Universiteit Utrecht

The role of supervisor endorsement and supervisor activism in determining employee attitudes of diversity policies: why supervisor integrity matters.

Author: Anna Eline Witteveen

Student number: 4256697

Assessor: Dr. Wiebren Jansen

Second Assessor: Dr. Ruth Veelen

Academic Year: 2019/2020

Social, Health, and Organisational Psychology, Specialisation in Organisational Psychology

Utrecht University

Word count: 5146

Abstract

Despite the motivation of organizations and civil services to increase gender diversity in the workforce, diversity policies sometimes fail to show the desired result, partly due to employee resistance. An increasing amount of research acknowledges the importance of supervisory characteristics, like behavioral integrity, on employee attitudes and resistance to change. Present research builds on these insights and investigated how supervisor endorsement and supervisor activism affected employee endorsement of gender diversity policies ($N = 119$). The linkage between supervisor endorsement and supervisor activism served as an indicator of Perceived Behavioral Integrity (PBI) directly towards gender diversity policies. It was predicted that (1) supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement were positively related, and (2) that this relationship was dependent of supervisor activism. Indeed, results indicated that supervisor endorsement predicted employee endorsement of gender diversity policies, but this relationship appeared to be explained by supervisor activism. Together, these findings underline the importance of supervisory attitudes and behavior on the level of employee endorsement of (gender) diversity policies.

Introduction

A shift in the demographic composition of the workforce and growing demands for labor induced an organizational tendency to invest heavily in gender diversity initiatives. These initiatives are intended to improve the demographic diversity of organizations. The European Union also acknowledges the importance of demographic diversity in organizations, by initiating the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) in 2006. EIGE is a body dedicated exclusively to pursue an equal gender distribution among the European workforce. Despite the motivation of organizations and civil services to increase gender diversity in the workforce, the percentage of women in chief executive positions and Board Members remains insufficient in a number of countries, including the Netherlands (European Commission, 2019). As a result, members of Dutch parliament (MPs) voted in December 2019 in favor of a 30% quota for the number of women on listed companies' supervisory boards in the Netherlands. Organizations will, therefore, continue to spend a fortune on gender diversity initiatives to meet governmental requirements by all means.

Although diversity policies seem effective in some cases, they fail to show desired results in others, partly due to employee resistance towards the diversity policy. Indeed, the effect of diversity policies is largely contingent upon the level of support it receives from employees within the organization (Gonzalez & DeNisi, 2009; Slater, Weigand, & Zwirlein, 2009). Supervisors may play a crucial role in employee resistance towards diversity policies, as they are the primary link between the organization's change strategy and the employees responsible for executing that strategy (Furst & Cable, 2008). Studies done in this area have documented that supervisor characteristics play a role in employee readiness to change, in particular transformational leadership behavior and behavioral integrity of the supervisor (Dineen, Lewicki, and Tomlinson, 2006; Schyns & Schilling 2013).

Utilizing on this field of research, the current study challenges this assumption conceptually and empirically in relation to gender diversity policies. A relationship between behavioral integrity of supervisors, as perceived by their employees, and employee endorsement of gender diversity policies is tested. A result of this test may help organizations to tackle employee resistance, increase the female representation throughout the organizational hierarchy, and successfully meet the 30% female quota.

Supervisors and employee attitudes of diversity policies

When information about a policy gradually flows to the lower levels of the company, it is the primary role of the supervisor to communicate the ins and outs of the diversity policy to

the employees. In this communication process, the extent to which the addressed issues are (mis)understood by employees is partly determined by the supervisor. Especially in top-down policies, which are initiated and incorporated by the CEO and other top-level executives, supervisors may determine the quality of the communication regarding the diversity policy with the employees.

Multiple social and psychological theories recognize the impact of others on the shaping of one's attitudes and behavior. The attitude theory states that individual attitudes are positively affected by other people, specifically those in one's focal person's social environment (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Also, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1991) highlights subjective norms (i.e., a form of perceived pressure by others to act a certain way) as an antecedent for behavioral intention. More specifically, in organizational settings, the leader-member exchange theory (LMX) states that leaders and their subordinates are connected and that LMX quality can range from low to high (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Research indicates a positive relationship between LMX and a variety of employee attitudes, including organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and justice perceptions (Rockstuhl, Dulebohn, Ang, & Shore, 2012).

Literature regarding the effect of supervisors on employee attitudes towards diversity policies remains insufficient. However, research of Shah & Irani (2010) indicates a positive relationship between supervisors and employee readiness to change. Diversity policies require some form of change from employees Therefore, resistance towards diversity policies is here considered as a form of resistance to change.

Supervisors claim a vital role in one's work environment, and could, therefore, be considered to influence the attitudes of their employees towards diversity policies. Indeed, employees look at their superior for cues on how they are to behave concerning diversity (Avery, 2011). Building on theoretical and empirical research, it is hypothesized here that supervisor endorsement of diversity policies is positively related to employee endorsement of diversity policies. An important note on this is that an employee's perception of the supervisor's level of endorsement is more critical than the supervisor's actual beliefs, as only the former is able to influence the employee's cognitive processes directly.

Hypothesis 1: Supervisor endorsement of diversity policies is positively related to employee endorsement of diversity policies.

Supervisors and employee trust

A growing need for individuals to work in an organization that is trustworthy and has a strong ethical culture, sparked growth in the study of leader integrity and its impact on followers (i.e., employees; Edelman Trust Barometer, 2019). Research indicates that when employees do not trust their supervisor's intentions, they are less willing to promote and implement the espoused change (Simons, 2002). In line with these findings, research also found that trust in senior management and trust in supervisors were predictors of organizational commitment, organizational cynicism, and organizational citizenship behaviors of employees (Kannan-Narasimhan & Lawrence, 2012).

This finding is supported by the attribution theory (Heider, 1958). This theory states that observers try to make sense of an actor's behavior by searching for a cause for that behavior. Employees decide whether to trust their supervisors by making judgements about the behaviour of their supervisor. This depends on whether they attribute supervisor behaviour to dispositional factors (i.e., caused by the actor) or to situational factors (i.e., caused by the context). If the actor's behavior is considered consistent with past behaviors, the behavior is typically assigned to dispositional factors. When this is the case, that behavior is more often to be adopted by the observers. When the actor's behavior is inconsistent with past behaviors, however, the actions are typically assigned to situational factors and are considered untrustworthy by observers (Furst & Cable, 2008). Whether or not employees trust their supervisor's intentions seems to be important for employees' compliance with the supervisor.

Supervisors' integrity and employee support

One of the critical determinants of whether employees trust their supervisor is the perception of whether the supervisor's words and deeds align. An individual's level of support may vary in terms of endorsement (i.e., the extent to which it is attitudinally supported intrinsically) and activism (i.e., the extent to which one's behaviors support or oppose diversity; Avery, 2011). One's endorsement and actions often align, but not always. It is the perception of the extent to which the two align that was first described by Simons (2002) as Perceived Behavioral Integrity (PBI). In an organizational context, PBI is measured by the extent to which employees perceive that their supervisors represent themselves and their motivating values accurately in their communications with employees.

The additional effect of trust in leader integrity research remains indecisive (Kannan-Narasimhan & Lawrence, 2012; Fritz, et. al., 2013; Davis & Rothstein, 2006). Some research suggests that there is no direct relationship, suggesting that trust explains the relationship

between supervisory PBI and employee attitudes (Kannan-Narasimhan & Lawrence, 2012; Fritz, et. al., 2013). However, meta-analytic research indicate a direct relationship between supervisory PBI and employee attitudes (Davis & Rothstein, 2006). A broad spectrum of research on behavioral integrity alludes that high levels of supervisor's PBI can directly result in attitudinal support of employees (Davis & Rothstein, 2006; Dineen, et. al., 2006; Bommer, Rich, and Rubin, 2005; Parry & Proctor-Thomson, 2002). Supervisory guidance can result in employees' organizational prosocial behavior when the supervisor's behavioral integrity is perceived as high (Dineen, et. al., 2006). Moreover, supervisors who engage in transformational leader behaviors (which have been associated with higher levels of behavioral integrity) can reduce employee cynicism about organizational change (Bommer, et. al., 2005; Parry & Proctor-Thomson, 2002).

On the other hand, a lack of PBI could have adverse effects by influencing the attitudes of those who witness them (Avery, 2011; Edelman Trust Barometer, 2019; Simons, Friedman, Liu & Parks, 2007; Schyns & Schilling 2013; Dineen, et. al., 2006). Supervisors with low PBI are less likely to be trusted by their employees. A lack of supervisory PBI in turn influences employees' advocacy, loyalty, engagement, and commitment towards supervisors (Edelman Trust Barometer, 2019). When employees perceive that their supervisor endorses diversity but not actively supports it, it can detract from trust, perceived justice, commitment, satisfaction, and intentions to remain with the organization (Simons, et. al., 2007). Furthermore, forms of destructive leadership among supervisors, as defined by Schyns and Schilling (2013), can lead to negative employee attitudes towards their supervisor and results in resistance towards him/her. In addition, it was found that supervisory guidance can result in employee deviance behavior when the supervisor's behavioral integrity was low (Dineen, et. al., 2006).

To my knowledge, the current study will be the first to operationalize and measure PBI directly as the interaction between employees' perception of supervisor endorsement and supervisor activism of diversity policies. This operationalization is based on Avery's typology of diversity support in organizations (Avery, 2011). Whereas PBI scales tend to measure an overall alignment between one's perceived values and actions in accordance with those values, present PBI operationalization will measure the actions and endorsement of supervisors specifically towards diversity policies.

Based on abovementioned findings, it is hypothesized that the positive relation between supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement is dependent on supervisor activism of diversity policies, in that supervisor endorsement can have both positive and negative effects, depending on the level of aligned supervisor activism.

Hypothesis 2a-c: Supervisor activism moderates the linkage between supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement of diversity policies. (a) When supervisor activism is high and in correspondence with the level of supervisor endorsement, supervisor endorsement will be positively related to employee endorsement of diversity policies. (b) When supervisor activism is low and in correspondence with the level of supervisor endorsement, supervisor endorsement should relate negatively to employee endorsement of diversity policies (c) When supervisor activism is not in correspondence with the level of supervisor endorsement, supervisor endorsement should relate negatively to employee endorsement of diversity policies.

The present study will combine insights from social and organizational psychology on attitude change (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen, 1991), leader-follower relationships (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Rockstuhl, et. al., 2012), and resistance (Shah & Irani, 2010) with research conducted on diversity policies and their effectiveness (Gonzalez & DeNisi, 2009; Slater, et. al., 2009). Utilizing an explorative cross-sectional research design, the effect of supervisor endorsement and supervisor activism of (gender) diversity policies on employee endorsement of (gender) diversity policies is tested.

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited via a virtual snowball sampling by social media (WhatsApp) and via survey sharing websites. Using G*power, it was calculated that a total of 193 participants was required for a moderation analysis $\alpha = 0.8$. Initially, 158 participants completed the online survey. Thirty-nine participants were left out because they indicated that they were formally a supervisor. The mean age was 38.40 (*SD*=13.42; range 22-70 years). Thirty-six respondents were female (*M*=30.67, *SD*=7.79), 81 were male (*M*=41.19, *SD*=14.08), and two identified as other (*M*=45.5, *SD*=4.95). A majority of the sample was Dutch (69.7%) and worked at a large organization with over 250 employees (N=110), 7 participants worked at a small organization (<49), and 2 participants worked at a medium organization (<250; European Commission, 2003). All participants were told they would participate in a study about gender diversity policies in their organization. Participants were excluded from the study if they did not work for one organization for at least 24 hours a week, worked for the organization for less than six months, and/or did not think there was a diversity policy in their organization. Subsequently, people working at micro organizations (<10; European Commission, 2016) were excluded. To ensure that possible effects on employee endorsement could be solely ascribed to the research variables, several control variables were included: age, gender, and nationality.

Procedure

Using Qualtrics.com, an online questionnaire was created that approximately took ten minutes to fulfill. Participants could answer the questionnaire in English or Dutch. On the introductory page of the survey, participants were informed about the general aim of the study, confidentiality, their right to withdraw (see appendix), and eligibility. Participants were then asked to provide information about background variables (e.g., age, gender) in a multiple-choice format. After completing this section of the survey, all participants were asked to describe what kind of gender diversity policy their organization facilitates and what their general perception of the diversity in their organization is (5-point Likert scale ranging from completely not diverse to completely diverse). Subsequently, employee endorsement, supervisor endorsement, and supervisor activism were measured.

Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS Statistics 25. Cronbach's Alpha, Inter-Item Correlation, Corrected Item-Total Correlation, and Cronbach's if Item Deleted of employee endorsement, supervisor endorsement, and supervisor activism were analyzed before further data analysis.

Employee endorsement

Employee endorsement of the organization's gender diversity policy was assessed by four statements about their own feelings and beliefs about the gender diversity policy. An example of a statement is: 'I have a positive stance towards the gender diversity policy of my organization.' (appendix). Responses to these items were provided on 5-point Likert scales, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Reliability analysis ($\alpha = .92$) was performed and indicated an excellent inter-item correlation (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). No questions had to be recoded. The supervisor activism questionnaire was combined as a mean score (Table 1).

Supervisor endorsement

The same four statements used for employee endorsement assessed supervisor endorsement but were transformed into a different perspective. Participants were asked about their supervisors' feelings and beliefs about the gender diversity policy. An example of a statement is: 'My supervisor has a positive stance towards the gender diversity policy of my organization.' (appendix). Responses to these items were provided on 5-point Likert scales, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Reliability analysis was performed ($\alpha = .96$) and indicated an excellent inter-item correlation (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). No questions had to be recoded. The supervisor activism questionnaire was combined as a mean score (Table 1).

Supervisor activism

Supervisor activism of the gender diversity policy of the organization was assessed by four statements about their supervisors' actions regarding the gender diversity policy. An example of a statement is: 'My supervisor publicly displays that he/she has a positive stance towards the gender diversity policy of my organization.' (appendix). Responses to these items were provided on 5-point Likert scales, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Reliability analysis was performed ($\alpha = .93$) and indicated an excellent inter-item correlation

(Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The supervisor activism questionnaire was combined as a mean score (Table 1).

Table 1

Reliability analysis for research variables

Research variables	α	*M*	*SD*
1. Employee endorsement	.92	4.05	.95
2. Supervisor endorsement	.96	3.93	.90
3. Supervisor activism	.93	3.52	.88

Results

Assumption checks

A number of preliminary analyses were performed to check whether the variables met the assumptions to carry out further analysis. A normal P-P plot of regression revealed non-normal distributed error variances in employee endorsement (Appendix C). The assumption of equal residual variances was not met. Differences in mean scores and 5% trimmed mean scores of employee endorsement indicated potential outliers. Four outliers were over three standard deviations from their corresponding means and were identified as outliers using the SPSS box plot procedure. After removal of these outliers, the Normal P-P plot showed roughly approximately normal distributed standardized residuals (Appendix D). The scatterplot of standardized predicted values versus standardized residuals showed that the data met the assumptions of homogeneity of variance and linearity. The variables were not normally distributed, but skewness was below one and less than two times its standard error.

Supervisor activism, supervisor endorsement, and employee endorsement

To test Hypothesis 1 and 2, stating that (1) there is a positive relationship between supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement of diversity policies and (2) that supervisor activism moderates the relationship between supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement, multiple regression analysis was performed. Supervisor endorsement and supervisor activism were standardized as suggested by Cohen, Cohen, West, and Aiken (2003) when investigating

interactions. The data supported hypothesis 1, in that the model for supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement was significant, R^2=.13, $F(1,113) = 18.41$, $p < .001$. When supervisor activism was included in the model, the model was also significant, R^2=.16, $F(3,113) = 7.99$, $p < .001$. There was a significant main effect for supervisor activism on employee endorsement, $\beta = .20$, $p = .05$. However, in this model, there was no significant interaction effect of supervisor activism and supervisor endorsement on employee endorsement. This is not in line with the second hypothesis. Moreover, the previous positive relationship between supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement became insignificant when supervisor activism was included in the model, which was also not according predictions.

Since the prior found relationship between supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement had lapsed in the second model, it was possible that supervisor activism mediated the relationship in the model. To further analyze this idea, data were analyzed using Hayes' SPSS macro PROCESS (version 3, model 4), for mediation analysis. The indirect effect of supervisor endorsement on employee endorsement was found to be statistically significant ($\rho < 0.05$, 95% C.I. [.03, .30]). Supervisor activism mediated the relationship between supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement.

Discussion

Management scholars recognize that successful change efforts require managers to overcome employee resistance to change (Furst & Cable, 2008). Social behavioral sciences acknowledge the importance of employee compliance and willingness to change for diversity policies to be effective (Gonzales & DeNishi, 2009; Slater et al., 2009). Despite these insights, little research has been conducted to answer the question of what drives employees to resist diversity policies in the first place. The present research stems from a social trend where it is appreciated to work with trustworthy people with strong ethical values, and scientific research that indicates that the perceived behavioral integrity of supervisors plays a role in employee attitudes (Edelman Trust Barometer, 2019; Bommer, et. al., 2005; Davis & Rothstein, 2006; Dineen, et. al., 2006; Parry & Proctor-Thomson, 2002; Schyns & Schilling, 2013; Simons, et al., 2007). It was investigated if employee endorsement of diversity policies was related to supervisor endorsement of diversity policies and whether this relationship was dependent on different levels of supervisor activism of diversity policies. The operationalization of perceived behavioral integrity (PBI) as the interaction between supervisor endorsement and supervisor activism was based on Avery's typology of diversity support in organizations (Avery, 2011). It was the first attempt to measure PBI concerning diversity directly to my knowledge.

The current results suggest that supervisor endorsement of diversity policies affects employees' endorsement of diversity policies, in that a higher level of endorsement of supervisors results in a higher level of employee endorsement. These results are in line with previous research about the role of supervisors on employee attitudes about their organization (e.g., organizational commitment, employee satisfaction; Sha & Irani, 2010; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Ajzen, 1991). Additionally, there was no effect of supervisor activism on the positive relation between supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement of diversity policies. This was a surprising result, as previous research indicated that supervisors could have differential effects on employee attitudes, depending on the alignment between their motivating values and their actions concerning these values (as perceived by the employees; PBI; Davis & Rothstein, 2006; Dineen, et. al, 2006; Bommer, et. al., 2005; Parry & Proctor-Thomson, 2002). Third, the significant relationship between supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement disappeared when supervisor activism was included in the model. This was also not in line with proposed hypotheses. It appeared that supervisor activism explained the relationship between supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement.

Theoretical and practical implications

The present study adds to the literature in multiple ways. First, previous research focused on supervisory influences on employee attitudes of the organization. The present study adds to this knowledge in that the endorsement and actions of supervisors may relate to employee attitudes of diversity policies. Second, it clarifies that employee resistance towards diversity policies may have a contextual explanation: supervisors can affect employee attitudes towards the organization's diversity policy. Supervisors can do so by exhibiting behavior that shows that they endorse the diversity policy. Previous research emphasized that differences in individual characteristics and diversity approaches can result in more resistance to diversity policies (Avery, 2011; Lambouths III, Scarborough, & Holbrook, 2019). Current research contributes to the literature as it provides insight into how employees can be affected by other people in the shaping of their attitudes towards diversity policies.

Moreover, the current study was the first research to measure and operationalize perceived behavioral integrity specifically towards diversity policies. Whereas PBI scales tend to measure an overall alignment between one's perceived values and actions in accordance with those values, present PBI operationalization measured the actions and endorsement specifically towards diversity policies. A supervisor may be perceived by his or her employees as someone who can get away with doing things that the employees cannot (PBI scale; Dineen et al., 2006).

Nevertheless, that does not necessarily mean that the supervisor is also perceived as someone whose actions and endorsement towards the diversity policy do not align. This study addresses how employees' perception of their supervisor's attitudes and behavior towards diversity policies do not always align. More research must be done into the perceived behavioral integrity of supervisors towards specific topics, in this case diversity policies.

In order for diversity policies to be effective, policymakers must acknowledge that employee endorsement is partly determined by the perceived supervisory endorsement of that policy. Communicating supervisory support of these policies will help employees to endorse the diversity policies as well, which in turn will be more likely to lead to an effective diversity policy in organizations (Gonzalez & DeNisi, 2009; Slater, et. al., 2009). Characteristics of an organization's diversity policy, like whether it is top-down initiated or not, might need to be adjusted when it requires supervisors to play an active role in the implementation of the diversity policy to the employees. They could affect the employee endorsement of the diversity policy if they display resistance towards the diversity policy themselves. Displaying such resistance to employees could lead to ineffectiveness of the policy.

Alternative explanations
The lack of an effect of supervisor activism on the positive relation between supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement in this study could be explained by the mixed results regarding the role of trust in leader integrity research. It could be possible that trust in supervisors plays a significant role in the relationship between supervisor activism, supervisor endorsement, and employee endorsement. If the relationship between perceived behavioral integrity of supervisors and employee attitudes is explained by trust, it would explain why the present study did not find a direct relationship between supervisor activism, supervisor endorsement, and employee endorsement of diversity policies.

There are several possible explanations for the fact that supervisor activism explained the relationship between supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement. Especially, when employees are unsure of their supervisors' level of endorsement of diversity policies, it may be that employees look at their supervisors' actions to determine their level of endorsement. Individuals tend to ascribe behaviors to dispositional factors (e.g., personal characteristics and attitudes) while undermining the effect of situational factors. This is referred to as the fundamental attribution error (Ross, 1977). Employees who are uncertain about their supervisors' endorsement towards diversity policies will base their judgment on supervisors' past behaviors that could indicate the endorsement level of their supervisor. If indeed, the

participants in this study based their supervisors' endorsement level on their supervisor's past behaviors, it could demonstrate why supervisor activism explained the relationship between supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement.

Another possible explanation for the role of supervisor activism on the relationship between supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement is that differences in the participants' work design affected the outcomes (Grant & Parker, 2009). A trustworthy connection between supervisors and employees could be more critical in one work design, while not in others. Work designs can be differentiated by several social characteristics (e.g., interpersonal interaction, task interdependence, interpersonal feedback) and work characteristics (e.g., autonomy, ambiguity, routinization) (for a more comprehensive overview: Grant & Parker, 2009). Research in the hospitality context, for example, found that leader relational transparency (i.e., leader's behaviors focusing on "valuing and achieving openness and truthfulness in one's close relationships";) and behavioral integrity are essential factors in the prohibition of employees' organizational deviance behavior (Gatling, Shum, Book, & Bai, 2017). Employees working in the hospitality sector have much interaction with people outside the organization, have a higher task interdependence, and experience frequent feedback from others. It is likely that employees active in a socially-oriented work design are more aware of their supervisors' level of endorsement of diversity policies, simply because it plays a more central role in their work. The opposite effect could occur for employees whose work design contains less social characteristics (e.g., IT sector), for instance, in jobs with low levels of interpersonal communication, low task interdependence, and high autonomy (Grant & Parker, 2009).

Lastly, it must be taken into account that the sampling recruitment of this research was during the time of COVID-19 restrictions in the Netherlands. Most organizations decided that all employees must work from home, which could have affected the results in that employees had limited direct contact with their supervisor for a longer period. Recent research has demonstrated that team members in virtual teams experience lower team engagement, experience difficulties in creating trust, and experience feelings of isolation and social distance between members (Dulebohn & Hoch, 2019). Moreover, research found that leaders of virtual teams often have less influence on the team members due to lower levels of co-presence (Dulebohn & Hoch, 2019), which is also evident in theoretical research (The Attitude Theory; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). A virtual work environment results in impaired team engagement and an increase in social distance and isolation, which could have paved their way for a fundamental attribution error, as previously described (Ross, 1977). Also, this could validate the

uncontemplated magnitude of the number of participants who evaluated their supervisor's activism (28.7%) and supervisor endorsement (25.2%) as 'neither agree nor disagree.' This conclusion, however, is speculative and requires further research to validate.

This study does not provide evidence to assume that the relationship between supervisor endorsement and employee endorsement depends on supervisor activism. It does imply, however, that supervisor activism explains this relationship. Supervisor endorsement and supervisor activism are clearly connected, and people may tend to determine supervisor endorsement on the level of supervisor activism, especially in times of uncertainty.

Supplemental work needs to be done to enhance the precision with which researchers study PBI concerning employee endorsement of diversity policies. Future studies in this topic could help organizations better understand the supervisors' role in the implementation and acceptance of diversity policies by their employees.

Limitations and directions for future research

Several limitations deserve consideration when interpreting the study results. First of all, the current study consisted solely of single-source data and a single method design. Whereas in experimental design one can rule out the effect of external factors, with a single method design this is not possible. It also raises the possibility of common method variance (CMV) bias and excludes the possibility to conclude causal effects. Future research must investigate whether these relationships are also causally valid. Second, it was not measured in what matter the employees were sure about their scores on the supervisor endorsement scale. As a large number of participants scored 'neither agree nor disagree,' it might be that participants were uncertain what their supervisors' level of endorsement was, which could have influenced the results. Future research could add a level of certainty score to the questionnaire, or might use multiple-source data to further analyze this thought. In addition, the current study did not include an objective measurement to differentiate for multiple types of gender diversity policies. Participants were asked what type of gender diversity policy existed in their organization, but whether this answer was correct or not was not tested. Therefore, it remains unclear to what extent the participants were actually aware of the gender diversity policy of their organization. Fourth, the current study had a limited sample size of 115 participants after supervisors and outliers were excluded. Therefore, our results should be interpreted carefully, and no preliminary conclusions can be drawn. Fifth, this study investigated gender diversity policies, yet the gender of the supervisor was not taken into account. Employees were asked about the perception of their supervisor's level of endorsement and activism of the diversity

policy. It could be possible that employees partially based their judgement on whether their supervisor was male or female. It is credible that employees believed that their female supervisor endorsed the policy more than if their supervisor was male because the outcome of gender diversity policies is more desirable for women than for men.

Conclusions

This research was exploratory in nature, meaning that more research is needed to support the presented findings. However, this research addresses an important gap in the literature, and the findings are theoretically plausible. How supervisors behave with regards to the organizational diversity policy, and how they are perceived by their employees, is related to employee endorsement of diversity policies. These findings underline the importance of supervisory attitudes and behaviors on employee endorsement of diversity policies. Future research should look into the relationship between supervisor endorsement and supervisor activism in different conditions (e.g., work environment, job design, organizational sectors), with multiple source data, and throughout different types of diversity policies to reveal the impact that mixed signals of supervisors can have on the endorsement of employees towards diversity policies in the workplace. Hence, supporting findings could result in an altered implementation strategy of gender diversity policies in organizations, with intentions to prevent employee resistance towards these gender diversity policies.

References

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, *50*(2), 179-211.

Avery, D. R. (2011). Support for diversity in organizations: A theoretical exploration of its origins and offshoots. *Organizational Psychology Review*, *1*(3), 239-256.

Barometer, E. T. (2019). Edelman trust barometer global report.

Bommer, W. H., Rich, G. A., & Rubin, R. S. (2005). Changing attitudes about change: Longitudinal effects of transformational leader behavior on employee cynicism about organizational change. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, *26*(7), 733-753.

Davis, A. L., & Rothstein, H. R. (2006). The effects of the perceived behavioral integrity of managers on employee attitudes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *67*(4), 407-419.

Dineen, B. R., Lewicki, R. J., & Tomlinson, E. C. (2006). Supervisory guidance and behavioral integrity: Relationships with employee citizenship and deviant behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *91*(3), 622.

Dulebohn, J. H., & Hoch, J. E. (2017). Virtual teams in organizations.

European Commission (2003) Commission recommendation concerning the definition of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. *The Official Journal of the European Union (OJ), 124,* 36-41.

European Commission (2019) *Report on equality between women and men in the EU.* Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2019.

Furst, S. A., & Cable, D. M. (2008). Employee resistance to organizational change: Managerial influence tactics and leader-member exchange. *Journal of Applied psychology*, *93*(2), 453.

Fishbein, M. A., & Ajzen, I. (2011). I.(1975). Belief, attitude, intention and behaviour: An introduction to theory and research. *Reading, Addison-Wesley*.

Fritz, J. H., O'Neil, N. B., Popp, A. M., Williams, C., & Arnett, R. C. (2013). The influence of supervisory behavioral integrity on intent to comply with organizational ethical standards and organizational commitment. *Journal of business ethics*, *114*(2), 251-263.

Gonzalez, J. A., & Denisi, A. S. (2009). Cross-level effects of demography and diversity

climate on organizational attachment and firm effectiveness. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, *30*(1), 21-40.

Graen, G. B., & Uhl-Bien, M. (1995). Relationship-based approach to leadership: Development of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25 years: Applying a multi-level multi-domain perspective.

Harrison, D. A., Kravitz, D. A., Mayer, D. M., Leslie, L. M., & Lev-Arey, D. (2006). Understanding attitudes toward affirmative action programs in employment: Summary and meta-analysis of 35 years of research. Journal of Applied Psychology, 91(5), 1013.

Heider, F. (1958). *The psychology of interpersonal relations.* New York: Wiley.

Jansen, W. S., Vos, M. W., Otten, S., Podsiadlowski, A., & van der Zee, K. I. (2016). Colorblind or colorful? How diversity approaches affect cultural majority and minority employees. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 46(2), 81-93.

Kannan-Narasimhan, R., & Lawrence, B. S. (2012). Behavioral integrity: How leader referents and trust matter to workplace outcomes. *Journal of business ethics*, *111*(2), 165-178.

Parry, K. W., & Proctor-Thomson, S. B. (2002). Perceived integrity of transformational leaders in organisational settings. *Journal of business ethics*, *35*(2), 75-96.

Rockstuhl, T., Dulebohn, J. H., Ang, S., & Shore, L. M. (2012). Leader–member exchange (LMX) and culture: A meta-analysis of correlates of LMX across 23 countries. *Journal of applied psychology*, *97*(6), 1097.

Ross, L. (1977). The intuitive psychologist and his shortcomings: Distortions in the attribution process. In *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 10, pp. 173-220). Academic Press.

Schyns, B., & Schilling, J. (2013). How bad are the effects of bad leaders? A meta-analysis of destructive leadership and its outcomes. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *24*(1), 138-158.

Shah, N., & Irani, Z. (2010). Examining employee attitudes and behaviours towards organisational change using supervisor and peer relations.

Slater, S. F., Weigand, R. A., & Zwirlein, T. J. (2008). The business case for commitment to diversity. *Business horizons*, *51*(3), 201-209.

Simons, T. (2002). Behavioral integrity: The perceived alignment between managers' words and deeds as a research focus. *Organization Science*, *13*(1), 18-35.

Simons, T., Friedman, R., Liu, L. A., & McLean Parks, J. (2007). Racial differences in sensitivity to behavioral integrity: Attitudinal consequences, in-group effects, and"

trickle down" among Black and non-Black employees. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *92*(3), 650.

Weeks, W. A., Roberts, J., Chonko, L. B., & Jones, E. (2004). Organizational readiness for change, individual fear of change, and sales manager performance: An empirical investigation. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management*, *24*(1), 7-17.

<center>**Appendix A**</center>

<center>Informed consent</center>

Dear respondent,
We would like to ask you to participate in this research.

The goal of this research
 The purpose of this study is to get more insight in attitudes towards gender diversity policies and in the attributes of such policies. The research can offer new perspectives regarding the implementation of diversity policies as well as new knowledge on which future diversity researchers may build.

Your right to withdraw/discontinue
To complete the survey you need to answer every question. However, you are free to quit the survey and stop participation at any time. It may take up 10 minutes to complete this survey.

The confidentiality of your data
All information gathered from this survey will be confidential. Participation is anonymous and the data will be accessible only to the researchers and their faculty advisor.

Incentive
When you participate in this survey you will have a chance of receiving 50 euro's by inputting your e-mail at the end of the questionnaire. If you choose to input your e-mail, it will be used purely to be included in the raffle pool, and will be deleted once the raffle prize is given out.

Researcher Contact Information
 This research study is being conducted by Utrecht University students Antonius Dimas Prasasto, Sander Konings, Anna Witteveen and Alexandra Molokostova. The faculty supervisor is dr. Wiebren Jansen. If you have questions or concerns about results or your participation in this study, you may contact the researchers via email: a.molokostova@students.uu.nl or s.konings@students.uu.nl.

Eligibility
The first part of the survey contains several questions to determine if you are eligible for this research. If this is not the case, the survey will end immediately.

Verification of Adult Age
 By participating in this survey, you attest that you are 18 years or older and that you have consented to participate in this research study.

○ I have read and understood the terms of participating.

Appendix B

Questionnaire

How many employees does this organisation approximately have?

▼ less than 10 ... >250

- -

How long have you worked for this organisation?

○ <6 months

○ 6 months - 5 years

○ >5 years

- -

Do you currently work for one organisation for at least 24 hours a week?

○ Yes

○ No

- -

Are you formally a supervisor?

○ Yes

○ No

- -

What is your gender?

○ Male

○ Female

○ Other _____

What is your age?

▼ Age ... >70

What is your nationality?

▼ Afghanistan ... Zimbabwe

Page Break ————————————————————————————

Following questions concern **gender diversity policies**. There are different types of gender diversity policies. To give you an overview, we listed the most common ones below. This is, however, not an exhaustive list.

Types of gender diversity policies:

- Voluntary or mandatory training about gender diversity

- Recruitment measures that ensure no discrimination based on gender

- Mentoring programs, designed to reduce gender discrimination

- Diversity task force: a department or an employee, that makes sure that no gender discrimination occurs within the company

- Gender diversity goals, in which numerical goals concerning the representation of male & female employees are established

Are there any gender diversity policies in your organisation?

○ Yes

○ No

What kind of gender diversity policies does your organisation have? Please elaborate.

_____

Following statement concerns your own perception of diversity in your organisation.

	Completely not diverse	More not diverse than diverse	Neutral	More diverse than not diverse	Completely diverse
To what extent do you perceive your organisation to be diverse in terms of gender?	○	○	○	○	○

The following statements are about your own feelings and beliefs about the gender diversity policy in your organisation.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I have a positive stance towards the gender diversity policy of my organisation.	○	○	○	○	○
I think the gender diversity policy of my organisation is useful.	○	○	○	○	○
I hope that the gender diversity policy of my organisation will be successful.	○	○	○	○	○
I support the gender diversity policy of my organisation.	○	○	○	○	○

Page Break

The following statements are about your supervisors' feelings and beliefs about the gender diversity policy in your organisation. Think of your direct supervisor while answering these questions.

My supervisor...

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
...has a positive stance towards the gender diversity policy of my organisation.	○	○	○	○	○
...thinks the gender diversity policy of my organisation is useful.	○	○	○	○	○
...hopes that the gender diversity policy of my organisation will be successful.	○	○	○	○	○
...supports the gender diversity policy of my organisation.	○	○	○	○	○

Page Break

The following statements are about your supervisors' feelings and beliefs about the gender diversity policy in your organisation. Think of your direct supervisor while answering these questions.

My supervisor...

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
...publicly displays that he/she has a positive stance towards the gender diversity policy of my organisation.	○	○	○	○	○
...lets others know that he/she thinks the gender diversity initiatives of my organisation are useful.	○	○	○	○	○
...plays an active role in making the gender diversity policy of my organisation a success.	○	○	○	○	○
...publicly declares that he/she supports the gender diversity policy of my organisation.	○	○	○	○	○

Page Break

Thank you for your participation in this research!

If you have any questions about this study, please contact us: a.molokostova@students.uu.nl

If this is not of great trouble for you, could you share the link with 1-2 of your colleagues?

If you are here from SurveySwap, go to this link to receive your credits
https://surveyswap.io/sr/z6HJktJn0ePobnz5

Have a nice day!

- -

If you would like to be included in the raffle, please insert your e-mail address* here

*Your e-mail is used exclusively to be included into the raffle pool, and will be permanently deleted from our database once the raffle prize is awarded.

_____

End of Block

Appendix C

Normal P-P plot before removal of outliers

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Dependent Variable: EmpEndors

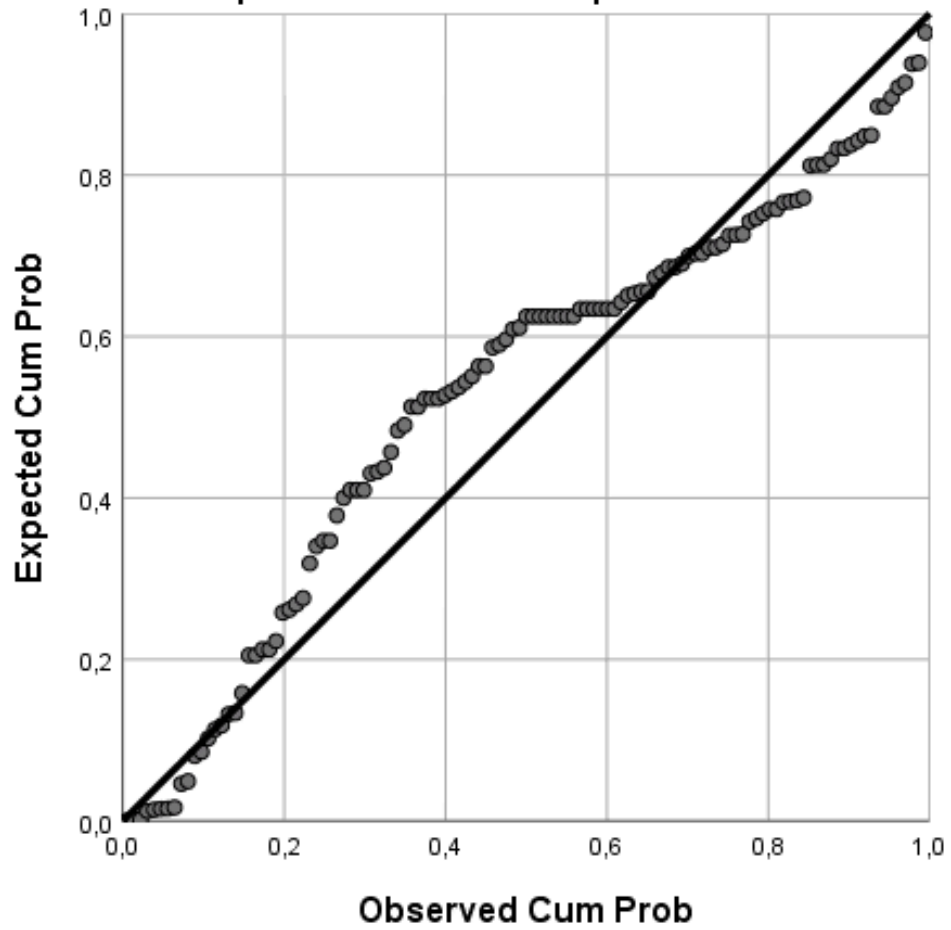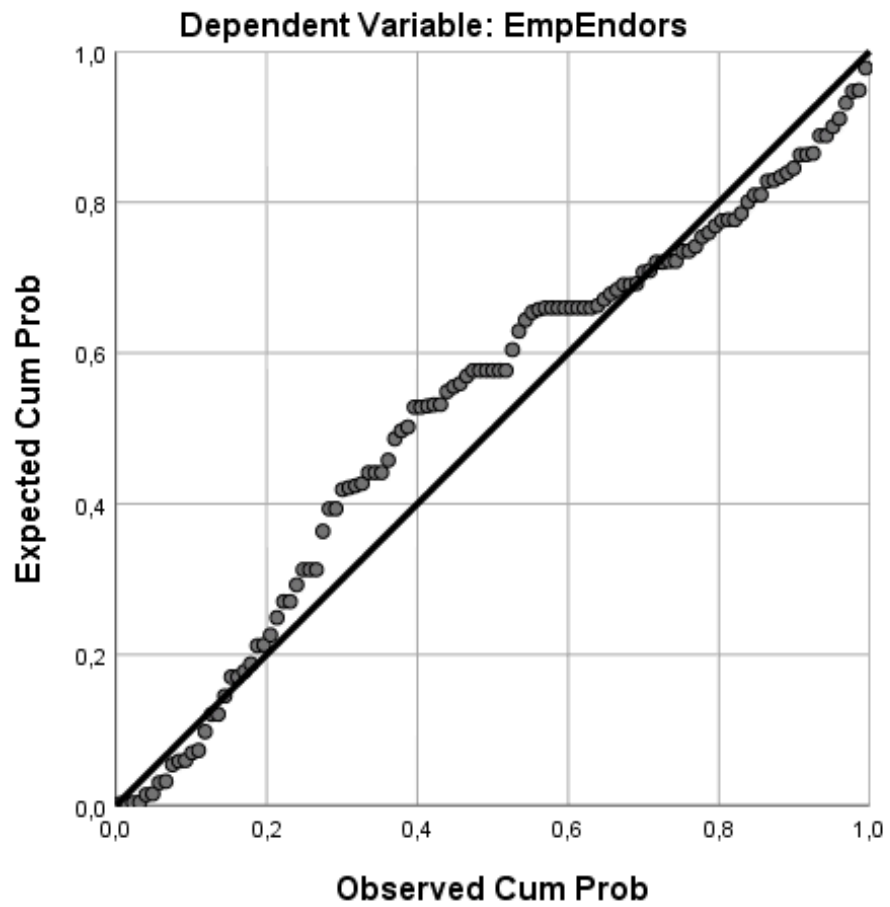**Appendix D**

Normal P-P plot after removal of outliers

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Dependent Variable: EmpEndors

Appendix E

SPSS Output of PROCESS Hayes, Model 1

```
Run MATRIX procedure:

**************** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 3.00 ****************

          Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D.        www.afhayes.com
    Documentation available in Hayes (2018). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3


*************************************************************************
Model  : 4
    Y  : EmpEndor
    X  : ZSupEndo
    M  : ZSupActi

Sample
Size:  115

*************************************************************************
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 ZSupActi

Model Summary
          R        R-sq        MSE          F         df1         df2
p
      ,6801       ,4626      ,5433    97,2710     1,0000   113,0000
,0000

Model
            coeff         se          t          p        LLCI       ULCI
constant    ,0066      ,0688      ,0953      ,9242     -,1297      ,1428
ZSupEndo    ,6800      ,0689     9,8626      ,0000      ,5434      ,8166

Covariance matrix of regression parameter estimates:
          constant    ZSupEndo
constant    ,0047      -,0001
ZSupEndo   -,0001       ,0048

*************************************************************************
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 EmpEndor

Model Summary
          R        R-sq        MSE          F         df1         df2
p
      ,4211       ,1773      ,5323    12,0699     2,0000   112,0000
,0000

Model
            coeff         se          t          p        LLCI       ULCI
constant   4,1437      ,0681    60,8879      ,0000     4,0088     4,2785
ZSupEndo    ,1555      ,0931     1,6698      ,0977     -,0290      ,3399
ZSupActi    ,2097      ,0931     2,2516      ,0263      ,0252      ,3941

Covariance matrix of regression parameter estimates:
          constant    ZSupEndo    ZSupActi
constant    ,0046      -,0001      -,0001
ZSupEndo   -,0001       ,0087      -,0059
```

```
ZSupActi      -,0001      -,0059      ,0087
```

*************************** TOTAL EFFECT MODEL ***************************
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 EmpEndor

Model Summary
          R   R-sq   MSE   F   df1   df2
p
       ,3743   ,1401   ,5514   18,4069   1,0000   113,0000
,0000

Model
              coeff   se   t   p   LLCI   ULCI
constant   4,1451   ,0693   59,8424   ,0000   4,0078   4,2823
ZSupEndo   ,2980   ,0695   4,2903   ,0000   ,1604   ,4356

Covariance matrix of regression parameter estimates:
          constant   ZSupEndo
constant   ,0048   -,0001
ZSupEndo   -,0001   ,0048

************** TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y **************

Total effect of X on Y
     Effect   se   t   p   LLCI   ULCI
c_ps   c_cs
      ,2980   ,0695   4,2903   ,0000   ,1604   ,4356
,3738   ,3743

Direct effect of X on Y
     Effect   se   t   p   LLCI   ULCI
c'_ps   c'_cs
      ,1555   ,0931   1,6698   ,0977   -,0290   ,3399
,1950   ,1952

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
            Effect   BootSE   BootLLCI   BootULCI
ZSupActi   ,1426   ,0584   ,0325   ,2622

Partially standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
            Effect   BootSE   BootLLCI   BootULCI
ZSupActi   ,1788   ,0730   ,0424   ,3298

Completely standardized indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
            Effect   BootSE   BootLLCI   BootULCI
ZSupActi   ,1790   ,0754   ,0409   ,3348

********************** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS **********************

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
  95,0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:
  5000

NOTE: Variables names longer than eight characters can produce incorrect
output.
      Shorter variable names are recommended.

------ END MATRIX -----