

The Consequences of Women-Targeted Diversity Approaches on Men



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Abstract

Organisations strive for a gender diverse workforce to address various challenges, nevertheless women remain a minority group in high-power leadership positions.

Organisations often implement women-targeted diversity programs to recruit and retain women, these programs often neglect men. Given the importance of the perspectives of men in diversity initiatives, the purpose of this study is to examine how the inclusion of men in diversity approaches affects their organisational commitment. To measure this relation we used a between-subjects experimental design with two conditions: a non-all-inclusive and an all-inclusive diversity approach. We analysed the data of 94 male participants who met the eligibility criteria and completed the survey. We found that the type of diversity approach did not significantly affect the organisational commitment of men. However, we did find that the type of diversity approach indirectly affects organisational commitment through perceived inclusion. Identification with their gender group did not moderate the relation between diversity approach and perceived inclusion. This highlights the importance of perceived inclusion in influencing commitment among men, regardless of the identification with their gender group. This study emphasises practical implications for organisations to enhance diversity and inclusion efforts to boost commitment among men by broadening their approaches to be more inclusive of all gender groups and enhancing inclusive policies and practices. To know how to keep male employees devoted to the organisation while reaching for equal gender diversity, future research can further examine the indirect effect of diversity approach on organisational commitment.

Keywords: diversity approach, perceived inclusion, organisational commitment, identification with gender group

Introduction

Organisations are striving to achieve a more gender diverse workforce due to the essential skills women possess for addressing various societal and economical challenges (Vokić et al., 2019). Despite instances of gender fluidity and non-binary identities, gender is still commonly seen as a binary categorisation, where differences between women and men are highlighted (Ellemers, 2018). Despite the aim for gender diversity women remain underrepresented in every level of corporate organisations, especially in high-power leadership positions, stimulating commitment of organisations to improving gender diversity (Cooper et al., 2017). To address this, many organisations resolve to a women-targeted diversity approach to be able to recruit, retain and advance women in the workforce (Cundiff et al., 2018).

These diversity initiatives are often launched to solve problems that minority groups are facing, such as the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions (Jansen et al., 2015). Focusing solely on minority groups in a diversity approach may discourage non-minority members from engaging in the organisation (Jansen et al., 2015). Individuals are drawn to organisations with inclusive diversity approaches that fulfil their need to belong (Plaut et al., 2011). Consequently, diversity initiatives that focus on minority groups might receive less support from non-minority members (Jansen et al., 2015; Plaut et al., 2011). Meanwhile, the effectiveness of the diversity initiatives largely depends on the receptiveness of non-minority members in the organisation (Jansen et al., 2015). Despite the frequent use of the women-targeted diversity approach, little research has investigated how men perceive a women-targeted diversity approach (Cundiff et al., 2017). Since men are critical stakeholders in diversity initiatives in organisations, it is important to know how a women-targeted diversity approach affects the excluded group of men in an organisation (Jansen et al., 2015).

This study will investigate how the inclusion and exclusion of men in a diversity approach affects the organisational commitment of men and how perceived inclusion and identification with gender group influence this relation.

Organisational commitment consists of three components: affective, continuance and normative commitment (De Gilder et al., 1997). Affective commitments refers to the emotional attachment, identification and involvement of the employee with the organisation. Continuance commitment refers to commitments of an employee based on the costs that are associated with leaving the organisation. Normative commitment is how committed an employee is based on a feeling of obligation to remain with the organisation (Muthuveloo et al., 2005). Organisations value processes regarding organisational commitment as it has

severe consequences such as loyalty, intention to leave, work stress, job performance, attendance and turnover (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Muthuveloo et al., 2005).

Gaining a better understanding of organisational commitment is not only beneficial for organisations, it also benefits employees and society as a whole (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). The devotion of an employee to an organisation influences if they are eligible for extrinsic rewards, such as wages and benefits, and psychological rewards, such as intrinsic job satisfaction and relationships with colleagues (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Looking at it from a bigger picture, society benefits from a better understanding of organisational commitment since high employee commitment may lead to lower rates of job movement and higher national productivity or work quality (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990).

As mentioned, this study will also be investigating the feelings of inclusion of men. Inclusion involves integrating and leveraging diversity at work (Innstrand & Grødal, 2021). This study defines perceived inclusion as the overall sense of employees of being valued and accepted in the organisation (Chen & Tang, 2018). Examining perceived inclusion is crucial as it is directly related with organisational outcomes such as employee engagement, commitment and job satisfaction (Chenn & Tang, 2018; Innstrand & Grødal, 2021; Trochmann et al., 2023). Broadening the knowledge about perceived inclusion can assist with fostering an inclusive and trusting environment which is beneficial for better business outcomes (Chenn & Tang, 2018).

Lastly, this study will examine if identification with gender group influences the relation between diversity approach and perceived inclusion. Strong identification with a gender group may heighten sensitivity to inclusion or exclusion in diversity programs (Park et al., 2015). Therefore, investigating the influence of identification with gender group can provide insights into how diversity approaches affect perceived inclusion and can help tailor programs to be more effective for all employees.

This study has the purpose to investigate how inclusion or exclusion of men in the diversity approach of an organisation affects their commitment to the organisation, and to examine the influence of perceived inclusion and identification with gender group on this relation.

The relation between diversity approach and organisational commitment

Before discussing the direct relation of diversity approach and organisational commitment it is important to define the two diversity approaches. This study makes the distinction between a non-all-inclusive diversity approach and an all-inclusive diversity approach.

The non-all-inclusive diversity approach used in this study is based on the multicultural diversity approach described in Stevens et al., (2008). This multicultural approach highlights the advantages of cultural diversity in organisations and views employee differences as strengths (Stevens et al., 2008). Organisations adopting this approach, which acknowledges diverse backgrounds and retains group identities, tend to be appealing to minority groups (Stevens et al., 2008). However, it can sometimes lead to the neglect of the non-minority group of employees (Jansen et al., 2015). In this study, the non-all-inclusive diversity approach focuses on the benefits of gender diversity and emphasises the importance of retaining gender minority groups, stating that women are important to the organisation, while neglecting men.

The all-inclusive diversity approach resembles the all-inclusive multicultural model mentioned in Stevens et al., (2008). The all-inclusive multicultural model asserts that diversity comprises all employees, including both cultural minority and non-minority groups (Stevens et al., 2008). Like the non-all-inclusive approach, it recognises and values employee differences, which is vital for supporting minority members (Stevens et al., 2008). However, it also acknowledges the significant role non-minority members have in workplace diversity, addressing concerns of exclusion and disadvantages they may face (Stevens et al., 2008). The all-inclusive diversity approach used in this study emphasises the importance of both gender minority and non-minority groups, affirming that both men and women are essential to the organisation.

With the diversity approaches defined, we can explore their relation with organisational commitment. Diversity programs can have a positive influence on the devotion of employees, for this relation the social exchange theory can function as an explanatory framework (Kundu & Mor, 2016). The social exchange theory of Blau (1964) states that social interaction is an exchange process where individuals seek to maximise rewards and minimise costs. It works via reward mechanisms of value exchange and the expectation of trust and reciprocity. This means that it is expected that all actors perform fairly in their activities for mutual benefit and when one individual provides a reward or something of value they expect something of equal value in return (Benitez et al., 2022; Blau, 1964). Rewards can be tangible, for example a pay rise or service, or intangible, like praise or recognition (Blau, 1964).

Following the social exchange theory, when men receive rewards from being included in the diversity program such as recognition, they can feel obligated to give something of value in return and display more commitment to the organisation (Blau, 1964; Kundu & Mor,

2016). When the organisation includes both women and men in the diversity approach it implies they are devoted to a diverse workforce and their diverse needs, which can result in more commitment by the employees (Magoshi & Chang, 2009).

In sum, the literature suggests that when men are included in the diversity approach, they will be more committed to the organisation than when they are excluded from the diversity approach. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Men that are in the all-inclusive diversity approach condition score higher on organisational commitment than men that are in the non-all-inclusive diversity approach condition.

The relation between diversity approach and perceived inclusion

This study will explore perceived inclusion as a mediating mechanism, potentially linking diversity approaches to organisational commitment. First, we will examine how the type of diversity approach affects perceived inclusion, followed by an explanation for the relation between perceived inclusion and organisational commitment.

Employees have a stronger perception of inclusion when they experience fair treatment and individual recognition (Mor Barak, 2017). Inclusive practices of the organisation shape feelings of inclusion with employees, these practices can show employees that the organisation is supportive and that they are treated fairly (Chen & Tang, 2018). Employees have the natural tendency that they want to be included, which is why non-minority members are less interested in working for organisations that pursue a diversity approach that excludes them (Plaut et al., 2011). The study of Jansen et al., (2015) demonstrates that an all-inclusive diversity approach that explicitly includes non-minority members leads to higher levels of perceived inclusion with the non-minority group members. Accordingly, a women-targeted diversity approach can make the men feel excluded (Cundiff et al., 2018).

This can be explained with the social identity theory (SIT) of Tajfel and Turner (1979). The SIT rests on the assumption that people categorise others and themselves into groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). People have the tendency to categorise people into different groups to make sense of the social environment around them (van den Scott, 2023). A group is defined as “a collection of individuals who perceive themselves to be members of the same social category” (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; van den Scott, 2023). Individuals can use gender to categorise groups, which means that men see other men as the in-group and women as the out-group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). When individuals have categorised people into groups, their social identity is rooted into this categorisation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

The social identity of individuals is threatened when members of a group detect that they are being devalued or treated negatively based on their membership of a social group (Gaucher et al., 2011). Social identity safety is the perception that the social identity is not threatened in a particular group context (Cundiff et al., 2018). Employees monitor their environment for contextual cues that can indicate this social identity safety (Cundiff et al., 2018). Contextual cues can be physical, such as observing that members of the in-group are present in the organisation, or affective, noticing that the in-group is valued by the organisation (Jansen et al., 2015). When men are excluded in the diversity approach, they may believe that diversity initiatives are benefiting the out-group, women, by taking away opportunities from the in-group members, men (Crosby, 2004; Cundiff et al., 2018). Because of this, men can feel that their social identity is threatened and will not feel included by the organisation (Cundiff et al., 2018).

Therefore, we expect that men who are included in the diversity approach will perceive more inclusion than men that are excluded in the diversity approach. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Men in the all-inclusive diversity approach condition will report higher levels of perceived inclusion compared to men in the non-all-inclusive diversity approach condition.

The relation between perceived inclusion and organisational commitment

Feeling included in the organisation is likely to enhance organisational commitment (Chen & Tang, 2018; Innstrand & Grødal, 2021). Employees that perceive they are included might obtain support and recognition from the organisation and because of that they can enjoy a psychologically positive work experience (Chen & Tang, 2018). The experience of inclusion shows that the organisation accepts and integrates the values and thoughts of the employees (Caldwell et al., 1990). Employees that value the support, recognition and positive work experiences are likely to commit to the organisation in order to proceed this positive social exchange relationship that they got with the organisation (Blau, 1964; Chen & Tang, 2018).

Building upon the social exchange theory, when male employees feel included in the organisation and experience the rewards like recognition and support that are associated with it, they are likely to reciprocate with increased organisational commitment (Blau, 1964; Chen & Tang, 2018; Innstrand & Grødal, 2021). Which is why this study proposes that when men perceive more inclusion, it will lead to higher organisational commitment. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: Men that perceive more inclusion score higher on organisational commitment.

The literature above shows that inclusion of men in the diversity approach can positively influence perceived inclusion and that perceived inclusion in its turn positively affects organisational commitment. These arguments suggest that perceived inclusion mediates the relation between inclusion of men in the diversity approach and organisational commitment.

This is why we propose that the relation between the type of diversity approach and organisational commitment is explained by perceived inclusion. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: The positive relation between diversity approach and organisational commitment is mediated by perceived inclusion.

The relation between the diversity approach and organisational commitment might be more complicated than it seems. A concept that is rather understudied is the level of identification of men with their gender group and how this affects the relation between diversity approach and organisational commitment.

The moderating role of identification with gender group

Research shows that diversity approaches have stronger effects on cultural minority members who are highly identified with their cultural group (Jansen et al., 2015). Jansen et al., (2015) propose that the response of non-minority members on diversity approach signals and contextual cues might depend on the extent that their cultural group membership is psychologically relevant to them. Therefore, Jansen et al., (2015) suggest to test the hypothesis that including cultural non-minority members in the diversity approach of an organisation is particularly important for those who identify strongly with their cultural group. We followed this suggestion for further research, although we shifted the focus from cultural non-minority group to gender non-minority group, as this study specifically examines men.

Following the SIT of Tajfel and Turner (1979) this is also relevant when it concerns gender groups instead of cultural groups, since the group processes that influence behaviour remain the same. The SIT proposes that people derive their social identity from being a member of a social group (van den Scott, 2023). The actions of individuals are influenced by how strongly they identify with a group and how they perceive the identification of others with their groups (van den Scott, 2023).

While the content of a social identity is determined by group features and elicits group processes, these group features and processes will also influence the affective components and emotions of people (Scheepers & Ellemers, 2019). The SIT states that people have a social identity that they derive from the social in-group while maintaining an individual identity (Park et al., 2015). This can result in people tying their evaluations of the self with the evaluations of the in-group (Park et al., 2015). This could mean that individual men who strongly identify with their gender group are more sensitive to the gender group of men being excluded or included in the diversity approach and may perceive it more intensely (Park et al., 2015).

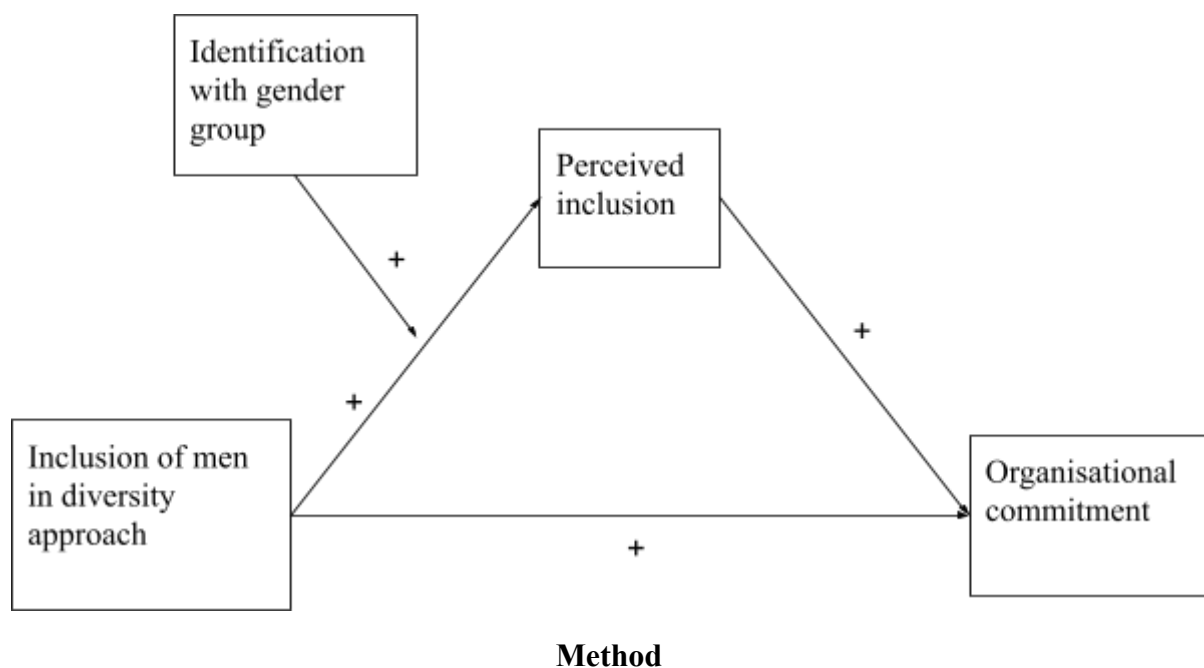
Based on the literature above, we propose that the inclusion or exclusion of men in a diversity approach of an organisation has a greater effect on their perceived inclusion when they are strongly identified with their gender group. This leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5: The relation between diversity approach and perceived inclusion is moderated by identification with gender group, such that the effect of diversity approach on perceived inclusion is stronger when a man is strongly identified with their gender group than when they are weakly identified with their gender group.

All five hypotheses between the four variables are visualised in the research model in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Research Model Visualising the Four Proposed Hypotheses



Before the survey was distributed a power analysis was performed with G*Power, version 3.1 (Faul et al., 2009). For the power analysis we used an expected effect size of Cohen's $d = .56$ and a power of $.80$. The effect size that we used for G*Power is based on the effect that Jansen et al., (2015) demonstrated in study 2, the relation between diversity approach and perceived inclusion. This resulted in a minimum of 82 participants, 41 participants for each condition. Respondents met the requirements of this study if they were a male that works or had worked in an organisation for at least 24 hours weekly, if their job was not solely performed at home, and if they had a minimum age of 18 years old.

In total, 308 respondents started the survey. Of these respondents, 147 (47.7%) respondents were excluded because they did not finish the survey, 63 (20.5%) respondents were excluded because they did not identify as male, 4 (1.3%) were excluded because their job was completely performed at home. Therefore, 94 respondents (all-inclusive diversity approach, $N = 47$; non-all-inclusive diversity approach, $N = 47$) were included in the analysis and the power requirements have been met.

Of the included respondents, 64 (68.1%) work full-time, 9 (9.6%) have worked full-time, 17 (18.1%) respondents work part-time and 4 (4.3%) respondents have worked part-time. The youngest respondents was 21 years of age and the oldest participant was 73 years of age. The average age of the respondents was 40.5 years, $SD = 14.5$.

Design

This study used a between-subjects experimental design with one factor. This factor consists of two conditions; a non-all-inclusive diversity approach condition and an all-inclusive diversity approach condition. The survey measures perceived inclusion, organisational commitment, manipulation check, demographics, and identification with gender group.

Procedure

Data collection was performed by two researchers. One researcher studied both men and women using the affective commitment component from the organisational commitment scale of Gilder et al., (1997), while this study focused solely on men and used the full three component model of organisational commitment of Gilder et al., (1997). Respondents were gathered with convenience and snowball sampling using social media (LinkedIn and Instagram) and through personal contacts via Whatsapp, participants were asked to further share the survey. Some participants shared the link to the survey on the intranet portal of their organisation. The survey was created and distributed using Qualtrics.

Participants received an informed consent form stating the requirements, voluntary nature, data storage details, and duration of the study. The informed consent had to be accepted before starting the survey. The informed consent form is presented in Appendix A.

Respondents were then instructed to read about a fictional organisation called 'CCG' and to try their hardest to empathise with the organisation. They were told to use their imagination to promote answering the questions. Lastly, they were told to use a minute after reading the text to let it sink and that they could not return to the instruction page.

Respondents were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: a non-all-inclusive diversity approach or an all-inclusive diversity approach.

Each condition presented a different diversity approach of the fictional organisation. The manipulation was similar to the manipulation used in the study of Jansen et al., (2015), however the manipulation was changed to gender diversity instead of cultural diversity.

In the non-all-inclusive condition, respondents read: “Many companies miss the point when thinking about putting together the best team of people. At CCG we know that diversity is very important. Therefore, we are very happy to have female employees within our organisation. It is exactly this diversity that strengthens our organisation”.

In the all-inclusive condition, respondents read: “Many companies miss the point when thinking about putting together the best team of people. At CCG we know that diversity is very important. Therefore, we are very happy to have female employees within our organisation. But, of course, we also value our male employees. It is exactly this diversity that strengthens our organisation”.

After the vignette, the respondents were asked to fill in a questionnaire, regarding the fictitious organisation. This included the scales to measure the variables, a manipulation to test the effectiveness of the manipulation and demographic questions. After completing the survey, respondents were debriefed about the purpose of the study.

Measures

Respondents completed a questionnaire after reading the vignette, with all material displayed in Dutch. Scales and vignettes were translated from English to Dutch, except for the already Dutch three component model of organisational commitment (Gilder et al., 1997). For translation, we used the back-translation method described in Klotz et al., (2023): the two bilingual researchers of this study translated the materials to Dutch, and a fellow bilingual student translated them back to English. Discrepancies in source items were resolved through repetition until correspondence was achieved.

Participants responded to the questionnaire as listed below. The full scales can be found in Appendix A.

Perceived inclusion

To measure perceived inclusion, this study used an adapted version of the Perceived Group Inclusion Scale of Jansen et al., (2014), to assess the extent to which respondents anticipated to feel included in the fictitious organisation. This scale consists of 16 items and had to be rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). An example item of this scale is ‘This organisation gives me the feeling that I belong’. The scale is reliable ($\alpha = .97$). The score for this scale was calculated by taking the average of all items.

Organisational commitment

To measure organisational commitment the three component model of organisational commitment of Gilder et al., (1997) was used, to assess the extent to which respondents were committed to the fictitious organisation. This scale consists of 15 items and had to be rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). An example item of this scale is ‘I experience problems of this organisation as my own’. The scale is reliable ($\alpha = .82$). The score for this scale was calculated by taking the average of all items..

Manipulation check

The quality of this study is only warranted if respondents had read the vignette with sufficient attention and if the experimental manipulation was done correctly. Which is why we added a manipulation check. The manipulation check consisted of 2 items and was measured on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (fully disagree) to 7 (fully agree). The items of this scale were ‘In the fictional organisation CCG, they mainly focus on women within the diversity approach’ and ‘In the fictional organisation CCG, they focus on both men and women within the diversity approach’.

Demographics

For demographics, the respondents were asked about their gender, age, current working status, and if they worked completely from home during their job.

Identification with gender group

Finally, to measure the degree of identification with their gender group, this study used an adapted version of the SISI 1-item scale of Postmes et al., (2012). The scale was adapted to gender group. This scale consists of 1 item and had to be rated on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree). An example item of this scale was ‘I identify with my gender group’. Because it is an 1-item scale, no reliability analysis could be done for a cronbach’s alpha. Still we assume that the scale is reliable because Postmes et al.,

(2012) argue that the construct of social identification is sufficiently homogeneous to be operationalized with a single item.

Ethical approval

This research project was registered at the Student Ethics Review & Registration site (UU-SER) and the Faculty Ethics Review Committee (FETC) has given approval, the approval number is 24-0552.

Statistical analysis

The statistical analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 29. The manipulation check and Hypothesis 1 were tested with a univariate ANOVA analysis. Hypothesis 2, 3, 4, and 5 were tested using Model 4 and 7 of the PROCESS macro SPSS package (Hayes, 2022).

Results

Manipulation check

A univariate ANOVA was conducted to test if the manipulation of the diversity approach was done correctly. When asked if the fictional organisation mainly focused on women, the all-inclusive condition, $M = 3.94$, $SD = 1.76$, scored significantly lower than the non-all-inclusive condition, $M = 5.34$, $SD = 1.75$, $F(1, 93) = 15.05$, $p < .001$. When the respondents were asked if the fictional organisation focused on both men and women, the all-inclusive condition, $M = 4.57$, $SD = 1.92$, scored significantly higher than the non-all-inclusive condition, $M = 3.23$, $SD = 1.76$, $F(1, 93) = 12.45$, $p < .001$. This suggests that the experimental manipulation of the diversity approach was successful.

Assumptions check

Relevant assumptions were checked for the analyses. Homoscedasticity was met, and no multicollinearity was found. The linearity assumption was met for all hypotheses. The normality assumption was not met. However, given the sample size and the use of the bias-corrected bootstrapping method with 5000 samples, the analysis is robust despite this violation (Efron & Tibshirani, 1994; Kulesa et al., 2015). Four outliers were found when examining boxplots, however because extreme scores were expected and no irregularities were spotted in the answers of the respondents, they were kept in the analysis.

Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis 1 was tested with a univariate ANOVA. The results did not show a significant effect of diversity approach on organisational commitment, $F(1, 93) = 3.46$, $p = 0.07$. This means that Hypothesis 1 was not supported. Men that were in the all-inclusive diversity condition ($M = 3.03$, $SD = .65$) did not score significantly higher on organisational

commitment than men that were in the non-all-inclusive diversity approach condition ($M = 2.8$, $SD = .53$).

To test Hypothesis 2, Hypothesis 3, and Hypothesis 4 we used PROCESS macro (Model 4) of Hayes (2022) to test whether the diversity approach predicted perceived inclusion (H2), whether perceived inclusion predicted organisational commitment (H3), and whether perceived inclusion mediates the relation between diversity approach and organisational commitment (H4). The results of this analysis are presented in Table 1.

First, the direct paths in the model were tested. The total effect of diversity approach on organisational commitment is still not supported, the effect of diversity approach on organisational commitment was not significant when controlling for perceived inclusion, $B = -.11$, $SE = .12$, $p = .35$, 95% CI $[-.35, .13]$. This means that the non-all-inclusive diversity approach condition scored lower than the all-inclusive diversity approach, although the difference was not significant. Hypothesis 2 was supported. Table 1, Model 1 shows that the diversity approach had a significant, negative effect on perceived inclusion. This indicates that the non-all-inclusive diversity approach condition scored significantly lower on perceived inclusion than the all-inclusive diversity approach condition. The results also showed support for Hypothesis 3. Table 1, Model 3 shows that perceived inclusion had a significant, positive relation with organisational commitment.

Next, the mediating effect of perceived inclusion was tested. Hypothesis 4 was supported. The results showed a significant mediating effect of perceived inclusion in the relation between diversity approach and organisational commitment, indirect effect = $-.11$, $SE = .06$, 95% CI $[-.25, -.03]$.

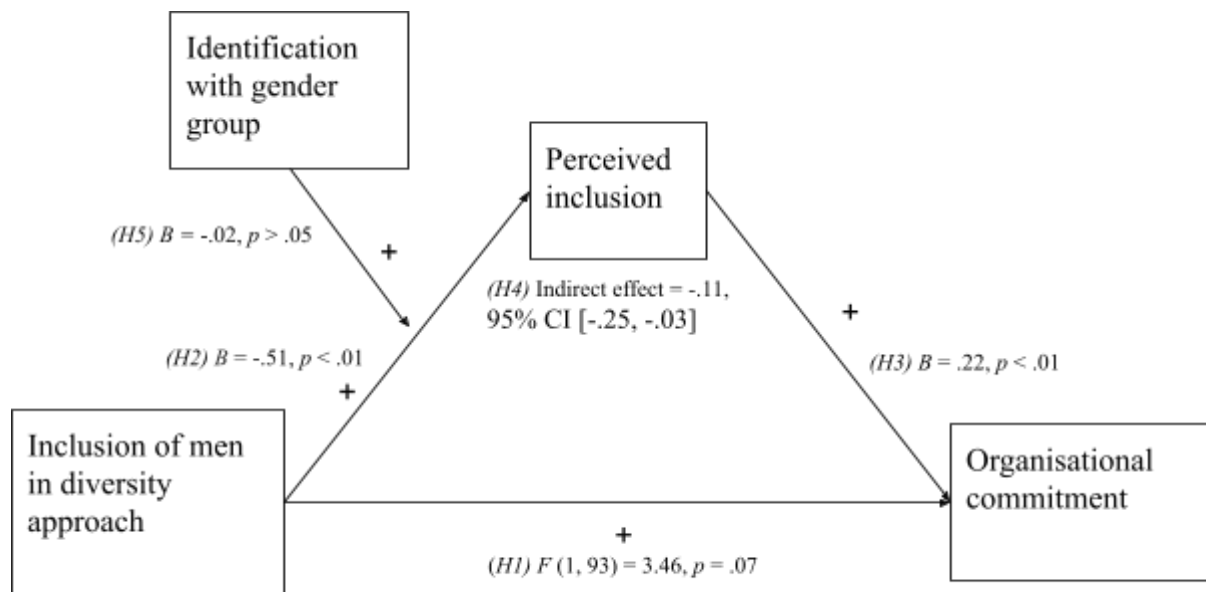
To test Hypothesis 5, we used PROCESS macro (Model 7) of Hayes (2022) to test whether identification with gender group moderates the relation between diversity approach and perceived inclusion (H5). Hypothesis 5 was not supported. Table 1, Model 2 shows that there is no significant result for a moderating effect of identification with gender group on the effect of diversity approach on perceived inclusion. For a graphic representation of the results, see Figure 2.

Table 1*Results of Mediation and Moderated Mediation Analysis Using PROCESS Macro*

Dependent variable	Perceived inclusion				Organisational commitment	
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>
Constant	3.57***	.12	3.56***	.12	2.23***	.27
Diversity approach ^a	-.51**	.17	-.50**	.17	-.11	.12
Perceived inclusion	-	-	-	-	.22**	.07
Identification with gender group	-	-	.02	.09	-	
Diversity approach X identification with gender group	-	-	-.02	.12	-	-

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

- a. The reference category for diversity approach is the all-inclusive diversity approach (0 = all-inclusive diversity approach, 1 = non-all-inclusive diversity approach)

Figure 2*Graphic Representation of the Results*

Discussion

As organisations strive for a more gender diverse workforce, they are increasingly adopting diversity approaches targeted at women (Cooper et al., 2017; Cundiff et al., 2018). Men are excluded in these women-targeted diversity approaches, while men are critical stakeholders in diversity initiatives (Jansen et al., 2015). This raises the need to investigate how a women-targeted diversity approach affects the excluded group of men. The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of how the inclusion or exclusion of men in the diversity approach affects their level of commitment to the organisation and to examine what the influence of perceived inclusion and identification with their gender group are on this relation.

Theoretical implications

Following previous work we expected that men that are included in the diversity approach would score higher on organisational commitment than men that are excluded in the diversity approach (Kundu & Mor, 2016; Magoshi & Chang, 2009). Contrary to what was expected, the type of diversity approach has no significant direct effect on organisational commitment. This suggests that when men are included in the diversity strategy, they are not more devoted to the organisation, and when they are excluded, they are not less committed. This result contributes to previous research as it provides evidence for the behaviour of

organisational commitment of solely men when they are included or excluded from the diversity approach. Previous research did not make the distinction in gender.

However, we did find a significant indirect effect of diversity approach on organisational commitment through perceived inclusion. The type of diversity approach significantly predicts perceived inclusion, aligning with previous research (Cundiff et al., 2018; Jansen et al., 2015; Plaut et al., 2011). Meaning, men that are included in the diversity approach report higher levels of perceived inclusion than men that are excluded. This study extends previous research as it measures the influence of the level of inclusion in the diversity approach on the perceptions of inclusion of men, rather than the differences between cultural minority and non-minority groups.

Following previous research we expected that perceived inclusion leads to higher organisational commitment (Chen & Tang, 2018; Innstrand & Grødal, 2021). As expected, perceived inclusion significantly predicts organisational commitment among men. Meaning, men that feel like they are included in the diversity approach are more devoted to the organisation. The current study contributes to the previous research by providing evidence for the relation between perceived inclusion and organisational commitment, specifically for men.

Although the total effect of the diversity approach on organisational commitment is not significant, we did find that perceived inclusion mediates the relation between diversity approach and organisational commitment. Meaning, the inclusion of men in the diversity approach leads to increased perceived inclusion, which in turn results in higher organisational commitment. This finding is in line with previous studies, which demonstrated the separate effects of diversity approach on perceived inclusion and perceived inclusion on organisational commitment (Chen & Tang, 2018; Cundiff et al., 2018; Innstrand & Grødal, 2021; Jansen et al., 2015; Plaut et al., 2011). This finding contributes to previous research as it is, up to our knowledge, the first study to provide evidence for a mediational effect of perceived inclusion for the relation between diversity approach and organisational commitment.

Moving beyond the mediation effect, we also examined the moderation effect of identification with gender group. Based on previous research it was expected that the relation between diversity approach and perceived inclusion was buffered by identification with gender group (Jansen et al., 2015; Park et al., 2015; Scheepers & Ellemers, 2019; van den Scott, 2023). Contrary to what was expected, we did not find a significant moderating effect of identification with gender group. Which means that the effect that the inclusion of men in

the diversity approach has on perceived inclusion is not increased when men strongly identify with their gender group.

A possible explanation for this could be that working men in organisations do not view men as the in-group and women as the out-group. Following Park et al., (2015), strong identification with a group might heighten sensitivity to being excluded or included from the social group. Each person belongs to several in-groups and categorises various in-groups and out-groups in different contexts (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Which means that it is possible that men in the labour force derive their identification from another category, such as categorisation in professional affiliation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). An example of this would be that the in-group for a male would be the category lawyer and the perceived out-group could be other professions such as accountants or dentists. If this is the case then the manipulation in this study does not affect their in-group, which explains the result of no significance.

Practical implications

The findings of this study have multiple practical implications for organisations to enhance their diversity and inclusion initiatives and to increase the organisational commitment of their employees. To start, organisations should consider broadening their diversity approaches to be more inclusive to all gender groups. Including more gender groups in the diversity approach can increase their perception of inclusion and indirectly enhance their commitment to the organisation. This could foster a more cohesive and supporting work environment.

Additionally, since the results demonstrated that perceived inclusion predicts organisational commitment, organisations should focus on enhancing strategies that increase the perception of inclusion for their employees. This can be achieved with inclusive policies and practices that ensure that employees feel recognised, supported, and experience fair treatment (Chen & Tang, 2018; Mor Barak, 2017)

Strengths, limitations and further research

A strength in the methodology of this study is the manipulation check. The validity of the experimental manipulation was confirmed through a post-survey manipulation check. The manipulation check verified that the manipulation in the survey was perceived by the participants as intended and that the two conditions are effectively differentiated. It enhances the validity because confirming that the manipulation was done correctly helps establish a causal relationship between diversity approach and perceived inclusion. Furthermore, the

manipulation check helps provide evidence that the effect of diversity approach on perceived inclusion is due to the manipulation rather than external factors.

Next to strengths, this study also has its limitations. The first limitation is that we did not conduct an experimental manipulation for perceived inclusion. Which means that causality cannot be established between perceived inclusion and organisational commitment. We used the PROCESS macro analysis of Hayes (2022) to give better insides in the relation, nevertheless this still does not allow for directional conclusions to be drawn. However the theoretical underpinning provided by the social exchange theory of Blau (1964) supports a causal relationship. As it states that when male employees feel included in the organisation it would create a reciprocation to the organisation in the form of organisational commitment (Blau, 1964; Chen & Tang, 2018; Innstrand & Grødal, 2021). Given this theoretical framework, it is reasonable to infer that higher perceived inclusion will lead to more organisational commitment. It is still advised for further research to consider an experimental design where perceived inclusion is manipulated to confirm the causal relationship.

Another limitation is the use of the convenience and snowball sampling methods. Convenience sampling selects participants based on availability and willingness to participate. This may not accurately reflect the diversity of the entire population. The snowball sampling method relies on participants recruiting others from their social group after they received a small encouragement to reach out to other people in their social group, potentially leading to homogeneity in the sample (Valerio et al., 2016). Consequently, the sample may not accurately represent the population, limiting the generalisability of the results. For further research we recommend using a random sampling method.

Furthermore, a limitation is the use of a hypothetical vignette to create experimental conditions. Experimental vignette methodology (AVM) is a useful tool to create realistic situations and it allows research to manipulate and control independent variables, thereby increasing the internal and external validity (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). In AVM the variables need to be prespecified and in complex situations where an interplay of variables is presumed, such as the perception of a type of diversity approach, the threat of forgetting important variables is high (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). AVM can also decrease ecological validity as participants need to respond to hypothetical scenarios and it is likely that participants do not produce the same responses as when those same scenarios occur in a real-world setting (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). For further research a real-world setting is preferred to find more valid results.

Additionally, this study used gender as the distinction between men and women. However there are instances of gender fluidity and non-binary identities (Ellemer, 2018). Since men and women do not cover the whole population, the results can not be generalised.

Lastly, we conducted a power analysis based on the expected effect size of the diversity approach on perceived inclusion. However, incorporating a moderating variable introduces complexity, this often requires a larger sample size to detect the moderation effect (Aguinis et al., 2005). This may explain the non-significant finding regarding the moderation effect of identification with the group and needs to be investigated further.

The findings also inspired directions for further research. It is possible that the awareness from men of gender inequalities in organisation may prompt them to recognise their privileged position and initialise solidarity behaviours, regardless of their inclusion or exclusion from diversity initiatives (Mazucca et al., 2022). Potentially mitigating the effects of the diversity initiatives on perceived inclusion. Further research could explore whether awareness of current gender inequalities moderates the relation between diversity approaches and perceived inclusion. If supported, organisations could raise awareness about gender inequalities to foster solidarity among men towards their female coworkers, potentially enhancing perceived inclusion (Mazucca et al., 2022).

Conclusion

Even when aiming for a more gender diverse workforce, the organisation should ensure that no gender is excluded from the diversity initiatives. This study found that the inclusion of men in diversity approach indirectly affects organisational commitment through perceived inclusion. We also found that identification with their gender group did not moderate the relation between diversity approach and perceived inclusion. These results highlight the importance of perceived inclusion in influencing commitment among men, regardless of the identification with their gender group. This tells organisations that it is valuable to broaden their diversity initiatives to be inclusive for all gender groups and to focus on enhancing strategies to increase the perception of inclusion for their employees. This could be achieved with inclusive policies and practices that ensure that employees feel recognised, supported, and experience fair treatment (Chen & Tang, 2018; Mor Barak, 2017). Future research can further examine the found relation by continuing to research what factors influence this relation. A suggestion is to examine if there exists a moderating effect of awareness of current gender inequalities at work on the relation between diversity approach and perceived inclusion. By further examining this indirect effect of the type of diversity

approach on organisational commitment, companies can find more ways to keep their employees committed while reaching for equal gender diversity.

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Appendix A

Full survey

Informed Consent

Gelieve de volgende informatie zorgvuldig door te nemen.

Geachte deelnemer,

U bent gevraagd deel te nemen aan een onderzoek naar betrokkenheid binnen een organisatie. Dit onderzoek wordt uitgevoerd door Nikki Deken en Luuk Batavier als onderdeel van de masteropleiding Social, Health and Organisational Psychology aan de Universiteit Utrecht. Het doel van dit onderzoek is om verschillende factoren van diversiteitsbeleid in een organisatie te onderzoeken en de invloed op de desbetreffende werknemers.

Deze enquête is uitsluitend bedoeld voor personen die momenteel werkzaam zijn bij een organisatie of in het verleden werkzaam zijn geweest bij een organisatie, op full-time of part-time basis (minimaal 24 uur per week). Banen die volledig uit thuiswerken bestaan zijn uitgesloten.

Deelname aan dit onderzoek is geheel vrijwillig en vrijblijvend. U kunt er op ieder moment voor kiezen om te stoppen, zonder hiervoor een reden op te geven. De Facultaire Ethische Toetsingscommissie (FETC) heeft dit onderzoek goedgekeurd op ethische aspecten.

<https://fetc-gw.wp.hum.uu.nl/ethiek-avg/>

Onderzoeks- en persoonlijke data zullen zorgvuldig worden opgeslagen volgens de richtlijnen van de Europese privacywetgeving (Algemene Verordening Gegevensbescherming). Uw data wordt alleen gebruikt voor onderzoeksdoeleinden en zullen eventueel beschikbaar worden gesteld voor andere onderzoekers. De bewaartermijn voor data bedraagt 10 jaar. De resultaten van dit onderzoek worden alleen gebruikt voor academische doeleinden. Er wordt voor gezorgd dat dit anoniem en volledig gebeurt zonder mogelijke identificatie van de deelnemers.

De deelname zal ongeveer 10 minuten van uw tijd innemen.

Mochten er vragen zijn over het onderzoek kunt u contact opnemen met Luuk Batavier via

het volgende e-mailadres: L.a.batavier@students.uu.nl.

We willen u alvast bedanken voor uw deelname en stellen uw antwoorden zeer op prijs. U kunt hieronder aangeven of u toestemming geeft voor het gebruik van uw gegevens en deelname aan het onderzoek.

- Ik geef toestemming voor deelname (1)
- Ik geef geen toestemming voor deelname (2)

Vignette Description

U krijgt zo een stuk tekst te lezen over de aanpak van het diversiteitsbeleid binnen de fictieve organisatie CCG. Het is belangrijk dat u zich zo goed mogelijk probeert in te leven in de situatie. U stelt zich voor dat u werkzaam bent in deze organisatie en op basis hiervan geeft u antwoorden op een aantal vragen over hoe u zich zou voelen in deze organisatie. U mag ook gebruik maken van uw verbeelding om het beantwoorden van de vragen te bevorderen. Neem na het lezen van de tekst een minuut de tijd om u in te leven. U kunt niet terug klikken naar de vorige pagina.

Non-all-inclusive Vignette

"Veel bedrijven slaan de plank mis wanneer ze nadenken over de samenstelling van het beste team van mensen. Bij CCG weten we dat diversiteit heel belangrijk is. Daarom zijn we erg blij met vrouwelijke medewerkers binnen onze organisatie. Juist deze diversiteit versterkt onze organisatie".

All-inclusive Condition

"Veel bedrijven slaan de plank mis wanneer ze nadenken over de samenstelling van het beste team van mensen. Bij CCG weten we dat diversiteit heel belangrijk is. Daarom zijn we erg blij met vrouwelijke medewerkers binnen onze organisatie. Maar natuurlijk waarderen we ook onze mannelijke medewerkers. Juist deze diversiteit versterkt onze organisatie".

Perceived Inclusion Scale (Jansen et al., 2014)

De volgende vragen hebben betrekking op hoe u zich mogelijk zou voelen bij deze organisatie. Wilt u voor elke vraag altijd het meest passende antwoord geven (geheel oneens tot geheel eens)?

Beantwoord de volgende vragen op basis van deze zin: Deze organisatie...

PIS1 ... geeft me het gevoel dat ik hier thuis hoor

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

PIS2 ...geeft me het gevoel dat ik onderdeel ben van deze organisatie

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

PIS3 ...geeft me het gevoel dat ik binnen de organisatie pas

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

PIS4 ...behandelt me als een insider

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

PIS5 ...vindt mij leuk

- Geheel oneens (1)

Oneens (2)

Neutraal (3)

Eens (4)

Geheel eens (5)

PIS6 ...waardeert mij

Geheel oneens (1)

Oneens (2)

Neutraal (3)

Eens (4)

Geheel eens (5)

PIS7 ...is blij met mij

Geheel oneens (1)

Oneens (2)

Neutraal (3)

Eens (4)

Geheel eens (5)

PIS8 ...geeft om mij

Geheel oneens (1)

Oneens (2)

Neutraal (3)

Eens (4)

Geheel eens (5)

PIS9 ...staat me toe om authentiek te zijn

Geheel oneens (1)

Oneens (2)

Neutraal (3)

Eens (4)

- Geheel eens (5)

PIS10 ...staat me toe om te zijn wie ik ben

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

PIS11 ...staat me toe om mijn authentieke zelf uit te drukken

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

PIS12 ...staat me toe om mijzelf te presenteren zoals ik ben

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

PIS13 ...moedigt me aan om authentiek te zijn

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

PIS14 ...moedigt me aan om te zijn wie ik ben

- Geheel oneens (1)

- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

PIS15 ...moedigt me aan om mijn authentiek zelf uit te drukken

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

PIS16 ...moedigt me aan om mijzelf te presenteren zoals ik ben

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

Het 3-componenten model van commitment (Gilder et al., (1997)

De volgende stellingen hebben betrekking op hoe toegewijd u zou zijn aan deze organisatie. Wilt u voor elke vraag altijd het meest passende antwoord geven (geheel oneens tot geheel eens)?

OCS1 Ik ervaar problemen van deze organisatie als mijn eigen problemen

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

OCS2 Ik voel me emotioneel gehecht aan deze organisatie

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

OCS3 Deze organisatie betekent veel voor mij

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

OCS4 Ik voel me thuis in deze organisatie

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

OCS5 Ik voel me als 'een deel van de familie' in deze organisatie

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

OCS6 Het zou voor mij op dit moment moeilijk zijn om weg te gaan bij deze organisatie, ook al zou ik dat willen

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)

Neutraal (3)

Eens (4)

Geheel eens (5)

OCS7 Ik heb het gevoel dat ik te weinig alternatieven heb om nu ontslag te nemen

Geheel oneens (1)

Oneens (2)

Neutraal (3)

Eens (4)

Geheel eens (5)

OCS8 Als ik ontslag neem wordt het moeilijk om een andere baan te vinden

Geheel oneens (1)

Oneens (2)

Neutraal (3)

Eens (4)

Geheel eens (5)

OCS9 Er zou teveel in mijn leven verstoord worden als ik nu ontslag zou nemen

Geheel oneens (1)

Oneens (2)

Neutraal (3)

Eens (4)

Geheel eens (5)

OCS10 Ik ben bang voor wat er zou kunnen gebeuren als ik mijn baan opzeg, zonder meteen een nieuwe baan te hebben

Geheel oneens (1)

Oneens (2)

Neutraal (3)

Eens (4)

- Geheel eens (5)

OCS11 Ik ben opgegroeid met de gedachte dat het waardevol is om loyaal te blijven aan een organisatie

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

OCS12 Het is onbehoorlijk om van de ene organisatie naar de andere over te stappen

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

OCS13 Het zou een goede zaak zijn als werknemers het grootste deel van hun loopbaan bij een organisatie zouden blijven

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

OCS14 Ik vind dat iemand loyaal zou moeten zijn ten opzichte van zijn of haar organisatie

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

OCS15 Een van de belangrijkste redenen waarom ik bij deze organisatie blijf, is dat ik loyaliteit belangrijk vind

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Neutraal (3)
- Eens (4)
- Geheel eens (5)

Manipulation Check

Binnen de fictieve organisatie CCG concentreren ze zich vooral op vrouwen binnen het diversiteitsbeleid

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Beetje oneens (3)
- Neutral (4)
- Beetje eens (5)
- Eens (6)
- Geheel eens (7)

Binnen de fictieve organisatie CCG concentreren ze zich op zowel mannen als vrouwen binnen het diversiteitsbeleid

- Geheel oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Beetje oneens (3)
- Neutraal (4)
- Beetje eens (5)
- Eens (6)
- Geheel eens (7)

Demographics

Onderstaand ziet u de laatste vragen die van belang zijn voor ons onderzoek:

Gender: Wat is uw gender?

- Man (1)
- Vrouw (2)
- Anders (3)

Age: Wat is uw leeftijd (in jaren)?

Work Status: Wat is uw huidige werk status?

- Ik werk full-time in een organisatie (38-40 uur) (1)
- Ik werk part-time in een organisatie (vanaf 24 uur) (2)
- Ik heb full-time in een organisatie gewerkt (38-40 uur) (3)
- Ik heb part-time in een organisatie gewerkt (vanaf 24 uur) (4)

WorkHome: Tijdens mijn baan werk(te) ik volledig vanuit huis

- Ja (1)
- Nee (2)

SISI 1-item scale adapted to gender group (Postmes et al., (2012).

De onderstaande vraag gaat over de mate dat u zich identificeert met uw gender groep. Vul het antwoord in dat het beste bij u past.

SISI1 Ik identificeer me met mijn gender groep

- Sterk mee oneens (1)
- Oneens (2)
- Beetje oneens (3)
- Neutraal (4)
- Beetje eens (5)
- Eens (6)
- Sterk mee eens (7)

Outro

Bedankt voor de tijd die u genomen heeft om deze enquête in te vullen. Vergeet niet op het pijltje onderaan deze pagina te klikken om de enquête te versturen.

Alle gegevens zullen vertrouwelijk en anoniem verwerkt worden. De resultaten zullen enkel voor onderzoeksdoeleinden gebruikt worden.

Het doel van dit onderzoek was om verschillende aspecten van diversiteitsbeleid binnen organisaties te onderzoeken en hoe dit invloed heeft op de betrokkenheid en het gevoel van inclusie van de medewerkers.

Heeft u verder nog opmerkingen? Neem contact op via n.deken@students.uu.nl. Heeft u klachten? Neem dan contact op met de FETC van de Faculteit Sociale Wetenschappen (FSW): klachtenfunctionaris-fetcsocwet@uu.nl

Hartelijke groet,

Nikki Deken en Luuk Batavier