

**Heterosexual employees' support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion in different
organisational climates**

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Abstract

Lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) employees face discrimination and exclusion in the workplace. Their heterosexual colleagues do not share the same experience but are crucial for diversity and inclusion (D&I) efforts. The support for D&I efforts depends on the self-interest of all stakeholders and heterosexual employees have the most influence. Perspective-taking is associated with increased empathy and helping behaviour. We examined how inclusive, heteronormative, and exclusive organisational climates affect heterosexual employees' support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion. By exposing heterosexuals to an exclusive organisational climate, enabled them to take a perspective which is novel to them but not to LGB employees. We expected that being suppressed in their free sexual expression could harm their self-interest and perspective taking increases their empathy thereby leading to an increased support for D&I efforts. Research on the impact of harming heterosexual's self-interest, by suppressing their expression of sexual orientation, on their support for D&I efforts is limited. Participants were exposed to either an inclusive, heteronormative, or exclusive organisational climate and their positivity towards the working climate, their support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion, and their perceived importance of these efforts were assessed. Participants felt significantly less positive in the heteronormative and exclusive climate than in the inclusive climate. However, besides their aversion to exclusive climates no difference in the support for D&I efforts could be observed. The findings indicate that heterosexual employees are as averse to heteronormative climates as they are to fully exclusive climates.

Lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals encounter different struggles than their heterosexual counterparts, even after decades of raising awareness and acceptance in many countries worldwide (e.g., Andersen & Fetner, 2008; Poushter & Kent, 2020). In their work environment, unique challenges arise, as they must decide daily whether and how to communicate their sexual identity and to whom (Clair et al., 2005; Ragins, 2004; Ragins et al., 2007) because they are more likely to fear discrimination by their colleagues upon 'outing' themselves than their heterosexual peers (Ragins, 2004). This fear is not unfounded, as up to 47% of LGB participants reported having experienced sexual discrimination at their workplace in studies conducted between 1998 and 2008 (Badgett, 2009; Sears & Mallory, 2011). Moreover, the fear of discrimination at work can have a severe negative impact on job attitudes and well-being (e.g., Rumens & Kerfoot, 2009). Conversely, disclosure is positively associated with LGB employees' well-being (e.g., Clausell & Roisman, 2009), self-esteem, and empowerment (Rasmussen, 2004), but only in supportive environments (Legate et al., 2017), because disclosure can increase the risk of discrimination through heightened exposure (Riggle et al., 2017). Therefore, the decision to disclose can be one of the most challenging decisions in the career of an LGB employee (Ragins, 2004), and contextual factors, such as the favourability of the working environment or organisational culture, are of high importance for this decision.

Supportive working environments, policies, and colleagues have been found to facilitate disclosure for LGB workers (e.g., Huffman et al., 2008). An inclusive climate is a shared perception of integration of the unique characteristics and differences of every employee in the work environment (Nishii, 2013; Sahin et al., 2019). Many companies aim at enhancing diversity and inclusion (D&I) climates through specifically designed policies. These initiatives, however, focus oftentimes exclusively on individuals of underrepresented groups, although their effect is highly dependent on the support of majority members as the most influential stakeholders (James et al., 2001). Without their support, a company cannot achieve its full diversity potential (Plaut et al., 2011). When the majority group is

disregarded by a D&I policy it can cause its resistance (Brief et al., 2005; Thomas & Plaut, 2008) or worsen its acceptance of the company (Jansen et al., 2015) because policy support depends on an employee's self-interest (Avery, 2011; Klandermans, 2004). That means that heterosexual employees would be more supportive of policies that benefit themselves or at least do not disadvantage them by harming their self-interest.

However, heterosexual employees do not share the same experience as their LGB peers because in both, heteronormative and inclusive climates, they can openly express their sexual identity (e.g., Reingardé, 2010) and thus are less harmed in their self-interest in normal organisational climates. Perspective-taking and learning about the struggles of an outgroup increases empathy and attitudes towards the outgroup (Finlay & Stephan, 2000; Hodson et al., 2009; Vescio et al., 2003) which can increase social cohesion and association with outgroup members (Galinsky et al. 2005). Additionally, it is a central precursor of helping others at the individual level (Batson, 1998). Enabling heterosexual employees' perspective-taking by exposing them to a climate that suppresses their free sexual expression, a situation that is novel to them, could therefore increase their support for D&I efforts because of their harmed self-interest. We expect that an exclusive climate could harm their self-interest because we assume that they value being able to express their sexual orientation.

Recent research explored support for D&I policies (e.g., Jansen et al., 2015), but little is known about the effect of the prevailing climate or harmed self-interest on the support of majority members for D&I policies. Moreover, it is crucial to reduce discrimination against LGB employees and the fear of discrimination in the workplace through increased LGB inclusion. Therefore, it is important to understand how inclusive, heteronormative, and exclusive working environments affect majority support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion. The current research aims at answering the question of to what extent heterosexual employees' support for D&I policies, and LGB inclusion differs in inclusive, exclusive, and heteronormative organisational climates. To our knowledge, the effect of exposing heterosexual

employees to an exclusive climate on their support for D&I and LGB inclusion has not been researched yet.

Heterop professionalism, Exclusion, and Discrimination Against LGB Workers

Workplaces and society, in general, adhere to heteronormative power dynamics, which means they are defined by the norms set by a heterosexual worldview, including its heterosexual hierarchies which are subordinating non-heterosexual individuals (Jolly, 2011). As described by Berlant and Warner (1998) heteronormativity is an attitude originated in the perspective that the heterosexual identity, including a biological gender dichotomy, is the only normal form of sexuality. Heterosexuality is perceived as the 'normal' state and by framing sexuality as private it becomes separated from the public life (Reingardé, 2010). Thereby other forms of sexuality are disregarded and become irrelevant within the employment context. Through this normalization of heterosexuality, heterosexual workers might erroneously perceive their workplace as a sexually neutral environment (Reingardé, 2010). Workplaces, however, are not sexually neutral environments but are characterized by heterosexual symbols and artefacts, such as wedding rings or photographs of the partner, which are not as recognizable by heterosexual employees compared to LGB employees (King et al., 2008; Reingardé, 2010; Willis, 2009). Queer sexual identities are not always solely ignored but are sometimes actively excluded from the workplace by discrimination (Mizzi, 2013). The exclusion of LGB identities is often justified by the proclamation of professionalism, as LGB identities might be perceived as "controversial" or "scandalous" (Mizzi, 2013). Mizzi describes this process of reinforcing a heteronormative dominance, through policies and active silencing of queer sexualities, as *heterop professionalism*. LGB individuals are still free to disclose their sexual identity but face the risk of being labelled as unprofessional. Accordingly, heteronormativity and heterop professionalism constitute more subtle forms of exclusion than overt prejudice and discrimination (Mizzi, 2013). Especially because heteronormativity can be promoted unconsciously by heterosexual employees (Yep, 2005). Therefore, the perspectives of LGB workers towards their working environment and their experiences during work differ strongly from their

heterosexual counterparts (Gacilo et al., 2018). Thus, heterosexual individuals cannot completely understand their non-heterosexual colleagues' perspectives because they will never experience a climate in which they cannot freely express their sexual identity, nor will they experience discrimination or exclusion based on their sexual orientation. Hence, it is likely that heterosexuals are not fully aware of the importance of LGB inclusion to decrease the negative impacts of conscious or unconscious exclusion and discrimination. Therefore, in this research heterosexual participants will be exposed to an exclusive climate condition in which they are not able to express their sexual identity freely, a perspective which is novel to them, but not to their LGB colleagues.

Promoting LGB inclusion is important to counter discrimination and its implications on LGB employees. Discrimination based on sexual orientation, both subtle or direct, has been found to have a negative impact on the mental health of LGB and gender nonconform individuals (Almeida et al., 2009; D'Augelli et al., 2002; Haas et al., 2010; Meyer et al., 2011; Woodford et al., 2012). That includes a significantly higher risk of developing mental disorders compared to their heterosexual counterparts (Mays & Cochran, 2001; Woodford et al., 2014). Furthermore, suicidal intentions and self-harm have been found to be more present in LGB students compared to their heterosexual peers (Almeida et al., 2009). Outness, on the other hand, was found to be associated with fewer psychological impairments, better overall health, and lower suicidal intentions (Morris et al., 2001). Conversely, for undisclosed LGB individuals, the fear of disclosing in the working environment can have severe negative impacts on job satisfaction, commitment, self-esteem (Ragins et al., 2007; Rumens & Kerfoot, 2009; Waldo, 1999), and well-being (Rumens & Kerfoot, 2009; Waldo, 1999). Additionally, non-disclosure can have negative effects on mental health leading to psychiatric impairments such as depression or anxiety disorders in some individuals (Pachankis et al., 2015). Miner and Costa (2018) found that besides negative impacts of overt prejudices on LGB workers' work attitudes and psychological well-being, heterosexual co-workers showed similar but significantly weaker effects, indicating that a hostile heteronormative climate that excludes LGB individuals poses a burden on everyone. Hence, reducing discrimination against LGB

employees by increasing inclusivity has positive implications for all employees within an organisation (Huffman et al., 2008; Sahin et al., 2019).

Contextual Supports and Disclosure

Contextual supports exist in different forms and on different levels, such as formal policies, inclusive climates, and supportive supervisors and co-workers which can mitigate the impact of psychological strain, perceived discrimination, and exclusion of LGB employees and can promote disclosure and work attitudes (e.g., Huffman et al., 2008; Webster et al., 2018). Yet, LGB individuals who fear stigmatization sometimes attempt to pass as heteronormative to not disclose their true sexual identity (Reingardé, 2010). However, besides negative impacts on mental health and job attitudes through non-disclosure, the suppression of homosexuality by coping strategies such as 'passing' leads to the self-marginalization of LGB employees. The fewer people disclose their non-heteronormative sexuality the weaker becomes the shared identity of LGB employees, which in turn reduces the ease for others to disclose their sexual orientation (Reingardé, 2010). Inclusive climates can facilitate disclosure as well as self-acceptance, specifically in environments with supportive (heterosexual) co-workers (Huffman et al., 2008; Mohr & Fassinger, 2003; Ragins et al., 2007). Inclusive climates and D&I policies are crucial to encourage the disclosure of LGB employees and minimize the risk of discrimination against them, which in turn reduces potential mental health impairments and increases job attitudes.

Many companies employ D&I policies to increase LGB inclusion in the workplace. D&I initiatives adopt different strategies in integrating or ignoring individual differences and therefore lead to different evaluations by minority and majority group members (Jansen et al., 2016). The success of such policies relies in part on the support of heterosexual employees (James et al., 2001). The endorsement of or opposition to organisational diversity mostly stems from self-interest motives because individuals aim toward enhancing their current situation (Avery, 2011). Majority group members tend to oppose approaches that integrate individual differences, because of a potential feeling of being disadvantaged (Jansen et al., 2016; Plaut et al., 2011), the association of only benefitting the underrepresented group

(Avery, 2011), due to a contested status quo (Brannon et al., 2018; Jansen et al., 2016), or the belief that interpersonal inequalities have been overcome (Brannon et al., 2018). Facilitated perspective-taking could counter heterosexual's opposition to D&I efforts because it can elevate empathy for outgroup members (e.g., Vescio et al., 2003) and increases the overlap between ingroup and outgroups members (Galinsky & Moscovitz, 2000) and thereby the connectedness to the outgroup members (Galinsky et al., 2005). Moreover, perspective-taking can reduce stereotypes and prejudice (Galinsky et al., 2005). The same positive effects could be confirmed toward homosexuals by enabling perspective-taking through a simulation of homosexuals' struggles (Hodson et al., 2009). Additionally, heterosexuals' collective action can be fostered by LGB perspective-taking (Mallett et al., 2008), thus similar effects are likely for policy support. Exposing heterosexual employees to an organisational climate that is excluding their own sexual identity will likely trigger their self-interest for more inclusivity and could increase their support for policies aiming at enhancing D&I policies through perspective-taking.

The Current Research

Hypotheses

The impact of inclusive and exclusive climates on LGB workers has been explored to a limited degree, but even less is known about the effects of these climates on their heterosexual colleagues, regarding their support of diversity efforts and LGB inclusion itself. Therefore, we exposed heterosexual employees to an exclusive climate that facilitates taking the perspective of not being able to freely express their sexual orientation, as is often the case for their LGB co-workers. We hypothesize that not being able to express their sexual orientation is against their personal preferences and thereby reduces their workplace positivity. Therefore, we expect heterosexual employees to anticipate feeling least positive in the exclusive climate condition, especially because the situation is novel to them. Additionally, we expect heterosexual employees to anticipate feeling most positive in an inclusive organisational climate. Moreover, we expect heterosexual employees to anticipate feeling moderately positive in a

heteronormative organisational climate because in this latter climate they are not directly affected but might feel indirectly affected when their LGB colleagues are not able to express themselves freely.

H1: Heterosexuals will anticipate feeling most positive working in an inclusive climate compared to an exclusive or heteronormative climate, and least positive in an exclusive climate.

Moreover, we hypothesize that suppression of sexual expression harms the self-interest of heterosexual employees. Additionally, it enables perspective-taking which promotes empathy, helping others, and collective action. Thereby heterosexuals' support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion could be increased because they become more personally affected and more empathetic toward the outgroup members. Therefore, we expect that heterosexual workers exhibit the most positive attitude toward D&I policy and LGB inclusion support in the exclusive organisational climate because their self-interest should be compromised the most. Imagining a heteronormative climate, we expect them to express lower support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion. And in the inclusive climate condition, we expect the lowest support from heterosexual employees. We measure general support and the support for the D&I efforts of the participants' own organisations separately because it could be that participants are more inclined to agree with generalised statements without being affected personally.

H2: When imagining working in a heteronormative working climate, heterosexual employees will show a more positive attitude toward D&I policies and LGB inclusion compared to imagining an inclusive working climate, but a less positive attitude compared to an exclusive working climate.

Method

Design

This study adopted a 1x3 between-subjects experimental design with organisational climate (exclusive vs. inclusive vs. heteronormative) as the independent variable. Anticipated work climate positivity,

Support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion, Perceived D&I policy importance, and Own organisation's policy support have been measured as outcome variables. In collaboration with my fellow student Milou van de Brug, we composed a survey to collect our data jointly. However, besides the combined data collection we used different study designs and pursued different research questions.

Participants

We first conducted a power analysis using G*Power to determine the minimum required sample size (Faul et al., 2009) for the 1x3 design. The expected effect size of the findings is small to medium ($f = .1 - .25$), as this study is rather exploratory. At a power of .80, an α -value of .05, and three treatment groups with two degrees of freedom, a total of 158 ($f = .25$) to 967 ($f = .1$) participants were required (see Appendix A). 374 participants filled out the online survey. 232 participants identified as heterosexual and gave their consent, thus have been relevant for this analysis. Of these, all participants have been excluded who did not fully complete the survey or did not give answers to all main variables, were unemployed, or did not answer a manipulation check question correctly. Only 76 participants remained of which six indicated to be solo self-employed, who we left in the main sample. Interestingly, a vast majority of those answering the manipulation check question incorrectly have been assigned to the heteronormative condition, resulting in very unequal sample sizes among groups, which might be due to inaccurate wording of the manipulation check question. The smaller sample of $N = 70$ and the bigger sample of $N = 101$ will be used for retests to control for potential different results. Most participants were recruited in the Netherlands and Germany via online requests on different social media platforms (e.g. LinkedIn, Facebook). In the main sample of 76 participants 85.5% identified as female ($n=65$), 14.5% as male ($n=11$). The participants' mean age was 38.96 ($SD = 13.1$). Participants have not been compensated for their participation.

Procedure

We conducted the survey after approval by Utrecht University's Ethics Committee via the online survey platform Qualtrics. First, an informed consent form was presented to the participants informing

them about their rights and briefly about the content of the survey (see Appendix B). Only participants who gave their consent could continue with the survey. Subsequently, participants could give answers to demographic questions regarding their gender identity, age, sexual orientation, and employment status (see Appendix C). Unemployed participants were directly forwarded to the end of the survey. Secondly, the participants were prompted via a vignette of around 100 words to imagine one of three different scenarios which described either (see Appendix D): 1. An inclusive climate promoting free expression of sexual orientation and supportive co-workers; 2. An exclusive climate that suppresses any expression of sexual orientation; Or, 3. A heteronormative climate that suppresses disclosure of non-heterosexual employees. Subsequently, the participants should imagine themselves working their current job in the type of climate they were assigned to. Furthermore, they were asked a manipulation check question (see Appendix E) to assess whether they understood the manipulation instructions. The manipulation check was executed as a dichotomous variable and the answer was tested in accordance with their assigned organisational climate condition. Thirdly, we explained briefly the purpose of D&I policies and presented the participants with different scales which were measuring the main variables (see Appendix E). Participants have not been debriefed after completion of the survey which constitutes a deviation from the protocol.

Materials

Independent Variable

The independent variable was Organisational climate, which consisted of three different organisational climate conditions, an inclusive, an exclusive, and a heteronormative climate (see Appendix D). Participants were randomly assigned to the conditions and the conditions were prompted via vignettes of around 100 words explaining the assigned organisational climate.

Dependent Variables

There were four dependent variables, each measured by one scale. All scales encompassed eight questions of the survey which were measured on 7-point Likert scales.

Anticipated Work Climate Positivity. This variable was assessed by a one-item scale with the question: “How positively or negatively would you feel about working in this work climate?” It was measured from 1 = “Negative” to 7 = “Positive”. It should assess how participants would expect their feeling to be in the assigned hypothetical working climate. Additionally, they were asked an open-ended question (“In a few sentences, please elaborate on how you would feel about working in this work climate:”), in which they could describe their feelings about working in their assigned type of climate. This open-ended question was intended to intensify the participants’ imagination of the scenario and let them consider its implications closer.

Support For D&I Policies and LGB Inclusion. This variable was assessed by a one-item scale with the question: “To what extent do you support D&I policies to facilitate LGB+ inclusion in the workplace?” It was measured from 1 = “Not at all” to 7 = “To a large extent”. It should assess to what extent heterosexual employees generally support D&I policies and LGB inclusion in the workplace.

Perceived D&I Policy Importance. This variable was assessed by a one-item scale with the question: “How important do you personally believe D&I policies are to the workplace?” It was measured from 1 = “Not at all important” to 7= “Very important”. It should assess how important heterosexual employees generally perceive D&I policies in the workplace.

Own Organisation’s D&I Policy Support. The last scale was devised based on a theoretical framework presented by Avery (2011). The scale’s five items which were measured from 1 = Strongly disagree to 7= Strongly agree, were derived from his propositions. The first item (“I have a good idea of the diversity policy of my organization.”) assessed the participant’s knowledge about their organisation’s D&I policies and was used as a control variable in the subsequent analysis. The four other items (“I think the diversity and inclusion policies of my organization are useful.”; “I think the diversity and inclusion policies of my organization are useful.”; “I am motivated to contribute to the successful implementation of the diversity and inclusion policies of my organization.”; “I want to play an active role in letting the diversity and inclusion policies of my organization succeed.”) measured D&I policy support of a

participant's own organisation's D&I policies. We combined the latter four items into one variable and performed a Cronbach's alpha test. The result indicated moderate levels of internal consistency, with a scale reliability statistic of $\alpha = .78$, which is satisfactory for this study. This combined variable should measure to what extent heterosexual employees support D&I policies in their own organisation and should thereby encompass real-world data because participants might be more at ease agreeing with general statements. Descriptive statistics for all main variables are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	Organisational climate	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Work climate positivity	inclusive	6.07	1.202	30
	exclusive	1.45	1.175	33
	heteronormative	1.92	.862	13
	Total	3.36	2.480	76
Support for D&I	inclusive	5.77	1.591	30
	exclusive	6.12	1.269	33
	heteronormative	4.69	2.359	13
	Total	5.74	1.676	76
D&I policy importance	inclusive	5.80	1.324	30
	exclusive	6.09	1.234	33
	heteronormative	5.92	1.498	13
	Total	5.95	1.305	76
Support organisation's D&I policy	inclusive	4.87	1.255	30
	exclusive	5.66	1.179	33
	heteronormative	4.90	1.340	13
	Total	5.22	1.282	76

Results

We used a General Linear Model (GLM), including a one-way MANOVA and one-way ANOVAs, to analyse the association between the independent variable climate condition with its three subcategories (i.e., inclusive, exclusive, and heteronormative) and Anticipated work climate positivity, Support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion, Perceived D&I policy importance, and Support for own organisation's D&I policy as dependent variables.

Preliminary Analyses

Before conducting the MANOVA and ANOVAs preliminary analyses have been performed to ensure that all assumptions have been satisfied. The assumption of no univariate outliers was assessed by inspection of side-by-side boxplots. fourteen outliers, with data points outside 1.5 interquartile ranges from the edge of the box of the upper and lower quartile, have been found, for all dependent variables and within each condition, but most were found within the exclusive organisational climate condition. Nine of these were extreme outliers, located more than three interquartile ranges from the box. Repeating the analysis with the bigger ($N = 105$) and smaller ($N = 70$) did not lead to substantial differences. Moreover, the normality of distribution was assessed by examining the skewness and kurtosis of each dependent variable within each condition. A normal distribution is assumed when the computed z-scores for skewness and kurtosis are within a ± 2.58 range. All variables violated this assumption as well (see Appendix B). Therefore, we transformed the variables with appropriate transformations based on their skewness (Osborne, 2010). The transformation for severely negative skewed variables, such as Support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion and Perceived D&I policy importance, is performed by reflecting and inverting the data points, using the following formula for variable X (Osborne, 2010):

$$NewX = 1 / (8 - X)$$

The transformation for moderately negative skewed variables, as for Support for own organisation's D&I policy, is performed by reflecting and taking the square root, by means of the following formula for variable X (Osborne, 2010):

$$NewX = \sqrt{(8 - X)}$$

Transforming the data eliminated outliers for Support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion (i.e., reflected and inversed), Perceived D&I policy importance (i.e., reflected and inversed), and Support for own organisation's D&I policy (i.e., reflected and square rooted), but not for Anticipated work climate positivity, because all values over one (i.e., $1 = \text{"Negative"}$) in the exclusive climate are outliers (8

extreme outliers and 1 regular outlier). For now, no outliers have been removed from the data, and the GLM was conducted with the lastly mentioned variables. To check if the outliers affected the results, we subsequently ran the analyses without outliers (Weisburg, 2014) which did not yield different results.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

	Organisational climate		Statistic	Std. Error
Work climate positivity	inclusive	Skewness	-1.542	.427
		Kurtosis	3.017	.833
	exclusive	Skewness	3.807	.409
		Kurtosis	16.262	.798
	heteronormative	Skewness	1.085	.616
		Kurtosis	1.772	1.191
Support for D&I (transformed)	inclusive	Skewness	-.088	.427
		Kurtosis	-1.846	.833
	exclusive	Skewness	-.417	.409
		Kurtosis	-1.636	.798
	heteronormative	Skewness	.372	.616
		Kurtosis	-2.025	1.191
D&I policy importance (transformed)	inclusive	Skewness	.105	.427
		Kurtosis	-1.905	.833
	exclusive	Skewness	-.276	.409
		Kurtosis	-1.755	.798
	heteronormative	Skewness	-.152	.616
		Kurtosis	-1.813	1.191
Support organisation's D&I policy (transformed)	inclusive	Skewness	-.278	.427
		Kurtosis	-.391	.833
	exclusive	Skewness	.416	.409
		Kurtosis	-.346	.798
	heteronormative	Skewness	.114	.616
		Kurtosis	-1.106	1.191

The normality of distribution of the transformed variables was assessed in the same way by examining the skewness and kurtosis of each dependent variable within each condition (see Table 2). For Support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion (transformed), Perceived D&I policy importance (transformed), and Support for own organisation's D&I policy (transformed) all z-scores fall within a 2.58

range and are thus assumed to be normally distributed. For Anticipated work climate positivity and its transformations, no normal distribution could be determined using the previous method. Additionally, a Shapiro-Wilk test was performed, which yielded significant results for all groups of Support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion (transformed), Perceived D&I policy importance (transformed), and Anticipated work climate positivity and all its transformations at a significance value of .05, indicating a non-normal distribution. For none of the groups of Support for own organisation's D&I policy (transformed) the test led to significant p-values, implying a normal distribution. Hence, the assumption of normality is partly violated, but the MANOVA and ANOVA are relatively robust to violations of this assumption (Laerd Statistics, 2015, 2017) and we continued with caution.

The dependent variables were tested for their correlation to check for multicollinearity (see Table 3). None of the correlation coefficients was higher than $r = .53$, hence moderately correlated, but two correlations were below 0.2 and not statistically significant. Multicollinearity could be ruled out, but low correlations are not ideal for a GLM (Laerd statistics, 2015). Therefore, separate one-way ANOVAs will be performed subsequently including a Bonferroni correction to validate previous findings.

Table 3. Correlations between variables

Variable		1.	2.	3.	4.
1. Work climate positivity	Pearson Correlation	1	-.092	-.134	.228*
2. Support for D&I (trans.)	Pearson Correlation	-.092	1	.660**	-.422**
3. D&I policy importance (trans.)	Pearson Correlation	-.134	.660**	1	-.436**
4. Support organisation's D&I policy (trans.)	Pearson Correlation	.228*	-.422**	-.436**	1

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Linearity was assessed by plotting scatterplots for all variables and subgroups. Almost all scatterplots displayed approximately linear relationships except for the scatterplot of Anticipated work climate positivity and Support for own organisation's D&I policy (transformed) in the inclusive climate

condition. The assumption is not considered to be severely violated; however, caution should be paid because non-linear relationships can reduce the power of the GLM (Laerd Statistics, 2015).

Multivariate outliers have been assessed by computing Mahalanobis distances for each participant and comparing these with the cut-off value of 18.47 for four dependent variables. The highest Mahalanobis distance was 13.8 and therefore below the cut-off value with a significance of $p < .001$. Thus, no multivariate outliers were found, and the assumption of no multivariate outliers was satisfied. The sample size assumption was satisfied as the minimum number of observations in each group is higher than the number of dependent variables (i.e., 4).

The Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices had a significant Box's M (46.31) with $p = .003$. Therefore, the assumption of homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices is not met, but at larger sample sizes (>30) the test is very sensitive and an alpha value of .001 can be used (Allen & Bennett, 2008), which would satisfy the assumption. Additionally, the treatment groups were not equally distributed with the biggest being more than 1.5 times (i.e., 2.54 times) larger than the smallest group. The Pillai's Trace test can be used in this case as it is robust to deviations from the assumption of the normality of the distribution of data (Laerd Statistics, 2015). In Table 4 we assessed the assumption of equal variance by Levene's Test of Homogeneity of Variance ($p > .05$). None of the dependent variables was significant at the given alpha level, implying that the assumption of homogeneity of variance is satisfied.

Not all assumptions could be satisfied. Support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion, Perceived D&I policy importance, and Support for own organisation's D&I policy have been transformed to satisfy some violated assumptions (e.g., outlier, normality of distribution). The transformations of Anticipated work climate positivity did not satisfy more assumptions and the untransformed variable was used in the subsequent analysis. This latter variable violated the assumptions of no univariate outliers, normality of distribution of data, and linearity (partly). Therefore, results will be interpreted with caution. After the

first run of the MANOVA, we conducted separate univariate ANOVAs which were subsequently repeated without extreme univariate outliers of Anticipated work climate positivity to assess their impact.

Table 4. Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances^a

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Work climate positivity	Based on Mean	1.152	2	73	.322
	Based on Median	1.973	2	73	.146
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	1.973	2	63.395	.147
	Based on trimmed mean	1.482	2	73	.234
Support for D&I (trans.)	Based on Mean	1.341	2	73	.268
	Based on Median	.243	2	73	.785
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.243	2	63.646	.785
	Based on trimmed mean	1.321	2	73	.273
D&I policy importance (trans.)	Based on Mean	.211	2	73	.811
	Based on Median	.008	2	73	.992
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.008	2	61.176	.992
	Based on trimmed mean	.226	2	73	.799
Support organisation's D&I policy (trans.)	Based on Mean	.097	2	73	.908
	Based on Median	.089	2	73	.915
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.089	2	72.328	.915
	Based on trimmed mean	.103	2	73	.902

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + Organisational climate

Main Analysis

To analyse the data, we performed a General Linear Model including a MANOVA to test whether there are differences between the groups of one variable and univariate ANOVAs to test which variable's groups have statistically different means. The results of the MANOVA imply a statistically significant difference in the means of the dependent variables based on the assigned organisational climate $F(8, 142) = 14, p < .001$; Pillai's Trace = 0.882, partial $\eta^2 = .441$. The multivariate $\eta^2 = .441$ for Pillai's Trace

implies that 44.1% of the multivariate variance is associated with the organisational climate. As the multivariate test showed significant results separate ANOVAs were conducted as post-hoc analyses to determine which variable contributed to its significance.

The results of the univariate ANOVAs are indicating a statistically significant difference in Anticipated work climate positivity ($F(2, 73) = 140.83; p < .001; \text{partial } \eta^2 = .794$), and Support for own organisation's D&I policy ($F(2, 73) = 4; p = .022; \text{partial } \eta^2 = .099$) within different organisational climate. The reported p-values for each ANOVA on the MANOVA output, however, are prone to Type I errors because they do not account for the multiple ANOVAs that have been conducted. Therefore, a Bonferroni adjusted a priori alpha value of .0125 can be used to reduce the chance of a Type I error, dividing the alpha level of .05 by the number of ANOVAs conducted (.05/4). Only the result for Anticipated work climate positivity lies below this adjusted p-value.

The results of the pairwise comparisons are displayed in Table 6. The alpha level has to be set as previously at .0125. We used Tukey's post hoc procedure because the assumption of homogeneity of equal variance was met. Only Anticipated work climate positivity showed statistically significant differences in the univariate ANOVAs and is the only considered variable for this post hoc procedure. The anticipated work climate positivity in the inclusive climate has been found to be on average 4.61 points (95% CI, 3.92 to 5.30) higher than in the exclusive condition ($p < .001$) and 4.14 points (95% CI, 3.24 to 5.05) higher than in the heteronormative condition ($p < .001$). We could not find a statistically significant difference between the exclusive and heteronormative climate.

Controlling for the knowledge about the D&I policies at the participants' own organisation (i.e., the first item of Support for own organisation's D&I policy scale) did not yield different results for either the transformed or the normal variables. Using the bigger sample, including the participants who incorrectly answered the manipulation check question ($N = 101$) or the smaller sample excluding self-employed participants ($N = 70$), did not affect the results. Rerunning the tests without the extreme outliers of Anticipated work climate positivity did not satisfy more assumptions nor did it lead to

different results for the multivariate test or the separate ANOVAs. Excluding the Anticipated work climate positivity altogether also did not affect the assumptions, except for the Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices with a slightly higher p-value of $p = .027$ (Box's $M = 24.95$), nor the results of the multivariate test or the separate ANOVAs. Moreover, running the GLM with the untransformed variables did yield slightly different results, but more assumptions have been violated.

Discussion

In this research, we assessed the anticipated work climate positivity in inclusive, exclusive, and heteronormative organisational climates for heterosexual employees. Moreover, we examined how these different organisational climates affected heterosexual employees' D&I policy and LGB inclusion support. We could partly confirm our first hypothesis, stating that heterosexuals will expect to feel most positive working in an inclusive climate compared to an exclusive or heteronormative climate, and least positive in an exclusive climate. We found a statistically significant difference between the positivity within the inclusive climate and the other two climate conditions but not between the exclusive and heteronormative climate conditions. One potential explanation for the lower positivity within the exclusive organisational climate could be that the suppression of free expression of a participant's sexual identity harms their self-interest and thereby reduces their anticipated work positivity in an exclusive organisational climate. However, we did expect that the difference between the positivity working in an exclusive or in a heteronormative working climate would be bigger and statistically significant because heterosexual employees are only indirectly affected in a heteronormative climate. However, the persons in this survey possibly felt also harmed in their self-interest when they imagined that their LGB colleagues could not freely express their sexual identity. Interestingly, ten out of thirteen participants in the heteronormative condition expressed negative emotions toward the suppression of LGB sexual identities in the open-ended question. Commonly mentioned themes were a disagreement of personal and organisational values, anger, and compassion with their LGB colleagues. Thus, the idea that participants would have to take a novel perspective to be more at ease imagining the experiences of

their LGB co-workers did not show the expected effect of making them feel least positive in the exclusive climate condition. Participants in this study are rather averse to a heteronormative organisational climate, which might be due to discrimination against their LGB colleagues and their discomfort with it. We could observe a trend towards the least positivity in the exclusive climate but due to insignificant results we could not statistically support this difference and this trend cannot be treated as conclusive.

Contrarily to our second hypothesis stating that heterosexual employees will show a more positive attitude toward D&I policies and LGB inclusion when imagining a heteronormative climate compared to imagining an inclusive working climate, but a less positive attitude compared to an exclusive working climate, we could not find any effects that would imply a difference in D&I policy and LGB inclusion support based on the imagined organisational climate. None of the three dependent variables Support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion, Perceived D&I policy importance, and Own organisation's D&I policy support yielded any statistically significant differences between the three different organisational climate conditions. Considering the conclusion drawn from the first hypothesis, this finding contradicts the assumption that participants should support inclusion and D&I policies more when they are more affected by exclusion (i.e., or indirectly affected in the heteronormative climate). Differences between the inclusive and the exclusive organisational climate have been found, however, for Support of own organisation's D&I policy, at an unadjusted p-value of .05 ($p = .028$). This observation must be treated with a lot of caution because it is not statistically significant, but it could indicate a trend in accordance with our second hypothesis.

Several factors must be considered which could have influenced the responses. First, the support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion could be, contrarily to our hypothesis, lowest in the heteronormative climate condition. This could be because in comparison to the other organisational climate conditions a heteronormative hierarchy is still in place, which could be threatened by the inclusion of LGB employees. While perspective-taking can decrease egoistic behaviour in cooperative environments it can increase it in competitive environments (Epley et al., 2006). Second, we assumed that a harmed self-interest or felt

negativity towards a working climate would be related to heterosexuals' support for D&I efforts. This assumption could be wrong, or it could be that self-interest only plays a minor role in D&I support. Third, D&I is a controversial and emotional topic and participants could have been drawn to answer the survey according to social desirability because they might not want to admit that they are more in opposition to D&I than their responses imply. Fourth, heterosexual employees often perceive workplaces as neutral environments and do not always perceive the exclusion of LGB identities (Reingardé, 2010). In the vignettes explaining the different organisational climate conditions, however, the exclusion of LGB employees was described very explicitly and surely more explicitly than in real-life situations. We assume that such explicit exclusion is very easily perceived as problematic whereas in more implicit situations it might be more difficult for heterosexual employees to detect exclusion and discrimination. Participants in this study likely have been more aware of the inequalities in the heteronormative condition as they are in reality. Moreover, participants might have misunderstood the vignettes because of the strong emphasis on the promotion or suppression of sexual expression. Based on some responses to the open-ended question we assume some participants could have understood the promotion of sexual expression in the inclusive climate condition as being meant very actively making the workplace a sexually loaded environment. That was not intended because free expression of sexual orientation does not equal heightened sexual communication. Some participants might have indicated feeling less positive in such an environment because they do not feel positive about sexual communication at their workplace.

Limitations

The small sample size constituted a limitation to the analysis because it lost a lot of power and potential trends could have resulted in significant differences. We could observe certain trends, such as the lowest mean for anticipated positivity being in the exclusive organisational climate condition. Or that the support for D&I policies of the own organisation differed between the inclusive and the exclusive climate, as hypothesised, at a higher p-value of .05. With a higher-powered analysis, more statistically

significant results could have been observed. Additionally, due to the small sample size, many variables displayed a lot of variances in their data which had an impact on the analysis. This analysis might have profited from a shorter questionnaire because many participants did complete it partially but left out the last few questions which were measuring the dependent variables of this research. Moreover, a vast majority of the participants that answered the manipulation check question incorrectly have been assigned to the heteronormative climate ($N = 18$) whereas only five and two answered the manipulation check question incorrectly in the inclusive and exclusive climate respectively. This resulted in very unequal treatment groups which could have affected the analysis. A potential explanation for the many incorrect answers in the heteronormative condition could be that the wording of the manipulation check question could have been understood as asking for the general freedom to express one's sexual orientation, whereas it was asked for the participants' personal freedom to express their sexual orientation. In the heteronormative condition, some people (i.e., LGB employees) are not able to freely express their sexual identity, which could have led some participants to falsely answer that in their assigned heteronormative condition they could not openly talk and express their sexual orientation. Finally, the gender distribution was very unequal with a vast majority identifying as female, which could have influenced the analysis because as being disadvantaged in comparison to men they belong to a minority group and might possess a different perspective-taking ability than men or feel more personally affected. Because of these limitations, the interpretation of results should be treated with caution, and they should be addressed in future research.

Conclusion

In this research, we assessed how different inclusive, heteronormative, and exclusive organisational climates affect heterosexual employees' support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion. The support of heterosexual employees for D&I policies and LGB inclusion is crucial because they determine their success. Their support, however, is dependent on self-interest. Moreover, perspective-taking can increase empathy and overlap with an outgroup and is a central element for help and support toward

outgroup members. We designed an experiment in which heterosexual employees were confronted with an exclusive organisational climate condition, besides an inclusive and heteronormative climate, which enabled them to take a novel perspective of not being able to express their sexual orientation freely. We assumed that their self-interest would be harmed most in this exclusive climate condition in comparison to a heteronormative or inclusive climate because as we hypothesised, they anticipated feeling least positive working in an exclusive climate. However, we could not conclude a different impact of the different organisational climates on the heterosexual employees' support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion. Thus, if the suppression of free expression of the participants' sexual orientation harmed their self-interest this harm was not sufficient to substantially increase their support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion. Moreover, it could be that participants did not sufficiently engage in perspective-taking because they might not have perceived the exclusive climate as a similar experience as to the experience of LGB employees. All these results should be interpreted with caution because not all assumptions for the statistical analysis could be satisfied. Although, we could not confirm all our hypotheses and the interpretation of our results must be treated with caution, and in consideration of the above-mentioned limitations, we could show that heterosexual employees are averse to heteronormative organisational climates in which their LGB colleagues cannot freely express themselves, to a similar degree as they are averse to exclusive organisational climates in which themselves cannot freely express their sexual orientation. Moreover, we could observe interesting trends in the support of heterosexual employees for D&I policies and LGB inclusion. These insights can be useful for HR practitioners and organisations in designing their D&I policies to foster LGB inclusion. Especially, knowing about heterosexual employees' tendency to disapprove heteronormative climates can be helpful to promote inclusive climates and increase their support for D&I efforts.

Future research is needed to re-test these potential trends with a bigger and better-powered sample while addressing the limitations of this study, such as potentially unclear wording in the questionnaire. Additionally, the manipulation of the organizational climate condition could be adapted

to make it more implicit or even integrated into a real-life experiment or study. Furthermore, it is important to assess the impact of self-interest as a potential mediator between the three organizational climates and the support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion. It could be that self-interest is of less importance for D&I support than we assumed.

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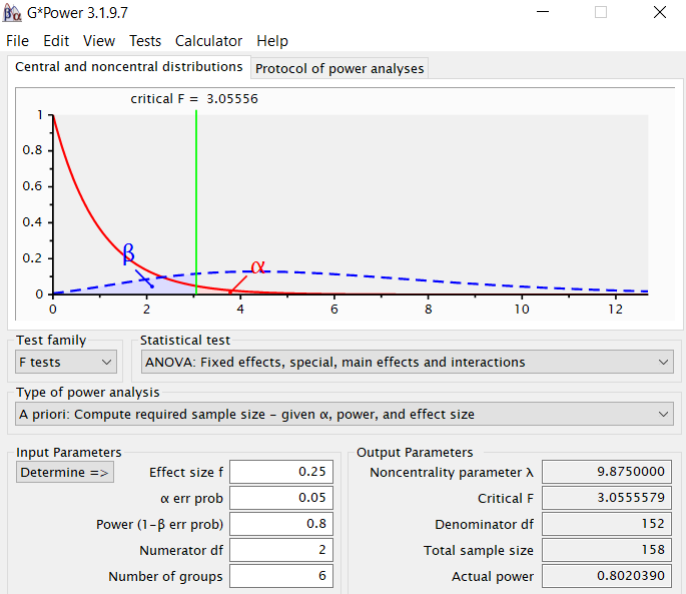
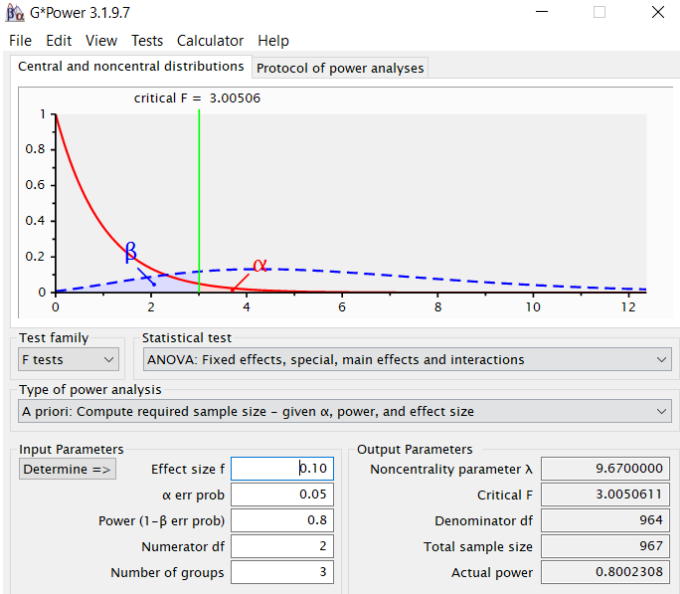
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Appendices

Appendix A: Power analysis with G*Power for small and medium effect size



Appendix B: Informed consent**Informed Consent Information on participating in a research project at Utrecht University**

Master research: Attitudes towards work climates

Version: 20 February 2022

Thank you for your interest in participating in our research, which is part of our master thesis project. If you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked to read about a work climate, imagine yourself working there, answer questions about the work climate and your work-related attitudes, and provide your demographic background information. This study is conducted by researchers from Utrecht University and should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete.

At the end of the survey, you will be redirected to a separate questionnaire where students of Utrecht University can choose to receive pilot hours (PPU) for participating in the survey. For this study, you can receive 0.25 PPU. For this, we need your name and student number. This information is only relevant to students of Utrecht University.

You can participate in this research if you are 18 years or older. Participation is entirely voluntary. You have the right to skip or not answer any questions you prefer not to answer. Not taking part or withdrawing after the study has begun will not penalize your standing on this platform in any way. If you withdraw at any time, no PPU will be given (only relevant for students of Utrecht University). There are no known or expected risks associated with participation in this research.

Your data will be anonymized and treated confidentially. All data that is collected, until the moment that your participation or the session has ended, will be used for research. The data may be used in scientific and professional publications. The anonymous data will be stored safely by Utrecht University for at least 10 years after publication. Your data may be shared with others in an anonymized way. You have the right to retract your data up to a month after participation. This means we will not use your data for the current or follow-up research, and we will not share it anonymously with others.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research or any of the procedures, please contact the researchers using the email addresses below. These details can also be found at the end of the study, in case you have any questions about this study after the session. For complaints, please contact the ethics committee at the following email address:

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By clicking on the "yes" button below you indicate that: you are at least 18 years of age, you have read

and understood all information provided here, and you consent to participate in this study.

Yes (1)

No (0)

Appendix C: Demographic questions**Gender identity**

What is your gender identity?

- Male (1)
 - Female (2)
 - Non-binary (3)
 - I prefer to self-describe: (4) _____
-

Age

What is your age (number of years only)?

Sexual Orientation

What is your sexual orientation?

- Heterosexual (1)
 - Gay / lesbian (2)
 - Bisexual (3)
 - I prefer to self-describe: (4) _____
-

Job status

Do you currently have a (side) job?

- Yes (1)
 - No (0)
-

Solo self-employed

Are you self-employed?

- Yes (1)
- No (0)

Appendix D: Vignettes**Condition 1: Inclusive**

Vignette 1 Inclusive

Now, imagine that the work climate in your organization was as described below. Please read the text and imagine yourself working in this work climate. Take your time, and read the text as many times as necessary to imagine yourself in this situation.

Your company values and promotes the inclusion of all its employees. Employees, whether they are lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB+) or straight, are encouraged to be open with each other. The work climate is such that everyone feels free to share their personal life with colleagues, if they want to. Employees can keep personal items in their space such as photographs of their family, partner or children, and they can openly talk about their weekend plans and relationships. Within this environment, no subject is taboo. Everyone can openly talk about their sexual orientation.

Condition 2: Exclusive

Vignette 2 Exclusive

Now, imagine that the work climate in your organization was as described below. Please read the text and imagine yourself working in this work climate. Take your time, and read the text as many times as necessary to imagine yourself in this situation.

Your company does not value or promote the inclusion of its employees. Employees, both LGB+ (i.e., lesbian, gay, or bisexual) and straight, are discouraged to be open with each other. The work climate is such that everyone feels reluctant to share their personal life with colleagues. Employees cannot keep personal items in their space such as photographs of their partner or children, and they cannot openly talk about their weekend plans and relationships. Within this environment, the subject of sexual orientation is taboo. No one can openly talk about their sexual orientation, not even straight employees.

Condition 3: Heteronormative

Vignette 3 Heteronormative

Now, imagine that the work climate in your organization was as described below. Please read the text and imagine yourself working in this work climate. Take your time, and read the text as many times as necessary to imagine yourself in this situation.

Your company does not value or promote the inclusion of its lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB+) employees. LGB+ employees are discouraged to be open with others at work. The work climate is such that LGB+ employees feel reluctant to share their personal life with colleagues. They cannot keep personal items in their space such as photographs of their partner or children, and they cannot openly talk about their weekend plans and relationships. Within this environment, the subject of sexual orientation is taboo. LGB+ employees cannot openly talk about their sexual orientation.

Appendix E: Measures**Manipulation check question**

You just imagined that you work in the work climate described. In this work climate, could you openly talk about and express your sexual orientation?

Yes (1)

No (0)

Intro

We are interested in how you would feel if you worked in the work climate described. Please answer the following questions imagining your organization has the work climate described.

Anticipated work climate positivity

How positively or negatively would you feel about working in this work climate?
(1 = Negative; 7 = Positive)

Open-ended question: Anticipated work climate positivity

In a few sentences, please elaborate on how you would feel about working in this work climate:

Intro

Now, we're interested in how much you support policies aimed at increasing inclusion at work. So-called diversity and inclusion (D&I) policies are directed towards empowering interpersonal differences among all employees with the aim to increase respect and appreciation for these differences.

Support for D&I policies and LGB inclusion

To what extent do you support D&I policies to facilitate LGB+ inclusion in the workplace?
(1 = Not at all; 7 = To a large extent)

Perceived D&I policy importance

How important do you personally believe D&I policies are to the workplace?

(1 = Not at all important; 7 = Very important)

Intro

The organisation you work in might have policies and initiatives to increase diversity and inclusion. Please think about these and then fill out the questions below.

Support for own organisation's D&I policy

Please indicate for each statement to what extent you agree or disagree.

(1 = Strongly disagree; 7 = Strongly agree)

1. I have a good idea of the diversity policy of my organization.
2. I think the diversity and inclusion policies of my organization are useful.
3. I support the diversity and inclusion policies of my organization.
4. I am motivated to contribute to the successful implementation of the diversity and inclusion policies of my organization.
5. I want to play an active role in letting the diversity and inclusion policies of my organization succeed.