

# Gender, workplace fun and organisational inclusion: an empirical study

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – This paper addresses nurses working in public hospitals in order to find out how gender may affect their perception of both diversity management and organisational inclusion. Moreover, and given the novelty of workplace fun and the lack of research in this field in the context of developing countries, the authors explore the relationship between diversity management and organisational inclusion and explore workplace fun as a predictor of organisational inclusion.

**Design/methodology/approach** – A total of 360 questionnaires were collected from nurses in three public hospitals in Egypt. The authors applied a *t*-test to identify how gender may affect perceptions of diversity management. Moreover, the authors employed hierarchical regressions to test gender and diversity management as predictors of organisational inclusion and to test whether workplace fun can predict organisational inclusion, too.

**Findings** – The findings indicate that compared to their male colleagues, female nurses respond to diversity management practices more positively. Second, no significant statistical differences in the mean values for female and male nurses were observed regarding their perceptions of organisational inclusiveness. Third, diversity management is positively associated with organisational inclusion for the nurses. Finally, workplace fun mediates the relationship between diversity management perceptions and organisational inclusion.

**Originality/value** – This paper contributes by filling a gap in human resources (HR) research in the health-care sector, in which empirical studies on the relationship between gender, workplace fun and organisational inclusion have been limited so far.

**Keywords** Gender, Organisational inclusion, Workplace fun, Nurses, Egypt

**Paper type** Research paper

## 1. Introduction

Over the past three decades, diversity has been increasingly accepted as an organisational reality. This double-edged concept includes benefits such as innovation, while at the same time entails negative outcomes such as conflicts between employees that are different (Tang *et al.*, 2017).

Booyesen (2007) advocates that diversity aims to maintain a quota target for minority-affiliated members in order to match national considerations, laws and legislations. This may be why Daya (2014) points out that managing diversity can be attained only through ensuring the fair representation of both minority- and majority-affiliated members at different organisational levels without discrimination on the basis of gender, age, religion, skin colour, social class and more. Other authors (e.g. Foldy, 2002; Ponzoni *et al.*, 2017) have demonstrated that power and its positioning have become a cornerstone in addressing diversity since the mid-1990s. There has been a marked shift from asking about diversity



management motives, barriers and approaches to the question of what fosters inequality in different work settings. This has been accompanied by a shift since 2000 from paying attention to social justice and social inclusion to focussing on organisational issues (Zanoni *et al.*, 2010).

This explains the ongoing discourse about building a business case for diversity due to its profound role in the majority of cases in promoting shared united goals, performance and innovation as the focus of employees (Zanoni *et al.*, 2010). However, management scholars have unfortunately not shown major research interest in addressing the relationship between workplace diversity and work-related behaviour, attitudes and feelings, such as workplace happiness and workplace fun.

Therefore, over the past decade, the concept of workplace fun has gained momentum in human resources (HR) and management studies (Plester and Hutchson, 2016). Management researchers have variously associated it with organisational citizenship behaviour (Fluegge, 2008), job satisfaction (Karl and Peluchette, 2006a, b) and creativity. Stromberg and Karlsson (2009) address the positive relationship between workplace fun and employee motivation. From their side, it can be elaborated that the positive mood resulting from fun fuels both oxygen and blood flow to the brain and subsequently stimulates the productive abilities of employees. Newstrom (2002), Plester (2009) and Tews *et al.* (2012) elaborate that workplace fun is currently considered a part of the culture of leading companies (e.g. IBM and Google) because of its role in raising organisational responsiveness.

For Bolton and Houlihan (2009), workplace fun is a complex concept because of the difficulty of developing a unified set of workplace fun activities for all organisational members. Ford *et al.* (2003), Han *et al.* (2016) indicate that workplace fun activities may include but are not limited to birthday parties, social gatherings, massages, jokes in newsletters, games and book clubs.

Based on the aforementioned and given the sense of exclusion female nurses in Egyptian public hospitals perceive (Mousa, 2017, 2020a, 2020b) and their feelings of being discriminated against (Mousa, 2018), the authors of this paper have decided to address nurses working in public hospitals in Egypt in an attempt to find out how gender may affect their perception of both diversity management and organisational inclusion. Moreover, given the novelty of workplace fun and the lack of previous empirical studies on workplace fun, diversity and inclusion in general and in the context of developing countries, in specific, the authors of the present paper seek to explore the relationship between diversity management, organisational inclusion and workplace fun. The impetus for the study lies in not only addressing diversity management and organisational inclusion in an organisational setting that has received little academic attention, the Egyptian health-care sector, but also in focussing on nurses who are not satisfied with their current status and their ongoing feelings of marginalisation and exclusion (Mousa, 2017). The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: first, the authors will present the theoretical background and hypotheses, followed by the study design and methodology, then the results and lastly, the discussion, implications, conclusion, limitations and future research.

## 2. Literature review and hypotheses formation

### 2.1 The Egyptian cultural context

Although the 2019 global competitiveness report recorded Egypt as number 12 out of 134 countries in terms of diversity at work, the same report placed it at 100 in terms of reliance on professional management and 131 in terms of the gender wage gap ([http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_TheGlobalCompetitivenessReport2019.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_TheGlobalCompetitivenessReport2019.pdf)). Unfortunately, Egypt cannot be proud of being one of the countries that secures women rights and ensure their full integration in the workplace. Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) highlight that *masculinity*, which

is the basis of the superiority men have within the Egyptian society, is the dominant cultural dimension in the Egyptian society. Mousa (2017) asserts that men hold the upper hand in the public health-care sector in Egypt, while Mousa and Ayoubi (2019) describe how male academics in Egypt refuse to work under the supervision or guidance and leadership of their female colleagues. However, the Egyptian parliament decreed some constitutional amendments in 2019, in which one article guarantees a 25% quota of women in the Egyptian parliament (<https://timep.org/reports-briefings/timep-brief-2019-constitutional-amendments/>). This shows that the country has started to initiate some responsible and affirmative steps towards realising equality and/or empowerment for women.

### *2.2 Gender and diversity management*

Career development for women, under-representation of women in some organisational contexts and the limited inclusion of women in some workplace settings remain a puzzle in both developed and developing nations (Mousa, 2018). However, career progress for women and gender-related themes have been perceived as one of the hottest topics in the Western research agenda in the past two decades (Su *et al.*, 2015). Unfortunately, this is not the case in the majority of developing nations, which prompts the following questions: if gender diversity and women's issues have been afforded considerable space in many Western academic contexts and even then advances for women are slower and women receive fewer opportunities relative to men, then what is the situation for women in the labour force in developing economies? How do they experience their everyday work life? What is their experience of the processes of recruitment, professional development, career advancement, job retention and deployment as these are organised by the different organisations they are affiliated with?

Although women are active partners in policymaking in Western countries and authentic leaders for many institutions, they are only responsible for raising children in developing nations (Welzel, 2014). Moreover, Welzel's (2013) emancipation theory entails that human empowerment for women is largely based on action resources (capabilities), emancipative values (motivation) and civic entitlements (removal of institutional boundaries such as workplace discrimination, bias and negative prejudice). Similarly, the authors of this paper consider the aforementioned factors as outcomes of the existence and effective implementation of workplace diversity management (Kakabadse *et al.*, 2015; Brieger *et al.*, 2019). Accordingly, the authors suggest that because women are less empowered and less represented in leadership positions compared to men in developing countries and masculine cultures, their diversity perceptions differ from those of their male counterparts. Therefore, the authors propose the following hypothesis:

- H1.* Female nurses respond to diversity management practices more positively compared to their male colleagues.

### *2.3 Gender, diversity management and organisational inclusion*

The concept of inclusion was first introduced by scholars in the field of education in 1980 (Gilhool, 1989) and later researchers in sociology and public policy introduced the concept social inclusion, which reflects the participation in trusting interpersonal relationships at family, peer and community levels. The concept is also used to describe the equal status of citizens and the feeling of belongingness in community life. Only since the year 2000 has the concept of inclusion been extended into the organisational context to describe both management practices that ensure equality and feelings of integration, sameness and involvement for employees (Mor Barak, 2000; Roberson, 2006; Nishii and Mayer, 2009).

Diversity and inclusion policies and practices vary from one context to the next. Thomas (1991) points out that the majority of multicultural organisations show a constant commitment towards diversity. Their leaders respect individual differences, where both majority- and

minority-affiliated members participate in the process of decision-making and open neutral work-related communication spreads throughout the work setting and the adopted organisational culture accelerates solidarity, tolerance, integration and involvement (Human, 2005; Booysen, 2007; Daya, 2014). Unfortunately, this is not the case in many public organisational contexts. Mousa (2017) has described cultural bias in the form of discrimination, the dominance of masculinity and in–out group favouritism throughout public health organisations in Egypt.

Given the fact that the roots of diversity management and organisational inclusion can be traced back to equal employment initiatives that appeared in the USA in the 1960s and that equal employment initiatives are based on Blau's social exchange theory (1964), then the roots of diversity management and organisational inclusion stem from social exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Van de Voorde *et al.*, 2012; Paauwe *et al.*, 2013; Simons, 2002; Jonsen *et al.*, 2011). This theory entails that investments (pay, promotion, information, status, etc.) in the organisation's staff are usually translated into positive returns (performance, loyalty, involvement, integration, etc.) from the employees to managers and the organisation. Unfortunately, scholars and researchers in the fields of HR and organisation studies have tended not to devote much research space to demographic changes in the labour market, labour market shifts and gender diversity (Ravazzani, 2016). In the context of the Egyptian health-care sector, nurses are not satisfied with the in–out group favouritism and consider gender as a motive for workplace discrimination (Mousa, 2017). Accordingly, the authors propose the following hypothesis:

- H2. There is a statistically significant relationship between gender and organisational inclusion.

#### 2.4 Diversity management and organisational inclusion

Tang *et al.* (2015) consider organisational inclusion as a more effective approach to manage different employees in the same workplace. Tang *et al.* (2017) see organisational inclusion as a set of plans, programmes and practices the organisation develops and implements to secure equal membership status and a sense of insidership for all employees. Roberson (2006), Guillaume *et al.* (2014) and Shore *et al.* (2011) find that even if both diversity management and organisational inclusion seek to ensure minority rights, organisational inclusion remains the positive side of diversity management ensuring employee involvement in decision-making, knowledge sharing at different organisational levels and integration amongst both minority- and majority-affiliated members.

Mor Barak and Cherin (1998), Davidson and Ferdman (2002) and Pless and Maak (2004) indicate that organisational inclusion entails not only a kind of recognition and respect for the unique differences between employees but also a readiness to utilise such differences and talents for the betterment of the organisation. Shore *et al.* (2011), Mousa and Puhakka (2019) and Mousa *et al.* (2020a, b) assert that organisational inclusion is a multilevel concept that works at both organisational and individual levels – in the former, the organisation designs and implements policies to ensure feelings of sameness for its employees; in the latter, the employee's feelings regarding the organisation's inclusive policies and practices are constantly sought and assessed. Accordingly, the authors formulate the following as their third hypothesis:

- H3. There is a statistically significant relationship between diversity management and organisational inclusion.

#### 2.5 Gender, diversity management perceptions, organisational inclusion and workplace fun

Fluegge (2008, p. 15) defines workplace fun as “any social, interpersonal or task activities at work of a playful humorous nature which provide an individual with amusement, enjoyment or pleasure”. Ford *et al.* (2003, p. 22) describe it as “a variety of enjoyable and

pleasurable activities that positively affect the attitude and productivity of individuals and groups". Lamm and Meeks (2009, p. 614) consider workplace fun as "playful, social, interpersonal, recreational or task activities intended to provide amusement, enjoyment or pleasure".

According to Plester and Hutchison (2016), what may be perceived as fun to one individual may be easily understood as silly or offensive to another. The same has been asserted by Karl and Peluchette (2006a, b) and Plester *et al.* (2015), who point out that the perception of workplace fun relies on differences in demographic characteristics (e.g. age, education, etc.) and functional factors (e.g. position in the organisational hierarchy). Lamm and Meeks (2009) raise the question of fun for whom? They accordingly indicate that age, personality, education and some other demographic characteristics play a role in determining the scope, mechanism and orientation of workplace fun. Costea *et al.* (2005) and Fineman (2006) highlight that the concept of fun is similar to or maybe the same as humour, joking, pleasure or even play. Tews *et al.* (2012) highlight that developing fun in the workplace entails a sense of personal enjoyment and a tendency to maintain good relationships with colleagues. Ford *et al.* (2003, p. 22) mention that the context of the work is perceived as fun when it "intentionally encourages, initiates and supports a variety of enjoyable and pleasurable activities that positively impact the attitude and productivity of individuals and groups".

Given social exchange theory, any investment in the employee/individual through support and encouragement stimulates positive responses in the employee (e.g. performance, loyalty, love, etc.) towards his/her workplace and managers. Plester and Hutchison (2016) differentiate between three types of workplace fun: managed fun, which reflects systematic deliberate humour initiated, guided and organised by an organisation and its management in an attempt to achieve the organisation's objectives; organic fun, which reflects the funny humorous practices that naturally take place amongst employees/staff members; third, task fun, which reflects job responsibilities, tasks and practices that make one's job enjoyable and pleasurable.

In hospitals, nurses should certainly take their business with patients sensitively and seriously. However, serious and sensitive work can be accomplished in a smooth and playful manner, particularly with those patients suffering from dangerous hurtful diseases. Accordingly, the authors suggest workplace fun is likely to create an environment which helps bringing different employees to participate together in activities which strengthen their interpersonal relationships with other employees and therefore could lead to more positive feeling of inclusion. The authors formulate the following as their fourth hypothesis:

*H4.* Workplace fun has a predictive ability of organisational inclusion when controlling for gender and diversity management.

According to H2, H3 and H4, the models of this study are given as follows:

$$OI = A + \beta_1 G + \beta_2 DMP + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

$$OI = A + \beta_1 G + \beta_2 DMP + \beta_3 WPF + \varepsilon \quad (2)$$

where OI is the predicted value of organisational inclusion G, DMP and WPF are the predictors and represent gender, nurses' diversity management perception and workplace fun, respectively.

### 3. The research methodology

#### 3.1 The sample

Although this study is perceived to be the first to address gender, diversity management, workplace fun and organisational inclusion in the Egyptian context, it is part of a broader

research project studying gender, organisational inclusion, workplace happiness, work engagement and workplace fun in Egyptian organisational contexts. This study was conducted amongst nurses working in three public hospitals in the Giza province, which is one of 26 provinces in Egypt. A previous study by Mousa (2017) pointed out that the majority of nurses working in Egyptian public hospitals suffer from in–out group favouritism, long working hours, lack of full integration in workplaces and the dominant hand of their superior male colleagues. Therefore, the authors employ purposive sampling in which nurses (male and female) working in the addressed hospitals were contacted with a questionnaire form. The participants also received a cover letter that described the aims of the research study and brief information about the authors. Moreover, the cover letter contained confirmation that all participants would receive a general report about the results of the study upon analysing the collected data. It is worth highlighting that a personal acquaintance of the author played an extensive role in the process of distributing, monitoring and collecting the questionnaire forms. The author distributed 380 questionnaire forms by hand with the kind assistance of the managers in the participating hospitals. The process of collecting the data consumed about seven months as the authors started in January 2019 and analysed the collected data in July 2019. After two follow-ups, the authors collected 370 completed questionnaires and of these, 360 were valid for the analysis. The following table (Table 1) shows more information about the participants.

### 3.2 Measures

To explore each of the themes in the study, the authors adopted existing approaches to the data collected in the questionnaires.

To explore diversity management, the authors used the items of workplace diversity perception developed by Mor Barak *et al.* (1998) after updating them to fit the organisational setting of the Egyptian culture and the health-care sector. For example, the term “Old boys’ network” was replaced by suitable examples that explain this term in the Egyptian culture, such as men in this organisation use their positions of influence to help other men from leveraged families/from their province/who are relatives to their fellow doctors and other medical staff members, etc. For organisational inclusion, the authors used the organisational inclusion model developed by Mousa and Puhakka (2019) to measure organisational inclusion in Egyptian hospitals. As Mousa and Puhakka’s (2019) study focusses on physicians, the only change to their model was replacing “physicians” by “nurses”. No additional adjustments were necessary as this model was originally designed and tested in an Egyptian organisational context. Mousa and Puhakka’s (2019) model consists of six items: “My hospital appreciates all nurses regardless of their differences”; “My hospital respects the uniqueness of nurses”; “My hospital treats all nurses as insiders”; “I did not feel any discrimination while working at my hospital”; “My hospital recruits and develops all nurses

Demographic variables	Items	Count
(1) Gender	Male	160
	Female	200
(2) Age	Below 25 years	40
	26–40 years	280
	More than 40 years	40
(3) Level of education	Bachelor’s degree	340
	Bachelor’s + master’s degrees	20
(4) Work basis	Full time	355
	Part time	5

**Table 1.**  
Demographic  
characteristics



based on their qualifications; “Equality, tolerance and sameness are the main feature of my hospital”. To explore workplace fun, the authors used the items from the model of workplace fun developed by Karl *et al.* (2005). The following items were included: “Having fun at work is very important to me”; “I prefer to work with people who like to have fun”; “I do not expect work to be fun – that’s why they call it work”; “Experiencing joy or amusement while at work is not important to me”; “If my job stopped being fun, I would look for another job”.

**4. Results**

The following presents the reliability analysis for diversity management, organisational inclusion, workplace fun and gender using Cronbach’s alpha. Cronbach’s alpha is used to assess the internal consistency of each of the variables used in the study. As depicted in Table 2, there is a significant correlation amongst the four variables (ranging from 0.141 to 0.343). Table 2 shows the reliability analysis for the four variables using Cronbach’s alpha.

To test the hypotheses of this study, both the *t*-test and the hierarchical multiple regression analysis were employed. For H1, the authors used the *t*-test to examine how gender may affect perceptions of diversity management. As shown in Table 3, the results suggest a significant difference between men and women’s perceptions of diversity management ( $t = -3.20, p < 0.05$ ). For female nurses, the mean is 3.66, while the SD is 0.77; meanwhile, the mean for male academics is 3.10 and the SD is 0.61. The results indicate that female nurses perceive, appreciate and respect diversity policies at their hospitals better than their male colleagues. Therefore, H1 is supported.

To test H2, H3 and H4 of this study, multiple step hierarchical regression was employed and the analysis was carried out in two steps after ensuring that data meet conditions needed to adopt this type of regression (Miles and Shevlin, 2001). The authors verified that there were no signs of multicollinearity in any of the three regression variables. All tolerance values are greater than 0.20 and the variance inflation factors (VIFs) are less than 4. In step 1, the independent variables (gender and diversity management perception) were entered into the model as predictors to examine the effects of the independent variables as indicated in H2 and H3. This step also allows identifying the model *R* square and significance before exploring (workplace fun) as a predictor. Next, the effect of workplace fun was introduced to the previous (first) model and further the hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed to test H4 and identify the change in *R* square of the model and check if it was

**Table 2.**  
Cronbach’s alpha, descriptive analysis and correlations

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>A</i>	1	2	3	4
Diversity management	3.41	0.71	0.84	1.00			
Organisational inclusion	3.29	0.66	0.80	0.141	1.00		
Workplace fun	3.26	0.54	0.86	0.343	0.320	1.00	
Gender				0.160	0.026	0.102	1.00

**Note(s):**  $\alpha$ , Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  coefficient estimates,  $p < 0.05$

**Table 3.**  
Diversity management and gender

Gender	<i>N</i>	Diversity management mean ( <i>SD</i> ) $T = -3.20^*$
Male	160	3.10 (0.61)
Female	200	3.66 (0.77)

**Note(s):**  $*p < 0.05$

significant. Results of the hierarchical multiple regressions analysis are presented in Table 4. Table 4 shows the two models that resulted from the two steps/regressions, their specifications, coefficient estimates and significance.

According to Table 1 (model 1) results, gender was not found to be a significant predictor of organisational inclusion ( $t = 0.700$  and  $\beta = 0.04$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) but diversity management perceptions were positively associated with organisational inclusion ( $t = 5.732$  and  $\beta = 0.21$ ) and this association is significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). Model 1 was significant at  $p < 0.01$  and  $R^2$  was 0.129. According to the above-mentioned results, H2 is rejected, suggesting gender is not a predictor of organisational inclusion and both male and female nurses have rate organisational inclusion in their hospital, similarly. The above-mentioned results also suggest that the better the nurses' perception of diversity, the better they rank the inclusion in their hospital and the opposite is true ( $\beta = 0.21$ ). The results of model 2 (organisational inclusion regressed on all three independent variables: gender, diversity management perceptions and workplace fun) were an improvement over model 1, with  $R^2$  increased to 0.259 and  $\Delta R^2 = 0.130$  suggesting extra 13% of the variance had been accounted for after adding workplace fun as a predictor. This change of  $R^2$  was significant at  $p < 0.01$  ( $t = 4.998$  and  $\beta = 0.215$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), suggesting workplace fun was positively related to organisational inclusion and H4 is supported.

### 5. Discussion

The statistical results indicated that compared to their male colleagues, female nurses respond to diversity management more positively. The authors believe that this result is logical, considering that there are some factors (e.g. national considerations, culture and legislation) that affect minority representation at different organisational levels (Booyens, 2007). However, diversity practices aim to ensure the fair representation of minority-affiliated members at all organisational levels (Daya, 2014). In the Egyptian context, women are minority members. Mousa (2017) points out that female nurses continuously suffer from the domination of their male managers, who usually exclude them from the process of decision-making. Consequently, any sound diversity practices will be perceived by female nurses as an opportunity to amend their under-representation in managerial-level positions and improve their career prospects. Furthermore, diversity management initiatives adopted in the Egyptian health-care sector will be considered an application for Welzel's emancipation theory (2014), which asserts that civic entitlement and the removal of institutional boundaries, such as workplace discrimination, is the main component/driver for female empowerment.

The results also indicated that there is no significant difference between female and male nurses in terms of the perception of organisational inclusion, despite the fact that Egyptian nurses consider gender as a motive for workplace discrimination (Mousa, 2017). If diversity

Predictor	$\beta$	SEB	$\beta$	$T$	Tolerance	VIF	$R^2$	$F$	$\Delta R^2$
Model 1							0.125	16.950	
Gender	0.04	0.067	0.051	0.700	0.960	1.001			
Diversity management	0.21	0.039	0.244	5.730	0.960	1.001			
Model 2							0.259	22.980	0.134
Gender	0.043	0.054	0.038	0.800	0.960	1.001			
Diversity management	0.210	0.036	0.313	5.791	0.966	1.060			
Workplace fun	0.215	0.044	0.226	4.977	0.969	1.019			

**Note(s):** VIF: variance inflation factor; dependent variable: organisational inclusion,  $p < 0.01$

**Table 4.** Results of the hierarchical multiple regression for predicting organisational inclusion



management seeks to ensure representation for minority members at different organisational levels, organisational inclusion ensures that the employee will not be disadvantaged because of gender, religion, age and so on (Roberson, 2006; Nishii and Mayer, 2009). The authors justified these results by highlighting the context of the Egyptian health-care sector, where nurses, regardless of their gender, feel marginalised, treated as a second class and lack the value of inclusion in their workplace as physicians often have the upper hand in managerial positions (Mousa, 2017). Accordingly, nurses can only secure participation in the decision-making process and involvement in work-related communication if they can use some other basis for being accepted and treated as “insiders” in their organisations.

Diversity management has been found to be positively associated with organisational inclusion. This result is in line with Shore *et al.* (2011) and Guillaume *et al.* (2014) who confirm that both diversity management and organisational inclusion seek to guarantee minority rights. Accordingly, they share the same objectives. This is also in line with social exchange theory (Blau 1964), which highlights that the positive feelings of employees (sense of inclusion in this case) often come as a result of the positive investment in or rewards to them (fair treatment in this case) from their managers. It is worth highlighting here that organisational inclusion works at both individual – through assessing employees’ feelings regarding their employer’s inclusion policies – and organisational levels – through designing policies to ensure employees feel they belong to the organisation – while diversity management works only at the organisational level (Mousa *et al.*, 2020a, b).

Finally, the results indicated workplace fun as a predictor of organisational inclusion and the two variables are strongly and positively associated. The authors believe that this result is in line with social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which entails that investments in employees through support and encouragement (managing workplace fun in this case) stimulates positive responses in the employees (organisational inclusion). Plester and Hutchison (2016) illustrate that managed fun, which is systematic deliberate humour initiated and organised by an organisation, contributes to achieving organisational objectives. Therefore, according to the results of this study, guiding and organising some workplace fun activities (e.g. birthday parties, performance recognition, etc.) foster in-group involvement and integration for nurses.

To the best of the authors’ knowledge, this paper comes as the first to address the relationship between gender, diversity management, workplace fun and organisational inclusion in the context of developing countries. This comes as a significant contribution to this field of research. Moreover, providing statistical evidence that workplace fun positively impacts employees’ organisational inclusion is the second main contribution of this research.

## 6. Conclusion, implications and limitations

This study looked at nurses in three Egyptian public hospitals and based on the statistical analysis using collected questionnaire forms, the authors found that compared to their male colleagues, female nurses respond to diversity management practices more positively. No significant statistical differences were found in the mean values of female and male nurses regarding their perceptions of organisational inclusion. Diversity management is positively associated with organisational inclusion for nurses, and lastly, workplace fun is an important predictor of organisational inclusion.

### 6.1 Practical implications

The authors suggest the administrations of the participating hospitals reconsider the communication policies they implement throughout their hospitals. Nurses should find a way

to freely and neutrally express their thoughts regarding the inclusion procedures their hospitals adopt. This can be initiated simply through organising regular meetings between managers and nurses. Moreover, the administration of the public hospitals may ask nurses to fill in monthly reports in which they express their viewpoints, thoughts, criticisms and suggestions regarding the elimination of any cultural bias, workplace discrimination or in-out group classification they may witness. Furthermore, conducting regular training sessions on diversity management and inclusion may foster the involvement of the nurses in decision-making at their workplace. Finally, the authors also suggest the participating hospitals manage some activities such as birthday parties, social gatherings, massages, jokes in newsletters, games and book clubs, which have been proven to positively impact feelings of organisational inclusion and sameness amongst nurses.

### 6.2 Limitations

This study has some limitations that should be taken into consideration. Firstly, the authors undertook their study in the health sector. The health sector is a unique sector being dominated by non-profit providers, payments are made by third parties such as the government and private insurers, increasing demand, limited resources, high regulation and rapid development. These unique characteristics increase the pressure on health-care employees and highlight the need for these employees to feel secured, appreciated and motivated. Although other sectors might not share all the characteristics of the health-care sector, the results of this study could be generalised to industries and private companies where employees face similar sort of pressure and needs, particularly in the developing countries' context. Secondly, the study focussed only on nurses in the addressed hospitals without considering physicians and administrators who also work there. Although this could limit the generalisability of the results to middle and top management and other staff members in different jobs, the authors believe that targeting nurses is appropriate for this study as nurses have difficult working conditions and face high pressure. In addition, they represent 40–50% of hospitals personnel with female nurses constituting the majority in this job category.

### 6.3 Future research

The authors suggest HR researchers test the same research hypotheses in other contexts (such as private organisations) in order to gain a more in-depth insight regarding the relationship between the four variables addressed in this paper. Moreover, examining the relationship between the four variables in other organisational settings and for different job categories in the same institutions is likely to improve our understanding of the views of employees from both advantaged and disadvantaged groups and those in the middle and top management. Furthermore, the authors find the relationship between the four variables – gender, diversity management, workplace fun and organisational inclusion – an opportunity for researchers from various disciplines, such as HR management, public policy, public administration, humanities and politics to collaborate and produce a number of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary studies in this regard.

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