

RESEARCH OF SOME FACTORS AFFECTING DISCRIMINATION IN THE ORGANIZATION AND ITS IMPACT ON CONFLICT SITUATIONS

Irma Dikhaminjia¹,
Kanat Tireuov²,
Tatia Qajaia³,
Zhibek Khussainova⁴

Abstract: The study of discrimination in organizations remains significant. Discrimination leads to various processes linked to conflict situations. In many instances, discrimination stems from the leader's management style. It is also important to consider that any form of discrimination in an organization that causes conflict situations affects the psycho-emotional state of employees, negatively affects their health and personal lives, and ultimately disrupts the work-life balance. The mentioned condition directly affects employee performance. We identified the factors that created significant problems in the relationship between leaders and followers in Georgian organizations. The study was conducted in the Ministry of Economy and its subordinate structural units. Data were collected through an anonymous questionnaire. The developed questionnaire included 64 questions. 720 respondents participated in the survey. Hypotheses were developed and tested using the SPSS statistical package during the research process. Based on the data analysis, important recommendations were developed.

¹ Doctor of economics, Associate Professor of Business Administration, Sokhumi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia, e-mail: i.dikhaminjia@sou.edu.ge, ORCID: 0000-0002-2227-5158

² Doctor of economics, professor, Saken Seifullin Kazakh Agro-Technical Research University (KATRU), Astana, Kazakhstan, e-mail: tireuov_k@mail.ru, ORCID: 0000-0003-3904-3553

³ PhD student, Sokhumi State University, Tbilisi, Georgia, e-mail: Tkaj2011@agrni.edu.ge, ORCID: [0009-0005-7210-345X](https://orcid.org/0009-0005-7210-345X)

⁴ PhD, professor, Head (Institute of Postgraduate Education), Saken Seifullin Kazakh Agro-Technical Research University (KATRU), Astana, Kazakhstan, e-mail: zhibekh11@mail.ru, ORCID: 0000-0002-2617-838X

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Introduction

The study of discrimination in organizations remains significant. Discrimination leads to various processes linked to conflict situations. In many instances, discrimination stems from the leader's management style (Garzon et al., 2024). It is important to study the decisions made by the manager while performing his/her work (Kalabina et al., 2021; Mushkudiani et al., 2020; Paresashvili et al., 2021). What is the manager's attitude towards the subordinate who uses non-working? What is the manager's attitude towards the subordinate who uses non-working hours to complete the task? Are they compensated differently? Does the subordinate have opportunities for career advancement? Recently, researchers have been studying job satisfaction intensively, specifically in relation to fair compensation. They discuss professional barriers and limited access to labour resources while highlighting the systemic inequality in career advancement opportunities (Wang & Chang, 2025). Research into the relationship between employee satisfaction and career position has also become relevant, as career support has a major impact on employee retention (Ferdiana et al., 2023). Workplace conflicts are prevalent and are often caused by personal differences and managerial relationships. Mentioned conflicts can impact teams and departments, resulting in dismissal, resignations, and absenteeism (Indeed, 2024).

Recognizing that individuals' perceptions of workplace discrimination are shaped by societal views on discrimination and the behavioral norms linked to organizational culture is crucial. Attitudes and beliefs regarding organizational discrimination often reflect perceptions of organizational culture (Kartolo & Kwantes, 2019).

Organizational culture significantly contributes to a stressful environment when attitudes towards discrimination are not assessed accordingly (Gryshova et al., 2019; Kazbekova et al., 2024; Mussapirov et al., 2019; Seitzhanov et al., 2020).

Subordinates perceive conflicts arising from discrimination as acute. The situation is further exacerbated when the supervisor makes an unfair and

biased decision in the conflict resolution process (Kharadze & Gulua, 2023). Often, subordinates believe that rights and responsibilities do not correspond to their position and remuneration and consider themselves victims of discrimination. On the other hand, some employees perform less work but receive disproportionately high remuneration. Some problems related to employee discrimination represent a significant challenge, and it is necessary not to allow it to become a social norm. Dealing with this challenge is the prerogative of the leader. It is important for the leader to clearly define rights and responsibilities, study the interests of followers, and make fair decisions (Popova et al., 2023; Popova et al., 2024; Petrova et al., 2018; Petrova et al., 2020; Petrova et al., 2025).

It is also important to consider that any form of discrimination in an organization that causes conflict situations affects the psycho-emotional state of employees, negatively affects their health and personal lives, and ultimately disrupts the work-life balance (Clausen et al., 2022). The mentioned condition directly affects employee performance (McCarthy, 2024; Bernabei & Kabat, 2024). In addition, the constant development and rapidly changing work environment increase the likelihood of psychosocial risks, which poses significant challenges for organizations to protect the psychological well-being of employees. (Amoadu et al., 2024).

The mentioned issues are the subject of our research. We identified the factors that created significant problems in the relationship between leaders and followers in Georgian organizations. The study was conducted in the Ministry of Economy and its subordinate structural units. Data were collected through an anonymous questionnaire. The developed questionnaire included 64 questions. 720 respondents participated in the survey.

Literature Review

The paper “Diversity and Discrimination in Research Organizations” presents a social understanding of discrimination. It also addresses the risk factors that shape discrimination and suggests ways to manage diversity and discrimination (Muller et al., 2022). Studies on various issues often reveal signs of discrimination, and similar studies were related to career management issues (Sul Khanishvil & Kharadze, 2025). The work of scientists is dedicated directly to the discrimination issues in the public sector (Dugladze et al., 2024). Our country is multinational, and we encounter

people of different religious beliefs in the workplace. Considering the above, it is interesting to study the facts of discrimination on religious grounds. (Linando, 2023) The study found an increase in workplace discrimination against Muslims. Therefore, seeing what pattern would emerge for our country was interesting. The study offers an interesting perspective on age discrimination (Kunze & Meulenaere, 2024). In this regard, studying discrimination in countries, where respect for older individuals is a core value, is also interesting. In addition, it is noteworthy that the victim of discrimination is not an older person but often a younger employee. The study focuses on interesting topics such as the workplace and internal tension caused by a toxic organizational culture (Deselnicu et al., 2024). When considering discrimination, it is difficult to avoid mentioning nepotism. Undoubtedly, nepotism is frequently condemned; nevertheless, little is known about what employees see in nepotism and why it is regarded as problematic.

In some cases, although the appointment of family members in politics and business is often frowned upon, it is considered a common occurrence (Burhan et al., 2020). An interesting international study was devoted to the preventive role of psychological support among victims of discrimination. (Eltaybani, et al., 2024). It is important to analyze these studies and adapt them to our environment. The employee evaluation system often serves as the basis for discrimination (Tarigan et al., 2025). Although all forms of discrimination require in-depth analysis, our study will focus on the supervisor's behaviour.

METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted in the Ministry of Economy and its subordinate structural units. 760 respondents participated in the survey. The obtained data were processed using the statistical software package SPSS.

Data filtering was utilized to select a certain data group for hypothesis testing. To establish the dependence and presence of a statistical relationship between variables, we employed consumer tables with the included chi-square test and General Linear Model /Univariate Analysis of Variance. Furthermore, Multivariate analysis of variance was used in the data processing process. Various graphical analysis tools were used to represent the data.

Results and Discussion

We formulated the following hypotheses to study the impact of discrimination on conflict situations and stressful environments in an organization.

Hypothesis 1: The following factors influence the frequency and causes of conflict situations arising based on discrimination: the leader's fairness in the conflict resolution process, clearly defining rights and obligations at work, and the labor discrimination acceptance as a social norm in Georgia.

The mentioned hypothesis tests the influence of three factors on two dependent variables. Therefore, we used Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) to assess the first hypothesis.

The main table obtained by the multivariate procedure (see Table 1) presents the tests of between-subjects effects. At the end of the table, we obtained an R Squared of .358, which indicates that 35.8% of the variance in the dependent variables is explained by the influence of the independent variables. Table 1 demonstrates which factors affect the dependent variables and which do not.

Table 1
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

| Source | Dependent Variable | Type III Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. | Partial Eta Squared |
|-----------------|---|-------------------------|----|-------------|----------|------|---------------------|
| Corrected Model | Q58 How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination? | 279.728 ^a | 34 | 8.227 | 7.416 | .000 | .358 |
| | Q59 What is the cause of conflict in your organization? | 142.192 ^b | 34 | 4.182 | 2.631 | .000 | .165 |
| Intercept | Q58 How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination? | 1631.967 | 1 | 1631.967 | 1471.009 | .000 | .765 |
| | Q59 What is the cause of conflict in your organization? | 1729.947 | 1 | 1729.947 | 1088.529 | .000 | .706 |
| Q60 | Q58 How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination? | 77.852 | 2 | 38.926 | 35.087 | .000 | .134 |
| | Q59 What is the cause of conflict in your organization? | 15.468 | 2 | 7.734 | 4.866 | .008 | .021 |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--|----------|-----|--------|--------|-------------|------|
| Q21 | Q58 How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination? | 36.015 | 2 | 18.007 | 16.231 | .000 | .067 |
| | Q59 What is the cause of conflict in your organization? | 24.418 | 2 | 12.209 | 7.682 | .001 | .033 |
| q63_4 | Q58 How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination? | 32.428 | 4 | 8.107 | 7.307 | .000 | .061 |
| | Q59 What is the cause of conflict in your organization? | 14.115 | 4 | 3.529 | 2.220 | .066 | .019 |
| Q60 * Q21 | Q58 How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination? | 27.772 | 4 | 6.943 | 6.258 | .000 | .052 |
| | Q59 What is the cause of conflict in your organization? | 16.188 | 4 | 4.047 | 2.546 | .039 | .022 |
| Q60 q63_4 | *Q58 How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination? | 16.364 | 6 | 2.727 | 2.458 | .024 | .032 |
| | Q59 What is the cause of conflict in your organization? | 12.554 | 6 | 2.092 | 1.317 | .248 | .017 |
| Q60 * Q21 q63_4 | Q58 How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination? | 18.971 | 9 | 2.108 | 1.900 | .050 | .036 |
| | Q59 What is the cause of conflict in your organization? | 14.347 | 9 | 1.594 | 1.003 | .437 | .020 |
| Error | Q58 How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination? | 502.567 | 453 | 1.109 | | | |
| | Q59 What is the cause of conflict in your organization? | 719.931 | 453 | 1.589 | | | |
| Total | Q58 How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination? | 5872.000 | 488 | | | | |
| | Q59 What is the cause of conflict in your organization? | 6414.000 | 488 | | | | |
| Corrected Total | Q58 How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination? | 782.295 | 487 | | | | |
| | Q59 What is the cause of conflict in your organization? | 862.123 | 487 | | | | |

a. R Squared = .358 (Adjusted R Squared = .309)

b. R Squared = .165 (Adjusted R Squared = .102)

Source: Author's findings

Assessment of the influence of factors according to Table 1:

The data in Table 1 demonstrate that R Squared for the first dependent variable is 0.358 while for the second is 0.165. Accordingly, the combined effect of the three factors on the dependent variable - Q58 "How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination?" - is quite strong. 36% of this variable is explained by the influence of the combination of all three factors, on the second dependent variable - Q59 "What is the cause of conflict in your organization?" - the effect of the influence of all three factors is 17%.

Factor - Q60 "Is the manager's attitude fair in the process of resolving the conflict in cases of discrimination?" - impacts both dependent variables at the 0.01 level of statistical significance. However, it has a greater impact on the variable - Q58 "How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination?" - $F=35.087$, the effect size of the influence is high, $\text{Eta Squared}=0.134$. And on the variable of causes (Q59) $F=4.866$, the effect size of the influence is small, $\text{Eta Squared}=0.021$.

The factor "Q21 Do you have clearly defined rights and obligations at work?" also impacts both dependent variables at the 0.01 level of statistical significance. However, it has a greater impact on the variable - Q58, "How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination?" $F=16.231$, the effect size of the statistical influence is medium, $\text{Eta Squared}=0.067$. And on the variable of causes (Q59) $F=7.682$, the effect size of the influence is small, $\text{Eta Squared}=0.033$.

Factor Q63_4, "In Georgia, labour discrimination is increasingly perceived as a social norm," - affects the variable - Q58, "How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination?" - at the 0.01 level of statistical significance, $F=7.307$, the effect size of the influence is medium, $\text{Eta Squared}=0.061$. And on the variable of causes (Q59), factor q63_4 has a very weak effect, $0.05 < P < 0.1$, $F=2.220$, and the effect size of the influence is also small, equal to 0.019.

According to the results, we can conclude that the first hypothesis is confirmed under the influence of individual factors.

Both variables are influenced by a combination of factors: Q60 "Is the manager's attitude fair in the process of resolving the conflict in cases of discrimination?" and Q21 "Do you have clearly defined rights and obligations at work?". On the variable Q58, "How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination?", with a statistical significance level of 0.01, $F=6.258$, the effect size of the influence is close to the average, $\text{Eta Squared}=0.052$, and on the variable of causes (Q59) at the 0.05 level ($P=0.039$) $F=2.546$, the effect size of the influence is small $=0.022$. It should be noted that all three factors together influence only the first dependent variable: Q58 "How often do conflict situations arise based on discrimination?" at the 0.05 level of statistical significance ($P=0.039$), $F=1.900$.

Hypothesis 2: The stressful situation in the organization affects the employee's psycho-emotional state, health, personal life, and labour productivity.

We utilized a consumer table and the chi-square test to evaluate the second hypothesis. In the mentioned hypothesis, the stressful situation in the organization is a factor, while the other variables are dependent. The study of the mentioned topic was based on the data of those respondents selected as a result of filtering who did not deny the existence of a stressful environment.

By implementing the procedure, we obtained the frequency distributions of the dependent variables in relation to the stressful environment variable (see Table 2) and a table of the chi-square test (see Table 3).

Table 2

Frequency distributions of dependent variables in relation to the stressful environment variable

| Dependent variables | Categories | Q54 Do you think there is a stressful environment at your workplace? (Row N %) | | |
|---|--|--|-----------|------------------------|
| | | Yes | Partially | I don't have an answer |
| Q55 Does discrimination in the workplace cause a deterioration in your psycho-emotional state? | Never | 23.8% | 71.4% | 4.8% |
| | Sometimes | 29.8% | 66.0% | 4.3% |
| | Often | 40.8% | 59.2% | 0% |
| | Always | 37.5% | 58.9% | 3.6% |
| | I don't have an answer. | 14.5% | 32.9% | 52.6% |
| Q61 How does discrimination in an organization affect your health? | Significantly negative | 51.0% | 44.9% | 4.1% |
| | Negative | 34.7% | 63.4% | 2% |
| | Does not affect | 21.1% | 73.7% | 5.3% |
| | I don't have an answer | 18.8% | 56.3% | 25% |
| | There is no discrimination in the organization | 14.0% | 44.2% | 41.9% |
| Q62 How does discrimination in the organization affect your personal life? | Significantly negative | 45.7% | 50% | 4.3% |
| | Negative | 48% | 49.3% | 2.7% |
| | Positive | 0% | 75% | 25% |
| | Does not affect | 23.4% | 70.3% | 6.3% |
| | I don't have an answer | 9.9% | 45.7% | 44.4% |
| Q64 Does discrimination in your organization affect your productivity? | Yes | 37.7% | 58.5% | 3.8% |
| | No | 26.7% | 53.3% | 20% |

Source: Author's findings

Table 3
Chi-square test results

| | | Q54 Do you think there is a stressful environment at your workplace? |
|---|------------|---|
| Q55 Does discrimination in the workplace cause a deterioration in your psycho-emotional state? | Chi-square | 179.599 |
| | Df | 8 |
| | Sig. | .000 |
| Q61 How does discrimination in an organization affect your health? | Chi-square | 130.766 |
| | Df | 8 |
| | Sig. | .000 |
| Q62 How does discrimination in the organization affect your personal life? | Chi-square | 149.373 |
| | df | 8 |
| | Sig. | .000 |
| Q64 Does discrimination in your organization affect your productivity? | Chi-square | 11.597 |
| | df | 2 |
| | Sig. | .003 |

Source: Author's findings

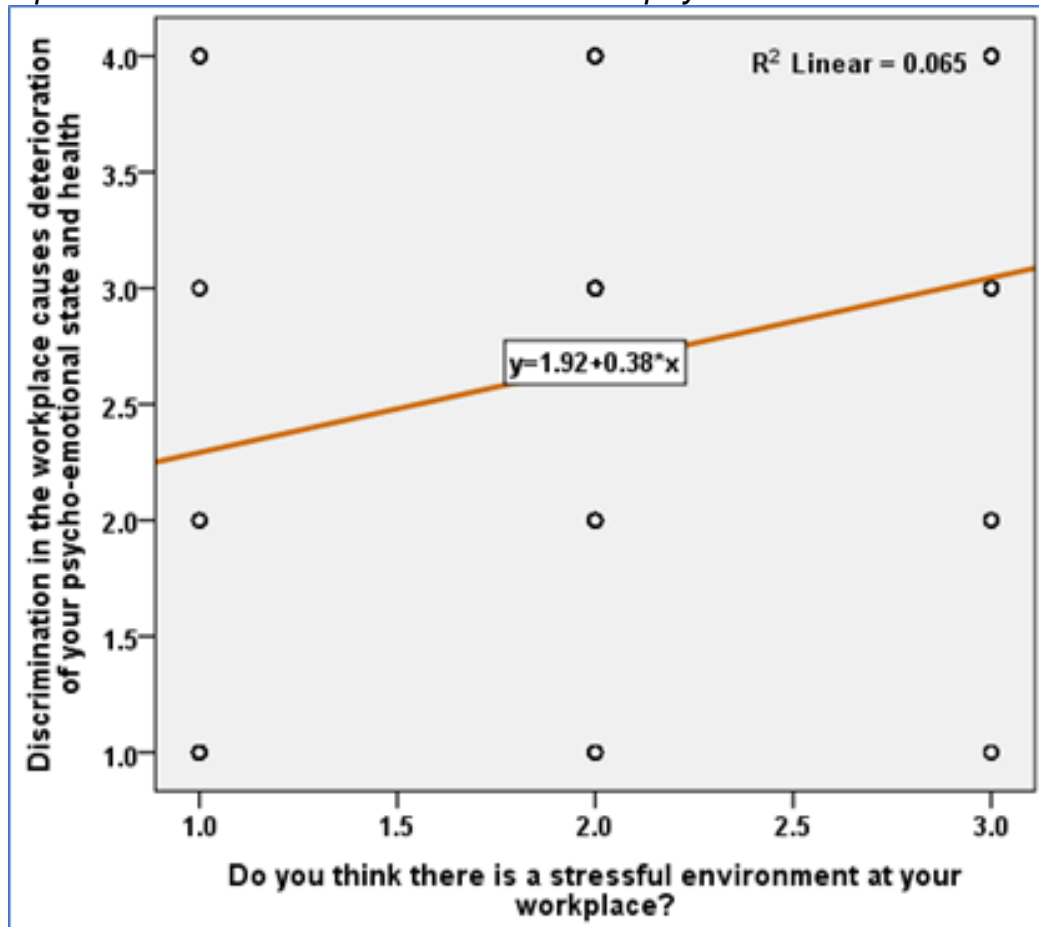
The chi-square test results table demonstrates that a stressful workplace environment affects all three dependent variables in the following order:

1. The greatest impact is on the psycho-emotional state, at the 0.01 level of statistical significance ($p < 0.001$), the chi-square coefficient is equal to 179.599;
2. On personal life, at the 0.01 level of statistical significance ($p < 0.001$), the chi-square coefficient is equal to 149.373;
3. On health, at the 0.01 level of statistical significance ($p < 0.001$), with a chi-square coefficient of 130.766;
4. On labour productivity, at the 0.01 level of statistical significance ($p = 0.003$), with a chi-square coefficient of 11.597.

We can conclude that the second hypothesis is confirmed, according to the results. The diagrams below illustrate the relationships between stressful environments and psycho-emotional state (see diagram 1), health (see diagram 2), personal life (see diagram 3), and labour productivity (see diagram 4).

Diagram 1

The impact of a stressful environment on the psycho-emotional state

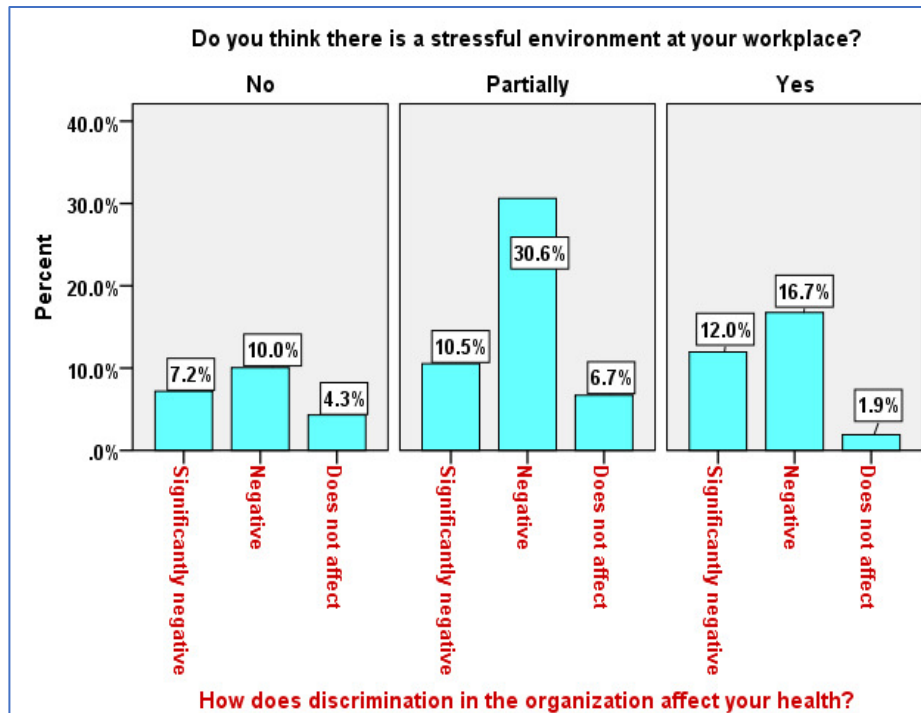


Source: Author's findings

If we take into account that in the first diagram, the categories of the variable "Q54_1 Do you think that there is a stressful environment at your workplace?" are arranged in the following order: 1-no, 2-partially, 3-yes, and the variable - "Q55 Does discrimination at the workplace lead to a deterioration in your psycho-emotional state?" is scored with the following correspondence: 1 - never, 2 - sometimes, 3 - often, 4 - always, then we obtain a directly proportional relationship and thus the presence of a stressful environment always leads to a deterioration in the respondent's psycho-emotional state.

Diagram 2

The impact of a stressful environment on health

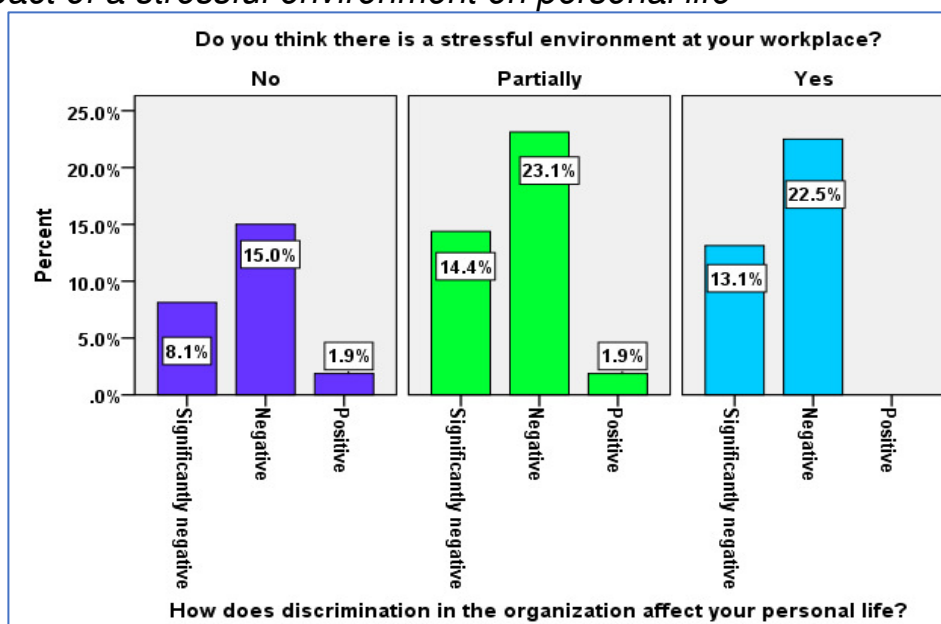


Source: Author's findings

Diagram 2 demonstrates that discrimination has a negative (or significantly negative) impact on health in the presence or partial presence of a stressful environment.

Diagram 3

The impact of a stressful environment on personal life

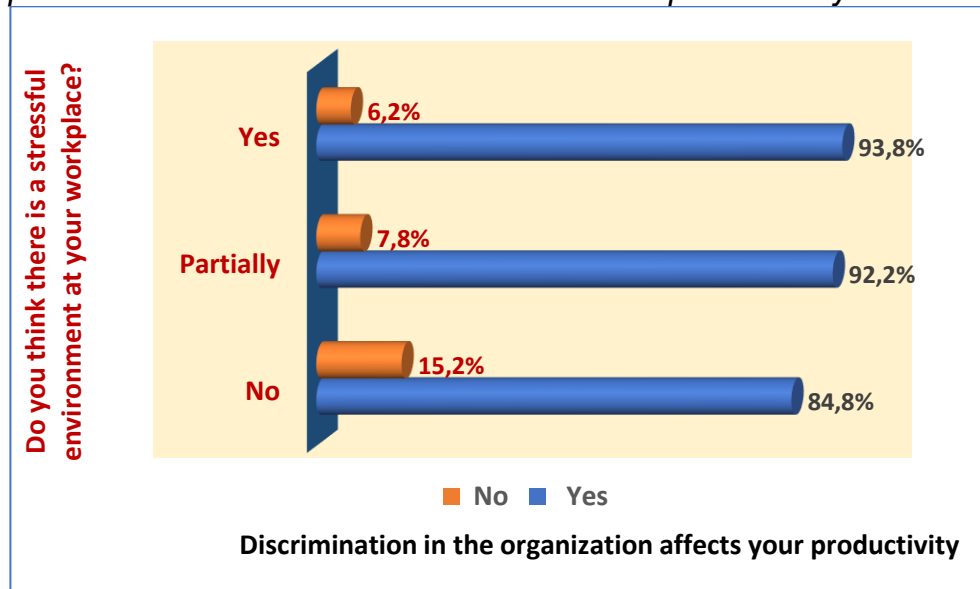


Source: Author's findings

Diagram 3 demonstrates that a stressful environment's presence or partial presence has a negative and significantly negative impact on the respondent's personal life.

Diagram 4

The impact of a stressful environment on labour productivity



Source: Author's findings

Diagram 4 demonstrates that discrimination within an organization significantly impacts labour productivity.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- Research indicates that the leader-manager management style creates a stressful environment. Therefore, organizational leaders should use a combination of democratic and authoritarian leadership styles (Maqbool, et al., 2024). Studies indicate that a democratic leadership style impacts organizational behaviour. It fosters and enhances organizational behaviour and establishes a positive relationship between leadership style and organizational behavior. Democratic leadership style has a positive effect on improving employee skills, productivity and morale. Under democratic leadership, subordinates contribute more to the organization's results (Hikmat & Ghorbandi, 2024). A harmonious workplace environment will assist employees in achieving a better work-life balance, directly impacting productivity growth (Kharadze et al., 2024).

- Overtime working hours and the remuneration system are regulated by the relevant law in the country (Parliament of Georgia, 2015). Nevertheless, overtime work, in some cases, impacts the stressful environment experienced by the respondents. The supervisor should examine the living conditions of each employee, including their marital status (married or single), interests, and the dynamics of their workability.

- Studies conducted in Georgia have also shown that one of the factors affecting employee satisfaction is the proper distribution of work and non-work time (Pirtskhalaishvili et al., 2023). The current research has identified connections between stressful environments and workplace conflicts. A personalized approach to subordinates, along with consideration for their interests by the supervisor, enhances the perception that the subordinate is a valuable member of the organization. Additionally, it is important to examine the extent of overtime pay, how well it meets the employee's needs, and whether it is worthwhile for them to allocate their time budget to work again. Unfortunately, this issue was not addressed in the study. Numerous studies have validated the influence of effective labour management on health (Arata et al., 2023).

Therefore, the organization's management should offer other benefits to help maintain the employee's well-being. Poor health makes it difficult to manage conflict situations in a stressful environment.

- The fact that most employees believe they deserve to work in a higher position becomes the basis for a stressful environment. In this case, it is also important for the supervisor to evaluate the employee transparently. We consider it appropriate to strengthen the above-mentioned management decision with legislation to reduce the likelihood of making subjective decisions. In Georgia, the roots of nepotism are so strong that helping relatives is even considered a necessary norm. Legislative norms should allow the manager to promote an individual based on objective criteria (years of service, competence, etc.).

The current study allows for additional research to identify the factors that impact employee satisfaction more accurately. It is crucial to explore the elements that obstruct a positive organizational culture within more public sector units.

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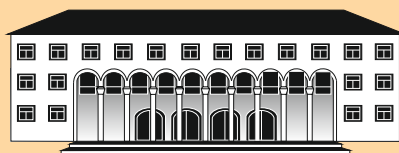
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