

## Research Article

# A Framework to Assess the Impact of Employee Perceived Equality on Contextual Performance and Mediating Role of Affective Commitment to Enhance and Sustain Positive Work Behavior

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Different employees working in a similar organization may have a different experience-based perception of workforce diversity and management. When employees perceive discrimination, it adversely affects them psychologically and negatively affects their behavior, while perceiving equality reinforces a positive mindset towards other members and management, resulting in healthy work culture. This study investigates the association between perceived equality, affective commitment, and contextual performance. Further, the differences in perception of various genders were examined. The data were collected from ( $n = 385$ ) employees working in various private organizations in India and were analyzed using the structural equation modeling (SEM) and analysis of variance (ANOVA). The study's novelty is that, unlike prior research, the study indicated a significant inverse relationship between perceived equality and contextual performance. Moreover, affective commitment mediated the positive relationship between perceived equality and contextual performance. Perceived equality showed a significant positive relationship with affective commitment. Unlike previous research, the analysis of variance demonstrated that both males and females indicated no significant differences regarding contextual performance. Thus, the current research provides a comprehensive model to assess the psychological and behavioral effect of organizational practices related to equal opportunities and representation to diverse employees.

## 1. Introduction

Many organizations around the world are becoming inclusive and promoting a diverse workforce. However, a diverse workforce will only be beneficial when there is equity, fairness, justice, and a healthy work environment for all employees. The principle of reciprocity advocated by the social exchange theory (SET) explains that when employees feel valued, they will put in additional efforts and vice versa. Therefore, it is imperative to study the implications of employee's perceived equality concerning workforce diversity practices on psychological and behavioral outcomes, which might affect organizational functioning and overall success, as workforce diversity will only be an asset if diverse

employees perceive equality as an enabler and feel valued in their workplaces. Based on the definition given by Van Knippenberg and Schippers [1], workforce diversity is a degree of subjective or objective differences between and within social groups. According to Harrison and Klein [2], objective diversity and subjective diversity differ. The former includes differences in the physical or visible traits (e.g., different groups), while the latter includes perceived differences between groups based on their association. Subjective diversity has more proximal explanatory power than objective diversity [2], making it essential to study a diverse workforce's perceived equality and differences. When employees perceive equality or differences, it has psychological implications on their emotional commitment towards

organizations. Employee emotional commitment to the organization is known as affective commitment [3]. Various studies indicated an adverse psychological effect of perceived discrimination on employee affective commitment [4–6]. Affective commitment in diversity research is essential because inclusiveness in the workplace is not about showcasing a diverse workforce but about making them feel they belong to the organization. Furthermore, affective commitment has psychological effects on employee's emotions. It is speculated that emotionally sound/safe employees will contribute more to the organization than employees who do not identify with it. Similarly, when employees perceive equality, it affects their behavior outcomes, consequently affecting their additional performance positively [7]. Meanwhile perceived discrimination detaches employees from the organization and adversely affects their additional work behaviors [8]. These additional work behaviors (i.e., behavioral implications) are known as contextual performance or organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Studies related to perceived workforce diversity and contextual performance were primarily done in western countries [9, 10], which does not clearly explain culturally different Asian workforce peculiarities. We believe that contextual performance is one crucial factor contributing to individual job performance, yet it was often overlooked in the past research [11]. Studying contextual performance as employee behavioral response of perceived equality in diversity practice will help formulate and implement the diversity-related human resource program and practices, which can propagate an employee's positive outlook towards workforce diversity managerial practices and supportive behavior towards the organization, consequently making a healthy and cohesive workplace.

Various previous research indicated that effective management of a diverse workforce leads to employee desirable behavior [12–14] and increases organizational commitment [5, 6, 8, 15] and job performance [16, 17]. Likewise, based on existing literature, we already know that fairness, justice, and equality increase employee engagement [18] and OCB [19]. Furthermore, effective diversity management indirectly affects OCB [20] with mediating variables such as self-esteem [9], trust, initiatives [10], psychological commitment [5, 6], job satisfaction, and organizational commitment [21]. Past studies were not focused on the simultaneous relationship between perceived equality in diversity practices, organizational commitment, and contextual performance. Qualitatively, Mamman et al. [22] investigated perceived diversity-based discrimination, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) amongst PLMSMs (perceived low-status minority) groups. Consequently, based on the literature review, the authors identified research gaps: prior studies did not statistically explore perceived workforce diversity-based discrimination, organizational commitment, and OCB. Furthermore, they did not study employee perceived equality and contextual performance. Therefore, we aim to fill the research vacuum by conducting empirical research using structural equation modeling (SEM) and analysis of variance (ANOVA) to investigate the relationship between employee perceived equality (EPE), affective

commitment (AC), and contextual performance (CP) of the white-collar employees. It is imperative to mention that employee perceived equality is the employee perception about organizational practices concerning representation and growth opportunities to a diverse workforce. Employee relative organizational commitment and contextual performance were measured to understand perceived equality's psychological and behavioral impact on employees, respectively. The organizational commitment construct captures employee affective commitment (i.e., willingness to stay in the organization, feeling of belonging, attachment with organization, etc.). It is the psychological response to organizational stimuli. Contextual performance construct encapsulates behavioral outcome of employees, that is, willingness to work beyond activities described in the job description. Lastly, the variable gender indicates male and female employees.

Based on past research and the social exchange theory (SET), which advocates the principle of reciprocity, we argue that the mere presence of demographic differences will not foster employee positive mindset and behavior. For positive outcomes, the workplace must have a healthy and cohesive work culture for which effective diversity management is required. Effective diversity management would bring employees positive psychological and behavioral outcomes when diverse employees have an emotional attachment and perceive that organizational diversity practices are doing justice to all. Answering underlying questions, "how perceived equality affects employee contextual performance and affective commitment?," "does affective commitment mediate the relationship between perceived equality and contextual performance?," and lastly "does different gender differs with regard to perceived equality, affective commitment, and contextual performance?" will aid various organizations to rework existing diversity policies and practices to create a healthy workspace that will enhance employee affective commitment and contextual performance. Thus, the current research's objectives are the following:

- (i) To assess the effect of employees perceptions about equality in diversity practices on their contextual performance and affective commitment.
- (ii) To examine the mediating effect of affective commitment between perceived equality and contextual performance.
- (iii) To assess the difference in the perception of gender, that is, males and females.

Based on objectives, the theoretical framework has been developed (Figure 1).

## 2. Dimensions

**2.1. Perceived Equality.** According to Mara [23], equality is fairness in treatment concerning uniformity in criteria and availability of equal opportunities to everyone. In comparison, perception is an individual's primary cognitive connection with their surroundings [24]. Perceptions can be formed based on an individual's own experiences or observing justice or injustice to others, based on which they

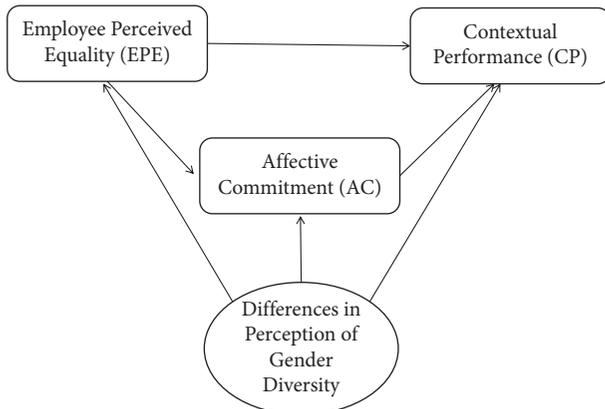


FIGURE 1: Theoretical framework.

attach different meanings to similar surroundings. Studying perception is essential as all the conceptual knowledge is derived from primary awareness [24]. Deriving from the above definitions, perceived equality in the workplace is an employee's perception of fairness in the employer's treatment, policies, and practices to themselves and others. Employees may have different perceptions concerning equality related to various aspects of the organization; however, the present study is based on employee perceived equality concerning representation and growth opportunities available to diverse employees working in the organization. The variable "equal representation and development opportunities" (ERDO) is used to assess employee perceived equality. Prior research also used the ERDO variable to assess equality in diversity management practice [11, 25].

**2.2. Contextual Performance.** Contextual performance is the performance other than core tasks that aid the organizational performance. CP measures the behavioral outcome of employees, which includes taking initiatives, voluntarily taking up additional tasks, and continuous updating of knowledge [26]. The contextual performances are not part of the job description, yet these additional employee activities aid in achieving organizational success [27]. It affects the social, psychological, and organizational work contexts and contributes to organizational efficiency and effectiveness [28]. Similarly, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is an extra work behavior not included in the official compensation system, and individuals do it at their discretion to support the organization's successful operation [29]. Contextual performance is the subset OCB as it includes various dimensions of OCB [30]. Therefore, contextual performance and OCB are used synonymously in the present study.

**2.3. Organizational Commitment.** Organizational commitment is the employee's psychological attachment with the organization, which is predicted by employees involvement based on their intention to reap extrinsic rewards, identification, and identical values with the organization [31]. Mowday et al. [32] defined organizational commitment as

the degree of employee identification and participation in the organization and further characterized commitment, based on three factors: belief in organizational values and objectives, willingness to work, and a desire to remain intact with the organization. It is an exchange between contribution and reward, and, based on equitable exchange, employee organizational commitment increases [33] and gets affected by employee expectations and experiences in the organization [20]. The organization's breach of expectation may adversely affect the employee's organizational commitment and further impede their work behavior, necessitating organizational commitment with perceived equality amongst diverse employees and contextual performance. Generally, there are three types of organizational commitment, that is, affective, continuous, and normative. However, the present study is focused on affective commitment. An employee's emotional attachment to the organization is called affective commitment, demonstrating a close link between the employee and the organization [3]. Psychologically empowered employees have a higher emotional commitment to their company [34].

Simply put, affective commitment is employee willingness to stay in the organization because the employee fits in, feels valued and satisfied, and is an asset to the organization. According to Mercurio [35], affective commitment is the core and source that most powerfully influences individual behaviors and feelings, forms individual perceptions, and may mediate individual reactions to organizational transactions. It also outperforms theoretical, behavioral, or transactional models of organizational commitment in terms of significant organizational outcomes, including turnover, absenteeism, and organizational citizenship behaviors. Since emotional commitment has a more substantial influence on work behaviors than other types of commitment, it is reasonable to regard affective commitment as the essence of organizational commitment. As a result, the current research is primarily concerned with affective commitment.

### 3. Review of Literature

**3.1. Perceived Equality and Contextual Performance.** The social exchange theory indicated that human resource practice is an essential element that affects the employee's supporting behavior towards the organization [36]. Bizri [37] conducted a study on 300 employees from banks in Lebanon to analyze the effect of diversity management on OCB and found that the two have a positive relationship; however, no direct impact was found between them. Similarly, Chattopadhyay [9] conducted a study based on 401 respondents from manufacturing organizations in the Midwest, USA, and found that employee OCB/CP is affected by demographic diversity when mediated by self-esteem. Employee's self-esteem decreases when perceiving differences in the workplace, affecting their trust and initiative and further decreasing their contextual performance [10]. On the contrary, Noor et al. [18] developed a theoretical model indicating that employee engagement increases when perceiving equality. Similarly, Nizan et al. [19] studied 430 employees of a large hotel in Malaysia and demonstrated

that employee OCB levels towards other employees and overall organization increase on perceiving fairness, just, and effective diversity management. The US-based study indicated that perceived equality enhances employee motivation to work for organizational success [38] and perceived justice enhances citizenship behavior [39, 40]. However, through the mediation of leader-member interchange, organizational justice can improve organizational citizenship behavior [41]. Employees perceived equality in diversity management improves their OCB, which is the positive additional behavioral outcome of employees [7]. At the same time, perceived discrimination is linked to unfavorable employment attitudes and work-related behavioral outcomes [8]. Differences in the workplace lead to stereotypes and prejudice, resulting in OCB-related issues [39]. Therefore, based on the above studies, we argue that when employees perceive equality in workforce diversity-related practice/policy (i.e., ERDO), it significantly affects their contextual performance ( $H_1$ ).

$H_1$ : there is a significant relationship between the employee perceived equality and contextual performance.

*3.2. Perceived Equality, Organizational Commitment, and Contextual Performance.* Blau [42] explained that diversity practices are associated with employee commitment towards the organization based on the principles of reciprocity. Simply put, when employees feel that they benefited from the organizational HR practices socially, economically, and emotionally, they feel a sense of responsibility to do behavior/actions for organizational benefit, which ultimately creates a healthy and sustainable working environment. Various other studies indicated how perceived discrimination has an adverse psychological effect on employees. Triana et al. [4] examined the impact of employee perceived racial discrimination on affective commitment based on the interactional model and found that when employees perceive racial discrimination in the workplace, their affective commitment decreases. Few studies also indicated that, on perceiving negative experiences in the organization, the psychological commitment of minority employees decreases in the organization, which reduces their career satisfaction [5, 6]. Nisar et al. [43] indicated the direct impact of organizational commitment on voice behavior. On the contrary, the feeling of equality and fairness enhances employee organizational commitment [38]; when employees feel happy, their organizational commitment increases [44, 45], and performance appraisal justice substantially predicts the affective commitment of employees working in banks [45]. Qu et al. [46] also indicated that perceived discrimination has a negative relationship with organizational attachment, whereas procedural and distributive justice has a positive relationship with affective commitment. Based on these studies, we hypothesize ( $H_2$ ) that when employees perceive equality concerning development opportunities and representation to a diverse workforce, their affective commitment towards their organizations gets affected.

$H_2$ : there is a significant relationship between the employee perceived equality and affective commitment.

According to the AMO theory, when diverse employees are treated fairly by their employer and given equal opportunities, their organizational commitment and job satisfaction rise. Increased job satisfaction and organizational commitment lead to increased OCB [47]. When employees are well treated in the organization, they are more likely to extend their help to the organization [21, 48]. Lee et al. [15] conducted a study on 901 employees working in various companies in South Korea and found that employee perception of diversity and employee turnover intention are mediated by personal diversity value and organizational commitment. Several studies also indicated similar findings. Cho and Barak [49], based on 381 employees of the Korean corporation, examined the association between inclusion, diversity, job performance, and organizational commitment; the study found that male employees working at higher positions and the older workforce have enhanced organizational commitment. The study also reveals that the diverse workforce's inclusion significantly affects their organizational commitment and, thereby, their job performance. Similarly, García-Rodríguez et al. [50] demonstrated that employees perceived diversity management directly and significantly relates to job performance; further, organizational commitment mediates the direct relationship. Meyer et al. [51] also found a significant relationship between organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior and supported that organizational commitment explains valuable outcomes in the organization. Meanwhile, Mamman et al. [22] theoretically found that employees from perceived low-status groups react differently to perceived injustice, resulting in decreased commitment and lower OCB. Similarly, various predictors and consequences of affective commitment are shown in Table 1. Based on this, we speculate that affective commitment is the best to explain the association between perceived equality and contextual performance as ensuring equity to the diverse workforce will have an effect on their emotional responses (e.g., affective commitment) [52–63], further affecting their behavioral outcomes (e.g., contextual performance) [64–68]. Thus, extending on prior studies, we hypothesize that when employees perceive equality in diversity practice, their affective commitment gets affected, which further has implications on their contextual performance ( $H_3$ ).

$H_3$ : affective commitment mediates the relationship between employee perceived equality and contextual performance.

*3.3. Gender.* The social identity theory by Tajfel and Turner (1986) indicated that the significance of individual differences based on salient features like gender and race in the organizational climate leads to the categorization of individuals in social groups. Based on these social groups, individuals stereotype each other, making it essential to study differences in perception of different categories. Various researchers indicated the categorical gender differences in

TABLE 1: Predictors and consequences of affective commitment.

Predictor of affective commitment	
Predictors	Authors
Employer brand image	Priyadarshi [52]
Employee satisfaction	Matzler and Renzl [53]
Personality traits: agreeableness and conscientiousness	Umi et al. [54]
Organizational justice	Andrews et al. [55]; Swalhi et al. [56]
Social support from the supervisor and coworker; work engagement (vigor and absorption)	Orgambidez and Almeida [57]
Work engagement and role conflict	Orgambidez and Benítez [58]
Social tactics, job embeddedness, and spirituality	Huang et al. [59]
Laissez-faire leadership	Robert and Vandenberghe [60]
Workplace fun	Jing et al. [61]
Job satisfaction and perceived organizational support	Fryer et al. [62]; Saifulina et al. [63]
Consequences of affective commitment	
Consequences	Authors
Job performance	Swalhi et al. [56]
Employee retention	Perreira et al. [64]
Program implementation success	Fryer et al. [62]
Employee performance/individual performance	Ribereiro et al. [65]; Astuty and Udin [66]
Employee’s pro-organizational work behavior	Saifulina et al. [63]
Innovative work behavior	Jing et al. [61]
Organizational citizenship behavior	Lee et al. [67]; Ribeiro et al. [68]

employee perception of diversity and management. Panicker et al. [69] tested employee perceptions related to inclusive practices. They found a significant difference in perception towards inclusive practices and inclusive leadership on OCB amongst male and female employees. Similarly, Soldan and Dickie [70] conducted a study in Australia on 391 employees and found that females have more receptivity to diversity practices than males. A study based on Dutch employees indicates that men perceive to have more workplace flexibility than females [71]. Similarly, Kundu [72] studied 1083 employees in India and found that employee perceptions of diversity issues, equal opportunities, and representation differ based on gender, ability, and ethnicity. Thus, based on the above studies, the current research is focused on finding a difference in the effect of male and female employees with regard to various variables (H<sub>4</sub>).

H<sub>4a</sub>: there is a significant difference in the effect of gender (male and female) with regard to employee perceived equality.

H<sub>4b</sub>: there is a significant difference in the effect of gender (male and female) with regard to affective commitment.

H<sub>4c</sub>: there is a significant difference in the effect of gender (male and female) with regard to contextual performance.

#### 4. Research Methodology

4.1. *Questionnaire.* Based on existing research, various variables were identified. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. Sixteen items were included in the questionnaire to measure employee’s responses concerning EPE, AC, and CP. For all items of this research, the authors have used a 5-point Likert scale as it provides a reasonable quantitative degree of respondent’s agreement/

disagreement, which is relatively easy to analyze and interpret. Employee’s perceived equality was assessed using scale “equal representation and development opportunities” with six items, that is, ERDO1 to ERDO6 [11], developed by Kossek and Zonia (1993), which assess employees perception concerning equal and adequate opportunities and representation available to socially disadvantaged, minority, gender, and diversity practices. The affective commitment was measured using a four-item scale, that is, OC1 to OC4 [73], which examines employee’s emotional attachment, feeling of belonging, intention to retain, and so forth. Lastly, contextual performance was measured using a six-item scale, that is, CP1 to CP6 [74], assessing employee’s extra work behavior like updating knowledge, skills, participation, seeking challenges, and so forth. After an extensive literature review, the above questionnaires were included in the study as they were previously validated, complementary to the current study, and the essence of the variables mentioned above was measured.

4.2. *Sample.* In most of experimental designs, a minimal sample size is required. In social sciences, calculating the minimum sample size is necessary to prove that the sample is representative of the population. Generalizability could not be accomplished if the sample did not sufficiently represent the population. The sample size is calculated using the Cochran (1977) equation of minimum sample size:  $n_0 = Z^2 * p * (1 - p) / \epsilon^2$ , where  $n$  is the sample size,  $Z$  is the statistic corresponding to the confidence level used,  $p$  is the expected prevalence, and  $\epsilon$  represents precision. In this research, a 95 percent confidence level is taken for which the  $z$  value is 1.96 according to the normal distribution. In this research, 0.5 is assumed to be the value of standard deviation and the margin of error is +5%. The calculation is done as follows:

$$n_0 = \{(1.96)^2 * 0.5(0.5)\}/(0.05)^2$$

$$n_0 = (3.841 * 0.25)/0.0025$$

$$n_0 = 0.9604/0.0025$$

$$n_0 = 384.1$$

Preceding the administration of the questionnaire, a pilot test was conducted on 40 employees working in various private organizations with a minimum of one-year experience in a similar organization to ensure understanding of the items to the respondents and their relevant suggestions. After a few corrections, data collection proceeded. Primary data were collected from white-collar employees working in different private organizations across various states in India using the snowball sampling technique; that is, data were collected by targeting primary respondent's referrals. Questionnaires were sent to 450 respondents, out of which 385 wholly filled questionnaires were used for the data analysis. The sample size of 385 employees was considered appropriate for the study based on the above calculation and a minimum sample size of 384 was suggested by Cochran (1977). As shown in Figure 2, demographic profile of respondents includes 56 percent males and 44 percent females. The respondents appeared to be rather young: 32.7 percent were below 25 years, 27.8 percent were between 26 and 35 years, 22.9 percent were between 36 and 45 years, and 16.60 percent belonged to the 46–55 years category. All the participants were white-collar employees who graduated from different disciplines and had at least one year of work experience in a similar organization.

## 5. Data Analysis

For the data analysis, confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling are used to assess direct and indirect correlations amongst the elements under consideration [75]. IBM SPSS 26.0 and AMOS v22.0 have been used to perform this analysis. These analyses are designed to assist us in figuring out which model best matches the data while also providing a trustworthy assessment of the factors that influence organizational environment and employee performance in the workplace.

In the simple SEM analysis, “employee perceived equality” is taken as the exogenous variable, while “affective commitment” and “contextual performance” are endogenous variables. In the mediation analysis, “affective commitment” is the mediating variable, while “employee perceived equality” is the exogenous variable, and “contextual performance” is the endogenous variable. In the analysis of variance, gender is an exogenous variable, while “employee perceived equality,” “affective commitment,” and contextual performance are endogenous variables.

**5.1. Reliability.** It is important for the endorsement of data to guarantee that the research instrument is correct. In order to coordinate the complete overview, analysts carried out the pilot test from the beginning to ensure the resolute reliability of the instrument and subsequently performed a total assessment subject to the potential results of the unwavering

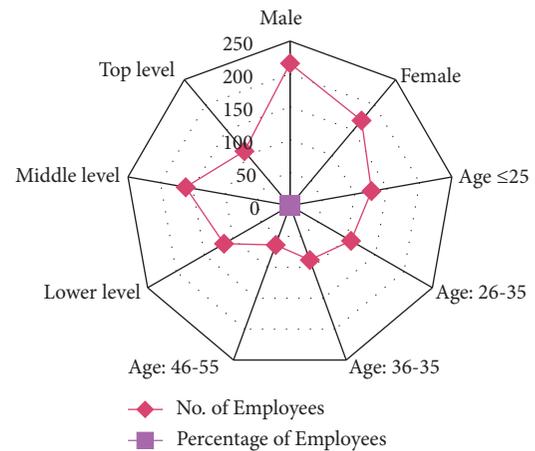


FIGURE 2: Demographic profile of respondents.

reliability test. It is essentially a degree to which an assessment technique delivers consistent and predicted results, demonstrating that the instruments yield comparable results if the tests are duplicated repeatedly. The reliability values enhanced our prior findings for a total overview of 17 statements. Cronbach's alpha values range from 0.783 to 0.804, which show the solid and unflinching nature of the results, which is sufficient. In addition, the results of reliability statistics for the questionnaires are presented in Table 2. The reliability coefficients or alphas for the various constructs were calculated using the reliability approach in IBM SPSS software. The reliabilities of the relatively large number of constructs included in this study were determined to be higher than the threshold of 0.70 [76]. The value obtained is best for the investigation.

**5.2. Descriptive Statistics.** The information about the descriptive statistics, that is, mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis, is given in Table 3. The data pattern is noticed by the illustrative analysis. The skewness and kurtosis are within acceptable limits for the data collected. The estimates of skewness must be in the acceptable range, such as  $-1$  to  $+1$ , and the estimates of kurtosis should be in the range of  $-3$  to  $+3$ . If the data falls outside of the defined range, it signifies that it is erroneous.

**5.3. Exploratory Factor Analysis.** Factor analysis is a technique for identifying a smaller number of components from a larger number of observed factors. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test are shown in Table 4. The KMO scale ranges from 0 to 1, with higher qualities demonstrating more prominent appropriateness. This value should ideally be bigger than 0.7. According to Marcus et al. (2006), a KMO proportion of 0.9 to 1.0 is excellent, 0.8 to 0.9 exemplary, 0.7 to 0.8 normal, 0.6 to 0.7 good, and 0.5 to 0.6 awful. Table 4 demonstrates that the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin proportion of examining sufficiency (MSA) is 0.839, and Bartlett's trial of sphericity is significant [ $\chi^2$  (136) = 1806.597;  $p < 0.001$ ].

TABLE 2: Reliability statistics.

Constructs	Number of attributes	Cronbach's alpha
Employees perceived equality	7	0.783
Affective commitment	4	0.792
Contextual performance	6	0.804
Overall reliability	17	0.734

TABLE 3: Descriptive statistics.

Items	Mean	Std. deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
GDP1	3.465	1.258	-0.473	-0.691
GDP2	3.491	1.242	-0.57	-0.514
ERDO1	3.468	1.279	-0.468	-0.738
ERDO5	3.348	1.304	-0.284	-0.982
ERDO3	3.366	1.348	-0.253	-1.157
ERDO2	3.177	1.331	-0.247	-1.018
ERDO4	3.296	1.337	-0.370	-0.986
CPO3	3.873	1.133	-0.774	-0.318
CPO5	3.735	1.160	-0.536	-0.663
CPO2	3.899	1.069	-0.786	-0.128
CPO4	3.808	1.203	-0.762	-0.406
CPO1	3.997	1.017	-0.802	-0.208
CPO6	3.613	1.057	-0.505	-0.325
OC1	3.987	0.928	-0.897	0.625
OC2	4.018	0.993	-0.934	0.160
OC3	3.914	1.063	-0.900	0.081
OC4	3.948	0.972	-0.870	0.300

TABLE 4: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy		0.839
Approx. chi-square		1806.59
Bartlett's test of sphericity	df	136
	Sig.	0.000

5.4. *Confirmatory Factor Analysis.* Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is an auxiliary condition that controls the relationship between observed estimations and inert factors. It is a multivariate statistical approach for determining how well measured variables correspond to the quantity of constructs. The goal of inert variable estimating models (also known as factor examination) is to determine the number and importance of elements that describe the difference and covariation between the indicators.

A factor is an unobservable quantity that has an impact on multiple measurements and accounts for the correlations between them. According to CFA, the number of factors represents the number of subscales, and the pattern of element-factor relationships (which items load on which factors) represents the subscale score. Other components of psychometric evaluation include scale reliability tests and the need for the use of CFA, for example, Raykov [77]. CFA is a valuable statistical tool for determining the validity of a claim [78].

The rotational factor loadings in Table 5 represent the correlations between the variable and the factor, with potential values ranging from -1 to +1. A specific variable

should stack high on one factor and low on any remaining components in the pivoting factor matrix for an effective factor solution [79]. According to Table 5, each of the 17 items included in the study has more than 0.50-factor loadings. These 17 items were taken to be examined further.

## 6. Results and Descriptions

6.1. *Structural Equation Modeling.* The study utilizes structural equation model (SEM) to simultaneously estimate and inspect how employee perception factors and organizational commitment lead to the contextual performance of employees working in an organization. The theoretical model is proposed and tested with SPSS version 26.0 and AMOS. The structural equation of the model is

$$\eta_i = \beta_{ij}\eta_j + \gamma_{ij}\xi_j + \varsigma_i, \quad (1)$$

(i, j = 1, 2, 3...),

where  $\xi_j$  denotes exogenous latent variables,  $\eta_i$  denotes endogenous latent variables,  $\gamma_{ij}$  denotes the regression coefficient of  $\xi_j$  on  $\eta_i$ ,  $\beta_{ij}$  denotes the regression coefficient of  $\eta_j$  on  $\eta_i$ , and  $\varsigma_i$  denotes the error variance of structure equation. The measurement equation of the SEM is

$$X_i = \lambda_{xij}\xi_j + \delta_i, \quad (2)$$

$$Y_i = \lambda_{yij}\eta_j + \varepsilon_i, \quad (3)$$

where  $\lambda_{xij}$  denotes the regression coefficient of  $X_i$  on  $\xi_j$ ,  $\lambda_{yij}$  denotes the regression coefficient of  $Y_i$  on  $\eta_j$ , and  $\delta_i, \varepsilon_i$  denote measurement errors of exogenous ( $\xi_j$ ) and endogenous ( $\eta_j$ ) latent variables, respectively.

When determining the causal relationship between variables and evaluating the model's compatibility, the structural equation model (SEM) comes in handy [80]. The data is analyzed using SEM analysis to see if it fits a theoretical model. Chi-square/degrees of freedom ( $\chi^2/df$ ), CFI, GFI, AGFI, TLI, IFI, RMSEA, and PGFI were used to evaluate the model.

According to the model architecture shown in Figure 1, a structural model is fit to aid employee perceived equality, affective commitment, and contextual performance. There are standardized path coefficients for three ways (employee perceived equality to affective commitment, affective commitment to contextual performance, and employee perceived equality to contextual performance). The goodness of fit records for the last underlying model, which can be seen at the bottom of Table 6, show a good fit to the data: a low percentage of chi-square to the level of opportunity and huge upsides of GFI, AGFI, CFI, NFI (>0.9), and RMSEA values (0.05).

The expected linkages in the proposed model illustrated in Figure 1 were tested using structural equation modeling (SEM). Multiple regression equations can be estimated simultaneously in a single framework using the structural equation modeling methodology. Maximum likelihood was used to estimate the model. According to Browne and Cudeck [81], a model with a root mean square error of

TABLE 5: Measures of latent variables.

Constructs	Items	Factor loadings	CA
Employee perceived equality	ERDO1: There are adequate development opportunities for socially disadvantaged employees in this organization	0.696	0.783
	ERDO2: There is adequate socially disadvantaged representation in the organization	0.673	
	ERDO3: There are adequate development opportunities for women employees in this organization	0.661	
	ERDO4: There is adequate minority representation in the organization	0.653	
	ERDO5: Open job structures are more conducive to employment equity in an organization	0.621	
	ERDO6: Equal opportunity for management only helps to reinforce the limited attempts at implementing creative opportunities policies	0.618	
Affective commitment	OC1: I feel emotionally attached to my organization	0.779	0.792
	OC2: I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization	0.775	
	OC3: I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization	0.762	
	OC4: I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own	0.757	
Contextual performance	CPO1: I am able to keep my job-related knowledge up-to-date	0.811	0.804
	CPO2: I am able to keep my work skills up to date	0.754	
	CPO3: I come up with creative solutions for new problems	0.740	
	CPO4: I take on the extra workload	0.653	
	CPO5: I continually seek new challenges in my work	0.640	
	CPO6: I actively participate in meetings and consultations	0.636	

Notes: 1. Extraction method: Principal component analysis. 2. Rotation method: Varimax with kaiser normalization. 3. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

TABLE 6: Criteria for several fit indices.

Goodness-of-fit statistics	Values obtained	The desired range of values for good fit
Chi-square/degrees of freedom ( $\chi^2/df$ )	1.570	<5 (Hair et al., 1998)
Comparative fit index (CFI)	0.961	>0.90 (Hu and Bentler, 1999)
Goodness-of-fit index (GFI)	0.945	>0.90 (Hair et al., 2006)
Adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI)	0.928	>0.90 (Daire et al., 2008)
Normed fit index (NFI)	0.901	$\geq 0.90$ (Hu and Bentler, 1999)
Incremental fit index (IFI)	0.962	Approaches 1
Tucker-Lewis index (TLI)	0.954	$\geq 0.90$ (Hair et al., 1998)
Root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)	0.039	<0.08 (Hair et al., 2006)
Root mean square residual (RMR)	0.069	<0.08

approximation (RMSEA) of less than 0.05 has a close fit, whereas one with an RMSEA of less than 0.08 has an excellent fit. According to Chin and Todd [82], the GFI and NFI should be over 0.90, and the AGFI should be above 0.80. Additionally, Bentler [83] suggested that the CFI should be more than 0.90.

6.2. *Mediation Effect.* When (1) multiple regression (or structural equation model without latent variables) is used, (2) there is no missing information, and (3) the equivalent covariates are in the equations assuming there are any covariates, the measure of mediation, also known as indirect impact, is defined as the decrease of the effect of input variable on the result  $c-c'$ .  $c-c' = ab$ . The two are comparable for staggered, logistic, and structural equation models with latent variables. In this case, we determine the total impact via  $c' + ab$  rather than  $c$ . For the simplest intervention model with no gaps in data,  $ab = c - c'$ .

Bollen and Stine [84] pioneered the bootstrap method in mediation analysis. This method makes no assumptions about the distribution of the indirect effect  $ab^\wedge$ ; instead, it uses its bootstrap distribution to approximate the distribution of  $ab^\wedge$ . Currently, the bootstrap mediation method is

generally used per the procedure described by Bollen and Stine [84]. The method operates as follows. Using the original dataset (sample size = 385) as the population, randomly select a bootstrap sample of 385 individuals with paired  $(Y, X, M)$  scores from the dataset. The distribution of  $ab^\wedge$  can be seen as the empirical distribution based on this bootstrap technique. The empirical distribution's  $\alpha/2$  and  $1 - \alpha/2$  percentiles can be used to generate the  $(1 - \alpha)^*100\%$  confidence interval of  $ab$ .

6.3. *Hypothesized Causal Structural Model.* The regression weights of employee perceived equality to contextual performance ( $\beta = -0.241$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) indicate a negative and significant relationship. Meanwhile, employee perceived equality to affective commitment ( $\beta = 0.240$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) and affective commitment to contextual performance ( $\beta = 0.423$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), were positive and significant, as shown in Table 7. The results demonstrated that employee perceived equality has an inverse relationship with contextual performance and a positive relationship with affective commitment. Thus, the two hypotheses,  $H_1$  (employee perceived equality-contextual performance) and  $H_2$  (employee perceived equality-affective

TABLE 7: Summary of hypotheses testing results.

Hypotheses	Structural relationship	$\beta$ value	CR.	$p$ value
<i>Direct effect</i>				
H1	Employee perceived equality > contextual performance	-0.241	-3.479	0.000***
H2	Employee perceived equality > affective commitment	0.240	4.380	0.000***
	Affective commitment > contextual performance	0.423	4.832	0.000
<i>Indirect effect</i>				
H3	Employee perceived equality > affective commitment > contextual performance	0.100		0.002***

Note:  $\beta$ : standardized beta coefficients; C.R.: critical ratio; \*  $p < 0.05$ .

commitment), are highly supported by the estimated results in Table 7. with standardized path coefficients of  $-0.239$  (EPE > CP),  $0.302$  (EPE > AC), and  $0.334$  (AC > CP) as shown in Figure 3.

The result of indirect effect indicates that affective commitment positively and significantly mediates the relationship between employee perceived equality and contextual performance ( $\beta = 0.10$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) as shown in Table 7, demonstrating that when an employee perceives equality, their affective commitment increases, which further enhances their contextual performance. Thus the hypothesis (H<sub>3</sub>) is confirmed.

6.4. *Analysis of Variance.* Table 8 shows the ANOVA results for each subscale, the corresponding significance levels of the main effects, that is, gender effect with respect to employee perceived equality, affective commitment, and contextual performance, where significant  $F$ -values indicated the differences of perceptions between males and females.

The regression weights obtained through factor analysis are tested with gender using univariate ANOVA. The results indicate that, considering employee perceived equality (H<sub>4a</sub>), gender is related significantly to a  $p$  value of 0.048 and  $F$ -score of 3.918.

Affective commitment (H<sub>4b</sub>) is related substantially to gender since the obtained  $p$  value is 0.019 and the  $F$ -score is 5.542. Meanwhile, the contextual performance (H<sub>4c</sub>) is not significant with respect to gender since the  $p$  value obtained is 0.132 and  $F$ -score is 2.279. Thus, hypotheses H<sub>4a</sub> and H<sub>4b</sub> were confirmed, while hypothesis H<sub>4c</sub> was not confirmed.

## 7. Discussion

The current study aimed to assess employee perceived equality in representation and development opportunities to diverse employees and its psychological and behavioral implication by testing its relationship with contextual performance and employee affective commitment. The study further aimed to test the mediating effect of affective commitment and the differences in the perceptions of diverse gender concerning EPE, AC, and CP. A thorough analysis of 385 employees working in the private sector has been conducted using IBM SPSS and AMOS software, and the framework has been developed.

Firstly, the findings indicate a significantly negative relationship between employee perception of equality in diversity practice and contextual performance (H<sub>1</sub>). Simply

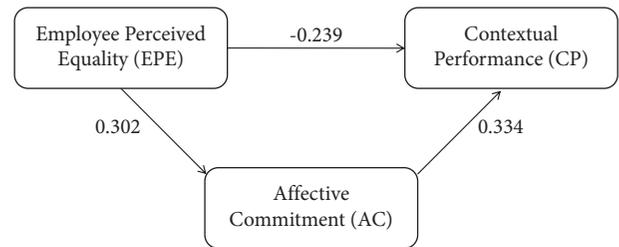


FIGURE 3: The standardized path coefficients of the structural model.

put, when employees perceive excess equality in representation and growth opportunities (act as a stressor), they disengage from the contextual performance. The result depicts the reality of private organizations, as, unlike public organizations, they work on meritocracy, and there is no government-imposed affirmative action. So when employees feel that organization is more focused on representation and opportunities to minorities, the majority will get demotivated to participate, excel, and update their knowledge or skills, as they believe that, irrespective of their knowledge or skills, the minority will have more chance of representation and promotions. The finding contradicts prior studies that indicated that perceived equality enhances employee performance and improves work behavior [7, 18, 19, 38, 39].

Secondly, the study indicates a significantly positive relationship between employee perceived equality concerning diversity practice and affective commitment (H<sub>2</sub>). In simple words, perceived equality in representation and development opportunities psychologically affects employees, enhancing their affective commitment to their organizations. Thus, this finding suggests that employees get more attached to the organization, are willing to stay in the organization for long, feel a strong sense of belonging with their organization, and consider organization problems their own. The result is consistent with the prior studies that perceived equality enhances employee organizational commitment [4–6, 38, 42].

Interestingly, the mediation analysis (H<sub>3</sub>) indicates a significantly positive mediating effect of affective commitment (act as a self-efficacy) between employee perceived equality and contextual performance. This relationship demonstrates the behavioral and psychological effect of perceiving equality in employee representation and growth opportunities. Thus, when employees perceive equality, their affective commitment towards their organization increases, increasing their extra-role behavior for organizational

TABLE 8: Summary results of analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Source	Type III sum of squares	df	Mean square	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i> value
Contextual performance					
Corrected model	2.271	1	2.271	2.279	0.132*
Intercept	0.034	1	0.034	0.034	0.854
Gender	2.271	1	2.271	2.279	0.132
Error	381.729	383	0.997		
Employee perceived equality					
Corrected model	3.889	1	3.889	3.918	0.048*
Intercept	0.058	1	0.058	0.058	0.809
Gender	3.889	1	3.889	3.918	0.048
Error	380.111	383	0.992		
Affective commitment					
Corrected model	5.477	1	5.477	5.542	0.019*
Intercept	0.082	1	0.082	0.083	0.774
Gender	5.477	1	5.477	5.542	0.019
Error	378.523	383	0.988		

Notes: \*  $p < 0.05$ .

success. Contrary to prior research findings, the results of  $H_1$  indicate a negative association between EPE and CP. Moreover, the  $H_3$  findings depict that the negative relationship between EPE and CP can be interpreted into a positive relationship based on a high level of employee affective commitment towards the organizations. Employees with a high emotional and psychological attachment with the organization will be more motivated to build their skills and knowledge to stay long in the organization because they feel valued, related, and accepted in their organizations, consequently achieving positive behavioral outcomes [50, 51].

Lastly, unlike previous research [69, 70, 72], the current study using analysis of variance found the similarity in the perception of both males and females with regard to contextual performance. Similar to prior studies, the results further indicate the significant differences in the perception of males and females regarding employee perceived equality and affective commitment. The findings demonstrate that both genders perceive diversity management efforts related to equality in representation and development opportunities differently and have a different level of affective commitment towards their organization. On the contrary, both genders feel the same about their additional behavioral outcome, that is, contextual performance related to work.

**7.1. Implications.** Various researchers argued in favor and against workforce diversity and have defended their argument well. However, both the extreme views of diversity leave practitioners in a dilemma about addressing a diverse workforce. The current research has demonstrated the practical implication of contemporary diversity research and applying IBM SPSS and AMOS software for effective human resource management (HRM). Theoretically, the current research adds to the existing literature. The originality of the current study is that it provides empirical evidence in the context of perceived equality, contextual performance, and affective commitment simultaneously (i.e., both behavioral and psychological outcomes), which was not studied earlier.

Unlike previous research, which indicated that perceived equality enhances additional work behavior [18, 19, 38], the present study indicated an excessive focus on diversity representation and promotion decreases employee contextual performance (i.e., behavioral outcomes) to excel and grow in their organizations. Interestingly, the simultaneous analysis of perceived equality, affective commitment, and contextual performance demonstrated that a negative association between excessive representation and growth of diverse employees and contextual performance could be transfigured into positive when employees have a high affective commitment (i.e., psychological outcome) towards organizations. This was not studied earlier as previous research were individually focused on either “equality and contextual performance” [7, 18, 19, 38,39], “discrimination and OCB” [8, 39], or “discrimination/equality and organizational commitment” [4–6, 38]. Also, unlike previous studies, the current study reveals that, irrespective of gender, employees have similar perceptions related to contextual performance. Practically, the current research has developed a framework that will aid managers in understanding employee perceived equality regarding existing diversity practices and their behavioral and psychological effects on employees, which will further assist top management and HRM in reworking and reformulating diversity policy and practice that can enhance employee affective commitment and contextual performance. Thus, the obtained results from the developed framework will aid the effective management of a diverse workforce to create a healthy and flourishing work culture. On the basis of findings, the authors suggest that new policies regarding workforce diversity management will only bring positive outcomes if framed based on employee receptivity. For example, focusing excessively on diversity representation and opportunities would reinforce employee psychological commitment and mitigate additional work behavior. The study has broader implications as it can be used in various other culturally similar countries and private sectors worldwide to assess the effect of existing diversity practice on contextual performance, which will facilitate thoughtful and practical amendment in existing

diversity policy for effective diverse workforce management and create a healthy, cohesive, thriving, and sustainable work environment for all.

## 8. Conclusion, Limitations, and Future Scope

The social exchange theory supports the principle of reciprocity and is a social and psychological perspective advocating the fact that behavior change is the outcome of the exchange between the counterparts. Accordingly, the authors aimed to examine implications of perceived equality in representation and growth opportunities to a diverse workforce on psychological and behavioral outcomes of employees, that is, their affective commitment and contextual performance, respectively. Using SEM and ANOVA, the authors studied  $n = 385$  employees working in various private organizations. The study's findings indicated that, unlike previous research [18, 19, 38, 39], the study found a negative relationship between EPE and CP. Further, affective commitment mediates the positive relationship between EPE and CP [69, 70, 72]. In a nutshell, when employees perceive an organization's excessive focus on equal representation and growth opportunities to a diverse workforce, they get demotivated to engage in additional positive behavior (i.e., contextual performance). However, when employees have high affective commitment, the negative relationship between EPE and CP transfigures into positive. When employees have a high affective commitment, they feel more valued, fit in the organization, feel like an asset, feel more connected, and are willing to stay. In return, they are eager to invest in the organizational activities and indulge in a contextual performance like taking extra workload, taking initiatives, taking challenging tasks, and actively participating. To reap the benefits of enhanced affective commitment and contextual performance, the policymakers, top management, and HR managers need to ensure adequate (and not excessive) equality in representation and growth opportunities to diverse employees as the private sector works on meritocracy and not affirmative action. Also, employee affective commitment must be enhanced for their unwavering support to the organizational success.

The study has certain limitations which could be addressed in future research. Firstly, the study exclusively assessed one dimension of diversity practice and management, that is, representation and growth opportunities. We incite future researchers to consider other elements, including hiring, retention, interview, application, and the pay scale for a similar study, which could theoretically and practically augment the existing research. Secondly, the study tested the significant difference in the effect of gender. Further studying it with more comprehensive diversity traits, including hierarchical position, age, educational qualification, and other diversity variables, could bring more insight into present research.

## Data Availability

The data will be made available upon reasonable request.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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