yang & Konrad, 2011; Inegbedion et al., 2020). However, if diversity is not properly managed, it can be a source of conflicts, leading to inefficiency, impoverished quality, absence of creativity and innovation potential, as well as increased labor turnover (De la Torre-Ruiz et al., 2019). Organizations and companies have adopted different approaches to diversity management at various stages of their development (Hewlett et al., 2013). They represent best practices in the area of diversity management and inclusion practices and in terms of a holistic view of diversity management, they can be understood as certain stages in the implementation of diversity management tools. The basic approach to comply with legislation is to apply diversity as an equal opportunity, justice and non-discrimination tool. This approach guarantees the neutrality of human resource management processes to avoid discrimination of all kinds and requires transparent management processes (Van Laer et al., 2021; Inkson et al., 2012; Flory et al., 2021; Dobbin & Kalev, 2016; Ibanez & Riener, 2018). It is a traditional perception of diversity management, but it does not push its boundaries further.

Another approach is to understand and implement diversity as a resource. This approach is based on the fact that diverse populations have different skills and knowledge that can be used to improve business performance, gain access to different market segments, create a competitive advantage and increase competitiveness in domestic and foreign markets (Joshi & Sarker, 2007; Nowak, 2020; Gerpott et al., 2021; Zacher et al., 2018). The third approach is to understand diversity as an inclusive activator, emphasizing the contribution of diversity to a learning culture and therefore using diversity to rethink organizational structures, working methods and cultures. It requires the creation of an environment that connects values in the workplace with employees – their basic identities, perspectives and allows you to influence and contribute to the creation of vision and build up the strategy of the organization through differences between people. This type of self-reflection suggests that learning and innovation are more likely to occur (Ashikali et al., 2020; Randel et al., 2018; Otaye-Ebede, 2019; Gerpott et al., 2021).

The concept of diversity management should be understood in each of these three meanings, as it describes not only the combination of skills, competencies, perspectives, experience, background, but also the appreciation and use of this diversity to improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness and meet staff professional expectations. Diversity should not be seen as an end in itself, but as a mechanism to achieve the wider goals of the business. In order for the results to be visible, according to Madera et al. (2018) diversity management needs to be sustainable. Because, like any other long-term goal, achieving diversity poses risks to sustainability.

According to the theoretical research, we extracted the most common items in the application of diversity and inclusion approaches in the company, from which we compiled a baseline variable called best practices in diversity and inclusion in the company). The structure of items that are part of the Best practices (BP) are shown in Figure 1 and Table 1.

Effective diversity management has various organizational implications. Van Dick et al. (2008) pointed out in their research that diversity management can not only weaken employee morale and reduce individual performance if tools are set incorrectly, but can also have a negative impact on employee satisfaction and increased turnover in companies. Fluctuation is often understood as a negative factor influencing staffing and continuity of knowledge in companies (De Winne et al., 2019) and firm performance (Hancock et al., 2013). Outgoing employees do not work at full capacity, they carry with them (often to the competition) important knowledge and their departures and replacement cost the company time and money (Hom et al., 2017). The organization therefore strives to keep the percentage of turnover as low as possible. It is stated that the recommended fluctuation rate is in the range of 5–10%. We assume that the BP will lead to a lower turnover rate of the company's employees.

H1. Best practices in diversity and inclusion in the company are positively correlated with employee turnover.

Based on the studies about the supportive effect of teamwork climate and its leading to creation of mechanism focused on the job satisfaction (Hargadon & Bechky, 2006; Wang et al., 2014; Chen et al., 2021; Wombacher & Felfe, 2017; Hong et al., 2019; Cambre et al., 2012; Lamberti et al., 2022); we also incline to believe that diversity management would lead to a reduction in the rate of employee turnover by creating a favorable teamwork climate.

H2. Best practices in diversity and inclusion in the company are positively correlated with teamwork climate.

Optimal teamwork climate is a tool that helps to increase employee performance (Bogan & Dedeoglu, 2017), to develop job satisfaction (Abdolshah et al., 2018), to increase employee loyalty (Guillon & Cezanne, 2014), trust (Nedkovski et al., 2017) and business performance (Ali et al., 2018; Cizmaş et al., 2020). These facts have a positive effect on the degree of fluctuation (Schreurs et al., 2015; De la Torre-Ruiz et al., 2019; El Akremi et al., 2014).

H3: Teamwork climate is positively connected with the employee turnover in the company.

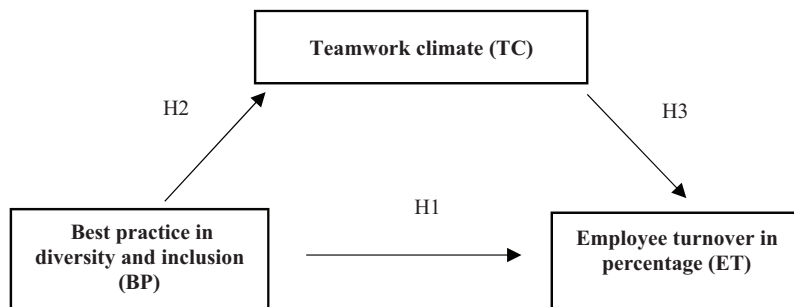


Figure 1. Used mediator model (source: own research)

Table 1. Content of analyzed variables Best Practice and Teamwork Climate (source: own research)

Best practices in diversity and inclusion in business (BP) (1 – we do not apply at all, 7 – we apply fully)	Teamwork climate: perceived level of cooperation among employees (TC) (1 – strongly disagree, 7 – strongly agree)
<i>Diversity as equal opportunity, justice and non-discrimination</i> – fair treatment – equal access to opportunities – non-discrimination <i>Diversity as a resource</i> – using the skills and knowledge of a diverse workforce – focusing on diversity between internal and external stakeholders – focusing on innovation and creativity, flexibility, responsiveness and agility <i>Diversity as an inclusive activator</i> – representation of diversity at all levels of the organization – teamwork and cooperation – education and training of employees – conflict management strategies that are cooperative – evidence of leadership commitment to diversity (e.g. Chief Diversity / Equality Officer in company)	– Each team member can ask questions in not understandable situations – Employees receive the needed support from other employees at the workplace – The contribution of employees is positively perceived in our company – Disagreements in the team are managed adequately, Team members work together as a well-coordinated team regardless of their job positions – It is not difficult to express my critical opinion in this workplace if I perceive problems in performance of task

2. Research objective, methodology and data

The aim of this research paper is to examine the link between best practice in diversity and inclusion in companies and the rate of employee turnover, assuming that best practice is positively related to the rate of employee turnover through teamwork climate. To meet this research aim, it is necessary to verify following hypothesis:

H1. Best practices in diversity and inclusion in the company are positively correlated with employee turnover.

H2. Best practices in diversity and inclusion in the company are positively correlated with teamwork climate.

H3: Teamwork climate is positively correlated with the employee turnover in the company.

Data collection was realized by using questionnaire, which was distributed by e-mails to managers of companies in Slovakia during November 2019.

In the introduction part of the questionnaire was explained to the managers the purpose and meaning of the research. Participation in the research was voluntary while maintaining the anonymity of the respondents. There were contacted 410 company managers in total to obtain a wide and diverse sample in terms of their size and different business focus. There are very few relevant studies focused on diversity management in Slovakia. Due to the need for basic research, there was chosen the widest possible range of companies as the basis of research sample. Managers of companies from the field of services, sales, production and other sectors were asked, as well as managers of small, medium and large companies in order to have all groups equally represented. Each manager represented one company.

The return rate of the questionnaires was 51.5%. The research sample of 211 companies is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The research sample (source: own research)

Variable	Categorization	Quantity	%	Variable	Categorization	Quantity	%
Number of employees	10–50	55	26.1	Business focus	services	115	54.5
	51–250	87	41.2		sale	46	21.8
	above 250	69	32.7		manufacture	40	19.0
	Total	211	100.0		others	10	4.7
					Total	211	100.0
Position	Lower	45	21.3	Years of the managerial practice	Less than 1 up to 5 years	2	0.9
	Middle	11	5.2		6–10 years	33	15.6
	Upper	155	73.5		Above 10 years	75	35.5
	Total	211	100.0		Total	101	47.9
						211	100.0
Gender	Man	130	61.6	Managers age	Average	50.15	
	Woman	81	38.4		SD	6.471	
	Total	211	100.0		Median	5.00	
					Minimum	35	
					Maximum	65	
Education	Secondary	27	12.8				
	University	172	81.5				
	PhD.MBATotal	12	5.7				
		211	100.0				

In this research the SPSS 22 software package was used to analyze data. Cronbach's coefficient was used to test the internal consistency reliability of scales. During data analysis the correlation analysis was applied to test for relationships among elements of best practices in diversity management in the company, teamwork climate and employee turnover rates. In order to eliminate the detrimental effects of method biases, we have used factor analysis (Podsakoff et al., 2012). To verify the factor structure of mediating variable, the CFA was facilitated. Factor structure was verified by using scattering factor fixation method in order to determine free-covariation factor coefficients. The factor-based average score method was used as a means to calculate factor score.

Through Smart PLS 3.0 (calculation of outer loadings, construct reliability and validity), we verified that the measurement model meets the reliability requirement because all the standardized loadings are greater than 0.70. Cronbach's alpha (0.925 and 0.884) and composite releases (CR) values (0.949 and 0.920) were greater than 0.70 and less than 0.95. Another tool we measured was rho_A, which is also satisfactory (0.940 and 0.905) and based on the theory should be between Cronbach's alpha and CR. We also assessed the convergent validity. For this purpose, we used the calculation of the average variance extracted (AVE), which in our models exceeds the level of 0.5 for all constructs, which means that the construct explains an average of at least 50% of its item's variance. Finally, we also tested discriminant validity of our model. Based on the result of realized analysis we state that discriminant validity is demonstrated. Baron and Kenny's (1986) mediator model was used. For testing the mediator effect the Sobel test was used. A series of regression analysis were used to identify the proposed hypotheses. Partial R² (ΔR^2), F test and standardized regression coefficient (b) and their test statistics (t value) were reported in all regression analysis. The size of the company, gender and age of the manager were selected as the control variables. ANOVA was used to analyze the multiple dependence. During analysis a significance level of 5% was used.

A mediator model was applied to test the relationships between the application of best practices in the field of diversity and inclusion in the company (BP), teamwork climate (TC) and employee turnover (ET), which takes into account the mediating role of TC in the relationship between BP and ET. Applied mediation allows us to survey the causal relationships between variables and to involve the third variable in the basic relationship for a better and deeper examination of the analyzed relationships.

BP is an independent, explanatory variable. This variable is implemented as a score based on managers' responses to the application of best practices in diversity and inclusion in the companies within 3 main areas, with each main area consisting of sub-area:

- diversity as equal opportunity, justice and non-discrimination (fair treatment, equal access to opportunities, non-discrimination);
- diversity as a resource (use of skills and knowledge from a diverse workforce, focusing on diversity between internal and external stakeholders, focus on innovation and creativity, flexibility, responsiveness and agility);
- diversity as an inclusive activator (representation of diversity at all levels of the organization, teamwork and collaboration, education and training of diversity staff, conflict resolution processes that are cooperative, evidence of leadership commitment to diversity).

In total, the independent BP variable contains 11 items, which are scaled using 7-point Likert-type scales (1 – not applicable at all, 7 – applied in full). After reliability analysis, the Cronbach's Alfa of the BP was 0.925 (11 items).

The second variable, representing the consequence, is the dependent variable – the rate of employee turnover. Based on the literature search, confirming that effective diversity management is reflected in employee job satisfaction, which results in a reduction in their turnover, we chose this variable, which managers identified within the specified intervals. The selected fluctuation rate intervals were 0–5%, 6–10%, more than 10%.

The third variable is the mediator variable teamwork climate (TC), which presents transition between the dependent and independent variable. Mediator is directly inserted in the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables and affects the whole model. The independent variable is the cause of the mediator variable, which is then the cause of the dependent variable (MacKinnon, 2008). Our data TC were extracted from the Safety Attitudes Questionnaire (SAQ), a validated tool that obtains six organizational domains – teamwork climate, job satisfaction, perceptions of management, safety climate, working conditions, stress recognition, one of which is teamwork climate (Sexton et al., 2006). The intermediate variable TC contains 6 items that are scaled by 7-point Likert-type scales (1 – disagree at all, 7 – strongly agree). The Cronbach's alpha of the TC was 0.884.

3. Results of the research

The main aim was to analyze and clarify the link between best practices in diversity and inclusion in companies and the rate of employee turnover, assuming that best practices are positively related with the rate of employee turnover through teamwork climate.

The independent variable BP contains 11 items, which are scalable via a 7-factor Liker type scale. The reliability of both variables is satisfactory, specific values are stated in Table 3.

Table 3. Reliability statistics (source: own research)

Item	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Best practices in diversity management	0.925	11
Teamwork climate	0.884	6

Correlations between analyzed individual variables are shown in the matrix (Table 4). To construct it, there were created summary variables – best practices and teamwork climate as the overall average score from the relevant items. The third variable is the degree of fluctuation (employee turnover). The control variables are in the matrix as well. Descriptive statistics of research is also shown in Table 4.

The correlation matrix shows a significant positive correlation between best practices in diversity management and teamwork climate. There is also a significant negative correlation between the two variables and fluctuation, indicating the use of a mediator model. In mediation, we worked with the established main hypothesis.

H: The dependency between best practices in diversity management and employee turnover is mediated by teamwork climate.

Table 4. The correlation matrix (source: own research)

Variable	n	Mean	SD	OP	TC	ET	Gender	Size	Position	Practice
BP	211	4.72	1.00							
TC	211	5.12	0.96	0.904**						
ET	211	0.10	0.10	-0.649**	-0.650**					
Gender	211	1.38	0.49	0.250**	0.325**	-0.175**				
Size	211	2.07	0.77	-0.174**	-0.160**	0.046	-0.158**			
Position	211	2.52	0.82	-0.048	-0.081	-0.003	-0.394**	0.594**		
Practice	211	3.30	0.76	0.280**	0.209**	-0.371**	-0.301**	0.177**	0.186**	
Age	211	50.15	6.47	0.368**	0.353**	-0.537**	-0.045	0.242**	0.228**	0.350**

Note: BP – best practice in diversity; TC – teamwork climate; ET – employee turnover, ** $p > .05$. The variables are coded in ascending order.

Research results were analyzed through steps (A, B, C), in which were verify partial hypotheses by evaluating these regressions:

C) There is a connection between fluctuation (Y) and best practices in diversity management (X).

A) There is a connection between teamwork climate (M) and best practices in diversity management (X).

B) There is a connection of fluctuation (Y) and teamwork climate (M), in which X does not participate.

Where: C is the overall effect.

A multiple B is the mediated (indirect) effect of X on Y through M. The difference $C' = C - A \times B$ is the pure (direct) effect of X on Y without the participation of M.

The hypothesis applies when the indirect effect is significant. This means when $A \times B = C$. C is significant (using the Sobel test). The significance level is 5%. (Sig. – in the following Tables 5 to 7 means p-value). We added the control variables age, gender, practice, company size, focus and position.

ANOVA was used to analyze the multiple dependence, during analysis was used significance level of 5% and the results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Coding of variable categories (source: own research)

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1.131	11	.103	23,361	.000
Intercept	.815	1	.815	185.190	.000
Business focus	.010	3	.003	.792	.500
Gender	.023	1	.023	5.233	.023
Education	.010	2	.005	1.101	.335
Size	.000	1	.000	.090	.764
Job position	.000	1	.000	.057	.812
Management practice	.043	1	.043	9.722	.002

End of Table 5

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age	.141	1	.141	32.107	.000
Best practices	.189	1	.189	42.999	.000
Error	.876	199	.004		
Total	4.333	211			
Corrected Total	2.007	210			

Table 8 shown that the control variables as gender, management practice and age are significant. This means that we adjusted the mediator effect by the effect of the variables in Table 6.

Step C)

Table 6. Parameter Estimates (Dependent Variable: Employee turnover (source: own research))

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	.585	.049	11.991	.000	.489	.681
[gender=1= man]	.028	.012	2.288	.023	.004	.053
[gender=2= woman]	0	.	.	.	.	.
Practice	-.023	.007	-3.118	.002	-.037	-.008
Age	-.005	.001	-5.666	.000	-.007	-.003
Best practice	-.039	.006	-6.557	.000	-.051	-.027

Based on analysis was found that the turnover of employees reaches a higher value if the managers are men and lower values if managers are women. The length of time in a managerial position is negatively related to the turnover. This means that the longer the manager is in position, the lower the staff turnover. Age is also negatively related to fluctuation, i.e. the higher the age of the manager, the lower the fluctuation. The final effect (C) is significant; the dependence is negative, which means that a stronger application of best practices in diversity management reduces the rate of staff turnover.

Step A) and B)

Table 7. Parameter estimates (Dependent Variable: Teamwork climate, employee turnover) (source: own research)

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	1.081	.228	4.750	.000	.632	1.529
Best practice	.827	.032	25.625	.000	.763	.890

End of Table 7

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	.644	.039	16.446	.000	.567	.721
Teamwork climate	-.031	.011	-2.709	.007	-.053	-.008
Best practice	-.019	.011	-1.742	.083	-.040	-.002

Table 7 shows that the relationship between teamwork climate and best practices in diversity management is significant, as is the relationship between fluctuation (Y) and teamwork climate (M), in which X does not participate, is significant. However, the direct effect of C': the effect of X (OP) on Y (fluctuation) without the participation of M, is not significant.

The Sobel test was used to test the mediator effect (Table 8), and as the output was shown the indirect effect as significant in the negative direction (the effect of X on Y via M).

Table 8. Sobel test (indirect effect) (source: own research)

$A \times B =$	-0.025
$z =$	-2.694
Sig. =	0.007

The interpretation of all the results, based on the proceed data in the following steps (A, B, C) it can be stated: To interpret all the obtained results, we proceed in the following steps (A, B, C):

The connections shown in steps A and B are significant, so there is a connection between teamwork climate (M) and best practices in diversity management (X) and concurrently there is a connection between fluctuation (Y) and teamwork climate (M), in which it does not participate. X. As a result of the significance of these relations, a precondition for the existence of mediation arises.

The result of parameters $A * B$ is significant, so the indirect effect of good practices in diversity management (X) on the rate of fluctuation (Y) through the measured teamwork climate was confirmed.

The indirect effect is significant and the direct effect is not significant. In percentage terms, we can see that approximately 42.4% of the total effect is due to the direct effect and approximately 57.6% of the total effect is due to the indirect effect. In practice, the rule is that if the indirect effect does not gain more than 80% of the total effect, it is interpreted as a partial mediation.

4. Discussion

Employee turnover above its natural value is perceived as a negative factor, reflecting many management issues. Managers generate significant efforts to reduce it, as fluctuations result in the loss of funds invested in outgoing employees, and at the same time incurs additional costs for the selection and training of new employees. It is essential for managers to know

what change in process management will lead to a reduction in the rate of staff turnover and optimal use of employee potential. One of the tools currently in the context of new challenges in the world of work is the management of diversity. According to many studies, value creation through a diverse workforce is not clear in companies. It is the result of other interconnected relationships, which are constantly researched and their effects in relation to fluctuations are verified. Our findings shown positive associations between best practices in diversity management and staff turnover rates, with a favorable teamwork climate significantly entering into this relationship.

The hypothesis of a dependence between best practices in diversity and employee turnover, which is mediated by teamwork climate, has been confirmed. However, partial mediation was found, where only part of the effect is mediated. This is an important finding: the rate of fluctuation can be influenced by the implementation of diversity management and thus intensify its reduction through a favorable teamwork climate. These findings are consistent with many studies and research papers reported in the scientific literature on the significant impact of internal factors on the rate of staff turnover in companies (Kim & Yi, 2019; Han & Jekel, 2011; Lee et al., 2018; Hausknecht & Holwerda, 2013). The results support several findings that diversity management support has potential because it affects employees' intention to remain in the business. Kaplan et al. (2011) state as a condition of this activity that employees must clearly perceive this support for diversity. Several studies have analyzed the factors involved in the relationship between diversity management and organizational outcome. The results suggest that diversity management activities do not affect in isolation, but that other elements of an organization's management and culture may affect their effectiveness. Kaplan et al. (2011) in this regard confirmed the impact of fair remuneration of employees, Avery et al. (2007) demonstrated the impact of employees' perceptions of the organizational value of diversity. The results of our study expand the range of factors by teamwork climate. It is therefore recommended to focus in particular on the inside of the company in an effort to eliminate the causes of fluctuations.

According to our findings, the key factors are the application of best practices in diversity management and a favorable teamwork climate. If these are not present, the employee is more likely to leave the company as soon as he sees another suitable job opportunity. Implementing diversity of management based on tolerance and inclusion and a favorable teamwork climate can help attract and retain talented candidates from the widest possible environment to companies. People need to feel rewarded for who they are.

Hewlett et al. (2013) state that diverse and inclusive workplaces are increasingly needed because they allow employees to perform better. Teamwork climate is the basis of job satisfaction because new ideas are heard and feasible, feedback is regularly given and implemented, and recognition for success is shared (Hewlett et al., 2013; Ali et al., 2018; Fu & Deshpande, 2014; Lamberti et al., 2022).

Of the individual stages of the application of diversity procedures, the procedures of the lowest form are applied to the highest degree, namely diversity understood as equal opportunities, justice and non-discrimination. All three items within this sub-variable received a high average of application (5.41 to 5.72 on a scale of 1 to 7). The reason is the enshrinement of legislation in order to prevent discrimination of any kind. The items within the diversity

perceived as a source of creative and different ideas and opinions and in this sense as a source of competitive advantage had an average rating of one degree lower, which indicates certain gaps that still exist in the understanding of diversity management in business practice and which need to be addressed attention. These findings correspond to the findings of the studies of Gerpott et al. (2021), who identified the importance of sharing knowledge of diversity groups in increasing business performance, and Nowak (2020), who emphasize the importance of cognitive diversity as a source of diversity in innovation processes.

Within the understanding of diversity as an inclusive activator, teamwork and cooperation of diverse employees received the highest evaluation out of 5 items, which is in line with the result of the mediation model, which evaluated the teamwork climate as a significant variable transferring effect between diversity management and employee turnover. This kind of approach requires Inclusive Leadership, as confirmed by Ashikali et al. (2020) and Mayo (2020).

Our findings show the fact that the involvement of women in corporate governance can have a positive impact on the level of staff turnover. The lower rate of employee turnover is also related to longer experience in a managerial position and a higher age of the manager, probably due to greater managerial experience. All variables (age, length of experience and gender) are also significantly related to the variables of best practices in diversity management and teamwork climate. Older managers with longer experience and women managers are much more aware of the importance of teamwork climate and diversity management in reducing staff turnover in companies. The research also showed that current diversity management is more focused on ensuring equal access for employees to opportunities, non-discrimination and creating fair conditions. To a lesser extent, it focuses on harnessing the diversity of the workforce's knowledge and skills and using them to support innovative processes. This seems to be a potential space for the future direction of diversity management. The results of these studies show to achieve the positive effects of diversity management, it is necessary to involve support mechanisms. We agree with the statement of Avery et al. (2007) that allocating resources, creating company's systems for diversity responsibility, ensuring equal access to mentoring and networking appear to be key drivers for successful diversity management.

Conclusions

The current business environment is being attacked by many influences, which are manifested at the level of companies in the form of pressure to constantly focus on competitiveness and activities through which competitiveness can be increased. In addition to the relatively easily identifiable various innovative activities, activities aimed at attracting, developing and retaining valuable employees, who are a significant source of competitive advantage, are often neglected. The big challenge for current managers is to cope with the growing level of diversity of employees. Successfully managed diversity can bring notable benefits to companies, such as increasing the number of customers, revenue growth, increased profits. Inefficiently managed diversity, on the other hand, can lead to negative consequences, can cause conflicts, job dissatisfaction and employee turnover.

Based on the results of the research, we confirmed the hypothesis of the dependence of the turnover rate of the company's employees on the implementation of best practices of diversity management, which is mediated by teamwork climate. Mediation through teamwork climate has proven to be partial, indicating the existence of a direct effect between the variables of good diversity management practices and the rate of fluctuation, which is lower than the indirect effect mediated by the mediator variable teamwork climate. Our findings have several implications for business practice. They point out the possibilities of solving the problems of high turnover by the simultaneous action of two tools – tools for diversity management and quality teamwork.

Teamwork climate can be a really effective and supportive management tool for successful diversity management, which will ultimately be reflected in loyal and innovative employees. The direction of managers should be focused on continuous support of teamwork, where all team members can ask questions, be critical, support each other, function as a well-coordinated team and their contribution is positively perceived throughout the company. These simple tools are also invaluable in managing diversity and, while operating, bring significant benefits to the company.

Our findings have shown key implication in area of a direct relationship between good diversity management practices and lower staff turnover, thus contributing to a wide range of existing research and reducing its level of ambiguity.

The second practical implication resulting from this study is related to the composition of the management team itself. The findings pointed to better results in all three variables (best practices in diversity management, teamwork climate and turnover rates) for older managers, with longer experience and in terms of gender for female managers. Management teams should be diverse so that the strengths of managers can be used in the right place and in the right way in terms of different criteria.

The final implication of our research may relate to the revision of the corporate value portfolio. Diversity and teamwork in companies are important predictors of the value profile of companies and they are becoming a source of competitive advantage. Support, shared values, trust, recognition, fair treatment, using of the key skills and knowledge about diverse workforce are current issues in human resource management, implementing into concrete procedures and programs. Diversity management, supported by a favorable teamwork climate, generates resources that are scarce and difficult for competitors to imitate, and finally that helps to create and develop lasting competitive advantage. In relation to results, we consider this research original and applicable for this time era that putting pressure on keeping competitiveness.

However, this research has several limitations that should be discussed.

First, a questionnaire survey was conducted on a diverse sample of companies in order to cover the widest possible scope of their focus. For this reason, some categories were under-represented, e.g. sales and production. Due to the high number of SMEs in Slovakia, a relatively small sample of enterprises (211) may be a factor influencing the results.

Second, the indication of the rate of turnover of enterprises may include not only a negative but also a positive rate of turnover, which would be appropriate to differentiate in further research.

The policy implication is determined by the key findings of the research. The findings speak in favor of promoting diversity and inclusion at the level of employers, so it also affects societal level. As the results show, diversity can also generate economic benefits. Therefore, the promotion of approaches based on the acceptance of diversity has not only its social, but also its economic rationale. The results of this research paper create space for further research in selected areas of diversity management in companies. At least, it would be relevant to analyze the different types of diversity separately, as well as the mechanism by which the teamwork climate mediates their effect on employee behavior.

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Author contributions

Nadežda Jankelová, Zuzana Joniaková conceived the study and were responsible for design and development of the data analysis. Nadežda Jankelová, Zuzana Joniaková were responsible for data collection and analysis. Nadežda Jankelová and Katarína Procházková were responsible for data interpretation and first draft creation. Katarína Procházková was responsible for editing and manuscript administration.

Disclosure statement

Authors declare there is no conflict of interest and they have not any competing financial, professional and personal interests from other parties.

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APPENDIX

Notations

Abbreviations

BC – Best practice in diversity management.

TC – Teamwork climate.

ET – Employee turnover.