Intention or Action, the Effect of Managerial Support for Diversity and Inclusivity Policies on the Perceived Climate for Inclusion

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Summary

The climate for inclusion is the way in which employees, irrespective of their background, are fairly treated, valued for who they are, and included in core decision making. When employees perceive this as high, it has various benefits to both employees and employers. To ensure this employers can employ various diversity and inclusion policies to establish this climate for inclusion, however this is not always effective due to a lack of support within the organization itself. An important factor in this can be the level of managerial support for the D&I policies. This research aims to explore the existing theories on the influence of managerial support for D&I policies on the perceived climate for inclusion, and expands further on this by exploring the moderating role of the personal values towards diversity of employees. This was explored through an experimental vignette study. In total 252 participants were included in the research. As predicted, the condition with high managerial support for D&I policies lead to a higher perceived climate for inclusion. However, there was no support found for the moderating effect of the personal values towards diversity. Future research should expand more on the relationship between the level of managerial support D&I policies and the perceived climate for inclusion, by looking at the support for D&I policies within the high level managers and explore the personal values towards diversity even further. Organizations and research should focus on finding avenues to increase managerial support for D&I policies to ensure a more effective implementation.

Introduction

While Dutch society has become more diverse over the years, it is often not reflected on the work floor of companies (Thijssen, 2023). In 2022 around 20% of companies put more focus on hiring employees from a minority background (Faber et al., 2023). This is an improvement that is welcomed and a trend that looks to be continuing upwards, granted that the employees are provided a good environment to land in. This can be seen as the Climate for Inclusion, described by Nishii (2013), as an environment in which employees are fairly treated, valued for who they are, and included in core decision making, regardless of their background or physical attributes. When the Climate for Inclusion is considered good, it has benefits to both employees and employer, ranging from an increase in prosocial behaviour (Twenge et al., 2007), higher employee retention (Shore et al., 2018), and more satisfaction and productivity amongst employees (Cho & Mor Barak, 2008). However, when an organization does not create the aforementioned climate for inclusion, but forces employees to hide parts of their identity to fit in, it has adverse effects on the employees' well-being and performance (Hewlin, 2003; Ellemers & Barreto, 2006). Hence not only improving diversity by hiring being important, but also creating an environment in which employees feel valued, fairly treated, and involved is an integral part of the application of diversity and inclusion policies, or D&I policies. When these D&I policies are proactively managed, they have a beneficial effect on the creation of the climate for inclusion (Nishii, 2013; Mor Barak et al., 2016).

However, the adoption of these policies do not immediately lead to an increase of the climate for inclusion and the aforementioned benefits (Mor Barak et al., 2021), as often the programs implemented are not effective (Kalev et al., 2006; Avery, 2011). The ineffective implementation is often due to the quality of said implementation, because companies do not

allocate adequate time and attention to communicate to employees, why and how the D&I policies are implemented (Iyer, 2009). This creates organizational opposition towards the implemented policies and because of this, employee productivity and performance will decrease, through the increase in organizational conflicts (Avery, 2011). To understand why these policies fail, it is thus important to understand why employees show opposition. A possible explanation could be a gap between the intention, and the eventual execution of the policies. As suggested by Mor Barak et al.(2021) within organizations there is often a gap between organizational intent, and organizational execution, which will have adverse effects on the intended target.

A key factor to the success of the implemented policies are the managers, seeing as they are the direct supervisors of the employees below them, they are often used as such (Avery & McKay, 2010; Boehm et al., 2013). Managers are the ones directly applying the directives in the policy, and communicating with their employees on the how and why. However, as seen in the research by Kalev et al. (2006) it is important that these managers also support the policies that are meant to be introduced. Managers could believe that when employees with a minority background get hired, they do not deserve the position, leading to an increase in stereotyping and decreasing inclusion (Bernstein et al., 2019; Kalev, 2006). When this does not happen, the concept of decoupling occurs, meaning the gap that exists between an organization's policies, and the actual implementation of practices (Mor Barak et al., 2021). When the lower level management does not support the implementation of D&I policies, it influences how the employees below them experience the D&I policies, Mor Barak et al. (2021) call this scenario "between levels decoupling". This disconnect will diminish positive effect of organizational support for D&I policies, which leads to failure to implement a climate for inclusion (Sahin et al., 2019).

As mentioned earlier the support of employees towards D&I policies is critical in its implementation. When there is opposition towards the D&I policies the effectiveness decreases because employees from the majority see the policies as a threat to their status quo (Iyer, 2022). Employees who work with their supervisor are influenced daily by them, so how the managerial support for D&I policies is perceived will influence employees own perception (Elvestuen & Valaker, 2021). Inclusive leadership is considered an important antecedent within the overall climate for inclusion (Mor Barak et al., 2021). This perception of their managerial support towards D&I policies will then also influence how an employee experiences the climate for inclusion. This perceived climate for inclusion was introduced by Sahin et al. (2019), to measure the experienced climate for inclusion on the work floor. Understanding the employee perspective is essential to understanding how to successfully implement D&I policies.

However, these employees themselves also carry their own biases and prejudices, which in turn will influence how supportive they themselves will be of the new D&I policies. While often employees might not openly make statements that could be considered so, the implicit biases can cause individuals to unconsciously act discriminatorily to their colleagues (Bernstein et al., 2019). As Mor Barak et al. (1998) found, employee backgrounds and personal values towards workplace diversity, influenced in turn how they perceived inclusivity in the workplace. As employees who experience managerial backing are more likely to support employees with a different background (Triana et al., 2011). However, when an employee themselves does not value diversity, they are of course less likely to be supportive. Suggesting that there might be an reinforcing effect of the personal values towards diversity, within a supportive environment.

Research Goals

Given that often there are good intentions behind the implementation and the essential nature of D&I policies in the process of shaping an inclusive organizational climate, furthering research into the implementation of these D&I policies is important to ensure these goals are reached. When looking at the possible influence of managerial support for D&I policies within organizations on the ineffective implementation of D&I policy, this research aims to understand this relationship between managerial support for D&I policies and the perceived climate for inclusion. Looking at it from the perspective of the employees within the company structure, taking a bottom-up approach instead of looking down from the top. Additionally, this research aims to explore gaps in the literature regarding this perspective.

Understanding these relationships will help further research into the effectiveness of D&I policies, their implementation, and provide further context for the theories of organizational decoupling as suggested by Mor Barak et al. (2021). Alongside the theoretical implications, it will also provide crucial information for organizations hoping to effectively shape their organizational culture to be more inclusive.

Theoretical background and hypotheses

Managerial D&I Policy Support and Perceived Climate for Inclusion

During their tenure as employees within their company, employees will develop perceptions about how their organization functions regarding diversity and will be more aware of their own perception of these values in their work environment (McKay et al., 2007). During these day to day interactions, the most prominent embodiment of the values espoused by the company is through the managers, given that they are powerful communicators who relay information provided by the board by their words and actions (Zohar & Luria, 2010). However. What happens when these words and actions do not align with the goals of the organization. As

mentioned earlier, Mor Barak et al. (2021) define this as decoupling. When a manager shows support for their employees, regardless of their background, the climate within the organization is considered more inclusive (Triana et al., 2011; Elvestuen & Valaker, 2021). This would be beneficial for implementing D&I policies within the organizational structure, as managers are often used for this purpose (Avery & McKay, 2010; Boehm et al., 2013), but that does not mean the managers are 100 percent behind these policies. When this misalignment happens, it can be assumed that managers will produce negative stereotype of minority workers (Bernstein et al., 2019), which in turn can result in a decrease in the level of inclusion (Kalev 2006). So based on the above it is hypothesized that employees working in an environment where there is low managerial support for D&I policies will experience a lower perceived climate for inclusion, when compared to colleagues working in a situation with high managerial support for D&I policies.

  Hypothesis 1: "The level of managerial support for diversity and inclusion policies is positively related to the perceived climate for inclusion within an organization."

Managerial D&I policy support, personal values towards diversity, and perceived climate for inclusion

  As opposition towards D&I policies by employees leads to a higher chance of the implementation of D&I policies failing (Iyers, 2022), it is important to look further than just the managerial influence on the perceived climate for inclusion. As Mor Barak et al., (1998) found, the personal values towards diversity influence how people experience inclusive culture. This implicit bias, as described by Bernstein et al. (2019), is an important factor in workplace behaviour. Especially in situations where there may not be an aligned approach to diversity and inclusion. Li et al. (2019) state, that employees who report higher on their personal values

towards diversity, report lower fulfilment of diversity promises made by their organization. This is in line with the first hypothesis, and with the theory by Mor Barak et al. (2021), that suggests that organizational misalignment on the topic of D&I policies leads to a lower climate for inclusion. Since employees who value diversity and inclusion higher report dissatisfaction more, it can be assumed that employees who value diversity greater will be more impacted by the managerial support for D&I policies they experience (Li et al., 2019). On top of that, when employees who value diversity greater, feel that they are supported by their own managers, they are more likely to help fellow colleagues from a minority background (Triana et al., 2011).

Although research into the specific relationship between managerial support for D&I policies, personal values towards diversity, and perceived climate for inclusion, is scarce and more insight into this topic is need, based on the above it is proposed that the personal values of employees towards diversity moderate the relationship between managerial support towards D&I policies and perceived climate for inclusion, by amplifying the effects. Meaning that employees who value diversity report higher scores of perceived climate for inclusion when managerial support is high compared to their colleagues, and report a lower perceived climate for inclusion when managerial support is low compared to their colleagues in the same situation.

Hypothesis 2: The relationship between managerial support for D&I policies and the perceived climate for inclusion is moderated by the personal value towards diversity, such that people who value diversity highly will report higher perceived climate for inclusion scores when managerial support is high and lower scores when managerial support is low, compared to their colleagues who do not value diversity highly.

Methods

Participants

The study was conducted among people who have work experience. Participants were gathered through convenience and snowball sampling (Emerson, 2015), it was distributed on social media such as LinkedIn and Facebook, including public groups and networks. Besides this it was spread through the organization SurveySwap, who have their own database of participants. It was spread on the private network on LinkedIn and Survey sharing groups on Facebook. The total sample consisted of 340 participants of which 64 participants did not complete the questionnaire, leading to their removal form the total sample and a total of 276 participants. However, after the attention check 24 more participants were removed leading to 252 participants being present in the sample. To reach sufficient power of P=0.80 with $r = 0.04$ and $a = 0.05$, a minimum amount of participants of 200 was needed, this meant that the power was met (Case & Ambrosius, 2007). The gender distribution was as followed: 125 men, 122 women, and 5 did not want to specify. The average age was 34.5 (SD = 12.368), 27 participants did not fill in their age. 205 participants did not hold Dutch nationality. On average participants have been working 5.6 years (SD = 6.993) at their company and they work 33 hours per week (SD = 12.942). 216 Participants are currently working. Among the participants, 92 currently have a supervisory role at their job.

Design

Participants accessed the questionnaire through a link which directs them to the questionnaire. After agreeing to the informed consent, the participants filled in demographic questions, which provided information on age, gender, employment status, if they hold Dutch nationality, current tenure, work hours, and if they are supervisors. Subsequently, participants

filled in the questionnaire for the Personal Diversity Value. Following this participants were randomly assigned to one of the two conditions: high (N = 130) versus low perceived managerial support for D&I policies (N= 133). After reading the vignette participants filled in a manipulation check, after which they filled in the Perceived Climate for Inclusion Questionnaire.

Measures

Personal Diversity Value

To measure the personal attitude towards diversity amongst participants the Personal Diversity Value subscale of the Diversity Perceptions Scale was used (Mor Barak et al., 1998). A fourth question was added in accordance with research by Triana et al. (2011). The scale consists of 4 items: (1) Knowing more about cultural norms of diverse groups would help me be more effective in my job, (2) I think that diverse viewpoints add value in the workplace, (3) I believe diversity is a strategic business issue, (4) I value diversity in the workplace. The items were answered on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree, to strongly agree. ($\alpha = 0.832$)

Vignette

Participants were randomly assigned one of two conditions: High versus Low Managerial support for D&I policies. In each condition participants were asked to read a vignette about a fictional work environment in which they had to imagine themselves to be working. The vignettes contained an experimental manipulation in which extent the manager in the scenario supported D&I policies of the fictional organization. Participants in the *low managerial D&I policy support condition* read the following scenario:

"Contrary to the organization's stance, your manager does not support nor is well-versed in the content of the D&I policy of the organization. This reflects a disregard for the activities within the organization that contribute to diversity and the fair treatment of employees, and that

are aimed to make employees feel that they belong and can be themselves in the organization. As a new member of the team, your manager neither invests energy nor time in implementing these policies nor ensures that you and other team members are informed about the opportunities and specific D&I initiatives available for diverse groups of employees. This lack of action includes failing to provide information about the organization's initiatives that cater to the needs of a diverse workforce. This alienating you and other team members from the D&I efforts purported by the company."

Participants who were assigned the *high managerial D&I policy support condition* read the following scenario:

"Your manager supports and is well-versed in the content of the D&I policy of the organization, which entails all activities within an organization that contribute to the diversity and fair treatment of employees, and that make employees feel that they belong and can be themselves in the organization. As a new member of the team, your manager shows their support for these policies by investing considerable energy and time in implementing these policies and ensure that you and other team members are informed about the opportunities and specific D&I initiatives available for diverse groups of employees. This includes a variety of dietary options, flexible holiday schedules, wheelchair accessibility, gender-inclusive restrooms, transition leave, prayer rooms, and quiet spaces. Your manager will also provide information about various employee networks, talent programs within the organization."

Participants were asked to keep this scenario in mind while answering the questions (appendix **A**). During the coding process, participants in the *low managerial D&I policy support condition* were classed as 0, while participants in the *high managerial D&I policy support condition* were classed as 1.

Climate for Inclusion

To measure the perceived climate for inclusion, the Perceived Climate for Inclusion Questionnaire was used (Boezeman et al., in preparation). An adjustment was made in the questionnaire to account for the fact that participants were answering a fictional scenario. This was done by adding "I expect that" to the questionnaire statement, furthermore it was also rewritten to make it a bit more easily understandable. This lead to the following phrase: "I expect that people who are in one way or another (visibly or invisibly) different from most others at BVV B.V.". Participants were then asked to imagine they were working in the scenario presented in the vignette and fill in the items based on that experience. Participants were asked to answer how much they felt 6 statements reflected the way people would be treated at the fictional company. This was done using a 7-point Likert scale, 1 indicating strong agreement with the left statement, while 7 indicates strong agreement with the right statement, see appendix A. Some examples of statements were: "I expect that people who are in one way or another (visibly or invisibly) different from most others at "BVV B.V.": … Are seen as a burden - … Are seen as an asset, … Are left out - … Are included" ($\alpha = 0.931$).

Manipulation Check

To check whether or not participants had correctly understood and imagined the scenario they filled in the manipulation check, which was created for this research. The manipulation check consisted of 3 items regarding the scenario they just read. The items were answered on a 7 point Likert scale. (1) My manager is positive about the diversity policy at "BVV B.V.", (2) My manager supports the diversity policy of "BVV B.V.", (3) My manager is able to apply the diversity policy of "BVV B.V.". This was analysed using a linear regression to measure if the scenario matched the score on the manipulation check ($\alpha = 0.974$).

Attention Check

To ensure that participants were engaged with the questionnaire, a control question was added to the Perceived Climate for Inclusion Questionnaire. It was embedded between the questions of the questionnaire and used the same 7-point Likert Scale and asked to fill in the left most answer. Participants that did not fill in the question as described were removed from the data. However, as seen in Appendix A, it could be confusing to see which value is the most left because the format of the questionnaire. Because of this participants who filled in 1 or 7 were kept in (N = 252), leading to 24 participants being removed from the dataset.

Data analysis

To ensure that the questionnaires were valid and measured exploratory factor analyses were conducted. Using principal axis factoring with a Direct Oblimin rotation it was checked if the items that were supposed to be related, actually were. The pattern matrix can be seen in table 1. As seen in table 1, there are no cross-loadings between the two scales.

Data Preparation

Participants who did not complete the demographic questions were included in the data, replacing the missing values with averages in line with Baraldi and Enders (2013). Missing age was be substituted with the mean age (34.48), same goes for current tenure at their job (M = 5.6), and current work hours per week (M = 33). A Z-test was ran to spot possible outliers regarding age, but only 1 participant was more than 3 standard deviations removed from the mean, this participant was not deleted after careful consideration due to the fact that the participant was reflecting on a fictional scenario within the experiment and the fact that there were 27 missing values for age (Mowbray et al., 2018). Participants that did not fill in gender were put under Do Not Want to share (2 participants). Given that the demographic questions were only meant to be

descriptive, the missing values have not been replaced. Missing values during the questionnaire questions will be left open, given that questionnaire scores were calculated using the mean of the items.

Analysis

The statistical analysis was run using *IBM SPSS Statistics 29*. H1 was tested using a linear regression, with the Managerial Support Condition as the independent variable, and the Perceived Climate for Inclusion as the dependent variable. Hypothesis 2 was tested using the PROCESS macro within SPSS (Hayes, 2013). Because this is a moderation effect, Process model 1 is used with the Managerial Support Condition as IV, Perceived Climate for Inclusion as DV, and Personal Value towards Inclusion as moderator W. After this, a linear regression was run, with the Manipulation check as the dependent variable and the experimental condition as the independent variable. This test was run to explore whether or not the experimental condition was clear enough in the level of managerial support for D&I policies.

Results

Preliminary Testing

Before the hypotheses were tested, an Exploratory Factor Analysis using Principal Axis Factoring (PAF) and Oblique rotation was run to explore whether or not the intended constructs were measured by the chosen items. As seen in Table 1, the three scales were matched up according to their items and factors. It shows us that the items in the manipulation check should be reverse coded. After this Reliability Analyses were run for the independent scales, which showed that no items had to be removed, because the Cronbach's Alpha was reliable for every scale and it would not increase with the removal of any items. The items in the manipulation check were not included in the Exploratory Factor Analysis because they were only used to

check the effectiveness of the manipulation.

Table 1: Patern Analysis of study variables

	Factor	
	1	2
Factor 2: Personal Diversity Value		0.765
Knowing more about cultural norms of diverse groups would help me be more effective in my job		0.824
I think that Diverse viewpoints add value in the workplace		0.602
I believe diversity is a strategic business issue		0.809
I value diversity in the workplace		
Factor 1: Perceived Climate for Inclusion		
I expect that people who are in one way or another (visibly or invisibly) different from most others at "BVV B.V.":		
… Are looked down upon - … Are admired	0.728	
… Are seen as a burden - … Are seen as an asset	0.821	
… Are disadvantaged - … Are taken into consideration	0.840	
… Have bad things said about them - … Have good things said about them	0.762	
… Are left out - … Are included	0.914	
… Are considered of little importance - … Are considered of much importance	0.899	

Hypothesis Testing

First Hypothesis 1 was tested using the experimental conditions, High or Low Managerial Support for D&I policies, as independent variable. This is a dichotomous variable, meaning that a score of 0 represents a low level of managerial D&I policy support condition (N = 122), and 1 represents the high level condition (N=130). The scores on the perceived climate for inclusion questionnaire were used as an dependent variable. This was done using a linear regression in SPSS.

As seen in Table 2, there is a significant positive effect for the relationship between the condition of high level of managerial support for D&I policies and the perceived climate for inclusion, $b = 0.251$, SE $= 0.167$, $t(250) = 4.094$, $\rho < 0.001$. This provides support for Hypothesis

1, implying that managerial support for D&I policies leads to a higher perceived climate for inclusion.

Table 2: Regression analysis results for the Perceived Climate for Inclusion

	B	SE	t	p
High/Low Managerial Support	0.251 [0.355, 1.013]	0.167	4.094	< 0.001

Next the moderating effect of the Personal Values towards Inclusion was tested using the PROCESS Macro. As mentioned earlier, PROCESS Model 1 was applied, with the Managerial Support condition as independent variable, the score on Perceived Climate for Inclusion Questionnaire as dependent variable, and the score on the Personal Diversity Value scale as moderator W. The mean score on Personal Diversity Value was 5.49 (SD = 1.169)

As seen in Table 4, there is no significant evidence supporting an interaction effect between the level of managerial support for D&I policies and personal opinion towards diversity in the workplace, $b = -0.01$, $t = -0.04$, $p = 0.97$. This implies that there is no significant support towards Hypothesis 2, implying that the personal values towards diversity, do not significantly impact the relationship between managerial support for D&I policies, and the perceived climate for inclusion.

Table 3: Moderation analysis results for the Perceived Climate for Inclusion

	B	SE	t	p
High/Low Managerial Support	0.62 [0.31, 0.92]	0.15	4.02	< 0.001
Personal Diversity Value	0.47 [0.29, 0.65]	0.09	5.16	< 0.001
High/Low Managerial Support X Personal Diversity Value	-0.01 [-0.26, 0.25]	0.13	-0.04	0.97

Manipulation Check

An additional linear regression was run, to check if the experimental condition, high/low managerial support for D&I policies, were truly manipulated. This relationship between

the experimental conditions and the manipulation check was significant, $b = 0.785$, SE $= 0.177$, $t(250) = 20.010$, $\rho < 0.001$, implying that participants who read the scenario for high managerial support for D&I policies, also perceived this to be the case.

Discussion:

As diversity and inclusion in the workplace will increase in importance over the years as the world becomes more global, research into the perceived climate for inclusion in the workplace will stay as an important subject. As the benefits of a good climate for inclusion are beneficial for both employer and employee. The goal of this study was to gain a better understanding of the relationship between the level of managerial support towards D&I policies and the perceived climate for inclusion. And hoping to establish the role of the employee's personal values towards diversity in this relationship.

Managerial Support for D&I Policies and the Perceived Climate for Inclusion

In line with the expectations, there is a positive relationship between the levels of managerial support towards D&I policies, and the perceived climate for inclusion amongst employees. This implies that when employees notice that their supervisors openly support D&I policies and make an effort to apply them, they perceive the climate for inclusion in their workplace to be higher. This is in line with the prediction done based on theory by Mor Barak et al. (2021), which stated that when decoupling would be present, climate for inclusion would be low. As during the experiment in the high managerial support for D&I policies there was no decoupling, the results support this theory. Which was further supported by Triana et al. (2011) and, Elvestuen and Valaker (2021), which stated that increased support by managers towards minorities would lead to an increase in the perceived climate for inclusion.

This study helps to paint the picture that within an organization that puts focus on D&I

policies, the managerial support for these policies has a big impact on the effectiveness of these policies. It provides avenues for further research into the relationship between upper and lower level management's influence on workplace dynamics and creating an inclusive workplace (Nishii, 2013).

Managerial Support for D&I Policies, Personal Values towards Diversity, and the Perceived Climate for Inclusion

Based on the previous literature (Li et al., 2019; Mor Barak et al., 2021; Triana et al., 2011) it was expected that employees who value diversity report higher scores of perceived climate for inclusion when managerial support is high compared to their colleagues, and report a lower perceived climate for inclusion when managerial support is low compared to their colleagues in the same situation, however this reinforcing relationship was not found for the personal values of employees.

A possible explanation why the expected effect was not found would be that participants answered the questions according to a social desirability, the mean answers of the questionnaire were 5.49 (SD = 1.169), the small standard deviation implies that most participants scored around the mean. A question like: "I think that diverse viewpoints add value in the workplace" could be considered socially sensitive and because of that participants may knowingly or unknowingly have answered the questions to fit in with social standards, or answer in a way that they might think is desired by the researcher (Van de Mortel, 2008). This affects the validity of the questionnaire, leading to a possible influence on the analysis.

Additionally during the analysis, there was a direct effect found between the personal values towards diversity and perceived climate for inclusion (see table 3). Which is in line with the research by Iyers (2022) and Mor Barak et al. (1998). This relationship might be worthwhile

to explore further in future research, suggesting that while the personal values towards diversity do not influence the relationship between managerial support towards D&I policies and the perceived climate for inclusion, there is definitely more to expand on when it comes to the relationship between personal values towards diversity and the perceived climate for inclusion.

Practical Implications

The results of this study have practical implications for organizations looking to implement D&I policies. As managers are considered key factors in the implementation of the D&I policies, and their resistance might rub off on their employees, it will be important for organizations to clearly communicate with their managers and make sure that they are behind the program being implemented (Avery & McKay, 2010; Zohar & Luria, 2010). Of course many methods have been tried, for example trainings (Kalev, 2006). However, this does not always wield the desired results. So for organizations it is essential to ensure that their managers are supportive of the new D&I policies given their influence on their employees (Goswami & Goswami, 2018; Kuknor & Bhattacharya, 2020). Additionally, taking steps to increase managerial support for D&I policies will also prevent negative effects from taking advantage of a diverse work culture, without cultivating it (Leroy et al., 2021).

Furthermore, while there was no influence of the personal values towards diversity on the relationship between the managerial support towards D&I policies and the perceived climate for inclusion. The presence of the relationship between personal values towards diversity and the perceived climate for inclusion means that organizations could be a headache for organizations, which makes is it needed to establish a base of support amongst employees for the D&I policies before they are implemented (Mor Barak et al., 1998; Iyers, 2022).

Strengths, limitations and recommendations for future research

A strength of this research was that the needed amount of participants to reach power (P=0.80), namely at least 200 participants was reached. This meant that the sample is of sufficient quantity to properly reject and accept the proposed hypotheses. (Case & Ambrosius, 2007). This has a positive impact on the validity of the research.

The use of vignettes within the experimental condition is one of the strengths of this research. As mentioned there was a strong effect of the high/low managerial support for D&I policies conditions on the scores in the manipulation check questions, implying that the vignettes covered the situation well, and communicated the scenario clearly. This implies that the construct validity of the vignette is high. However, since it does contain a fictional scenario it could be that the external validity of the research is not as high, given that people tend to judge fictional scenarios differently from real experiences (Eifler & Petzold, 2019).

As mentioned above, social desirability could have an impact on the results found for the second hypothesis as the scores were centered around the mean with a small standard deviation. This could be due to having a sample that might be more open towards diversity in the workplace, as in the research by Triana et al. (2011) the mean score on the personal value for diversity was 4.90 (SD = 0.86). On the other hand, it could also mean that the questions were too agreeable and thus the use of a different questionnaire to measure the same construct could be used for future research.

A limitation in the research could be the data set. During the early data collection period there were a lot of participants who started the questionnaire, but did not finish it. This led to a large amount of attrition, implying that the questionnaire could be too long or complicated. This was also feedback that was given back. However, this was solved when the participants were gathered through SurveySwap, a data collection service that pays participants for their

participation. The difference between the voluntary filling in of the data and the paid with regards to attrition could be assigned to the length and complexity of the questionnaire, preventing people who did not care about the topic to drop out, while people who did care about the topic or got monetary compensation wanted to finish the survey. However, since the two experimental groups were similar in size, this did not threaten the research in the end (Behaghel et al., 2009).

Another dataset related limitations is due to the way participants were acquired. The survey was spread through my personal network, which largely consists of higher educated participants, during the demographic questions, no question regarding education level was added meaning that it is hard to gauge whether or not this had influence on the results. Furthermore, the data largely consisted of participants from outside of the Netherlands, and due to a lack of specification of the other countries it cannot be ruled out that nationality impacts the results.

This plays into the decision to not include participant background into the research. This was done due to time constraints and difficulty with adjusting the vignettes to be all encompassing. However, as done in for example the research by Li et al. (2019) adding the background of the participants, for example if they belong to a minority group could lead to additional explanations that have not been explored in this research.

Due to time constraints it was also decided to only focus on one of the organizational scenarios regarding organizational support for D&I policies. In both experimental conditions the participant was placed in a scenario where the organization supported the implementation of D&I policies and the experimental condition was the high or low level of managerial support for these policies. However, not all organizations are supportive of D&I initiatives and in those companies there are also managers present who do. Adding one more aligned, low organizational

support for D&I policies and low managerial support for D&I policies, and one more misaligned, low organizational support for D&I policies and high managerial support for D&I policies, in accordance to the model by Mor Barak et al. (2021), would provide even more insight into the relationship between managerial support for D&I policies and organizational support for D&I policies.

Lastly, while this research was primarily focused on exploring the relationship between managerial support for D&I policies and the perceived climate for inclusion, it does not give an answer of what would be considered best practices to increase the managerial support for D&I policies. While Kalev et al. found that moderating managerial bias through diversity training and evaluation were least effective in increasing diversity in management, most other approaches are more focused on the approaches themselves (2006). Looking at the theory of the climate for inclusion does give a possible interesting avenue for future research, as employees who feel fairly treated, valued for who they are, and included in core decision making judge the climate to be more inclusive (Nishii, 2013). A possible angle to explore in future research would be to focus on the effect of including the manager within the decision making process of the D&I policies. By increasing organizational psychological ownership it could lead to an increase in affective organizational commitment and result in an increase in managerial support towards D&I policies (Mayhew et al., 2007).

Conclusion

Even though organizations do seem to be putting more effort into the implementation of diversity and inclusion policies to increase the climate for inclusion, and it seems to be coming from a good place, it does not always mean that it will be effective. The results of this research suggest that managerial support for diversity and inclusion policies is an important aspect in the

successful implementation of these policies, and should be taken into account when deciding on the strategy used. The personal values towards diversity did not seem to enhance the effects of managerial support for D&I policies on the perceived climate for inclusion. However, a universal high score on the personal values towards diversity and the fact that there was a relationship between these personal values and the perceived climate for inclusion do warrant further exploration in future research. By further exploring the influence of managerial support for D&I policies on the perceived climate for inclusion, how to combat low managerial support towards D&I policies and other possible causes will be beneficial towards both employees and employers in the future.

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Appendix A

Perceived Climate for Inclusion - Final

Q2 Dear participant, I would like to thank you for your participation in this study.

Topic and goal of the study.

As a master student at Utrecht University, I am conducting research on the influence of managerial support for diversity and inclusion policies on the perceived climate for inclusion. Many contemporary organizations implement various diversity and inclusion initiatives aimed at making diverse individuals feel included in the workplace. That is, to ensure that diverse individuals have a feeling of belonging and are able to be themselves. Even when they differ from most other employees. In this research, we examine how people view these initiatives and what they think of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

If you participate in the questionnaire, we will ask several questions about yourself and how you experience the workplace and diversity policies of your hypothetical future organization.

Completing the questionnaire will take about 10 minutes.

Page Break

Q3 If you complete this questionnaire the following conditions apply:

 - Participation in this study is voluntary. By completing and submitting the questionnaire, you give us permission to use your data for our research.
- You can skip questions you do not want to answer. You can stop the questionnaire at any time. If you do not complete the questionnaire, the answers you gave will be stored and used in the study.
- Your questionnaire responses may be used for scientific research and publications. The research data will be stored by researchers at Utrecht University for at least 10 years after the research.

Your Privacy

Your privacy is important to us. Therefore, we make sure that you are never recognizable as an individual in the data files and (scientific) publications. To this end, we take the following measures:
- We never make statements about individuals. In (scientific) publications, we only make statements about groups (of at least 10 people).
- Your data will be processed confidentially and in accordance with privacy laws and regulations.
- Research data will be stored anonymously. In the questionnaire, we ask for your age, gender and work experience, among other things. Because we do NOT ask for your name, address, email address or IP address, you cannot be (directly) identified.

Questions or complaints?

Do you have questions or comments about the survey? Please contact the research team: Bob van Veldhuizen (B.vanveldhuizen@students.uu.nl) And supervisor of the project Yonn Bokern (y.n.a.bokern@uu.nl).

Do you want to file an official complaint about the research? Then please contact

klachtenfunctionaris-fetcsocwet@uu.nl. You can also file a complaint with the Dutch Data Protection Authority.

○ I agree and I am sufficiently informed about the study. (1)

○ No, I do not agree and do not wish to participate in the study. (2)

Q5 What is your age?

Age: (1)

▼ 1 (1) ... 100 (100)

Q6 How would you identify yourself as:

○ Man (1)

○ Woman (2)

○ Other (3)

○ Do not want to share (4)

Q8 Do you hold Dutch nationality

○ No (1)

○ Yes (2)

Q9 Are you currently employed?

○ No (1)

○ Yes (2)

Q18 How many years have you been employed at your current organization?
(Answer in full years)
Years: (1)

▼ 1 (1) ... 100 (100)

Q19 How many hours do you work per week?
Hours: (1)

▼ 1 (1) ... 100 (100)

Q20 At your current job, do you supervise employees?

○ No (1)

○ Yes (2)

○ Does not apply (3)

Q13 Please answer the questions regarding your personal opinion towards diversity in your workplace. If you are not currently employed please take any future work into consideration.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat disagree (3)	Neither agree nor disagree (4)	Somewhat agree (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly agree (7)
Knowing more about cultural norms of diverse groups would help me be more effective in my job (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I think that diverse viewpoints add value in the workplace (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I believe diversity is a strategic business issue (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

| I value diversity in the workplace (4) | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

Scenario 1 Imagine you will start working at Company "BVV B.V.", where the board of directors dedicates significant attention to developing diversity and inclusion (D&I) policies. These policies aim to ensure that all employees, even when they differ from most other employees, feel a sense of belonging and can be themselves within the organization. The CEO explicitly expresses support for these initiatives, emphasizing the importance of making everyone feel included and valued.

Your manager supports and is well-versed in the content of the D&I policy of the organization, which entails all activities within an organization that contribute to the diversity and fair treatment of employees, and that make employees feel that they belong and can be themselves in the organization. As a new member of the team, your manager shows their support for these policies by investing considerable energy and time in implementing these policies and ensure that you and other team members are informed about the opportunities and specific D&I initiatives available for diverse groups of employees. This includes a variety of dietary options, flexible holiday schedules, wheelchair accessibility, gender-inclusive restrooms, transition leave, prayer rooms, and quiet spaces. Your manager will also provide information about various employee networks, talent programs within the organization.

Please answer the following questions while keeping this scenario in mind.

Scenario 2 Imagine you will start working at Company "BVV B.V.", where the board of directors dedicates significant attention to developing diversity and inclusion (D&I) policies. These policies aim to ensure that all employees, even when they differ from most other employees, feel a sense of belonging and can be themselves within the organization. The CEO explicitly expresses support for these initiatives, emphasizing the importance of making everyone feel included and valued.

Contrary to the organization's stance, your manager does not support nor is well-versed in the content of the D&I policy of the organization. This reflects a disregard for the activities within the organization that contribute to diversity and the fair treatment of employees, and that are aimed to make employees feel that they belong and can be themselves in the organization. As a new member of the team, your manager neither invests energy nor time in implementing these policies nor ensures that you and other team members are informed about the opportunities and specific D&I initiatives available for diverse groups of employees. This lack of action includes failing to provide information about the organization's initiatives that cater to the needs of a diverse workforce. This alienating you and other team members from the D&I efforts purported by the company.

Please answer the following questions while keeping this scenario in mind.

Q21 The following questions are about how you think your manager views the diversity policy of "BVV B.V.". Please indicate for each statement to what extent you

agree or disagree with it.

	Completely Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Agree (6)	Completely Agree (7)
My manager is positive about the diversity policy at "BVV B.V." (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My manager supports the diversity policy of "BVV B.V." (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
My manager is able to apply the diversity policy of "BVV B.V." (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q16 Different types of people work in 'BVV B.V.'. There are men and women, people from different cultural backgrounds and age groups, with different sexual orientations, work styles and political beliefs. While some differences are immediately visible, other differences are not.   How would you expect that people who are in some way (visibly or invisibly) different from most of their colleagues treated at "BVV B.V."?

Instructions for the following question
Read the work situations on the left-hand side and the opposite work situation on the right-hand side. Choose one answer for each statement. The closer your answer is to the left-hand side, the more you expect the work situation on the left is applicable according to you. The closer your answer is to the right-hand side, the more you expect the work situation on the right is applicable according to you.

I expect that people who are in one way or another (visibly or invisibly) different from most others at "BVV B.V.":

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Are looked down upon	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Are admired
Are seen as a burden	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Are seen as an asset
Are disadvantaged (for example with work tasks, development, working times)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Are taken into consideration (for example with work tasks, development, working times)
Have bad things said about them	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Have good things said about them
This is a control question. Please select the first circle on the left to show that you are paying attention.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	This is a control question. Please select the first circle on the left to show that you are paying attention.
Are left out	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Are included

Are considered of little importance		○	○	○	○	○	○	○		Are considered of much importance

Q17 Thank you for your participation in this research!

The goal of this research is to determine the influence of managerial support for diversity policies on the expected climate for inclusion on the work floor.
If you have any questions or comments you can contact me at
b.vanveldhuizen@students.uu.nl