**Connecting Perceived Dissimilarity and Innovative Work Behavior: The Roles of Felt Inclusion and a Climate For Inclusion**

Sophie Tolhuisen (6882099)

Course: Master Thesis SHOP

Track: Work & Organisation

UU-SER Approval number: 24-0422

Supervisor: Lisanne Versteegt, MSc

Second reader: Dr. Jan Fekke Ybema

Faculty of Social Sciences, Utrecht University

24/06/2024

Word count: 7898

This manuscript can be made publicly accessible.

**Abstract**

Seeking ways to stimulate an employee's innovative work behavior (IWB) and managing adverse consequences of perceived dissimilarities in teams due to workforce diversification, are two themes of continuing interest in psychological research. Nevertheless, to date, their possible relationship received relatively little attention. This study examines whether perceived dissimilarity and IWB are related via lowered feelings of inclusion. Furthermore, the buffering role of a perceived climate for inclusion is investigated. A cross-sectional survey involving 147 employees (aged 20-65) working in the Netherlands assessed employees' perceived surface- and deep-level dissimilarity, felt inclusion, IWB, and perceived climate for inclusion. Data were collected through selective sampling and analysed using mediation and moderated mediation analyses in SPSSv.28 and PROCESSv.3.5.2. Results indicated that as perceived dissimilarity in age and deep-level attributes increased, feelings of inclusion and consequently employees' engagement in IWB decreased. Furthermore, a positive climate for inclusion buffered the negative relationship with felt inclusion for perceived age dissimilarity, but not for all other types of perceived dissimilarity. However, a positive inclusion climate increased feelings of inclusion and engagement in IWB for all employees, regardless of their perceived (dis)similarity. These findings imply that IWB can be stimulated through inclusion, by fostering a climate for inclusion. This study contributes to our understanding of these relationships. Future research could supplement this understanding, by focusing on differing perceptions about all constructs at hand, longitudinal effects of feeling dissimilar on feelings of inclusion and IWB, and possible moderators that affect the relationship between felt inclusion and engagement in IWB.

*Keywords:* dissimilarity, inclusion, innovative work behavior, climate for inclusion, surface-level, deep-level

**Introduction**

Modern organizations face different strategic objectives. For instance, organizations are required to be representative of society, thereby enhancing the organization's legitimacy (Ashikali et al., 2021). Secondly, rapid changes in today's global labor market and unpredictability in inputs, outputs, and processes require stimulation of innovative work behavior (IWB) to gain competitive advantage (Elidemir et al., 2020). IWB involves employee's intentional engagement in exploring, generating, championing and implementing ideas (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). Like diversification, increased attention has been raised about ways to improve IWB among both practitioners and researchers (De Clercq et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2019). Especially because research indicates that both objectives can conflict when not managed adequately (Bogilović et al., 2021).

Particularly, heterogeneous work teams that result from diversification of the workforce (van Bommel et al., 2023) go along with an increased chance of perceived dissimilarity; the extent to which individuals perceive themselves to be different from their colleagues (Hobman et al., 2004). To avoid negative effects of these perceived dissimilarities on engagement in IWB, it is worthwhile to investigate how dissimilarities are related to feelings of inclusion in employees (Ellemers et al., 2018; van Bommel et al., 2023). This reflects feelings of belongingness and authenticity (Jansen et al., 2014). The organization's climate for inclusion is considered a prerequisite for inclusion, which has captured increased attention (Ashikali et al., 2021).

The current study adds to gaps in prior research in multiple ways. Firstly, in contrast to prior research that has mostly focused on team composition and creativity (e.g., Huang et al., 2014; Kim et al., 2021; Tripathi, & Ghosh, 2020), this study examines the individual level and follow-up stages up until idea implementation. For instance, while diversity (a team-level construct) contributes to team innovation (van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007), perceived dissimilarity at the individual level could adversely affect IWB. Focusing on the individual level is also relevant because individuals should engage in IWB for team innovation to take place (Tang et al., 2014). Investigating the stages following creativity are of added value, because while triggering the generation of ideas (creativity), stagnation could occur in the implementation phase (Williams & O'Reilly, 1998).

Secondly, Knippenberg & Schippers already noted in 2007 that research into diversity and dissimilarity is mainly focused on surface-level (visible attributes, e.g., age and ethnicity)

rather than deep-level attributes (invisible attributes, e.g., personality and work attitudes). However, this trend is ongoing (van Bommel et al., 2023), whereas research suggests that deep-level dissimilarity is of equal importance (Şahin et al., 2019). Therefore, the current study focuses on both perceived surface-level (PSLD) and deep-level dissimilarity (PDLD).

Thirdly, both dissimilarities will be studied in combination with employees' felt inclusion, responding to the call of Ellemers et al. (2018) and van Bommel et al. (2023). To the best of my knowledge, the specific relationships between perceived dissimilarity, felt inclusion, and IWB, including the role of perceived climate for inclusion, have not been studied before.

Studying these relationships is of societal relevance, as the implementation of diversity initiatives has not always proven to be successful and sometimes even evokes undesired effects (Gündemir et al., 2023; Von Bergen et al., 2002). This threatens the hoped-for added value of diversity (Ellemers et al., 2018). Thus, organizations should increase knowledge about how dissimilarities in teams affect IWB and how to create inclusive climates to foster IWB. This knowledge helps to avoid an inclusion façade, where surface-level diversity metrics overshadow the deeper aspects of true inclusion, leading to corporate hypocrisy (Gündemir et al., 2023). Furthermore, studying dissimilarities from a perceptual point of view enhances our ability to identify conditions and groups at risk of low engagement in IWB. Knowing how to stimulate IWB will in turn yield better individual outcomes (e.g. less turnover intentions, more job satisfaction) and ultimately at the team level to more creativity and constructive decision-making (Tang et al., 2014).

In conclusion, the current study attempts to supplement existing research on the relationships between PSLD, PDLD, felt inclusion, perceived climate for inclusion, and IWB. Therefore, the central research question is: To what extent is an employee's perceived dissimilarity (surface- and deep-level) from team coworkers related to their innovative work behavior through felt inclusion, and what is the role of a perceived climate for inclusion in these relationships?

## Theoretical framework

**Perceived Dissimilarity and IWB**

Research increasingly focuses on perceived diversity rather than objective diversity, driven by the notion that people's reactions are based on their perceptions rather than reality itself (Shemla et al., 2016). An operationalization is *perceived dissimilarity*: a subjective measure of the extent to which individuals perceive themselves to be different from their team members (Hobman et al., 2004). This reflects a self-to-team dissimilarity perspective (Shemla et al., 2016) that is closely related to 'relational demography' (Mowday & Sutton, 1993) in which the individual's similarity to their work group predicts individual outcomes (van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007). Perceived dissimilarity differs from actual dissimilarity, which is an objective measurement that is often assessed through demographic attributes in team compositions (Hobman et al., 2003). Specifically perceived dissimilarity, and not objective diversity, shows the biggest effects on work-related outcomes (Harrison et al., 2002; Şahin et al., 2019).

To bring structure into the concept of dissimilarity, it is typically divided into two categories. *Perceived surface-level dissimilarity* (PSLD) represents readily observable attributes, such as age and ethnicity. *Perceived deep-level dissimilarity* (PDLD) entails less visible or underlying attributes, and is often divided into job-related attributes (e.g., work attitudes), and non-job-related attributes (e.g., personal values and personality) (Hobman et al., 2003; van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007).

Several studies have indirectly linked diversity and dissimilarity to *IWB* (Bogilović et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2019, Cui et al., 2023; Tajeddini et al., 2023), defined as: "An individual's behaviour that aims to achieve the initiation and intentional introduction (within a work role, group or organization) of new and useful ideas, products or procedures" (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010, p. 24). IWB encompasses a range of behaviours aligned with several phases of the innovation process, including opportunity exploration, idea generation, championing, and finally execution and implementation within the workplace. Given the discontinuous nature of the innovation process, individuals often find themselves involved in combinations of these activities simultaneously (Devloo et al., 2015).

Whether investigating group diversity on a team-level or perceived dissimilarity on an individual level, in both cases it is likely that it is not the diversity or dissimilarity itself that accounts for higher or lower levels of IWB. For instance, the Categorization-Elaboration-

Model (CEM) of van Knippenberg et al. (2004) argues that relational and task-related mediating mechanisms (i.e.; the social categorization and information/decision-making perspective) intervene between surface- and deep-level group diversity and work outcomes. Following this reasoning, it is expected that there is no direct relationship between PSLD, PDLD, and IWB. Instead, it is rather the emotional affect or psychological consequences an individual experiences from their perceived dissimilarity that accounts for their engagement in IWB. Likewise, prior research frequently investigated mediation mechanisms, rather than direct effects (Bogilović et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2019; Cui et al., 2023) and mostly relied on the relational aspect, which will be discussed in further detail below.

**Felt Inclusion as a Mediator**

One such mediating mechanism explaining the relationship between perceived dissimilarity and IWB could be felt inclusion. As research attention is growing on perceived dissimilarity (Shemla et al., 2016), scholars likewise have increasing interest in its relationship with inclusion (Şahin et al., 2019; Shore et al., 2018). The current study adopts the definition of Jansen et al. (2014), defining *felt inclusion* as comprised of feelings of belongingness and authenticity. Belongingness signifies an individual's longing for meaningful connections with others and their yearning to be embraced as members of the group (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Authenticity refers to the extent to which a group member perceives that he or she is allowed (room for authenticity) and encouraged (value in authenticity) by the group to remain true to oneself (Kernis & Goldman, 2006). Felt inclusion should be regarded as contingent upon the group's disposition to incorporate the individual (Ellemers & Jetten, 2013). Specifically, the individual receives cues from the group regarding their status within the group, which consequently shapes their perception of inclusion.

*Perceived Dissimilarity and Felt Inclusion*

Generally, it is expected that both types of dissimilarity are negatively related to felt inclusion (Şahin et al., 2019; Shemla et al., 2016). For instance, Şahin et al. (2019) found that individuals who felt deep-level dissimilar experienced lower felt inclusion compared to deep-level similar individuals. In addition, those who perceived both PSLD and PDLD scored lower on inclusion compared to those who perceived themselves to be similar in both terms. Contrary to their expectations, no negative relationship was found between PSLD and felt inclusion, whereas Jansen et al. (2017) did find that those who diverged more from their work team in terms of gender experienced lower feelings of inclusion.

Underlying theoretical explanations most often rely on the social-categorization perspective (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), one of the mediating mechanisms in the aforementioned CEM that is captured in the felt inclusion measure. This relational perspective proposes that individuals categorize themselves and others into subgroups of in- and out-groups (Valenzuela et al., 2020). Furthermore, the similarity-attraction hypothesis states that individuals will seek company of and are more positively inclined toward their (in)group when fellow group members are similar to the self (Byrne, 1971, as cited in Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2011; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998). Perceiving similarity will also contribute to stronger identification with the group (Amiot et al., 2012).

Conversely, dissimilar individuals are less likely to feel attached to their team when social categorization process occur, and feel less included. Not only the individual may refrain from attachment to the group, but also the team might be less willing to include this member (Jansen et al., 2014). Although social categorization processes are often linked to surface-level dissimilarities, the CEM of van Knippenberg et al. (2004) argues that social categorization processes could occur for both types of dissimilarity.

These findings lead to the following hypothesis:

*H1: Perceived dissimilarity (both surface- and deep-level) is negatively related to felt inclusion.*

### Felt Inclusion and Innovative Work Behavior

A recent study of Arthachinda & Charoensukmongkol (2024) found a positive relationship between perceived work group inclusion and IWB among consulting employees. Apart from this study, the concepts of felt inclusion and IWB have mostly been implicitly related before in prior research. Mainly through a positive relationship between two distinct components of the self-determination theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2000) that correspond to the subscales of inclusion, and (stages of) IWB (Devloo et al., 2015; Gao et al., 2017; Saxena & Prasad, 2023; Wang et al., 2021). SDT considers the satisfaction of fundamental needs in people in group contexts (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

SDT describes the need for relatedness, which corresponds to belongingness in the concept of inclusion (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Belongingness is pivotal for IWB, because individuals challenge the status quo. Risks both related to the idea itself (Wang et al., 2021) and criticism or mockery from colleagues (Janssen, 2003) require a non-threatening and

supportive interpersonal environment (van den Broeck et al., 2008, as cited in Devloo et al., 2015). Psychological security derived from belongingness enables individuals to freely propose and pursue new ideas without fear of judgement from their peers (Dewi & Etikariena, 2024; Eisenbeiss et al., 2008, as cited in Devloo et al., 2015), and persist in the championing and implementation of ideas (Eisenbeiss et al., 2008; Wang et al., 2021). For instance, Tang et al. (2014) found that individuals with high team identification (reflecting feelings of belonging to the team) were more creative. The same process occurs for authenticity which resembles identity-related autonomy in SDT (Jansen et al., 2014). Being allowed to be and act according to one's true self also contributes to being more confident. As a result, individuals are more likely to embrace risks for growth, and perceive challenges as opportunities for exploration of creative solutions (Grošelj, 2020; Saxena & Prasad, 2023). These are all behaviours that are helpful for engagement in IWB. Saxena & Prasad (2023) confirmed this and found that perceived authenticity significantly increased workers' IWB.

On the other hand, IWB could be supressed when being too concerned with consensus, conformity, and belonging to the group instead of your own interests and benefits. A phenomenon called 'groupthink' then occurs, which is compliance with existing practices (Wang et al., 2021), maintaining consensus and a cohesive in-group at the cost of seeking alternatives (Janis, 1991, as cited in DiPillo, 2019). For instance, Goncalo & Staw (2006) found in their experimental study that individualistic groups were more creative than collectivistic groups when both were instructed to be creative. However, most studies tend to find support for a positive relationship between felt inclusion and IWB (Bogilović et al., 2021; Devloo et al., 2015*)*.

Aligning with the prevailing expectation of a positive relationship, it is expected that as employees feel more included in their work team, their engagement in IWB increases. Furthermore, felt inclusion could act as a mediator in the relationship between perceived dissimilarity and IWB. These findings lead to the following hypotheses:

*H2: Felt inclusion is positively related to employee's IWB.*

*H3: Felt inclusion mediates the relationship between perceived dissimilarity and IWB, such that the higher you perceive to be dissimilar, the less included you feel, and therefore the less you engage in IWB.*

**Moderating Role of Perceived Climate for Inclusion**

An important factor that mitigates the negative relationship between perceived dissimilarity and felt inclusion is the organization's *climate for inclusion* (Nishii, 2013; Şahin et al., 2019). Following Park's et al., (2023) recommendation from their review on climate for inclusion measures, the current study adopts the definition and widely-used instrument of Nishii (2013): "In inclusive environments, individuals of all backgrounds—not just members of historically powerful identity groups—are fairly treated, valued for who they are, and included in core decision making" (p. 1754).

This buffering effect occurs through three dimensions. Fairly implemented employment practices mitigate bias, such that distribution of resources is not perceived to be in favour of certain in-groups. Secondly, the dimension 'integration of differences' captures the interpersonal integration of diverse employees within the workplace and collective norms regarding authenticity. The final dimension captures inclusion in decision-making, which reflects "the extent to which the diverse perspectives of employees are actively sought and integrated, even if expressed ideas might upset the status quo" (Nishii, 2013, p.1757).

When these dimensions are strongly present, whether an individual is part of an in- or out-group becomes less salient (Nishii, 2013). This mitigates their risk for lower feelings of inclusion, and probably consequently IWB, because differences do not matter as much as they would have within an non-inclusive organizational climate with categorization-based perceptual processes and behaviors. People are also more likely to accept one another's differences in a climate for inclusion (Nishii, 2013). Supporting this buffering effect, Jansen et al. (2017) found that a work environment that was perceived to be open toward and appreciative of differences was positively related to felt inclusion, and even more strongly for highly dissimilar employees. In addition, Şahin et al. (2019) found that a positive climate for inclusion had a buffering effect on the relationship between PDLD and felt inclusion.

Altogether, this leads to the final hypothesis and a conceptual model (see Figure 1) where all variables and their predicted relations are depicted.

*H4: Perceived climate for inclusion moderates the mediating effect of felt inclusion between perceived dissimilarity and IWB, such that the negative relationship between perceived dissimilarity and felt inclusion is weaker the more inclusive the climate is perceived to be.*

**Figure 1**

*Conceptual Model*
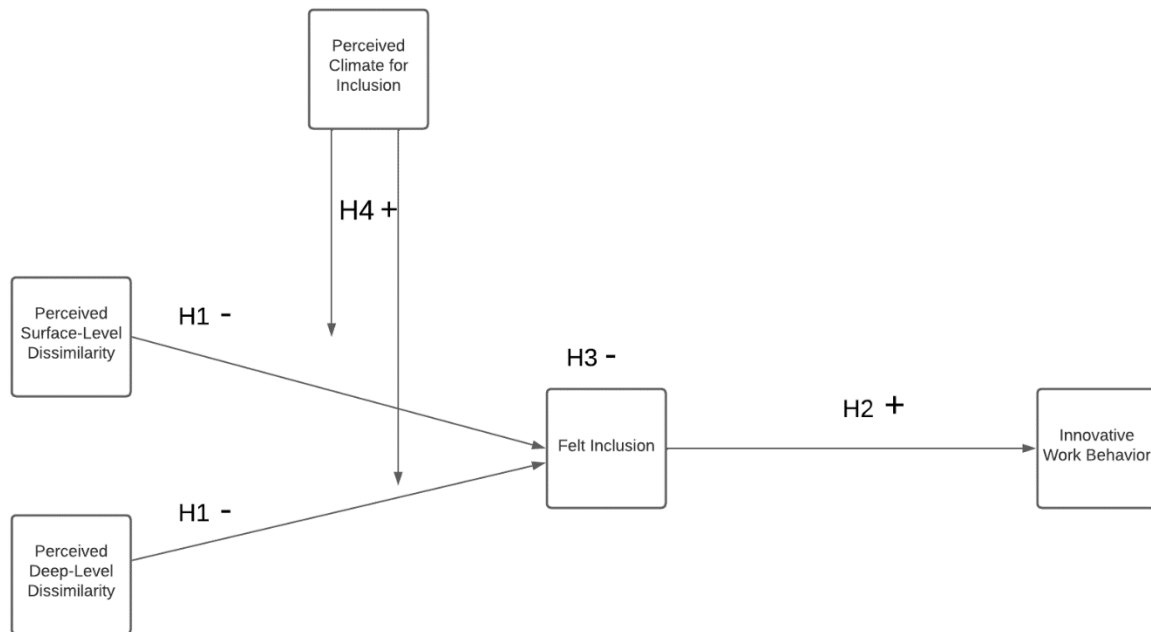


**Method**

**Participants and Design**

An a priori power analysis was conducted using G*Power 3.1 (Faul et al., 2009) to calculate an estimation of the desired sample size. The conducted test was Linear multiple regression: Fixed model, $R^2$. Based on the general explained variance of 4% for interaction effects, $F^2 = .04$ with a significance criterion of $\alpha = .05$ and power $= .80$, the minimum sample size needed with this effect size is $N = 235$. Participants needed to be at least 18 years old, work at least twenty hours per week (to ensure that they were more likely to be embedded in and involved with the organisation), and part of a team with at least three other colleagues (Guillaume et al., 2012). They were recruited using convenience and snowball sampling methods. The survey was spread via social media channels of the researcher, like Facebook groups, LinkedIn, Instagram, and SurveyCircle, a platform where students fill out each other's surveys as a reciprocal service. The research design was cross-sectional moderated mediation.

Although 252 participants initially started the survey, 105 participants had incomplete responses, of which two participants had invalid data entry (e.g., 213 for age), two answered 'prefer not to say' at migration background, and three were working less than 20 hours per week. One participant identified as non-binary and was also excluded from the data analyses to ease the interpretation of the results. This resulted in a final $N = 147$. Demographics about the sample are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Demographics*

| Variables | *n* | % | *M* | *SD* | Min. | Max. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | | | | | | |
|     Man | 37 | 25.2 | | | | |
|     Woman | 110 | 74.8 | | | | |
| Migration background | | | | | | |
|     No migration background | 106 | 72.1 | | | | |
|     Turkish/Moroccan | 10 | 6.8 | | | | |
|     Surinamese/Dutch | 14 | 9.5 | | | | |
|     Caribbean/Indonesian | | | | | | |
|     EU/EEA/Swiss (European) | 7 | 4.8 | | | | |
|     Other migration background | 10 | 6.8 | | | | |
| Age | | | 34.1 | 13.7 | 20 | 65 |
| Hours working per week | | | 32.2 | 7.3 | 20 | 50 |
| Years working for organisation | | | 5.8 | 7.5 | 0 | 31 |

*Note.* $N = 147$.

**Procedure**

An online questionnaire (+- 10 minutes) consisting of 57 questions (see Appendix B) was conducted once during March-April 2024 in collaboration with another student. This collaboration served the collective aim of data acquisition to increase response rates. Each researcher selectively incorporated variables and questions in their analyses that aligned specifically with their respective research objectives. The survey was developed in Qualtrics, where data was initially collected. Before its distribution, the authors obtained permission to proceed with the study from the Faculty Ethics Review Board. This approval concerns ethical aspects, data management and privacy issues.

Participants read an information letter at the beginning of the survey (see Appendix A), that informed them about the purpose of the study, involved the inclusion criteria, data storage information, and secured their anonymity and voluntary participation. Thereafter, participants agreed to informed consent, confirming their eligibility criteria and consenting to the study procedures including data usage. They retained the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Although participation was voluntary, participants were allowed to enter a raffle for a 15 euro gift card by providing their email address which was solely used for this purpose. This personal information was deleted right after the winner was announced. Next, they received questions about their PSLD and PDLD, felt inclusion, perceived climate for inclusion, and IWB. Participants received the demographic questions last, to ensure that their dissimilarity was not as salient to them as it would have been when these questions were asked at the beginning of the survey (Şahin et al., 2019).

**Measures**

***Perceived Dissimilarity***

To measure the extent to which participants perceived themselves to be surface- and deep-level dissimilar from their coworkers, two scales were used based on the perceived surface-level and deep-level dissimilarity scale of Harrison et al. (2002). They were adapted to the individual level based on work by Liao et al. (2008). Visible characteristics that were assessed for PSLD were gender, age, and ethnicity (e.g., "How similar do you feel on average to your coworkers in your current workgroup in terms of gender?"). Response options ranged from 1 (very similar) to 7 (very dissimilar). However, a principal components factor analysis with oblimin rotation and a reliability analysis (see results section) revealed low internal consistency among the three items (Cronbach's $\alpha = .420$). Therefore, the three items were treated as separate variables in the models, being gender, age and ethnicity dissimilarity.

PDLD (Cronbach's $\alpha = .739$) consisted of an assessment of dissimilarity in personality attributes, personal values, work attitudes and education (e.g., "How similar do you feel on average to your coworkers in your current workgroup in terms of personal values?"). Response options ranged from 1 (very similar) to 7 (very dissimilar). Mean scores were calculated, where high scores on PDLD indicated a higher sense of feeling dissimilar from your colleagues on invisible, underlying attributes.

*Felt Inclusion*

The extent to which participants felt included in their work team was measured using the Perceived Group Inclusion Scale (PGIS) developed by Jansen et al. (2014). This scale consisted of 16 items (Cronbach's $\alpha$ = .960) with subscales of belonging and authenticity, which in turn each comprised two components. Belonging is categorized into group membership (e.g., "This group gives me the feeling that I belong.") and group affection (e.g., "This group appreciates me."). Authenticity comprised room for authenticity (e.g., "This group allows me to express my authentic self.") and value in authenticity (e.g., "This group encourages me to present myself the way I am."). Answer options ranged from 1 (completely disagree) to 7 (completely agree) and mean scores were calculated in which all subdimensions were taken together. As such, high scores on this scale reflected high feelings of being included in the work team, whereas low scores indicated low feelings of workgroup inclusion.

*Innovative Work Behavior*

Employees' engagement in IWB was measured using the Innovative Work Behavior Scale from De Jong & Den Hartog (2010) consisting of 10 items (Cronbach's $\alpha$ = .879). Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). The IWB scale is an unidimensional measure that incorporates the four stages of IWB; opportunity exploration (e.g., "In your work, how often do you wonder how things can be improved?") idea generation (e.g., "In your work, how often do you find new approaches to execute tasks?"), championing (e.g., "In your work, how often do you attempt to convince people to support an innovative idea?"), and implementation of ideas (e.g., "In your work, how often do you contribute to the implementation of new ideas?"). Items were transformed from other-report into self-report items, so that employees could rate their own IWB. Mean scores were calculated, where high scores on the scale could be interpreted as high engagement in IWB, and low scores reflected low engagement in IWB.

*Perceived Climate for Inclusion*

The extent to which participants perceived their organisation's climate to be inclusive was measured using the abbreviated version of the Climate for Inclusion Scale of Nishii (2013). This 15-items scale (Cronbach's $\alpha$ = .909) consists of three subscales: equitable employment practices consisted of 5 items (e.g., "This organisation has a fair promotion

process"), integration of differences comprised 6 items (e.g., "This organisation is characterized by a non-threatening environment in which people can reveal their "true" selves"), and inclusion in decision-making included 4 items (e.g., "In this organisation, employee input is actively sought."). A mean score was calculated based on ratings on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). As such, a high score reflected a positively perceived climate for inclusion, whereas a low score reflected a negatively valanced climate for inclusion.

*Demographics*

Age (in years), gender (0 = man, 1= woman), amount of hours working per week and years working for the organisation were obtained in the final part of the survey as demographics. Migration background was assessed using items from Mulder et al. (2023) and recoded into a new variable (0 = no migration background, 1 = migration background).

**Analyses**

The analyses for hypotheses testing were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics v. 28 and Hayes' PROCESS v.3.5.2 models 4 and 7. For all analyses, separate models were tested because PROCESS does not allow to examine effects for more than one independent variable at once. Thus, each time the effect of a predictor was tested in a model and other perceived dissimilarity variables were included as covariates. This is a valid strategy because although all separate mediation models were equivalent in PROCESS, it enabled to calculate indirect effects per independent variable.

Gender was included as a covariate in all main analyses, because the sample consisted of relatively way more women than men. As women were also found to perceive higher levels of inclusion than men, this possible bias was ruled out. Similarly, migration background was also added as a covariate, as the sample consisted of relatively way more participants without a migration background. Furthermore, participants with a migration background have a higher chance of feeling ethnically dissimilar, because people with non-migration background form the majority in most work fields. This could have biased the results.

## Results

### Factor Analyses

Prior to the hypotheses testing, a factor analysis was conducted for both scales of perceived dissimilarity to examine and ensure validity of the scales. This was particularly important for the PSLD scale, given the fact that items have been treated as separate variables in previous work due to low internal consistency (see Liao et al., 2008). A principal components analysis (PCA) with oblimin rotation was performed for both scales independently. The low intercorrelations for PSLD ($r < 0.3$) and a KMO $< 0.6$ revealed that further analysis was deemed impractical. In contrast, the factor analysis for PDLD did meet all criteria and distinguished one underlying factor. As expected, a follow-up PCA with oblimin rotation combining all items from both scales indicated that the items of PDLD had a different underlying factor than the items of PSLD. Cronbach's alfa was sufficient for PDLD (Cronbach's $\alpha$ = .739), whereas the PSLD scale showed low internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha$ = .420). In conclusion, PDLD was treated as one variable, whereas all items from PSLD were treated as separate variables, being perceived gender, age and ethnicity dissimilarity.

### Regression Assumption Checks

The assumptions for regression analyses were assessed, and were all found to be valid. A multiple regression analysis was run to examine whether variables exhibited linearity, homoscedasticity, and absence of multicollinearity. Residuals were normally distributed and two outliers containing implausible values (e.g., 213 for age, 238 for years working for organisation) were removed from the dataset. One case exceeded the leverage criterium of .014. However, the exceedance was negligible and further inspection indicated that all values of this case were valid. Consequently, this case did not warrant any action or removal from the dataset.

### Hypotheses Testing

Table 3 shows the intercorrelations between all main variables and their descriptive statistics.

**Table 3**

*Correlation Matrix*

| Variables | *M* | *SD* | Min. | Max. | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 6. | 7. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Gender Dissimilarity | 2.52 | 1.49 | 1.00 | 7.00 | - | | | | | | |
| 2. Age Dissimilarity | 3.48 | 1.58 | 1.00 | 7.00 | .27** | - | | | | | |
| 3. Ethnicity Dissimilarity | 2.59 | 1.83 | 1.00 | 7.00 | .27** | .07 | - | | | | |
| 4. PDLD | 3.02 | 1.02 | 1.00 | 5.75 | .27** | .32** | .25** | - | | | |
| 5. Felt Inclusion | 5.45 | 0.96 | 2.56 | 7.00 | -.20* | -.33** | -.26** | -.44** | - | | |
| 6. Perceived Climate for Inclusion | 5.02 | 0.94 | 2.07 | 6.53 | -.27** | -.30** | -.26** | -.53** | .68** | - | |
| 7. IWB | 3.22 | 0.62 | 1.70 | 4.80 | -.05 | .04 | .03 | -.13 | .24** | .27** | - |

*Note. N* = 147. The corelations are Pearson correlations. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Four mediation models were run in PROCESS model 4 to test the relationships between perceived dissimilarity and felt inclusion, felt inclusion and IWB, and the mediating effect of felt inclusion (see Table 4). First, the total effects were examined for all three items of PSLD and the PDLD scale on IWB. As shown in Table 4, Model 3, as expected, all total effects were insignificant. This means that there was no relationship between all predictors and IWB. Following Hayes' method of mediation analysis (2017), the direct effects of all predictors on IWB were still examined (see Table 4, Model 2). Again, these were all statistically insignificant as expected.

To test whether perceived dissimilarity was negatively related to felt inclusion (H1), the effects of all types of perceived dissimilarity on felt inclusion were examined. Perceived age and deep-level dissimilarity were negatively related to felt inclusion (see Table 4, Model 1). However, there was no significant negative relationship found between perceived gender dissimilarity and felt inclusion, and perceived ethnicity dissimilarity and felt inclusion. Therefore, H1 was partially supported. In addition, PDLD was the strongest predictor in the model ($\beta$ = -.32; see Table 5, Model 1).

The results also showed a positive relationship between felt inclusion and IWB, supporting H2 (see Table 4, Model 2).

Lastly, to test whether felt inclusion was a mediator in the relationships between all types of perceived dissimilarity and IWB (H3), all indirect effects were examined. Felt inclusion mediated the relationships between perceived age dissimilarity ($b$ = -0.03; 95% CI [-0.06, -0.01]) and deep-level dissimilarity ($b$ = -0.06; 95% CI [-0.11, -0.01]) on IWB. Felt inclusion did not mediate the relationships between perceived gender ($b$ = 0.00; 95% CI [-0.02, 0.02]) and ethnicity dissimilarity ($b$ = -0.01; 95% CI [ -0.04, 0.01]) on IWB. Therefore, H3 was partially supported.

**Table 4**

*Results Mediation Analysis*

| Variable | Model 1 Felt Inclusion M | | | | Model 2 IWB Y | | | | Model 3 Total effect | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *B* | *SE* | *p* | 95% *CI* | *B* | *SE* | *p* | 95% *CI* | *B* | *SE* | *p* | 95% *CI* |
| Constant | 6.70*** | 0.28 | <.001 | [6.14, 7.25] | 2.03*** | 0.46 | <.001 | [1.12, 2.93] | 3.29*** | 0.21 | <.001 | [2.88, 3.70] |
| Gender Dissimilarity | 0.01 | 0.05 | .858 | [-0.09, 0.11] | -0.02 | 0.04 | .613 | [-0.09, 0.05] | -0.02 | 0.04 | .655 | [-0.09, 0.06] |
| Age Dissimilarity | -0.13** | 0.05 | .005 | [-0.23, -0.04] | 0.07 | 0.03 | .052 | [-0.00, 0.14] | 0.04 | 0.04 | .217 | [-0.03, 0.11] |
| Ethnicity Dissimilarity | -0.04 | 0.05 | .409 | [-0.15, 0.06] | -0.01 | 0.04 | .805 | [-0.08, 0.07] | -0.02 | 0.04 | .654 | [-0.09, 0.06] |
| PDLD | -0.30*** | 0.07 | <.001 | [-0.45, -0.16] | -0.04 | 0.06 | .456 | [-0.15, 0.07] | -0.10 | 0.06 | .075 | [-0.21, 0.01] |
| Felt Inclusion | | | | | 0.19** | 0.06 | .003 | [0.07, 0.31] | | | | |
| Gender | 0.39* | 0.16 | .014 | [0.08, 0.71] | 0.05 | 0.12 | .651 | [-0.18, 0.28] | 0.13 | 0.12 | .284 | [-0.11, 0.36] |
| Migration Background | -0.29 | 0.20 | .163 | [-0.69, 0.12] | 0.31 | 0.15 | .042 | [0.01, 0.60] | 0.25 | 0.15 | .100 | [-0.05, 0.56] |
| $R^2$ | .30*** | | | | .12** | | | | .06 | | | |

*Note.* CI = confidence interval. Migration background and gender were added as covariates in the models.

**p < .01 (two-tailed test). ***p < .001 (two-tailed test).

**Table 5**

*Standardized Coefficients from Mediation Analyses Models*

| Variable | Model 1<br>Felt Inclusion<br>*M* | Model 2<br>IWB<br>*Y* | Model 3<br>Total Effect |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *β* | *β* | *β* |
| Gender Dissimilarity | .01 | -.04 | -.04 |
| Age Dissimilarity | -.22 | .17 | .11 |
| Ethnicity Dissimilarity | -.08 | -.03 | -.05 |
| PDLD | -.32 | -.07 | -.16 |
| Felt Inclusion | | .29 | |
| Gender | .18 | .04 | .09 |
| Migration Background | -.13 | .22 | .18 |

To test whether a positive climate for inclusion moderated the mediation effect of felt inclusion between all types of perceived dissimilarity and IWB (H4), moderated mediation analyses were run in PROCESS using model 7. Stepwise, each time another independent variable was included as the main predictor. The other perceived dissimilarity variables, as well as gender and migration background, were included in the model as covariates. Results showed that perceived climate for inclusion did not moderate the effects of perceived gender- (see Table 6) and ethnicity dissimilarity (see Table 8), and PDLD (see Table 9) via felt inclusion on IWB.

However, the results indicated that perceived climate for inclusion buffered the negative effect of perceived age dissimilarity on felt inclusion (see Table 7). The effect of perceived age dissimilarity on felt inclusion was tested for three levels of perceived climate for inclusion (1 *SD* below mean, mean, and 1 *SD* above mean). As shown in Table 7, the effect was negative and significant for mean and low levels of perceived climate for inclusion. For high levels (+ 1 *SD*) the effect was negative but not significant (see Figure 2). This interaction effect explained 1% of the variance in felt inclusion. The indirect effect of perceived age dissimilarity on IWB via felt inclusion was negative and significant for mean and low levels of perceived climate for inclusion. For high levels, the effect was negative but not significant. Furthermore, the moderated mediation effect approached significance, as the

confidence interval just included zero ($b = 0.01$; 95% CI [0.00, 0.03]). Therefore, H4 was only partially supported for perceived age dissimilarity.

All results and unstandardized coefficients are presented in Figure 3.

**Table 6**

*Results Moderated Mediation Analysis Gender Dissimilarity*

| Variable | Felt Inclusion | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | *M* | |
| | *B* | *SE* | *p* | 95% *CI* |
| **X1 = Gender Dissimilarity** | | | | |
| Constant | 5.82*** | 0.27 | <.001 | [5.29, 6.35] |
| Gender Dissimilarity | 0.03 | 0.05 | .497 | [-0.06, 0.12] |
| Perceived Climate for Inclusion | 0.58*** | 0.07 | <.001 | [0.44, 0.73] |
| Perceived Climate for Inclusion X Gender Dissimilarity | -0.02 | 0.04 | .684 | [-0.10, 0.07] |
| Age Dissimilarity | -0.09* | 0.04 | .025 | [-0.17, -0.01] |
| Ethnicity Dissimilarity | -0.01 | 0.04 | .801 | [-0.10, 0.08] |
| PDLD | -0.67 | 0.07 | .332 | [-0.20, 0.07] |
| Gender | 0.31* | 0.13 | .021 | [0.05, 0.57] |
| Migration Background | -0.24 | 0.17 | .171 | [-0.58, 0.10] |
| $R^2$ | .52*** | | | |

| Conditional indirect effects at different levels of perceived climate for inclusion | Bootstrapped effect | Boot *SE* | Boot 95% *CI* |
|---|---|---|---|
| - 1 SD | 0.01 | 0.01 | [-0.02, 0.03] |
| *M* | 0.01 | 0.01 | [-0.01, 0.03] |
| + 1 SD | 0.00 | 0.01 | [-0.02, 0.03] |
| Moderated mediation effect | -0.00 | 0.01 | [-0.02, 0.02] |

*Note.* This model controlled for perceived age, ethnicity and deep-level dissimilarity, and gender and migration background of the participants.

Perceived climate for inclusion and gender dissimilarity were mean centered prior to the analysis.

* *p* <.05. *** *p* <.001.

**Table 7**

*Results Moderated Mediation Analysis Age Dissimilarity*

| Variable | Felt Inclusion | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | *(M)* | | | |
| | *B* | *SE* | *p* | 95% *CI* |
| **X1 = Age Dissimilarity** | | | | |
| Constant | 5.46*** | 0.25 | <.0001 | [4.96, 5.97] |
| Age Dissimilarity | -0.09** | 0.04 | .027 | [-0.16, -0.01] |
| Perceived Climate for Inclusion | 0.55*** | 0.07 | <.0001 | [0.40, 0.70] |
| Perceived Climate for Inclusion X Age Dissimilarity | 0.07* | 0.04 | .033 | [0.01, 0.14] |
| Gender Dissimilarity | 0.05 | 0.04 | .212 | [-0.03, 0.14] |
| Ethnicity Dissimilarity | -0.03 | 0.04 | .529 | [-0.11, 0.06] |
| PDLD | -0.08 | 0.07 | .259 | [-0.21, 0.06] |
| Gender | 0.33* | 0.13 | .014 | [0.07, 0.59] |
| Migration Background | -0.22 | 0.17 | .202 | [-0.55, 0.12] |
| $R^2$ | .53*** | | | |
| $\Delta R^2$ | .01** | | | |

| Conditional direct effects at different levels of perceived climate for inclusion | B | SE | p | 95% CI |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| - 1 SD | -0.16** | 0.05 | .002 | [-0.26, -0.06] |
| M | -0.09* | 0.04 | .027 | [-0.16, -0.01] |
| + 1 SD | -0.02 | 0.05 | .757 | [-0.12, 0.09] |

| Conditional indirect effects at different levels of perceived climate for inclusion | Bootstrapped effect | Boot SE | Boot 95% CI |
|---|---|---|---|
| - 1 SD | -0.03** | 0.02 | [-0.07, -0.00] |
| M | -0.02** | 0.01 | [-0.04, -0.00] |
| + 1 SD | -0.00 | 0.01 | [-0.02, 0.01] |
| Moderated mediation effect | 0.01 | 0.01 | [0.00, 0.03] |

*Note.* This model controlled for perceived gender-, ethnicity- and deep-level dissimilarity (PDLD), and gender and migration background of the participants. Perceived climate for inclusion and age dissimilarity were mean centered prior to the analysis.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

**Figure 2**

*Simple Slopes Plot Interaction Effect Perceived Age Dissimilarity And Perceived Climate for*
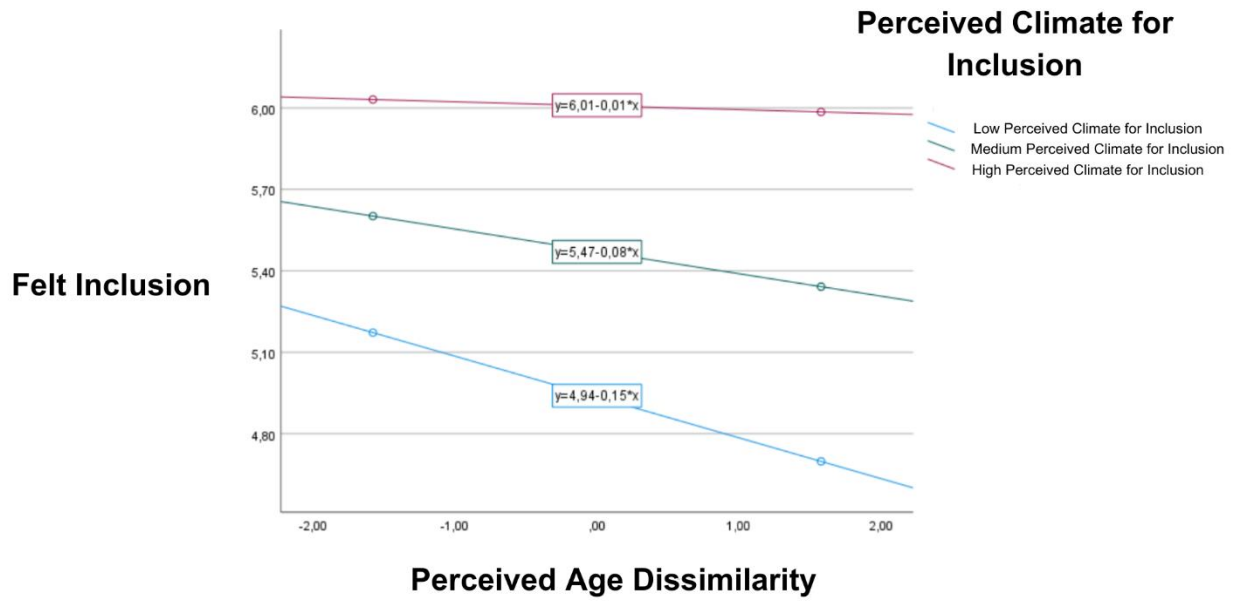
*Inclusion*

**Table 8**

*Results Moderated Mediation Analysis Ethnicity Dissimilarity*

| Variable | Felt Inclusion | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | | M | |
| | B | SE | p | 95% CI |
| **X1 = Ethnicity Dissimilarity** | | | | |
| Constant | 5.72*** | 0.27 | <.001 | [5.17, 6.26] |
| Ethnicity Dissimilarity | -0.01 | 0.04 | .765 | [-0.10, 0.08] |
| Perceived Climate for Inclusion | 0.58*** | 0.07 | <.001 | [0.43, 0.73] |
| Perceived Climate for Inclusion X Ethnicity Dissimilarity | 0.01 | 0.03 | .796 | [-0.06, 0.08] |
| Gender Dissimilarity | 0.04 | 0.04 | .395 | [-0.05, 0.12] |
| Age Dissimilarity | -0.09* | 0.04 | .027 | [-0.17, -0.01] |
| PDLD | -0.07 | 0.07 | .299 | [-0.21, 0.06] |
| Gender | 0.31* | 0.13 | .021 | [0.05, 0.57] |
| Migration Background | -0.23 | 0.17 | .184 | [-0.57, 0.11] |
| $R^2$ | .52*** | | | |

| Conditional indirect effects at different levels of perceived climate for inclusion | Bootstrapped effect | Boot *SE* | Boot 95% *CI* |
|---|---|---|---|
| - 1 SD | -0.00 | 0.01 | [-0.04, 0.02] |
| *M* | -0.00 | 0.01 | [-0.03, 0.01] |
| + 1 SD | 0.00 | 0.01 | [-0.03, 0.02] |
| Moderated mediation effect | 0.00 | 0.01 | [-0.02, 0.02] |

*Note.* This model controlled for perceived gender-, age- and deep-level dissimilarity (PDLD), and gender and migration background of the participants. Perceived climate for inclusion and ethnicity dissimilarity were mean centered prior to the analysis.

* $p < .05$. *** $p < .001$.

**Table 9**

*Results Moderated Mediation Analysis PDLD*

| Variable | Felt Inclusion | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | *M* | | | |
| | *B* | *SE* | *p* | 95% *CI* |
| **X1 = PDLD** | | | | |
| Constant | 5.52*** | 0.21 | <.001 | [5.10, 5.93] |
| PDLD | -0.08 | 0.07 | .243 | [-0.22, 0.06] |
| Perceived Climate for Inclusion | 0.58*** | 0.07 | <.001 | [0.43, 0.73] |
| Perceived Climate for Inclusion X PDLD | -0.04 | 0.06 | .524 | [-0.16, 0.08] |
| Gender Dissimilarity | 0.04 | 0.04 | .359 | [-0.04, 0.12] |
| Age Dissimilarity | -0.09* | 0.04 | .027 | [-0.17, -0.01] |
| Ethnicity Dissimilarity | -0.01 | 0.04 | .754 | [-0.10, 0.07] |
| Gender | 0.30* | 0.13 | .027 | [0.03, 0.56] |
| Migration Background | -0.23 | 0.17 | .183 | [-0.57, 0.11] |
| $R^2$ | .52*** | | | |

| Conditional indirect effects at different levels of perceived climate for inclusion | Bootstrapped effect | Boot *SE* | Boot 95% *CI* |
|---|---|---|---|
| - 1 SD | -0.01 | 0.02 | [-0.05, 0.02] |
| *M* | -0.02 | 0.02 | [-0.05, 0.01] |
| + 1 SD | -0.02 | 0.02 | [-0.07, 0.01] |
| Moderated mediation effect | -0.01 | 0.01 | [-0.03, 0.01] |

*Note.* This model controlled for perceived gender-, age-, and ethnicity dissimilarity, and gender and migration background of the participants.

Perceived climate for inclusion and deep-level dissimilarity were mean centered prior to the analysis.

\* *p* <.05. \*\*\* *p* <.001.

**Figure 3**

*Conceptual Model of Unstandardized Regression Coefficients*
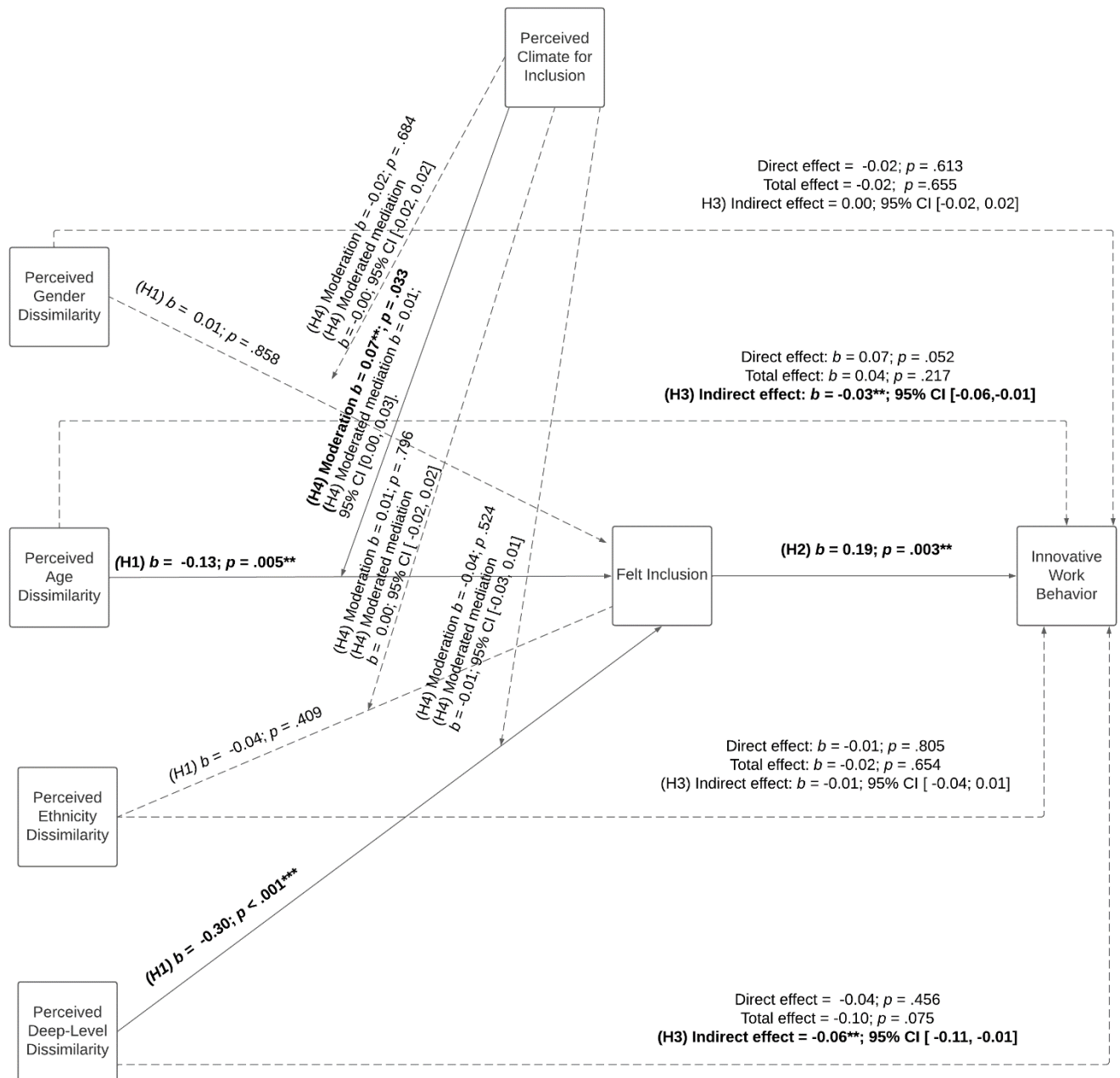


*Note.* The dotted lines reflect non-significant effects. The significant effects are displayed in bold.

**Discussion**

This study draws on social-categorization and self-determination theory, and diversity and inclusion research to gain better understanding of the complex relationship between perceived surface- and deep-level dissimilarity and innovative work behavior for employees aged 18 years and older, in the Netherlands. Specifically, the mediating effect of felt inclusion was examined. Furthermore, moderated mediation analyses were performed to investigate the role of a climate for inclusion in these relationships.

**Perceived Surface- and Deep-Level Dissimilarity and Felt Inclusion**

Based on prior research, it was expected that perceived dissimilarity had a negative relationship with felt inclusion (H1; Şahin et al., 2019). This hypothesis was partially supported, as this negative relationship was only found for perceived age dissimilarity and PDLD. This indicates that those who felt highly age- and deep-level dissimilar experienced lower belongingness to their team and lower acceptance or encouragement of being their authentic selves. Contrary to the expectations, there was no negative relationship between perceived gender- and ethnicity dissimilarity and felt inclusion. Similar to the study of Şahin et al. (2019), PSLD attributes (except from age) only had a negative correlation with felt inclusion when PDLD was not taken into account. This leads to the same conclusion as Randel & Alexandra (2024) & Şahin et al. (2019) that PSLD may only affect inclusion at work to the extent that it is accompanied by a sense of PDLD. However, Şahin et al. (2019) used a categorical assessment of perceived dissimilarity and Randel & Alexandra (2024) solely focused on work style and ethnic dissimilarity, which constrains direct comparisons.

There are several explanations for this result. For ethnicity dissimilarity, it was likely that actual dissimilarity in terms of migration background was more pivotal for felt inclusion, because the negative association did exist when the model did not control for migration background. Correlations showed that employees with a migration background experienced lower inclusion than employees without a migration background.

Secondly, mean scores on all PSLD attributes were relatively low, indicating that on average, participants felt quite visibly similar rather than dissimilar to their coworkers. This could explain why a negative relationship with felt inclusion did not occur.

Another explanation could be that individuals differed substantially in how long they had already been working for their organisation, consequently affecting if their dissimilarity is still being noticed by others. Several studies argue that it is mostly surface-level characteristics that are salient in the very early stages of team formations (Harrison et al., 2002; van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007). However, group members may find out over time that initial stereotypes they held about other coworkers were wrong, attenuating the effects of social categorization processes. On the other hand, extended tenure could also reveal more hidden differences like deep-level attributes later on that may negatively affect group processes (van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007). Viewing mean scores of years working in the organisation revealed that most participants had been working for their organisation for a couple of years. Thus, this might explain why PSLD was less detrimental for felt inclusion than PDLD.

**Felt Inclusion and IWB**

Conform the expectations, this study found that individuals who felt highly included in their work team, showed higher engagement in IWB (H2). In other words, when individuals feel a strong sense of belonging to their team and perceive that they can be their authentic selves, they might be more likely to engage in IWB. This is congruent with the study of Arthachinda & Charoensukmongkol (2024) among consulting team members.

As argued in self-determination theory, included individuals likely experience a psychologically safe and supportive interpersonal environment (van den Broeck et al., 2008, as cited in Devloo et al., 2015) and feel socially accepted, which enables creative and innovative efforts in the workplace. In addition, being allowed to be and act according to one's true self contributes to being more confident, higher self-efficacy, willingness to take risks, and to perceive challenges as opportunities for exploration of creative solutions. These are all helpful behaviors for IWB (Grošelj, 2020; Saxena & Prasad, 2023).

**The Mediating Effect of Felt Inclusion**

Another finding is that felt inclusion mediated the relationships between perceived age- and deep-level dissimilarity on IWB (H3). This means that as perceived dissimilarity increased for age and deep-level attributes, individuals felt less included, which consequently negatively affected their engagement in IWB. Unexpectedly, felt inclusion did not mediate the relationships between all other perceived dissimilarity attributes and IWB. This indicates that there might be other mediating factors that are more important in the relationship

between perceived dissimilarity and IWB. For instance, Cui et al. (2023) found that employees with diverse cognitions were more likely to be perceived as out-group members, which had negative effects on their IWB via decreased knowledge sharing. Other studies found that autonomous/intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000) may serve as an additional mediator between felt inclusion and IWB (Devloo et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2021).

**The Moderating Effect of Perceived Climate for Inclusion**

This study also found that a positive climate for inclusion buffered the negative effect of perceived age dissimilarity on felt inclusion, but the indirect effect was not significantly affected by a perceived climate for inclusion (H4). Still, this indicates that a positively valanced climate for inclusion - where employees experience equitable employment practices, integration of differences and influence in decision-making- mitigates the adverse effects of perceived dissimilarity on felt inclusion. Similarly, Şahin et al. (2019) found that a climate for inclusion buffered the negative effect of PDLD on social inclusion. Surprisingly, the current study did not find this moderating effect for all other types of perceived dissimilarity on felt inclusion.

The absence of moderation effects could have several explanations. As the perceived climate for inclusion scale consisted of several subdimensions (Nishii, 2013), it is possible that the climate excelled in one dimension, while falling short in others. For instance, the organization might have effectively managed their influence in decision-making, but fall short in truly integrating differences between employees. As a result, despite perceiving positive aspects, the overall inclusion climate may not effectively buffer the relationship between perceived dissimilarity and felt inclusion.

In addition, the climate for inclusion was measured on organization-level, whereas felt inclusion was measured on a team-level. Although it is likely that an effectively executed climate for inclusion within the organization spills-over on a team-level, participants might have rated their organization's climate to be positive but still had negative experiences or interactions within their team.

Finally, participants could objectively feel like their organisation is working on creating an inclusive climate, but the orientation behind it could make a huge difference in actual experiences of inclusion. For example, Shore et al. (2018) argue that prevention-oriented organisations merely invest in diversity and inclusion practices to comply to obliged

laws, practices and policies to 'tick-the-box' and secure the organization's position. They focus on preventing exclusion, rather than enhancing inclusion in a promotion orientation. Still, if prevention is the only means by which organisations show their commitment to diversity, then minorities will still not experience inclusion (Shore et al., 2018). Nevertheless, a climate for inclusion was positively and statistically significantly correlated to felt inclusion (and IWB), meaning that an inclusive climate was beneficial to all employees.

**Practical Implications**

The findings indicate that managers should know how to manage inclusion effectively to stimulate their employee's IWB and mitigate potential risks associated with perceived dissimilarity. On a team-level, felt inclusion could be stimulated through offering activities like team-building to build unity and trust (Arthachinda & Charoensukmongkol (2024). On an organizational level, an inclusive climate could be established through the three dimension of Nishii (2013). There should be a focus on equitable employment practices to signal about intolerance of discrimination. Secondly, they should adopt integration strategies aimed at supporting authenticity rather than forcing assimilation to the dominant culture at work. Finally, decision-making should include all employees and their voices (Gündemir et al., 2023). It is even more beneficial if this inclusive climate is accompanied by an organizational innovation climate that encourages creativity and change (Bogilović et al., 2021).

Particularly, it is important that organizations adopt a promotion inclusion orientation and signal to their employees that they take them seriously as individuals and care about their social belonging, to avoid an inclusion façade (Gündemir et al., 2023). Contrary to a prevention orientation which merely focuses on compliance to laws, recruitment of minorities and diversity trainings, a promotion orientation involves active promotion or inclusion practices and policies. Furthermore, top management actually shows commitment to diversity and inclusion instead of solely compliance (Shore et al., 2018).

The results also indicated that deep-level dissimilar individuals might have different needs that are not covered in the three inclusion climate dimensions of Nishii (2013), as its negative relationship with felt inclusion remained stable for all levels of a climate for inclusion. Especially because PDLD was the strongest predictor on felt inclusion, and also had a strong influence on IWB, it is also necessary for organizations to shift their one-sided focus from surface-level only (van Bommel et al., 2023), to understanding the needs of deep-

level dissimilar individuals. As proposed by Şahin et al. (2019), establishing employee networks for groups that may be less visibly different from the norm might help.

Finally, practitioners and managers should beware of feelings of inclusion for those with a migration background, as this study indicates that they might be more likely to experience exclusion than employees without a migration background. Especially this group might feel like they were hired solely to increase diversity within the organization. Once again, a promotion-orientation is helpful, as a prevention-orientation could even strengthen this negative feeling (Shore et al., 2018).

## Limitations and Strengths

This study had several limitations. Firstly, the calculated sample size needed for this study was 235 participants, whereas the final sample size consisted of only 147 participants. This has negatively affected the power of this study, as a result of which it is possible that no effects were found for certain perceived dissimilarity attributes, even though these effects might exist in reality.

Secondly, this study did not have any insight in specific PDLD attributes and felt inclusion, but only an indication of PDLD in a general sense. Therefore, we could not establish whether the relationships found were present to a larger or lesser extent for specific PDLD attributes.

Thirdly, despite the fact that this study provided a definition of IWB in the questionnaire, participants may still have had different definitions in mind. For instance, the scope and degree of IWB can vary in terms of novelty and radicalness (Anderson et al., 2014; Axtell et al., 2000). Therefore, it is uncertain what was considered truly 'innovative' according to individuals, which might have affected their ratings. In addition, the first item of IWB might have suggested that IWB could be considered as an extra-role behavior, whereas IWB could be expected from every individual on a daily basis.

Finally, as this study observed perceived dissimilarity, there was no insight into the actual diversity in team compositions, as greater dissimilarity from the work group does not necessarily imply greater work group diversity (van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007).

On the other hand, this study provided valuable insights into the relationship between perceived dissimilarity and IWB; a relationship that has received relatively little attention in

prior research. Additionally, the perspective of perceived dissimilarity rather than actual diversity enhanced this understanding. It enables to investigate possible individual differences in dissimilarity perceptions that may be relevant to a specific group at a certain time (Shemla et al., 2016). Furthermore, this study responds to the call of Şahin et al. (2019) to use multi-item continuous measures for perceived dissimilarity, in which the influence of the degree of dissimilarity was captured. Finally, although initially unintended, separating the PSLD items has led us to gain insight into different effects for specific attributes rather than general conclusions. Nevertheless, results about specific attributes should still be interpreted with caution, as the context an individual operates in remains unknown.

**Future Research**

Future research could investigate differing perceptions about all constructs at hand that could impact their relationships. For instance, what attributes are considered surface- or deep-level is not always self-evident (Şahin et al., 2019). It also remains unclear whether perceived dissimilarity is always perceived to be something negative. For instance, Kammeyer-Mueller et al. (2011) argue that complementary fit to the existing team could occur, for instance when those older in age are seen as a good source of information through their experience, or younger coworkers are perceived to encompass relatively more 'new' knowledge obtained in their studies. This pinpoints that perceived dissimilarity might also be beneficial to felt inclusion, rather than a risk by nature.

As mentioned before, differing perceptions and expectations about IWB might exist too (e.g., when is something considered 'innovative'?). For instance, research shows that IWB is related to sex-based stereotypes, which might result in different levels of engagement in IWB for men and women. Luksyte et al. (2018) found that IWB was considered a prototypically masculine activity and that men were more positively rewarded after engagement in IWB, but the same actions demonstrated by women were ignored or not recognized to the same extent. Expectations about IWB could also differ in terms of whether the specific organisation or sector requires innovation (Saether, 2019). Furthermore, some studies argue that IWB could be considered a stressful event in itself which might explain why some employees are reluctant to show IWB (Janssen, 2004). All these findings emphasize the need of a more in-depth investigation of expectations and perceptions surrounding IWB that could account for high and low levels of engagement in IWB, alongside and in combination with perceived dissimilarity effects.

It is also worthwhile to investigate the longitudinal effects of feeling dissimilar on feelings of inclusion and IWB. Not only the effects of PSLD and PDLD might lessen or strengthen over time (van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007; Valenzuela et al., 2020), it is also interesting to investigate whether effects change when considering different stages of IWB. For instance, do dissimilar employees with low feelings of inclusion engage in the idea generation and exploration phases (as these are rather individual actions) but stop at the championing phase (where convincing others and interactions with fellow colleagues are needed)?

Finally, recent research emphasizes interesting moderators that affect the relationship between felt inclusion and engagement in IWB. For instance, Arthachinda & Charoensukmongkol (2024) found that the effect of perceived group inclusion on IWB was stronger in larger teams and teams that were less dominated by females. They argued that relatively bigger team sizes and a decent level of gender diversity contribute to a stronger effect of perceived group inclusion on engagement in IWB. Thus, future research should further examine such moderating effects, to understand and optimize conditions for IWB.

**Conclusion**

Modern organisations face several challenges, including managing diversity and innovation. Thus, getting more insight into ways to stimulate IWB and cope with negative effects of perceived dissimilarities among employees is crucial. This study revealed that perceived age- and deep-level dissimilarity from coworkers possibly poses a higher risk of lowered feelings of inclusion, which consequently negatively affects engagement in IWB. Thus, it is not the dissimilarity itself, but the psychological consequence of lowered feelings of inclusion as a result of this dissimilarity that accounts for lower engagement in IWB. Furthermore, this study showed that stimulation of social inclusion among employees is an effective strategy to increase employee' IWB. This could be realised through fostering an inclusive organizational climate, which is especially beneficial for individuals dissimilar from their coworkers in age. Managers should pay special attention to deep-level dissimilar individuals who might have different inclusion needs, and should best adopt a promotion-orientation on inclusion to fully embrace inclusion for all employees, regardless of their status in their work teams. More research is needed to establish potential moderators, different perspectives and experiences with perceived dissimilarity and IWB, and longitudinal research is required to examine effects over time. Hence, by investing in an

inclusive work environment, organizations cannot only embrace diversity, but also pave the way for innovation and growth.

**References**

Amiot, C. E., Terry, D. J., & McKimmie, B. M. (2012). Social identity change during an intergroup merger: The role of status, similarity, and identity threat. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, *34*(5), 443-455. https://doi.org/10.1080/01973533.2012.712016

Anderson, N., Potočnik, K., & Zhou, J. (2014). Innovation and creativity in organizations: A state-of-the-science review, prospective commentary, and guiding framework. *Journal of Management*, *40*(5), 1297-1333. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206314527128

Arthachinda, P., & Charoensukmongkol, P. (2024). Effect of perceived group inclusion on innovative behavior and its subsequent impact on team performance: moderating effects of team characteristics. Vol. ahead-of-print No. ahead-of-print. *Management Research Review*. https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-09-2023-0708

Ashikali, T., Groeneveld, S., & Kuipers, B. (2021). The role of inclusive leadership in supporting an inclusive climate in diverse public sector teams. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, *41*(3), 497-519. https://doi.org/10.1177/0734371X19899722

Axtell, C. M., Holman, D. J., Unsworth, K. L., Wall, T. D., Waterson, P. E., & Harrington, E. (2000). Shopfloor innovation: Facilitating the suggestion and implementation of ideas. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *73*(3), 265-285.  https://doi.org/10.1348/096317900167029

Bogilović, S., Bortoluzzi, G., Černe, M., Ghasemzadeh, K., & Žnidaršič, J. (2021). Diversity, climate and innovative work behavior. *European Journal of Innovation Management*, *24*(5), 1502-1524. https://doi.org/10.1108/EJIM-03-2020-0100

Brewer, M. B. (1991). The social self: On being the same and different at the same time. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *17*(5), 475-482. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167291175001

Chen, X., Liu, J., Zhang, H., & Kwan, H. K. (2019). Cognitive diversity and innovative work behaviour: The mediating roles of task reflexivity and relationship conflict and the moderating role of perceived support. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational*

*Psychology*, *92*(3), 671-694. https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12259

https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12259

Cui, G., Wang, F., & Zhang, Y. (2023). Buffer or boost? the role of openness to experience and knowledge sharing in the relationship between team cognitive diversity and members' innovative work behavior. *Current Psychology*, *42*(29), 25233-25245. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-03633-7

De Clercq, D., Dimov, D., & Belausteguigoitia, I. (2016). Perceptions of adverse work conditions and innovative behavior: The buffering roles of relational resources. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *40*, 515–542. https://doi.org/10.1111/etap.12121

De Jong, J., & Den Hartog, D. (2010). Measuring innovative work behaviour. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, *19*(1), 23-36. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8691.2010.00547.x

Devloo, T., Anseel, F., De Beuckelaer, A., & Salanova, M. (2015). Keep the fire burning: Reciprocal gains of basic need satisfaction, intrinsic motivation and innovative work behaviour. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *24*(4), 491-504. https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2014.931326

Dewi, A. A. I. R. K., & Etikariena, A. (2024). Measuring innovative work behavior intention through experimental vignette method: The role of cognitive diversity and psychological safety. *ANIMA Indonesian Psychological Journal*, *39*(1), 183-208. https://doi.org/10.24123/aipj.v39i1.5775

DiPillo, K. A. (2019). *Diversity, cohesion, and groupthink in higher education: Group characteristics and groupthink symptoms in student groups*. Youngstown State University.

Eisenbeiss, S. A., Van Knippenberg, D., & Boerner, S. (2008). Transformational leadership and team innovation: integrating team climate principles. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *93*(6), 1438. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0012716

Elidemir, S. N., Ozturen, A., & Bayighomog, S. W. (2020). Innovative behaviours, employee creativity, and sustainable competitive advantage: A moderated mediation. *Sustainability*, *12(*8), 3295. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12083295

Ellemers, N., & Jetten, J. (2013). The many ways to be marginal in a group. Personality and Social Psychology Review, *17*(1), 3–21. https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868312453086

Ellemers, N., Şahin, O., Jansen, W.S., & van der Toorn, J. (2018). Naar effectief diversiteitsbeleid: het bouwen van bruggen tussen wetenschap en praktijk. *Gedrag en Organisatie. 31*(4), 409-428. 10.5117/2018.031.004.006  https://doi.org/10.5117/2018.031.004.006

Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Buchner, A., & Lang, A.-G. (2009). Statistical power analyses using G*Power 3.1: Tests for correlation and regression analyses. *Behavior Research Methods*, *41*, 1149-1160. https://doi.org/10.3758/BRM.41.4.1149

Gao, M. (2017). *A self-determination approach to understanding employees' innovative work behavior* (Doctoral dissertation, Concordia University).

Goncalo, J. A., & Staw, B. M. (2006). Individualism–collectivism and group creativity. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *100*(1), 96-109. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2005.11.003

Grošelj, M., Černe, M., Penger, S., & Grah, B. (2020). Authentic and transformational leadership and innovative work behaviour: the moderating role of psychological empowerment. *European Journal of Innovation Management*, *24*(3), 677-706. https://doi.org/10.1108/EJIM-10-2019-0294

Guillaume, Y. R. F., Brodbeck, F. C., and Riketta, M. (2012). Surface and deep-level dissimilarity effects on social integration and individual effectiveness related outcomes in work groups: a meta-analytic integration. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*. *85*, 80–115. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8325.2010.02005.x

Gündemir, S., Homan, A. C., & Greer, L. L. (2023). Overcoming the inclusion facade. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, *64*(3), 1-4.

Harrison, D.A., Price, K.H., Gavin, J.H. and Florey, A.T. (2002), "Time, teams, and task performance: changing effects of surface-and deep-level diversity on group functioning", *Academy of Management Journal*, *45*(5), pp. 1029-1045. https://doi.org/10.5465/3069328

Hayes, A. F. (2017). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach*. Guilford publications.

Hobman, E. V., Bordia, P., & Gallois, C. (2003). Consequences of feeling dissimilar from others in a work team. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *17*, 301-325. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1022837207241

Hobman, E. V., Bordia, P., & Gallois, C. (2004). Perceived dissimilarity and work group involvement: The moderating effects of group openness to diversity. *Group & Organization Management*, *29*(5), 560-587. https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601103254269

Huang, X., Hsieh, J. J., & He, W. (2014). Expertise dissimilarity and creativity: The contingent roles of tacit and explicit knowledge sharing. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *99*(5), 816. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0036911

Jansen, W. S., Otten, S., & van der Zee, K. I. (2017). Being different at work: How gender dissimilarity relates to social inclusion and absenteeism. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, *20*(6), 879-893. https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430215625783

Jansen, W. S., Otten, S., van der Zee, K. I., & Jans, L. (2014). Inclusion: Conceptualization and measurement. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *44*(4), 370-385. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2011

Janssen, O. (2003). Innovative behaviour and job involvement at the price of conflict and less satisfactory relations with co-workers. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *76*(3), 347-364. https://doi.org/10.1348/096317903769647210

Janssen, O. (2004). How fairness perceptions make innovative behavior more or less stressful. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *25*(2), 201-215. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.238

Kammeyer-Mueller, J. D., Livingston, B. A., & Liao, H. (2011). Perceived similarity, proactive adjustment, and organizational socialization. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *78*(2), 225-236. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2010.09.012

Kernis, M. H., & Goldman, B. M. (2006). A multicomponent conceptualization of authenticity: Theory and research. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, *38*, 283-357. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(06)38006-9

Kim, T. Y., David, E. M., & Liu, Z. (2021). Perceived cognitive diversity and creativity: A multilevel study of motivational mechanisms and boundary conditions. *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, *55*(1), 168-182. https://doi.org/10.1002/jocb.443

Liao, H., Chuang, A., & Joshi, A. (2008). Perceived deep-level dissimilarity: Personality antecedents and impact on overall job attitude, helping, work withdrawal, and turnover. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *106*(2), 106-124. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2008.01.002

Liu, Y., Wang, W., & Chen, D. (2019). Linking ambidextrous organizational culture to innovative behavior: A moderated mediation model of psychological empowerment and transformational leadership. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 2192. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02192

Mowday, R. T., & Sutton, R. I. (1993). Organizational behavior: Linking individuals and groups to organizational contexts. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *44*, 195–229. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.ps.44.020193.001211

Mulder, L., Akwiwu, E. U., Twisk, J. W., Koster, A. S., Ravesloot, J. H., Croiset, G., & Wouters, A. (2023). Inequality of opportunity in selection procedures limits diversity in higher education: an intersectional study of Dutch selective higher education programs. *Plos ONE*, *18*(10), e0292805. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0292805

Nishii, L. H. (2013). The benefits of climate for inclusion for gender-diverse groups. *Academy of Management Journal*, *56*(6), 1754-1774. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2009.0823

Park, S., Park, S., & Shryack, J. (2023). Measures of climate for inclusion and diversity: Review and summary. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, *34*(4), 463-480. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrdq.21493

Randel, A. E., & Alexandra, V. (2024). From cultural intelligence to workgroup inclusion through synchrony preference and perceived workgroup similarity. *Journal of World Business*, *59*(1), 101490. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jwb.2023.101490

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, *55*(1), 68. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68

Saether, E. A. (2019). Motivational antecedents to high-tech R&D employees' innovative work behavior: Self-determined motivation, person-organization fit, organization support of creativity, and pay justice. *The Journal of High Technology Management Research*, *30*(2), 100350. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hitech.2019.100350

Şahin, O., Van der Toorn, J., Jansen, W. S., Boezeman, E. J., & Ellemers, N. (2019). Looking beyond our similarities: How perceived (in) visible dissimilarity relates to feelings of inclusion at work. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *10*, 575. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00575

Saxena, A., & Prasad, A. (2023). Exploring the influence of dimensions of workplace spirituality on innovative work behaviour: role of sense of God. *International Journal of Ethics and Systems*, *39*(2), 183-212. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOES-12-2021-0220

Shemla, M., Meyer, B., Greer, L., & Jehn, K. A. (2016). A review of perceived diversity in teams: Does how members perceive their team's composition affect team processes and outcomes?. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *37*, 89-106. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.1957

Shore, L. M., Cleveland, J. N., & Sanchez, D. (2018). Inclusive workplaces: A review and model. *Human Resource Management Review*, *28*(2), 176-189. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2017.07.003

Tajeddini, K., Budur, T., Gamage, T. C., Demir, A., Zaim, H., & Topal, R. (2023). Impact of diversity management on innovative work behavior: mediating role of human resource management and affective commitment. *Journal of Management Development*, *42*(1), 29-53. https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-06-2022-0154

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. (1986). The social identity of intergroup behavior. In W. A. S. Worchel (Ed.), Psychology and intergroup relations. Chicago: Nelson-Hall.

Tang, C., Shang, J., Naumann, S. E., & von Zedtwitz, M. (2014). How team identification and expertise identification affect R & D employees' creativity. *Creativity and Innovation Management*, *23*(3), 276-289. https://doi.org/10.1111/caim.12069

Tripathi, N., & Ghosh, V. (2020). Deep-level diversity and workgroup creativity: The role of creativity climate. *Journal of Indian Business Research*, *12*(4), 605-624. https://doi.org/10.1108/JIBR-01-2019-0007

Valenzuela, M. A., Jian, G., & Jolly, P. M. (2020). When more is better: the relationships between perceived deep-level similarity, perceived workplace ethnic diversity, and immigrants' quality of coworker relationships. *Employee Relations: The International Journal*, *42*(2), 507-524. https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-05-2019-0202

van Bommel, H. M., Hubers, F., & Maas, K. E. H. (2023). Prominent themes and blind spots in diversity and inclusion literature: a bibliometric analysis. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-023-05522-w

Van Knippenberg, D., & Schippers, M. C. (2007). Work group diversity. *Annual Review of Psychology, 58*, 515-541. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.58.110405.085546

Van Knippenberg, D., De Dreu, C. K., & Homan, A. C. (2004). Work group diversity and group performance: an integrative model and research agenda. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *89*(6), 1008. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.89.6.1008

Von Bergen, C. W., Soper, B., & Foster, T. (2002). Unintended negative effects of diversity management. *Public Personnel Management*, *31*(2), 239-251. https://doi.org/10.1177/009102600203100209

Wang, Z., Gao, M., & Panaccio, A. (2021). A self-determination approach to understanding individual values as an interaction condition on employees' innovative work behavior in the high-tech industry. *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, *55*(1), 183-198. https://doi.org/10.1002/jocb.444

Williams, K. Y., & O'Reilly, C. A. (1998). Demography and diversity in organizations: A review of 40 years of research. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *20*, 77–140.

**Appendix A – Informed Consent**

Dear working individual,

We would like to invite you to participate in our thesis research!

**Goal**

The aim is to understand how the extent to which you feel dissimilar from your direct colleagues can have an effect on whether you feel included in your current work team, consequently affecting your job satisfaction and innovative work behavior. Furthermore, we are interested in the role of your perceived climate for inclusion within your organisation. This information provides valuable contributions to existing research into the field of diversity and inclusion and work outcomes.

**Requirements**

To participate, you must be 18 years or older, working at least 20 hours for a company in the Netherlands and be part of a team with at least 3 other colleagues.

**Participation**

If you decide to participate in this study, you will complete a short questionnaire that will take no more than 5-10 minutes of your time. We will investigate whether people with certain characteristics may differ from each other in how similar they think they are to their direct colleagues. In addition, you will be asked to answer statements about your perceived (climate for) inclusion and work outcomes. Lastly, we will ask you to answer some questions about yourself, like your age, gender, and migration background. We ask these questions so that we can describe our sample.

**Data**

Your privacy and anonymity are considered very important to us. The data will only be available to the researchers and their supervisor and will never be shared with other parties. Participation is anonymous. This means that your answers can never be traced back to your identity. This data will be handled according to the UU protocol (see: https://uu-ser.sites.uu.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/647/2020/08/GUIDELINE-FOR-DATA-

MANAGEMENT.pdf) and will be deleted after completion of the thesis. You can also decide to stop the survey at any time without consequences. Lastly, you can choose to view the results after the research by leaving your email.

**Gift voucher**

Although participation is voluntary, there is a possibility to enroll in a lottery to win a gift voucher worth 15 euros, for which you can leave your e-mail at the end of the survey. E-mail addresses will only be used for this purpose and will be deleted after completion of the thesis.

We would like to thank you in advance for your participation!

Angelique Joghi (a.a.joghi@students.uu.nl) & Sophie Tolhuisen (s.m.tolhuisen@students.uu.nl)
Utrecht University

**Consent statement**

If you would like to participate in this study, then click: 'Yes, I would like to participate in this study.'

This indicates that:
- I am 18 years or older.
- I am working in the Netherlands.
- I am working a minimum of 20 hours per week within my organisation.
- I am working in a team with at least three other colleagues.
- I have read and understood the informed consent.
- I agree to participate in the study and the use of the data obtained.
- I reserve the right to stop participating in the study at any time.

**Appendix B- Scales**

**Perceived Dissimilarity (Harrison et al. (2002), Liao et al. (2008).**

*Likert scale: 1- very similar, 2- similar, 3- somewhat similar, 4- neutral, 5- somewhat dissimilar, 6- dissimilar, 7- very dissimilar*

In the following questions, we will ask you how similar you feel to your direct colleagues in the team you are working in (*If you have multiple jobs or teams, please choose <u>one team within one job </u>you will be answering the rest of the questions about).*

How similar do you feel on average to your coworkers in terms of…

- Gender *(surface-level)*
- Age *(surface-level)*
- Ethnicity *(surface-level)*
- Personality attributes *(deep-level)*
- Personal values *(deep-level)*
- Work attitudes *(deep-level)*
- Education *(deep-level)*

**Felt Inclusion (Perceived Group Inclusion Scale (PGIS), Jansen et al., 2014).**

*Likert scale:1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- somewhat disagree, 4- neutral, 5- somewhat agree, 6- agree, 7- strongly agree*

The following questions will consider the extent to which you feel included in your current work team. (*If you have multiple jobs or teams, please choose the same team you had in mind when answering the previous questions*).

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

1. This group gives me the feeling that I belong
2. This group gives me the feeling that I am part of this group
3. This group gives me the feeling that I fit in
4. This group treats me as an insider
5. This group likes me
6. This group appreciates me
7. This group is pleased with me
8. This group cares about me

9. This group allows me to be authentic

10. This group allows me to be who I am

11. This group allows me to express my authentic self

12. This group allows me to present myself the way I am

13. This group encourages me to be authentic

14. This group encourages me to be who I am

15. This group encourages me to express my authentic self

16. This group encourages me to present myself the way I am

**Perceived Climate for Inclusion (Climate for Inclusion Scale developed by Nishii, 2013).**

*Likert scale; 1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- somewhat disagree, 4- neutral, 5- somewhat agree, 6- agree, 7- strongly agree.*

The following questions will consider whether you believe there are equitable employment practices in the organisation you are working for, how your organisation integrates differences and whether there is inclusion in decision-making. (*If you have multiple jobs, please choose the same organisation you had in mind when answering the previous questions.*)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

1. This organisation has a fair promotion process

2. The performance review process in fair in the organisation

3. This organisation invests in the development of all of its employees

4. Employees in this organisation receive equal pay for equal work

5. This organisation provides safe ways for employees to voice their grievances

6. This organisation is characterized by a non-threatening environment in which people can reveal their true selves

7. This organisation values work-life balance

8. This organisation commits resources to ensuring that employees are able to resolve conflicts effectively

9. Employees of the organisation are valued for who they are as people, not just for the job that they fill

10. In this organisation, people often share and learn about another as people

11. This organisation has a culture in which employees appreciate the differences that people bring to the workplace

12. In this organisation, employee input is actively sought

13. In this organisation, everyone's ideas for how to do things better are given serious consideration

14. In this organisation, employees' insights are used to rethink or redefine work practices

15. Top management exercises the belief that problem-solving is improved when input from different roles, ranks, and functions is considered

**Innovative Work Behavior (Innovative Work Behavior Scale from De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010)**

*Likert scale: 1- never, 2- rarely, 3- sometimes, 4- often, 5- always*

The following questions will consider your engagement in **innovative work behavior**, which is the generation of ideas, creating support for ideas and idea implementation.

In your work, how often do you….

1. pay attention to issues that are no part of your daily work?
2. wonder how things can be improved?
3. search out new working methods, techniques or instruments?
4. generate original solutions for problems?
5. find new approaches to execute tasks?
6. make important organizational members enthusiastic for innovative ideas?
7. attempt to convince people to support an innovative idea?
8. systematically introduce ideas into work practices?
9. contribute to the implementation of new ideas?
10. put effort in the development of new things?

**Demographics**

The last few questions will consider your demographic information. You are almost there!

How old are you? (only fill in two numbers, e.g., 34).

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say

- Not listed *(open question)*

What is your migration background? (Mulder et al., 2023)

- No migration background
- Turkish/Moroccan migration background
- Surinamese/Dutch Caribbean/Indonesian migration background
- EU/EEA/Swiss (European) migration background
- Other migration background
- Prefer not to say

How long have you been working for this company (in years)?

How many hours do you work per week?