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THESIS SUMMARY

Nikolett Olasz

Diversity and change strategies in the IT service industry

Ph.D. dissertation

Supervisor:
Prof. Dr. Miklós Dobák
Professor Emeritus
Prof. Dr. Henriett Primecz
Associate Professor

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Institute of Management

Department of Management and Organization

SUMMARY OF THESES

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Contents

Research background and justification of the topic

What is diversity? What is its significance in an organizational context? In response to these questions, most people think of diversity categories such as women, people with disabilities, or the elderly and young age groups in organizations. However, this is a topic worth addressing because it influences several factors on the path to success or failure of companies. Among other things, there are the organization's strategic direction, corporate capability, strategic actions, and the performance of organizational members.

The significance of the research topic

One of the fundamental questions in strategy research is what makes a company successful in the long term and what are the reasons for the failure, bankruptcy, or takeover of others. For example, how does a market leader, a successful company with a solid financial base, a good reputation, adequate physical and human resources, and experienced management, reach the point where it has to accept an acquisition by another company?

Since 2000, just over half of Fortune 500 companies have disappeared. These include, for example, the acquisition of Minolta and Motorola, the bankruptcy of Kodak, and the case of Blockbuster, which deemed the acquisition of Netflix unprofitable. It is clear from these phenomena that understanding the reasons for corporate survival and the corporate paths designated by top management is a critical issue in the life of organizations.

The downfall of successful companies can be a radical change in the external environment, a lack of trust within the organization, and a management and organizational culture that focuses on excessive control. The emergence of new business models and technologies is accompanied by market transformation, i.e., a change in the external environment.

However, while slow change gives organizations adequate reaction time to react to it with innovation, radical changes are often detected too late in and responded to inappropriately. A possible response of companies to radical changes is a strategic renewal, which means a set of adaptive decisions and actions that a company takes to change its path dependence and maintain dynamic adaptation to the changing environment over time (Volberda et al 2001:160).

Recognizing the importance and necessity of strategic renewal, new research questions have arisen concerning this topic, such as: How do people with different profiles, demographic backgrounds, cognitive basis, and the groups within the organizations they form affect each other, the performance and life of the organization? Furthermore, how can

organizations in a competitive environment simultaneously implement the processes of increasing efficiency and focusing on the future (Csedő & Zavarkó, 2019)?

The view of this dissertation is consistent with the idea that top management actively examines the external and internal environment of the organization. In this capacity, the top management's goal is to identify and define all the competencies that ensure coherence between the environment and the company's operation. My primary aspiration is to explore a deeper relationship between strategic renewal (Heyden, 2012; Volberda et al.., 2001; Dobák, 2008; Csedő & Zavarkó, 2019) ambidexterity (Tushman & O'Reilly, 1996) and diversity (Hambrk & Mason, 1984; Rijamampianina & Carmichael, 2005), which I would like to do through three lenses. Based on my personal interests, motivations, and the environmental, social, and economic context of the topic, I am looking for an overall answer to how diversity in the workplace (which includes top management diversity and the concept of diversity in management) influences the patterns of managerial information seeking that are part of strategic renewal and ambidexterity, and what patterns might be used to capture these effects.

Accordingly, my research questions were structured as follows:

Q1: How does the diversity of managers relate to strategic renewal and ambidexterity?

Q2: How does the diversity of top managers relate to the search patterns that form the basis of decision-making processes?

Q3: How does diversity as an organizational value affect strategic renewal and ambidexterity?

The theoretical focus introduced by the research question is the meaning and importance of diversity within the company (Hambrick & Mason, 1984; Rijamampianina & Carmichael, 2005), which I examined in connection with the theories of strategic renewal and ambidexterity. The answer to the research question has both theoretical and practical significance, as it aims to examine and synthesize the existing theories in terms of diversity management and draw the attention of small and medium-sized domestic IT companies.

The effects of organizational theories on the research of diversity management

In my dissertation, I point out that the functionalist paradigm and the interpretive approach are based on contradictory assumptions. In the case of my dissertation, the interpretive, qualitative approach supported the broader functionalist research goals and answered questions. I also adapted my methodological tools to resolve the contradictions

(case study methodology based on qualitative interviews). I also explored possible interpretations of the theoretical models of diversity management and - as a complementary aspect of my research - organizational renewal and ambidexterity from the perspectives of functionalist and interpretive science and organizational theory. (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). My understanding and knowledge of the assumptions in the research work were of great help to me in understanding managers' views on diversity and their interpretations of it within the organization. On the one hand, this has enabled me to understand the decision-making mechanisms of managers, their actions, and their interpretation of diversity within their organizations (Romani & Holgersson, 2020), and on the other hand, to examine the effects of diversity (Knights, & Omanović, 2015).

Theoretical framework

In my dissertation - in line with the literature (Manata, 2021; van Knippenberg et al.., 2004; Qin et al.., 2014) - I synthesized negative and positive perspectives to gain a deeper and better understanding of diversity. My theoretical framework is based on the foundations of the top management theory and thus aims to examine the role and importance of top management in organizational diversity management. The information/decision-making perspective implies integrity, which results in, for example, a broader, more in-depth analysis and complex problem-solving/decision-making. In the case of group members with a similar identity, relational demography creates commitment and group cohesion, while conflicts arise in-group members with opposite identities. All this influences process outcomes through moderators, which influence performance-related outcomes such as ambidexterity or renewal.

Research methodology

To present the implementation of my research, I followed Maxwell's (1996) interactive qualitative research model. This is because my understanding of the meanings deepened and consequently changed during my work. As a result, the conceptual environment of the research changed in terms of what was important and less important to me, and the methodology I chose changed. This process can be considered natural during qualitative research because, at the beginning of qualitative research, the researcher does not have a concrete indication of what kind of data he or she will obtain during the data collection. Therefore, I structure the individual chapters accordingly.

Methodological background

I structured my Ph.D. research strategy on qualitative research methodology and prepared several case studies. A case study is "empirical research that examines a given phenomenon embedded in its real environment, especially in cases where the boundary between the phenomenon and the context is blurred" (Yin, 2003, pp. 12-14). Case studies are preferred in qualitative methodology and may be applied with a variety of goals in mind: to construct a theory, to obtain a deeper understanding of a local context, or to test a theory (Szokolszky, 2004). The case study presents exceptional cases, which allows for exploring and taking into account the relationships and interactions between the cases and their context (Yin, 2011).

For the purposes of my thesis, a case is defined as a behavior, an act, and specific individual decision-making mechanisms. Accordingly, on the one hand, IT organizations are the main focus, which includes several embedded units of analysis - information gathering of TMT members, diversity, diversity management, renewal paths, and ambidexterity. On the other hand, my case study encompasses several cases in order to achieve more comprehensive research objectives.

The case studies were conducted through semi-structured individual interviews. The interviews were built around two topics: 1) the meaning of diversity and its interpretation at an individual and organizational level, furthermore diversity-related experiences; 2) experiences in organizational renewal and ambidexterity. To process the data, I used qualitative content analysis using Atlas.ti content analysis software. I used a qualitative methodology to analyze the verbatim transcript of the recorded interviews: I looked for similar patterns, then coded them, relying on the content analysis software Atlas.ti.

Research Steps

Data collection

My research goal is to explore diversity in domestic IT organizations and, related to this, organizational renewal and ambidexterity and to examine the meaning of diversity. In order to explore the possible background mechanisms, I chose the CEOs, top managers - where I had the opportunity - and middle managers of domestic IT organizations. According to Hambrick and Mason (1984), organizations are a reflection of their top managers, as the TMT determines the development trajectory of the company through the preferences, behaviors, and abilities embedded in their strategic decisions (Cyert & March, 1963; Hambrick, 2007; Heyne, 2012). Mor Barak et al.. (2021) and Tatli and Özbilgin (2009)) pointed out that the attitudes of middle management regarding diversity and equality are as

important as the senior managers', as they play a significant role in the practical implementation of this approach (Mor Barak et al.., 2021). Regarding organizational renewal and ambidexterity, the literature places great emphasis on collaboration, the behavioral integration of the TMT team (Taródy et al.., 2021), its entrepreneurial, planning, and implementation skills (Hortoványi, 2012), and the involvement of different levels of the organization in strategic renewal processes (Schmitt et al.., 2018).

After defining the organizational levels and the industry as the research field, the next essential step was to compile the sample. Due to the nature of qualitative research, the sample selection is theoretically motivated, which means a small-sample, context-embedded investigation (Miles & Huberman, 1994). When I compiled the sample, I tried to ensure similarity in terms of company characteristics and diversity in terms of personal characteristics. I identified three for corporate characteristics and five for personal characteristics, along which I aimed to achieve variation.

For the sampling, on the one hand, I sent an introductory e-mail using data obtained from the OPTEN database, and on the other hand, I used the snowball method (Szokolszky, 2004). In my research, I performed a case-oriented analysis: I examined diversity (in terms of individual and organizational politics), ambidexterity, organizational renewal, and decision-making, as well as their impact on each other. Based on interviews with fourteen people, I was able to identify 127 cases, of which twenty-five are related to the profile of the individual, forty-two to diversity policy, fifteen to renewal, eleven to ambidexterity, and thirty-four to decision making.

Data analysis

The process of data analysis involves three main tasks: data reduction, data representation, and the process of drawing and verifying conclusions. The performance of these tasks may take place before, during, and after the data collection activities (Huberman & Miles, 1994).

Data reduction: it represents the reduction of the available set of information, on the one hand, by choosing the degree questions of the research and, on the other hand, the methodology (Huberman & Miles, 1994).

In my research, I used the meaning categorization perspective (Kvale, 1996), whereby I grouped the interview transcripts, organized them into categories, and then analyzed connections and correlations. First, I examined the relationships between each category and code separately for each subject, then grouped the related categories into different sets. Then,

based on the analysis of the interview transcripts and the literature, I created my categories and groups, then I analyzed the relationships between them. This resulted in the different category groups of individual diversity, diversity policy, renewal, ambidexterity, and decision-making.

Data representation: its essence is to present the data in an organized, compressed form, that helps to conclude (Szokolszky, 2004). I used Atlas.ti program to structure the codes, organized them into groups, and arranged them in a network by graphically representing the strongly connected codes, which I mainly used to explore the connections between diversity, renewal, and ambidexterity. The Atlas.ti program has facilitated my work extensively during this process,. This way I could retrieve the related text for each category or group using the query option.

I have prepared a case study for each topic, i.e., to understand the processes related to diversity (individual and diversity policy), ambidexterity, renewal, and decision-making. These case studies contained the individual codes, the associated quotations and the case-level analysis, which I have placed in the Appendix. This case analysis was very helpful in helping me to compare and group the cases and to better understand the interrelationships between them.

Drawing and validating conclusions: means the formulation and interpretation of the displayed, compressed data (Szokolszky, 2004). In my work, I used the content analysis software Atlas.ti: I represented the relationship between codes using code groups (I built the hierarchy using numbers). The table that summarizes the modifications allows reviewing the groups, patterns, and relationships. The table also identifies a way to identify the frequency of cases: which and how many cases belong to a given group (e.g., Demographic Diversity vs Cognitive Diversity, etc.).

Throughout the analysis process, I have used comparison and the search for differences as a deduction strategy on several occasions. I paid particular attention to cases that, for some reason, could not be included in any of the groups in the first round of analysis or represented a completely separate entity in the grouping.

Validity: Quality Aspects of the Research

When conducting scientific research, it is necessary to ensure the quality of the research. Therefore, in my research, I pay particular attention to the validity, reliability, and generalizability of the research, but in qualitative research, these criteria have a different meaning and way of achieving them than in traditional research. In the traditional approach,

the focus is on the verification of the endpoint, whereas in qualitative research, the focus is on the process, and ensuring and verifying validity and reliability is built into every stage of the research (Kvale, 1996), (Bokor et al.., 2000). However, the methodology of designing a predefined sample and established measurement tools and analytical methods is less formalized in research using a quantitative approach. In the following sections, I summarize the steps I followed in my research. These practices have improved the validity, reliability, and generalizability of my research, which I have built on the work of Miles and Haberman (1994), Maxwell (1996), Kvale (1996) and Bokor (2000), among others.

Self-reflective attention, acceptance, and apperception

Prior to the data analysis, I recorded my understanding and assumptions. This allowed me to make explicit my previous patterns, with which I could handle the data in a more advanced way: to understand the feelings and insights of my interviewees.

- In conducting the interviews, I paid close and very conscious attention to how and in what ways I influenced the interviewees.

- I also recorded my understandings and realizations I gained during the process, but I treated them as assumptions and continued with the data analysis.

- Tracking surprises. My research yielded a number of surprises due to the exploratory methodology. In practical terms, these meant that my conceptual framework was expanded.

Transparency

- The structured data and case processing are presented in the appendix. On the one hand, the cases include raw data and quotes. On the other hand, they ensure the protection of my interviewees. In this way, the raw data can be retrieved in the original context when reading any section of the research conclusions.

- Throughout the research process, I aimed to document the research as much as possible and to make it more transparent: how it changed my research focus and understanding of the diversity concept.

- In case of contradictions and contradictory cases, I highlighted them and then gave details on how I handled them.

Triangulation

- When conducting the interviews, I used a dictaphone, for which I asked the interviewees' prior consent. The interview transcripts were not typed by me, but I listened to each of them and added relevant text, and comments, while I was listening.

- I kept a research diary in which I chronologically processed the direct experiences and knowledge gained during the interviews and various stages of analysis. In addition to the interviews, I also relied on biographical data.

- I conducted continuous self-examination in search of rival interpretations and explanations. I sought out cases that contradicted theories or my assumptions.

- During my research, I asked my colleagues and other specialists for feedback regarding my conclusions, analysis, and the identification of texts according to schemes. I paid particular attention to the conflicting opinions of the experts.

Generalizability

- When compiling my research sample, I tried to choose as many different subjects as possible according to the selected criteria.

- Maxwell distinguishes between internal and external generalizability in his work. In the case of internal generalizability, the conclusions are limited to the examined field and group. External generalizability also applies beyond the field of study (Maxwell, 1996). In his view, there are three possible levels of generalizability: 1) from the sample to a population, 2) from a given practical context to the level of theory, and 3) from one test case to another. In qualitative research, the latter two levels can primarily be realized. Theoretical generalizability means the fundamental question of external validity, while the level of test cases is given greater emphasis within the research framework. According to Bokor, generalizability means that we set up a theoretical framework that can be applied in other contexts, which can be interpreted if appropriate boundary conditions are met (Bokor, 2000).

- In my research, I aim for internal and theoretical generalizability by further developing the conceptual system. I can strengthen the generalizability of my research with the following aspects (Bokor, 2000):
   - Careful identification and description of the characteristics of the sample, which I presented in a separate chapter.
   - Adequate dispersion and width of the sample. In the sampling, I have tried to achieve diversity, to select as diverse a sample as possible.
   - Sufficient, dense description ensures that the reader can identify with his/her own situation. I aim to achieve this by developing quotes and cases in detail. I include the cases in the appendix of the dissertation to ensure that the conclusions can be verified.

- I constantly compared it with previous theories, existing literature and checked for fit and connectivity. To ensure this, I highlight and explain the comparisons with existing literature and new and different findings in a separate chapter. d to provide a general description of the processes and their results, which I have done in the summary chapters.
- To make the generalizable theory explicit, which is the purpose of the summary chapters.

Research Findings

During my work, on the one hand, relying on the model of Rijamampianina and Carmichael (2005), I started from the assumption that an individual's profile is made up of visible and invisible elements. Together, these provide a unique synthesis of the human profile. This forms the basis of my first analysis unit, which we have to divide into two groups based on the subject of the investigation: one unit contains the cases that can be linked to the profile of the individuals. With their help, the individual profile of the interviewees can be revealed. The other part contains the cases that include the opinion of the interviewees on diversity.

In agreement with Hambrick and Mason's (1984) TMT theory, I believe that TMT determines the path and development of the organization through its preferences and behavior. Accordingly, in my view, TMT has an impact on organizational renewal and ambidexterity. This is how the individual profile, diversity policy, renewal (related decision-making) and ambidexterity groups were formed.

Following the analysis process, I progressed in presenting my results. In this, I also touched on the contextual aspects separately. When I looked for the answers to the research questions, I found that a significant part of them is closely connected and challenging to answer separately. Therefore, I condensed the four topics of my dissertation into two large units: 1) individual profile; 2) diversity policy.

Individual profile

As I indicated earlier, I have based my analysis of diversity on the models of Rijamampianina and Carmichael (2005) and Hambrick and Mason (1984), and I have also used relational demography and information/decision-making perspectives as the basis for my analysis. However, it is essential to note here that, contrary to my approach to the concept of

diversity, which is that all diversity categories are part of human nature, I have only been able to present a limited number of diversity categories within the scope of this research.

First, I analyzed the answers to the biographical, and demographic diversity questions shared by the interviewees, which related to their family circumstances, where they grew up, and what schools they attended. Due to the sensitivity of the topic, I left it up to my interviewees to decide what they wished to share with me and to what depth. My research led me to the conclusion that family roots, the patterns seen and learned in the family, and the events of their youth had a significant influence on the attitudes of each leader towards his or her teammates.

Dissimilarity was also a point of disagreement or opposition for my research (Yadav & Lenka, 2020), however, in this case, we cannot speak about negative or positive effects on team performance, as the case actors are senior managers within a group of companies.

Values

Respect and recognition of knowledge were characteristic of all organizations. Every organization is also characterized by the manifestation of the separation theory. This can appear on the one hand in relation to members at the lower levels of the organization, or concerning less educated customers. In many cases, the basis of the categorization is professional experience and knowledge, which leads the members in the direction of using the category on a daily basis due to the position and the environmental factors (Turner et al.., 1987).

Education, work experience

All the participant organizations have a diverse educational background in TMT. Consequently, in line with the literature, these managers benefited from a diverse curriculum background during their studies (Hambrick et al.., 1996). During my investigations, I found that the curricular background of senior managers shapes managerial cognition, which has an impact on strategic situations and influences their understanding of the environment (Eggers & Kaplan, 2013).

My research showed that interviewees regularly use the methodologies they have learned in higher education. Their structural thinking and mental templates are influenced by their educational background, which also influences what is important to them and what is not. Consequently, it affects the way TMT processes information (Finkelstein & Hambrick,

1996; Hambrick & Mason, 1984), and what kind of mental map and information is used by them during the decision-making.

In my research, I found a similar result to the findings in the literature: the TMT's educational background increased their collective information-seeking and processing capacity approach a given issue from different perspectives based on their educational background. During brainstorming sessions, everyone adds their ideas related to strategic plans and renewal, which they built based on their own mental model and structural view.

In this study, I sought to explore the impact of the diversity of the CEO's educational background on TMT's decision-making mechanism, organizational renewal, and ambidexterity. In my research, I concluded that the operational and strategic function and role are closely related to the educational, functional, and work experience diversity of the CEO.

Therefore, the decisions that are made by CEOs and the strategic direction of their mental maps are determined by their educational and professional background, the sectors they have worked in, and their leadership experience. My findings for TMT were similar. The professional experience, educational background, functional background, and work experience influence the decision-making process and information search patterns of the TMT. According to my research, the functional diversity of the CEO affects the TMT's operation. Similar to Dobák and Antal (2010), I believe that the CEO's personality has an impact on the internal dynamics of the organization, including the TMT group dynamics, furthermore, on the performance of the organization and its strategic decisions.

I also extended my focus to the search patterns of CEOs and I came to the following results:

All CEOs examined the knowledge of their competitors. TMT also monitors competing companies, as they consider it important to keep their market knowledge up to date. Market entry was achieved through mergers, acquisitions, and lower (or free for the customer) pricing strategies in order to extend their professional network.

In all cases, the strategic move served a dual purpose. On the one hand, characteristics related to exploration, such as growth, entrepreneurial competence, flexibility, and focus on the future can be found in managers' decisions.

However, organizations have retained activities related to exploitation. The strategic goal associated with growth was not just innovation but increasing market share and ultimately, profits. On the other hand, organizations kept the activities related to their operation (exploitation). The strategic goal related to growth was not only innovation but also to increase market share and profits.

Taking risks is characteristic of all CEOs. Every CEO likes to make quick decisions. In their opinion, this type of decision-making mechanism is more efficient for the company.

On the one hand, a wrong decision can be corrected within a day or two. On the other hand, a long-term decision will stop the processes, which results in more significant losses.

My results above are consistent with the findings in the literature. In a turbulent environment, environmental changes impose time limits on organizations, forcing them to decide between winning and losing (Dobák, 2008). As a result of the complex decision-making processes in IT organizations and turbulent environmental effects, TMT is forced to process real-time information and solve problems quickly. This also means that the CEOs who participated in the study are supporters of immediate intervention, which applies not only to decisions but also to correcting errors. I found the need for control over the processes in the case of each manager.

Like Heyden (2012), I conducted my research with companies operating in turbulent environments. However, my results were partially different from those of Heyden's (2012) dissertation. There was a difference in how organizations use external professional assistance to support information gathering and decision-making related to their operational activities. In line with Heyden (2012), I used external consultants to clarify perceptions.

Diversity policy

At the beginning of the interviews, I asked each manager to define what diversity means to them. The dimensions that came up most often in the definitions were age, gender, and disability. For most managers, the concept of diversity was limited to these three categories. Consequently, no leader in the interviews mentioned the other three categories of the Big Six (Primecz, 2019): religion and belief, sexual orientation, race, and ethnicity. We cannot speak of the existence of a diversity policy at none of the medium-sized organizations, but all of them are called inactively open.

At the beginning of my analyses, none of the organizations seemed to be taking steps to promote any diversity category. On the other hand, if a particular diversity category applies to them, they are open for further introduction. In the following sections of the analysis, I present the results of my studies related to age, gender, and cognitive diversity, and I will refine the ideas of the organizations about diversity.

Age diversity

During the analysis of the interviews, I found a correlation between the companies' preference for employee seniority and their activities: those organizations that developed their

own products insisted on employing senior candidates when selecting new colleagues. In my opinion, a product that is owned by the IT organization gives greater responsibility since it is the brand of the company. In order to ensure and increase the user experience, they need professionals who can add value to the product using their previous management and professional experience.

On the other hand, I experienced a different kind of image at those organizations that primarily focused on service (they do not develop their own products but include many types of outsourcing at individual and team levels). My preliminary investigations showed that the target employees of these organizations were professionals with less or no experience. In this regard, the term junior can refer to age and professional experience, too. These organizations are open to accepting junior colleagues transferred from retraining centers. During the comparison, I found that IT organizations' preference for age diversity is significantly influenced by the organization's product portfolio and scope of activities. For organizations working on their own products, the goal is to employ senior colleagues because they want to gain as many profiles as possible by maximizing customer needs and the user experience associated with using their system. On the other hand, professional experience is less important for IT outsourcing organizations. In my opinion, the quantitative characteristics are more decisive in this case, since the more labor they can outsource, the more profitable it is for the company. At the same time, it is important to emphasize that these organizations greatly emphasize quality. As a guarantee of this, they pay great attention to their members' education and motivation. Consequently, they have a direct and indirect effect on the performance of the group or organization (Rijamampianina & Carmichael, 2005).

Cognitive diversity

My further research has shown that the organizations under study have autonomy of strategic renewal, characterized by a bottom-up process (Volberda, 2017; Volberda et al., 2001). Therefore, my results are similar to Volberda (2017).

Contrary to the research of Reynolds and Lewis (2017), the results of my dissertation show that in the case of medium-sized domestic companies in the IT sector, the existence of a sense of psychological security created not only by HR but also by CEOs, and TMT ensures the bottom-up renewal processes of the organization. In these organizations or departments, managers have developed a perception among employees that there will be no punishment or humiliation for voicing their ideas, questions, concerns or for pointing out mistakes.

Consequently, within some of the organizations and departments studied, there is a tendency to collaborate, identify and solve problems quickly, share and apply information, keep a constant focus, and find new approaches and solutions. This is achieved through the

perceived psychological safety of organizational members, i.e., the shared belief among team members that they can safely take interpersonal risks within the team (Edmondson, 1999, p. 354).

Gender diversity

Women were significantly under-represented in the organizations I researched, whether in the organization as a whole or in the management layer. Some of the interviewees explained the low proportion of women in the IT sector by the gender theory, i.e. the social structure of IT. Without exception, my interviewees emphasized that there is no particular reason from their side. According to their view, the reason for the lack of female IT professionals in the labor market a few years earlier was that women did not consider it a suitable profession due to the lack of proper promotion and social support (Nagy, 2014). Without exception, HR professionals highlighted that thanks to various initiatives and retraining centers, the proportion of women is slowly increasing in this industry. These findings clearly indicate that the managers who took part in my interview - regardless of their management level - are constantly up to date in order to be informed about issues related to their profession. I have extended my research focus to Anker et al.'s model (2003), to examine how far I can attribute gender segregation in IT to social, economic, cultural, and historical causes.

Social norms and stereotypes shape views on the right career path for girls and boys from an early age. According to my interviewees, this is one of the reasons for the stereotypes that girls and society have regarding IT. One of their perceptions was that the 'lack of promotion' is the reason for the low representation of women in STEM 'Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics'. For the organizations I examined, the proportion of women decreases exponentially at the higher levels of the organizational hierarchy (Nagy & Primecz, 2010). In all cases, they play a supporting background role, taking on a kind of household role.

Summarizing the results of the research

In this chapter, I place the findings of my research on the literature map of organizational diversity and point out what new or novel findings they contribute to the professional discourse.

Q1: How does the diversity of managers relate to strategic renewal and ambidexterity?

Based on this research, we can state that every leader has an individual profile comprising visible and invisible diversity elements. And this individual mix determines the chosen direction and goal of each organization. All organizations operating in a turbulent environment pay great attention to organizational renewal and the continuous maintenance of ambidexterity. For example, Company A and Company C continuously expand their knowledge inputs. With joint ideas, they want to make the user experience even more complete by focusing on the future. Company B and Company D are characterized by a desire to expand abroad; the goal of achieving a more extensive network of services is indicated by increasing the number of employees and developing new services that increase added value and competitiveness. As we have seen, organizations are not able to change direction themselves, to innovate, to implement ambidexterity on a daily basis. This requires leadership decisions that provide direction and milestones.

I managed to present several manifestations of self-categorization in the analysis section, based on which we can conclude that my findings also show that self-categorization is part of a person's self-concept. Consequently, it is the set of cognitive representations that show where the individual places him/herself, what he/she thinks about him/herself, and how he/she forms the "us" and "them" category groups (Reimer et al.., 2020).

The research confirms that although gender influences an individual's choices and preferences, it only partially influences them, as the gender of the TMT is only one component of the individual's unique profile. Consequently, any attempt to discover or research an individual's leadership style must be linked to an understanding of the individual's profile. For example, Christopher's view of diversity is not a result of his gender diversity but of his past experience. However, in the case of Julia, we can clearly speak about the impact of gender on actions and decisions.

The main pillars of Hambrick and Mason's (1984) model were proven in my dissertation: 1) the interviewees who participated in my study make their decisions based on their personal interpretations of reality; 2) the personal interpretation of reality stems from the managers' cognitive processes, values, personality, professional experience, education and ethical standards of conduct, in short, their individual profile.

I managed to get closer to understanding the strategy of the organizations that participated in the study. The similarity between Company A and Company C, or Company B and Company D did not seem apparent at first glance, and at the time of contacting the companies, I was unaware of the proportion of older, young, junior, and senior colleagues within the organization. During my later investigations, I found a correlation between the age preference of the organizations and the activities of the companies. In the case of

organizations that develop and support their products members with several years of experience are preferred. So, in this case, the organizations prefer the information/decision-making perspective and cognitive diversity. In the case of organizations focusing on IT services and outsourcing, the emphasis is on increasing the number of young colleagues, even those without experience. Obviously, this preference of service providers can be explained by several facts. On the one hand, the IT sector is characterized by a shortage of staff. Customer needs regarding team size can be met more quickly and easily by recruiting individuals with recent graduates and graduates from retraining centers.

On the other hand, these organizations use the network of existing members as a recruitment practice. Young IT professionals can typically recruit new members from their own group, thus increasing the proportion of young people in the organization. Thirdly, the lower the resource cost, the greater the profit the given organization can expect during outsourcing. At the same time, this kind of approach brings excellent benefits not only to organizations but also to young people. They provide continuous learning and development for their members. On the other hand, they can accumulate a lot of knowledge and experience within various projects. Consequently, the diversity category focuses of each organization is significantly connected to determining of its resource allocation rate and profit-making goals.

Q2: How does the diversity of top managers relate to the search patterns that form the basis of decision-making processes?

We can state that the individual's profile has an impact on the individual's decision-making mechanism and preferences. In their decisions, all these values, search preferences, learned and inherited things appear and take effect in their actions. At the same time, individual decision-making and behavioral patterns, as well as choices, determine the individual's choices to a large extent. All of this is manifested not only as a search, but also as a sign of self-classification, belonging to certain groups, and differentiation from other groups.

Cognition research has shown that it is crucial for managers that everyone tells his/her opinion. My research results were similar to Heyden's (2012): 1) managers make their decisions by their visible and invisible diversity categories that form their meanings. At the same time, the theory holds that leaders are aware of all alternatives, from which they choose the most appropriate after rational evaluation. In my view, professional, and managerial experience and education, while contributing to the specific insight, discovery, and recognition of alternatives, can also give limitations to them. In addition, all TMTs are

characterized by the execution of mental activities that play a role in the creation, retrieval,and modification of knowledge structures.

Many diversity studies do not deal with the role of psychological safety in sufficient depth, even though it plays a similarly crucial and universally valid role as inclusion. That is why it is often treated as part of the concept of inclusion. Obviously, there is a rationale for this, but psychological safety goes beyond inclusion, in my view a key quality of the team. When it exists, the team has the security to dare to take personal risks. Based on my research, I see that the main source of this is the CEO himself. In the absence of psychological safety, the power of not only cognitive diversity but of all types of diversity remains unused. All this can lead to a decrease in creativity and innovation.

Closely related to psychological safety is how the process of strategic renewal is evolving within organizations. The autonomy of strategic renewal, i.e. the bottom-up operation, was achieved in the case of Company B, Company C, and Company D. In these organizations, middle managers and lower-level employees are active participants in the process, which I linked to a good community atmosphere and psychological safety as a moderator. Consequently, the supportive and encouraging attitude of the transformational TMT in these organizations gives organizational members the security to dare to take interpersonal risks. In contrast, Company A's dominant coalition, especially the CEO, effectively blocks bottom-up processes through corrective action.

Accordingly, I consider it important to expand the conceptual framework of organizational diversity with the elements of inclusion and psychological safety. This is because, while inclusion was realized in the case of all examined organizations, in the absence of psychological safety, organizational innovation cannot be completed. After all, its absence prevents renewal from below. For example, in all companies, special attention is paid to the well-being of the members, to the creation of a suitable working environment, to the revitalization of community life, etc. However, at the same time, in the case of Company A, the strong TMT suppresses the members' willingness to take interpersonal risks.

Q3: How does diversity as an organizational value affect strategic renewal and ambidexterity?

Based on the research, we can highlight that in the case of the TMT, the selection of new team members only occurred once, according to the separation theory. In other cases, all managers choose their new colleagues per the information/decision-making perspective. The exceptional case is related to Ákos, for whom age was the basis of the comparison. This was achieved through a self-classification process. The young leader classified himself and his

group among the senior youth, and the interviewee into the opposite pole, the elderly category.

The results of the research show that the individual profile is influenced not only by one category but by the visible and invisible elements of diversity. At the same time, different categories have different impacts on the experiences, attitudes, and insights of a person.

It also raises the question of why there are not enough women in the STEM field. In this case, we arrive at the lack of promotion. I believe there is a need for serious social-level initiatives in which companies must be actively involved and not just participate. By this, I mean the attitude of the organizations, which I coded as inactive openness. We can tell about all organizations that if disabled people, members of gender and age diversity apply to them from among the diversity categories, they are open to receiving applicants. However, the given diversity category – with the Big six as a whole - does not always have the courage to apply to an IT company due to the low level of self-esteem and the image related to IT in society.

It would certainly be beneficial for organizations to take steps and develop in this direction. For example, 'declaration' of openness regarding to diversity on their websites, closer cooperation with universities and secondary schools, and openness towards the diversity categories displayed on social networking sites. In the case of relations with schools, I think it is very important that the territorial borders are not limited to Budapest but that poorer regions are also included, as it is even more difficult for children and young people living in disadvantaged situations to break out. I think that the SMEs involved in the research from the IT field should play a greater part in making the area better known to society.

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