CULTURAL DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT MODELS AND ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATIVENESS

Many researchers agree, that cultural diversity has positive influence on an organization – encouraging creativity, adaptivity, problem solving, knowledge transfer, creating conditions for innovative ideas and perspectives, however it also increases probability of conflicts, loss of trust as well as other challenges. Therefore, Ikegami et al (2017) equates cultural diversity to Schrödinger’s cat – a dual state of existence, at the same time it is an asset to an organization and a challenge. Cultural diversity is currently receiving increasing research intensity. There have been various studies conducted analysing opportunities created by cultural diversity on various levels. Also, widely analysed are cultural diversity influences on organization and relation between cultural diversity and innovation. However, there is a lack of research that focus on “how to manage” cultural diversity to achieve innovativeness or innovation. This is due to cultural diversity on its own not being able to guarantee these outcomes. The aim is to investigate how to enable innovativeness in an organisation while managing cultural diversity. Firstly, cultural diversity management and relation to organizational innovation are discussed; secondly, the cultural diversity management models are analysed. Comparative analysis and synthesis of scientific literature were used to conduct the research.

Keywords: cultural diversity, diversity management, organizational innovativeness, innovation.

Introduction. In the 21st century, one of the most topical issues from the organisation management perspective is the growing cultural diversity. According to the report of ‘WWWforEurope’, the quantity of research investigating cultural diversity is on the rise, the authors of the report Dohse and Gold (2014) have also noted that cultural diversity affects critical economic variables – economic growth, innovation and the social welfare. Cultural diversity is not a new concept, but it is a topic that raises many practical and scientific issues and unused potential. Therefore, organisations must integrate cultural diversity management into human resource management activities, such as identifying, recruiting, training, etc. of potential human resources.

Research on the challenges and benefits of cultural diversity has been conducted at various levels: work in groups, organisations, regions, countries, and combining several levels. There is also an extensive study of the impact of cultural diversity training programs on the organisation (Madera et al., 2016). Many scholars agree that cultural
During this period, some theoretical and empirical studies were carried out that analysed intercultural communication. Studies have changed from traditional ones that analyse culture and cultural context, to intercultural cooperation in the North America, which stated that in the 21st century, the Hudson Institute (Jahnson and Packer, 1987) in 1987 introduced in the ‘Workforce 2000’ report published by the organisation identify differences in social identities and organisational capacity development of employees, and other activities aimed at gaining competitive advantage through leadership and teamwork (Bassett-Jones, 2005). Diversity management could be defined as the use of HRM activities to incorporate and sustain human resource variations that do not interfere with and facilitate the achievement of organisational goals. The historical evolution of the roots of cultural diversity management research is presented in Table 1.

As mentioned earlier, cultural diversity management has emerged in the United States aiming at separating from a variety of legal aspects, such as affirmative action (AA) or equal employment opportunities (EEO) that have focused on quotas and forcible equality. Cultural diversity management has focused not on the legal or moral aspects but the economic benefits and the competitive advantage, productivity and profit generated by cultural diversity. Similarly, AA and EEO received strong opposition from white men and support by conservative politicians (Bassett-Jones, 2005), and cultural diversity management was focused on management elements rather than legal ones (Hollywood and Kamp, 2009).

Meanwhile, in Europe, cultural diversity management appeared decades later, relating to the wave of neoliberalism. Due to the relatively high proportion of ethnic minority populations, Great Britain and the Netherlands were the first countries to explore cultural diversity management. In the 2000s in Scandinavia, cultural diversity management was used as a tool to integrate ethnic minorities into the labour market (Kamp and Hagedorn-Rasmussen, 2004).

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<th>The historical evolution of the roots of cultural diversity management research</th>
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Cultural diversity management has become a platform for discussion of changing society and multiculturalism, and gradually there has been a shift in attitude that cultural diversity management is an organisational activity (Hollywood and Kamp, 2009).

Many authors (Ivancevich and Gilbert, 2000; Pitts 2009; Cunningham 2009; Mazur 2010; Singh et al., 2013; Nathan and Lee; 2013; Reynolds et al. 2014; Lozano and Escrich, 2016; Madera et al., 2016). Bakir (2017) agree that it is essential for organisations to manage cultural diversity because:

1) the structure of staff in many organisations is culturally diverse;
2) non-management of conflicts involving cultural differences results in a high demotivation of workers;
3) culturally diverse teams are more creative and more effective in resolving conflicts;
4) culturally diverse employment policy makes it easier to attract employees, clients and consumers from different cultures;
5) innovative and flexible solutions can be fostered;
6) cultural diversity policy can help attract socially responsible investors,
7) facilitates internationalisation processes.

Cultural diversity management can provide an organisation with a range of opportunities and challenges. Williams and O’Reilly (1998) and Berliant and Fujita (2011) state that the influence of cultural diversity management on an organisation is ambiguous. Ikegami et al. (2017) compare the ambiguity of cultural diversity management with the Schrödinger’s cat, because on the one hand there are specific opportunities and advantages, and on the other hand there are also challenges and drawbacks. Due to the ambiguity of cultural diversity, one cannot unambiguously identify the impact of cultural diversity on an organisation (Williams and O’Reilly 1998; Berliant and Fujita 2011).

Williams and O’Reilly (1998) analysed 90 scientific studies on cultural diversity management. Even 29 studies showed the negative aspects of cultural diversity, while the impact of 13 studies on cultural diversity was insignificant. Thus, only 55% of the studies carried out show a positive impact of cultural diversity on an organisation.

But not researchers share believes on the benefits of cultural diversity and do not recognise the need to manage cultural diversity since a large number of studies have shown adverse aspects of cultural diversity or demonstrated that cultural diversity does not significantly affect an organisation’s activities and outcomes. For example, the survey performed by Berg and Hapnes (2010) in Norway found that some organisations experienced a direct impact on cultural diversity, but the impact on other organisations was not determined. One of the organisations that directly benefited from cultural diversity was a bakery, in which immigrants experimented with products and various cooking traditions. Similarly, it was found that different elements/dimensions of cultural diversity might have a different effect on an organisation, for example: cultural diversity in aspects of sex and education have a positive impact on an organisation.

Another reason why many authors give a negative evaluation of cultural diversity management is the failure of cultural diversity management programs. These programs are often unsuccessful, as they are based on the United States model, where the society itself is multicultural and is actively pursuing equal rights, therefore, programs that have been successful in the US (which have been considered as good practices) are not appropriate in other contexts where society is more homogeneous (for example, in Lithuania, Japan) or gender differences and cultural norms related to gender are more stringent (e.g., in Saudi Arabia, India). Nishi and Ozbulgin (2007) find it ironic that programs that aimed at discussing cultural diversity and differences did not take into account the demographic and cultural aspects of other countries.

The issue of July/August 2016 of the Harvard Business Review dealt with the topic of cultural diversity management. The authors Dobbin and Kalev (2016) presented another cause of failure of cultural diversity programs: cultural diversity management has changed, but the tools and approaches are the same that have been used earlier. So, Dobbin and Kalev (2016) analysed the data of 829 organisations over the last 30 years and highlighted the approaches that work. According to the authors, diversity training, screening tests, performance evaluations, complaints systems often worsen the situation, while mentoring programs, hiring initiatives focused on specific groups, volunteer teams that are brought together to solve diversity issues efficiently promote diversity through engaging managers in solving problems, increase contact with specific groups and social accountability.

Madera (2013) studied diversity management programs in 14 organisations from the ‘Diversity Inc.’ list of 2010 and, besides the above, has distinguished cultural awareness programs (including language proficiency programs).

There is a tendency to highlight negative aspects of intercultural research, and there is, therefore, more focus on challenges rather than opportunities. Seymour (2006) also supports this opinion and believes that organisations must focus on cultural diversity management, rather than on emphasising challenges. Cunningham (2009) argue that cultural diversity management is the primary mechanism for coping with challenges, eliminating bottlenecks, and enhancing the opportunities for cultural diversity. One of opportunities and benefits of cultural diversity management is organisational innovativeness and innovation.

Organisational innovativeness involves organisational culture, climate, behaviour that seeks to create an innovative, enterprise-friendly organisational environment that is appropriate for the free generation of ideas, experiments, and encourages and enhances innovation. Innovativeness is a prerequisite for implementing innovation, but organisational innovativeness itself does not guarantee innovation. Innovation is the creation and implementation of new products, processes, organisational or marketing methods in business practice, organisation or development of external relations. Innovation is not mere ideas, they must be implemented, and organisational innovativeness is one of elements that increase the likelihood of innovation.

According to Ozgen et al. (2013) the scientific literature starts promoting the notion that not an organisation itself, but rather its employees are the primary source of innovation. Culturally diverse employees in organisations can be one of the factors that will stimulate innovative activities and solutions. According to Dohse and Gold (2014), interest in the interrelation between cultural diversity and innovation is growing, as cultural diversity also has an impact on critical economic variables – economic growth and prosperity.
Laursen et al. (2005) have shown that the lack of cultural diversity negatively affects an organisation’s performance since an organisation’s desire to create a competitive advantage requires exceptional capabilities. Many authors agree that the diversity of organisation’s abilities, knowledge and experience among employees creates more favourable conditions for sharing knowledge, solving problems and generating new creative ideas. Paradoxically, culturally diverse workforce creates opportunities for creativity and innovative solutions, but it is cultural differences that result in conflicts and more complex communication, which complicates the development of innovation (Basset-Jones 2005).

Cultural diversity management can also stimulate social exclusion, convergence, and reduce collaboration, and these conditions are counter-productive to a supportive culture of innovation (Mabey and Zhao, 2017). Chatman and Sparato (2005) found that individuals who have different cultural experiences in comparison with most team members have weaker confidence in the team, collaborate less and experience lower on-the-job satisfaction. Milliken and Martins (1996) observed that minorities experience less satisfaction with work, are less loyal, do not identify with an organisation and suspects discriminate. The authors also found that as the number of minorities in an organisation grows, new ideas increase, which can have a positive impact on organisational innovativeness.

Wenger (2000) argues that a team of innovators must be diverse in their experience and competencies, which creates a learning environment. According to Schoenmakers and Duysters (2006), if knowledge of an organisation’s employees is very similar, it is difficult for them to generate new ideas; however, if the fields of knowledge are far apart from one another, this complicates the transfer of knowledge, and in both situations, an organisation’s ability to innovate is limited. Bouncker et al. (2008) have discovered that denying the importance of cultural diversity management negatively impacts on organisations’ project performance and innovativeness.

Vegt and Janssen (2003) analysed the Dutch service sector by establishing a direct link between the team’s cultural diversity and innovative behaviour. Innovation generation is an interactive process whereby employees work together discussing, developing, modifying and implementing new ideas; therefore, culturally diverse teams stimulate innovative behaviour. According to Williams and O’Reilly (1998), it is difficult to justify the link between cultural diversity and innovation as there is no clear distinction between creativity (idea generation, innovation proposals) and implementation (innovation). Cultural diversity encourages creativity but can hinder the implementation process (for the reasons mentioned above – conflicts, complex communication and so on).

Ozgen et al. (2011) examined 4638 organisations in which culturally diverse workforce has a positive influence on the organisational innovativeness. Parrotta et al. (2011) examined the positive impact of cultural diversity on Danish organisations regarding innovativeness and productivity. Zajac et al. (1991) found that the lack of age diversity positively affects innovation in the medical sector. Østergaard et al. (2011), in the study of 1648 organisations, found a definite link between cultural diversity and innovation regarding education and gender, but ethnic, cultural diversity had no effect on innovation, and age diversity had a negative impact on it. Research by Parrotta et al. (2014) also confirmed the positive relationship between the diversity of staff and innovativeness. Bantel and Jackson (1989) analysed the financial sector by finding a definite link between innovation and cultural diversity management (education and cultural background).

Research carried out by DiRienzo and Das (2015) has shown that ethnic diversity has a negative impact on the country’s innovativeness, while religious diversity has a positive impact on innovativeness, and linguistic diversity does not make affect it at all. According to the authors, the challenges faced by ethnic minority workers are higher than the positive aspects. In countries with higher religious freedom, individuals are more tolerant of new ideas and technologies, and this has a positive impact on the country’s innovativeness. Maré and Fabling (2001) and Maré et al. (2011) did not establish any link between employees’ cultural diversity and innovativeness but noticed a possible link to productivity in New Zealand organisations. Frijns et al. (2016) found that in the financial sector, cultural diversity can have both a positive and a negative impact on companies. The authors found that the impact largely depends on whether the company is active in foreign markets and that not all dimensions of cultural diversity are equally important: Frijns et al. (2016) singled out the dimensions of individualism–collectivism and masculinity–femininity as the most important ones.

After summarising the research on the links between cultural diversity management and innovativeness, it has been established that cultural diversity management can have a positive impact on innovativeness: it can lead to creativity, create conditions for sharing knowledge, solving problems. However, the cultural diversity also results in a growing number of conflicts, social exclusion and hostility. In many studies, it has been observed that different dimensions of cultural diversity (e.g., religion, age or education) have a different effect.

2. Cultural Diversity Management Models

Many scientists and practitioners (Ivancevich and Gilbert, 2000; Pitts, 2009; Cunningham, 2009; Mazur, 2010; Singh et al., 2013; Nathan and Lee, 2013; Reynolds et al, 2014; Lozano and Escrich, 2016; Madera et al, 2016; Bakir, 2017) agree that it is essential for organisations to manage cultural diversity and do it in a strategic manner. This section will describe the cultural diversity management models.


Palich and Gomez-Mejia (1999) consider cultural diversity management to be part of an organisation’s strategic management. Thus, the authors created a model that shows the impact of cultural relatedness on direct and indirect benefits and substantial efficiencies. Direct benefits are tangible and related to market, production and technology, while indirect benefits are not noticeable and include shared managerial cognitions and efficient strategy (strategy formulation, implementation and control).

Gilbert et al. (1999) have developed a useful model of cultural diversity management (based on good practice in organisations) that reflects management processes, benefits
and outcomes. In particular, the authors note that cultural diversity management begins with the involvement of top management and perception of the impact of cultural diversity on an organisation, both regarding corporate social responsibility and strategic management. Another important aspect is the transformation of HRM functions, as using old tools, methods or practices will not succeed in changing the perceptions of cultural diversity and related aspects and attaining the desired results and benefits. Gilbert et al. (1999) point out that the empirical study found a positive correlation between organisations that receive awards related to HRM good practices and stock prices, and therefore the authors included a component of public recognition in the model.

Ivancevich and Gilbert (2000) have created a model of cultural diversity management, which presents types of diversity, mediating variables and consequences. The model outlines initiatives for cultural diversity management, which repeat the previous modelling of the proposed cultural diversity management components (e.g., training, strategy, programs, networks and so on). The authors presented the consequences of cultural diversity management, which include both negative and positive aspects of individual/group and organisational level. Ivancevich and Gilbert (2000) included mediating variables (stereotyping, racism, prejudice and so on), also surface and deep level diversity types.

Barak (2000) presented an inclusive workplace – a value-based and practice-based model. The value-based model from the micro (work organisations) to the macro level (economic globalisation) reveals cultural diversity exclusions and inclusion aspects. The author of the practice-based model also uses micro and macro equivalents. There are total four levels in the model: 1. An individual/group level; An organisation/community level; 2. An authorities level; 3. An international level. At each level, both culturally diverse employees and an organisation receive an individual new benefit. Unlike in previous models, Barak (2000) highlighted the level of authorities whose role is to ensure that culturally diverse workers are integrated into the labour market and ensure the prosperity in implementing various programs. Authorities’ efforts on involvement should include culturally diverse employees individually and authorities themselves (non-governmental organisations responsible for the programs). Further, in the article, Barak (2000) also analysed the influence of social worker on each level.

According to Seymen (2006), based on their approach to cultural diversity management, organisations can be: 1) limited, not affected by cultural diversity, because it is ignored; 2) ethnocentric, where cultural diversity creates challenges, and therefore it is aimed to control cultural diversity or avoid it; 3) synergistic, that manage cultural diversity, face challenges and try to seize opportunities. Seymen’s (2006) list of cultural diversity management activities: 1. Leadership. 2. Research and evaluation. 3. Training. 4. Change in culture and management styles. 5. Following.

Nishii and Ozbulgin (2007) composed the global diversity management: a conceptual framework. In the authors’ view, many cultural diversity management programs are unsuccessful because they are ‘taken over’ from the United States, regardless of the context and without the inclusion of international aspects, and there is a need to develop programs for the global cultural diversity management. The model focuses on leadership and cultural foundations (policy and culture), global diversity management (inclusions of global units, flexibility of HRM, global diversity practices and development of global competencies) and diversity-related organizational (global knowledge creation and sharing, reactions to global diversity programme, performance and innovation and employee engagement) aspects.

Pitts (2006) made a comprehensive model of diversity management. The model analyses organisational mission, recruitment and outreach, building cultural awareness, pragmatic management policy, integration/increased organisational heterogeneity, cultural synergy and job satisfaction aspects, by which cultural diversity improves organisational performance. However, it is difficult to define and measure these functions practically. Nevertheless, Pitts (2006) presented a model calculation methodology that allows one to calculate the performance of an organisation. Ozman and Erdil (2013) presented a model that shows the transition from diversity to innovation. There are two diversity aspects integrated into the model: 1) cultural diversity; 2) knowledge diversity. The model analyses cultural attitude towards collaboration: collectivism and uncertainty avoidance, knowledge similarity, network formation and learning in networks.

Meckl and Johanning (2013) examined the impact of cultural diversity on team performance. The model is based on the authors’ research on empirical German – Chinese teams engaged mostly in the automotive industry. Meckl and Johanning (2013) introduced a leadership dimension, determining the impact of different types of leadership on different aspects of cultural diversity management. The authors also distinguished between positive and negative influences.

Guillaume et al. (2014) composed an integrative model of diversity management in organisations. The model suggests that employee dissimilarity will lead to favourable work outcomes: 1. Innovation; 2. Effectiveness; 3. Well-being. In the model, there are four level factors towards diversity: 1. Societal (legislation, socio-economic situation and culture); 2. Organisational (policies and procedures); 3. Workgroup (workgroup composition, integration of differences, equitable employment practices and inclusion in decision making); 4. Individual (individual attributes, identity concerns, acceptance of performance standards, self-efficacy).

Zhan et al. (2015) present a model of diversity as a double-edged sword for the innovation process. The model introduces the impact of ethnic and cultural diversity on innovation. Ethnic polarisation reveals the level of fragmentation of population into sub-groups. Based on the model, ethnic diversity and cultural diversity contributes to the creation of a favourable environment for innovation (i.e., innovation input). Accordingly, an innovative environment contributes to the creation of innovation (e.g., innovation output).

The conceptual model of Caputo and Ayoko (2015) presents a link between cultural diversity management, conflict management, cultural intelligence, and organisational achievements. Under this model, cultural diversity management takes place within an organisation and among organisations. The main negative aspect of cultural diversity is that conflicts are neutralised through conflict
management and negotiation, the effectiveness of which is based on cultural intelligence. Organisations achieve results by solving conflicts or by failing to resolve them accordingly.

According to Bowcken et al. (2016), based on empirical research, a model has been developed to illustrate the effects of multi-cultural teamwork on creativity and innovation. The authors have found that cultural differences can stimulate innovation processes. Three types of diversity are distinguished in the model: 1. Surface level (time, context, space); 2. Knowledge; 3. Deep level (power distance, individualism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity). It also considers individual and team levels, also behavioural and attitudinal adaptation. In the model, diversity lead to creativity and creativity leads to innovation.

The model by Lisak et al. (2016) analyses the decisive role of global leaders in enhancing multicultural team innovation. The authors verified the model empirically and found that a culturally diverse team shares a more significant amount of knowledge (which is different regarding cultural diversity), thus creating more innovative solutions.

The model by Korzilius et al. (2017) presents a transition from multiculturalism to innovative work behaviour. The model shows that multiculturalism leads to cultural intelligence which positively affects the organisation’s activities by creating an innovative working environment. According to the authors, innovation is essential to the extent that organisations themselves are aware of the staff’s contribution to organisational innovativeness.

Shore et al. (2018) developed an inclusive organization model, in which all aspects of organization inclusion are provided: inclusive practices and processes, inclusive climate, leaders’ engagement within the work groups etc. Authors delineate two perspectives of an inclusive organization: 1) enhancement of inclusion; 2) prevention of exclusion. Prevention of exclusion is oriented towards adherence to laws related to diversity as well as general legislation. Enhancement of inclusion encompasses the desire and commitment of the organizations management to build an inclusive organization.

A comparison of the models in question is given in Table 2.

Cultural diversity management models focus on cultural diversity management processes (e.g., HRM practices, diversity policy, strategy, and so on) and outcomes (e.g., creativity, productivity, revenue and so on). Many models take into account different cultural typologies and dimensions of cultural diversity. The authors include cultural diversity management through leadership, knowledge networks and cultural intelligence, which are closely linked to cultural diversity management and the organisational culture. The models presented by Nishii and Ozbulgin (2007), Ozman and Erdil (2013), Zhan et al. (2015), Bowcken et al. (2016), Lisak et al. (2016), and Korzilius et al. (2017) introduce organisational innovativeness or innovation as a result or one of the results.

Conclusions. The origins of cultural diversity date back to the beginning of the twentieth century, but the term itself was first mentioned in 1987, and since then the focus has been on organisation’s strategic actions that promote diversity, changes in organisational culture and employee empowerment to create a work environment geared towards employee development, capacity-building, i.e., focusing on cultural diversity management. Many authors agree that cultural diversity management is ambiguous: it provides both opportunities and challenges. It is also illustrated by the ambiguous results of research examining the links between cultural diversity and innovativeness.

There are various models of cultural diversity management in the scientific literature, which focus on different areas of an organisation. Cultural diversity management models focus on the processes and results of cultural diversity management and take into account cultural typologies and dimensions of cultural diversity. In many cultural diversity management models (especially in the more recent ones), the outcome is the presentation organisational innovativeness or innovation.

### Comparison of cultural diversity management models

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