**12th Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Conference (EDI)**

22-24 July, Rotterdam

**Conference Theme:** Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in 2019: Resistance

**Stream Title:** Leadership and Diversity

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In 2019 theme, EDI conference will seek ways to expand the knowledge in Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion from the perspective of “Resistance.” The term resistance has long been studied in the extant literature as being away from proposed changes by the managers (Merron, 1993; Dent and Goldberg, 1999; Piderit, 2000). On the other hand, resistance is expected to arise when individuals tend to behave in accordance with their values, ethics, and code of conduct in the presence of an unfair or biased situation (Milgram, 1965; Modigliani and Rochat, 1995; Piderit, 2000). In either way, the resistance to change of a system or the resistance to protect an individual values, resistance can be defined as an individual’s ability to sustain, preserve his/her existence or the system’s continuality in the face of an attack (Haugtvedt and Petty, 1992). In other words, regardless of its existence on micro, meso or macro levels, resistance emerges when there is a perception of attack to the survival of any system. Therefore, individuals’ response to an attack as a resistance is related to their beliefs because the cognitive dimension of an attitude refers to an individual's beliefs about the attitude object (Piderit, 2000).

Research on attitudes has demonstrated that when individuals have stronger attitudes on any situation, they tend to show greater resistance on attacks and tend to persevere their judgements and behaviors related to their attitudes (Tormala and Petty, 2002). Accordingly, as a way to maintain resistance in the absence of equality in organizational settings, the role of leaders’ attitudes is essential to change the dysfunctional status quo. The main reason is that leaders have power to integrate equality, diversity, and inclusion into their organizations (Nishii and Rich, 2014). Bennis and Townsend (1989) denoted that one of the most important capacities of leadership is its ability to translate vision into reality. This idea is also in line with Schein’s (1996) discussions on group norms and the effect of leadership on changing or maintaining collective norms in organizational setting. The group norms can affect the decision-making abilities on the operation of systems where these norms can mostly be changed and challenged by leaders (Schein, 1996). However, as Schein (1996) suggested, there has been always a conflict between leaders and group norms: will group norms be changed by leaders or will leaders change according to these norms? Paradoxes do not exist to be solved, they essentially exist to be observed and understood. Therefore, in this stream we aim for addressing the role of leadership in equality, diversity, and inclusion.

Although challenges in diversity continue for historically underrepresented groups, in today’s work environment, organizations are gradually becoming more and more diverse in terms of demographics and culture (Shore et al., 2018). Thus, the relationship between diversity and leadership in the extant literature is important for both industry practitioners and scholars. An inclusive climate can be provided by upper management and this climate is essential for encouraging employee participation in creating an environment for equality, diversity, and inclusion (Leroy et al., 2018). Managing diversity by providing an inclusive environment and creating equality are among the critical success factors of organizations in terms of retaining the talent, which in turn, enhance the effectiveness of the entire organization (Shore et al., 2018). Because of the deep engagement of leadership in creating equality, diversity, and inclusion (Chen and Van Velsor, 1996), philosophical depth and theory expansion will be enriched while establishing and maintaining constructs in the relevant literature. Accordingly, we invite theoretical and empirical papers that address these and related issues. The following is a suggested but not exclusive list of possible areas:

* Which leadership styles will be more suitable and applicable for organizations, which focus on diversity management?
* Why there is lack of diversity in leadership? How can leaders be more diversified?
* How can leaders support diversity? How can “couching for diversity” and “leading for diversity” be addressed?
* Dark side of leadership and diversity; how can toxic leadership affect diversity?
* How can ethical leadership be effective in defending diversity? (Resisting against diversity?)
* The relation between diversity management and power structures
* What skills and competencies should a diversity leader have?

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