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Permanent link to this document:
http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/JMP-04-2013-0123

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Leader inclusiveness, psychological diversity climate, and helping behaviors

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Received 22 April 2013
Revised 10 September 2013
28 May 2014
7 September 2014
Accepted 8 September 2014

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine how psychological diversity climate and leader inclusiveness relate to an employee's self-reported propensity to engage in helping behaviors toward the leader or work group. The authors also tested whether these elements operate differently for women and racioethnic minorities.

Design/methodology/approach – A sample of 534 respondents completed electronic surveys. Hypotheses were tested with hierarchical multiple regression.

Findings – Results indicate a positive relationship between leader inclusiveness and leader-directed and work group-directed helping behaviors, particularly when accompanied by a positive psychological diversity climate. These relationships were stronger for racioethnic minorities and women relative to racioethnic majority members and men for leader-directed helping.

Research limitations/implications – Data were self-report. Future research should incorporate data from other sources and additional outcomes.

Practical/implications – Leaders who act inclusively can obtain measurable benefits with respect to employee helping by reinforcing a diversity climate.

Social/implications – Leaders should act in ways that demonstrate that they are inclusive; coupled with a positive diversity climate, this may encourage all members to engage in helping behaviors, which may have a positive impact on society at large.

Originality/value – The authors addressed the call in past research for sending consistent signals across the organization regarding the value of diversity and inclusion.

Keywords Diversity, Leadership, Inclusion, Helping

Paper type Research paper

Recruiting and selecting diverse individuals has been increasingly recognized as important but insufficient to realize the full potential of today's workforce (Bilimoria *et al.*, 2008). Increasingly, research has highlighted the importance of inclusive practices (Mor Barak and Levin, 2002) as a means for organizations to welcome the contributions of a broad range of employees (Mor Barak, 2005; Shore *et al.*, 2011). Miller (1998, p. 151) described inclusion as the extent to which diverse persons "are allowed to participate and are enabled to contribute fully." More recently Shore *et al.* (2011) conceptualized inclusion as involving treatment at work that satisfies individuals' needs for belongingness (the need to develop and maintain strong interpersonal relationships) and uniqueness (the need to preserve a differentiated self-perception). Such treatment can be provided by leaders and organizations, as both are critical elements of the context in which employee perceptions of inclusion are shaped.

Journal of Managerial Psychology
Vol. 31 No. 1, 2016
pp. 216-234
© Emerald Group Publishing Limited
0268-3946
DOI 10.1108/JMP-04-2013-0123

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While very little research on leader inclusiveness exists in the diversity literature, preliminary results suggest its importance. Research by Nembhard and Edmondson (2006) defined leader inclusiveness as "words and deeds by a leader […] that indicate an invitation and appreciation for others' contributions" (p. 947). Empirical work on leader inclusiveness has found positive effects on psychological safety (Nembhard and Edmondson, 2006) and unit performance (Hirak *et al.*, 2012), but there is little understanding of its relationship with employee behavior. It has been long recognized that leader behaviors cannot be understood without taking into consideration the organizational context in which such behaviors occur (Vroom and Jago, 2007). We therefore include psychological diversity climate, or individual-level perceptions of "the extent that a firm promotes equal employment opportunity and inclusion" (McKay *et al.*, 2009, p. 771), which has been shown to positively impact employee attitudes and behaviors.

While leader inclusiveness and psychological diversity climate are both expected to be important in predicting employee behavior, leader inclusiveness is the more proximal influence, and should have a stronger influence on behavior. Therefore, we consider psychological diversity climate as a moderator of the relationship between leader inclusiveness and self-reported helping behaviors since climate may enhance or detract from leader inclusiveness, as suggested by research showing the importance of uniformity in positive treatment of employees by the leader and organization (Liu and Ipe, 2010).

As Shore *et al.*'s (2011) theoretical framework on inclusion suggests, helping behavior is an important outcome to consider because feeling included facilitates the desire to reciprocate such favorable treatment. Further, inclusion is about respect and cooperation with others, which are reflected in self-reported helping behaviors (Smith *et al.*, 2012). When opting to engage in helping behaviors, individuals look at signals from both their leader and the organization. This may especially be the case for women and racioethnic minorities who may choose not to put forth extra effort toward helping because of signals from the leader and/or the organization that they are not included (Mamman *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, we examine the relationships among leader inclusiveness, psychological diversity climate, and self-reported helping behavior among men and women, and whites and racioethnic minorities.

Leader inclusiveness

Although leader inclusiveness captures the diversity-friendly notion of welcoming and valuing the contributions of employees, it has not received much attention, even in the diversity literature. Moreover, there is a lack of agreement about what leader inclusiveness involves and how it should be measured. We draw on Nembhard and Edmondson's (2006) conceptualization because their focus on individual-level perceptions of leader inclusion in the work group is consistent with our study goals and the Shore *et al.* (2011) framework on which this study is based. Nembhard and Edmondson focussed on a leader's interest in others' contributions which taps into individuals' desires to both belong and to be valued for their uniqueness. Thus, inclusive leaders attempt to include others in decisions in which their voices might otherwise be absent.

In the small body of research on leader inclusiveness, Nembhard and Edmondson (2006) found that inclusive leadership helps overcome the detrimental effects of status differences by increasing group members' engagement through heightened perceptions of psychological safety. More recently, Nishii and Mayer (2009) discussed the role of leader inclusiveness in their study of the relationship between group diversity and turnover moderated by leader-member exchange. In addition, Carmeli *et al.* (2010) found a positive relationship between inclusive leadership and employee perceptions of

psychological safety, which in turn predicted employees' creativity. Finally, a similar concept to leader inclusiveness, interactional justice, has been shown to have a positive relationship with organizational citizenship behaviors (Moorman, 1991; Masterson *et al.*, 2000).

Although leader inclusiveness and psychological diversity climate are theoretically distinct, inclusive leaders could contribute positively to a psychological diversity climate through their emphasis on including individuals from a variety of backgrounds.

Psychological diversity climate

Since racioethnic minorities and women often experience discrimination in the workplace and may experience fewer opportunities for upward mobility in internal labor markets (Landau, 1995), psychological diversity climate is particularly important to these individuals. Racioethnic minorities and women place greater value on an organization's commitment to diversity than racioethnic majority members and men (Kossek and Zonia, 1993). For instance, diversity climate reduces turnover intentions for racioethnic minorities (McKay *et al.*, 2007), and the mediating effect of psychological diversity climate on the relationship between reactions to performance appraisals and employee engagement is pronounced for racioethnic minorities (Volpone *et al.*, 2012). We thus explore psychological diversity climate as a moderator among racioethnic minority vs majority members and among women vs men.

Diversity climate research has highlighted that signals sent by managers to employees about how they are valued should be consistent. Stewart *et al.* (2011) showed the importance of sending a consistent message through ethical and diversity climates. Others (e.g. Triana *et al.*, 2010) have suggested that proximal workplace interactions, such as leaders' inclusive treatment of employees, are important to consider in conjunction with organizational diversity efforts. Accordingly, we propose how leader inclusiveness (a proximal factor) and psychological diversity climate (a contextual factor) combine to contribute toward self-reported helping behavior.

Hypotheses

Building on Shore *et al.*'s (2011) reasoning that social exchange theory provides a theoretical basis for outcomes related to inclusion, group members who perceive their leader to be inclusive should experience a sense of obligation and should reciprocate with helping behaviors directed toward the leader (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). Consistent with this, research has found a strong relationship between citizenship behavior and authentic leadership (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2010) and servant leadership (Ehrhart, 2004). This reciprocity also could be manifested in helping behaviors toward the work group in that a leader who values group members and demonstrates inclusion encourages group members to do the same, yielding work group-directed helping (Tyler and Lind, 1992). Relatedly, Wayne *et al.* (1997) showed that employees who reciprocate beneficial treatment provided by the organization and leader sometimes do so by helping other employees.

Understanding the relationship between leader inclusiveness and helping necessitates considering the context in which leader inclusiveness occurs (Mowday and Sutton, 1993). In addition, direct supervisors (as leaders) serve as local implementers of an organization's overall climate (Zohar and Luria, 2004). Thus, the perception that a leader's behavior is inclusive will partly depend on the extent to which individuals view the organization as signaling that it values diversity and inclusion.

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When an individual perceives a positive diversity climate, we expect the positive relationship between leader inclusiveness and helping to be particularly strong. In this situation, both the leader's inclusive behaviors and the organization's diversity climate are positive and consistent with one another. This alignment between the leader's behavior and the psychological diversity climate sends a unified message of inclusive and respectful treatment, which enhances goodwill and increases the likelihood of reciprocity. This logic aligns with evidence that an organization's policies work best when leaders and the policies themselves are consistent with one another (O'Reilly *et al.*, 2010). By contrast, perceiving leader inclusiveness in a weak psychological diversity climate is unsettling due to the mixed messages involved. In this situation, even though leader inclusiveness should be appreciated and reciprocated by the individual through helping, the strength of these efforts is not likely to be as high due to the incoherence of signals about diversity and inclusion being sent to the employee:

H1a. Psychological diversity climate moderates the relationship between leader inclusiveness and leader-directed helping behavior such that the positive relationship between leader inclusiveness and leader-directed helping behavior is stronger when psychological diversity climate is more positive.

H1b. Psychological diversity climate moderates the relationship between leader inclusiveness and work group-directed helping behavior such that the positive relationship between leader inclusiveness and work group-directed helping behavior is stronger when psychological diversity climate is more positive.

Our next hypotheses are rooted in research indicating that women and racioethnic minorities respond differently to situations in which diversity is relevant. Women and racioethnic subgroup members are often considered "perceived low status minorities" (PLSM) (Mamman *et al.*, 2012). Because of their experiences in society historically, PLSMs are thought to be especially sensitive to diversity issues such that their reactions are often different than majority group members. According to asymmetric theory, people respond differently to identical experiences (Tsui *et al.*, 1992). For example, Wharton and Baron (1987) found women reacted more positively to a heterogeneous work environment than men did. In addition, status differences and past experiences among groups dictate how a current experience is interpreted (Berger *et al.*, 1980). A woman or racioethnic minority who has suffered discrimination in the past is likely to interpret a negative workplace experience from a minority group member's perspective while a person from a dominant group is likely to interpret a similar experience from a less personal vantage point. Last, relative deprivation theory suggests that minority members' reaction to negative work situations is based in part on the amount of deprivation experienced rather than the objective situation itself (Mummendey *et al.*, 1999). Since PLSMs have suffered more injustices historically and may have been more deprived of opportunities, they will likely be more sensitive to interpersonal treatment.

The discussion above has focussed on PLSMs' views of negative events; we posit that the same effect is true for positive events such as perceptions of diversity climate and leader inclusiveness. Women and racioethnic minorities respond more favorably to diversity climate relative to men and racioethnic majority members regarding outcomes such as organizational commitment and turnover intentions (Gonzalez and DeNisi, 2009; McKay *et al.*, 2007). Racioethnic minorities and women are expected to value diversity climate for its emphasis on countering such discrimination whereas

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majority group members are less likely to experience discrimination and, accordingly, should be less concerned about diversity climate (McKay *et al.*, 2007). Further, according to aversive racism theory (Dovidio *et al.*, 2002), some majority group members may have a subconscious aversion to racioethnic minorities and thereby respond negatively to diversity efforts. For example, Tsui *et al.* (1992) found that white men in diverse work groups felt less attachment to the organization than non-whites via absenteeism and intentions to remain.

The positive relationship between leader inclusiveness and helping behavior should be even stronger for women and racioethnic minorities when accompanied by a positive psychological diversity climate based on the group-value model (Lind and Tyler, 1988; Tyler and Lind, 1992), which contends that individuals' treatment is especially important to group members whose status is uncertain (Lind and Tyler, 1988). Women and racioethnic minorities are typically less assured relative to men and racioethnic majorities of having high status in groups since their sex and race/ethnicity are diffuse status characteristics that often are equated with lower social power (Berger *et al.*, 1980). Due to having their status in a questionable state, women and racioethnic minorities are expected to react in a more strongly positive way to treatment that affirms their status in the group, such as leader inclusiveness and psychological diversity climate (Lind and Tyler, 1988). In addition, inclusive leadership and psychological diversity climate serve to create psychological safety when there are status differences (Nembhard and Edmondson, 2006), which should result in an even stronger relationship with self-reported helping for women and racioethnic minorities due to their appreciation of a work environment that counters discrimination:

H2a. The moderating effect of psychological diversity climate on the relationship between leader inclusiveness and leader-directed helping behavior is stronger for women and racioethnic minorities such that, for women and racioethnic minorities relative to men and racioethnic majority members, the positive relationship between leader inclusiveness and leader-directed helping behavior is stronger when psychological diversity climate is more positive.

H2b. The moderating effect of psychological diversity climate on the relationship between leader inclusiveness and work group-directed helping behavior is stronger for women and racioethnic minorities such that, for women and racioethnic minorities relative to men and racioethnic majority members, the positive relationship between leader inclusiveness and work group-directed helping behavior is stronger when psychological diversity climate is more positive.

Methods

Sample

A total of 690 students were invited to participate in locating a study participant who worked full-time, which resulted in surveys returned by 534 participants linked to 77 percent of the students. Students received extra credit for their respondents' participation. A total of 377 respondents provided complete data on the variables examined in the current study, yielding a response rate of 55 percent. In total, 29 percent of respondents chose not to report their age, raising questions as to whether some of them were students, only working part-time. Thus, we opted to use age as a control variable in this study to address this potential issue and to be consistent with past studies of helping (Ng and Feldman, 2008; Waismel-Manor *et al.*, 2010). Cases in

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which age was not reported were excluded in keeping with common practice when the missing data are important to hypotheses testing (Howell, 2007).

The sample for this study was 52.5 percent male, 52.8 percent Caucasian-American, 17.5 percent Asian-American, 13.5 percent Hispanic-American, 11.7 percent International, 4.0 percent African-American, and 0.5 percent Native-American/Alaska-Native. Participants were an average age of 37.5 years (SD = 13.5), had an average tenure of 8.1 years (SD = 8.34), and were employed in a wide range of industries including health care, financial services, and retail. Participants were mostly college graduates (58.9 percent graduated from college, 30.0 percent completed some college, and 11.1 percent did not attend a four-year college).

Measures

All measures used a five-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Leader inclusiveness was assessed with Nembhard and Edmondson's (2006) four-item measure ($\alpha = 0.85$). A sample item is: "The leader of my work group asks for the input of all team members." Psychological diversity climate was assessed with McKay *et al.*'s (2008) four-item measure ($\alpha = 0.84$). A sample item is: "My organization maintains a diversity-friendly work environment." Leader-directed helping was assessed with Podsakoff *et al.*'s (1990) four-item measure, which included directions that the items should be answered in reference to one's supervisor ($\alpha = 0.89$). A sample item is: "I often help my supervisor when he or she has a heavy workload." Work group-directed helping was measured with Podsakoff *et al.*'s (1990) four-item measure, worded in terms of the work group ($\alpha = 0.88$). A sample item is: "I often help work group members who have heavy workloads."

We included gender (male = 0, female = 1), racioethnicity (racioethnic majority = 0, minority = 1), age, and educational background as control variables because they have been included in previous work on helping-focussed behaviors as controls or as focal variables (Aquino, 1995; Ng and Feldman, 2008; Waismel-Manor *et al.*, 2010).

Results

Table I shows descriptive statistics and correlations among the variables. Collinearity statistics for all regression analyses were within acceptable ranges (tolerance > 0.10 and variance inflation factors < 10) (Cohen *et al.*, 2003). Moderated regression analyses revealed a significant interaction between leader inclusiveness and psychological diversity climate predicting leader-directed helping ($\beta = 0.13$, $p < 0.05$; see Table II)

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Gender	0.48	0.50								
2. Racioethnicity	0.45	0.50	0.06							
3. Age	37.50	13.52	0.01	−0.24**						
4. Education	4.55	1.14	0.02	−0.04	0.21**					
5. Psychological diversity climate	3.86	0.76	0.06	0.03	−0.02	0.03	(0.84)			
6. Leader inclusiveness	3.64	0.82	0.09	−0.03	0.06	0.06	0.62**	(0.85)		
7. Work group-directed helping	4.20	0.57	0.03	0.00	−0.07	−0.02	0.24**	0.25**	(0.88)	
8. Leader-directed helping	3.91	0.70	0.05	0.03	−0.08	−0.07	0.24**	0.31**	0.42**	(0.89)

Notes: $n = 377$. α's are in parentheses on the diagonal. **$p < 0.01$

Table I. Descriptive statistics and correlations

Variable	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3
Controls			
Racioethnicity	0.01	0.01	0.02
Gender	0.05	0.02	0.02
Age	−0.07	−0.08	−0.07
Education	−0.06	−0.07	−0.07
Main effects			
Leader inclusiveness		0.27**	0.28**
Psychological diversity climate		0.07	0.10
Interaction			
Psychological diversity climate × Leader inclusiveness			0.13*
R^2	0.01	0.12	0.13
ΔR^2		0.10	0.02
ΔF	1.14	21.57**	6.52**
Model F	1.14	8.04**	7.92*

Notes: $n = 377$. *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$

Table II. Psychological diversity climate and leader inclusiveness predicting leader-directed helping

supporting *H1a*. *H1b* examined the same proposed relationship for work group-directed helping and was supported ($\beta = 0.18$, $p < 0.01$; see Table III). These interactions are depicted in Figures 1 and 2, respectively. We further analyzed significant interactions by evaluating simple slopes at two levels of leader inclusiveness calculated as +1 and −1 standard deviations from the mean (Aiken and West, 1991). Simple slopes analysis for Figure 1 indicated a significant increase in leader-directed helping at both low and high levels of psychological climate. Specifically, leader inclusiveness was significant at both low ($b = 0.14$, $t = 2.21$, $p < 0.05$) and high levels of psychological climate ($b = 0.33$, $t = 4.80$, $p < 0.001$).

Simple slopes analysis for Figure 2 indicated a significant increase in work group-directed behavior as evidenced by a significant value for leader inclusiveness

Variable	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3
Controls			
Racioethnicity	−0.02	−0.02	−0.00
Gender	0.03	0.01	0.01
Age	−0.07	−0.07	−0.07
Education	−0.01	−0.02	−0.02
Main effects			
Leader inclusiveness		0.17**	0.18**
Psychological diversity climate		0.13*	0.17**
Interaction			
Psychological diversity climate × Leader inclusiveness			0.18**
R^2	0.01	0.08	0.11
ΔR^2		0.07	0.03
ΔF	0.52	15.29**	11.89**
Model F	0.52	5.47**	6.52**

Notes: $n = 377$. *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$

Table III. Psychological diversity climate and leader inclusiveness predicting work group-directed helping

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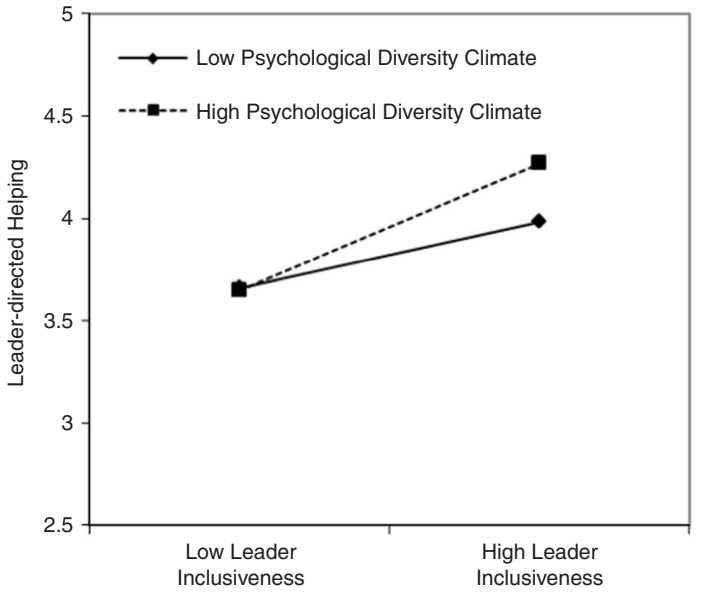

Figure 1.
Psychological diversity climate and leader inclusiveness predicting leader-directed helping

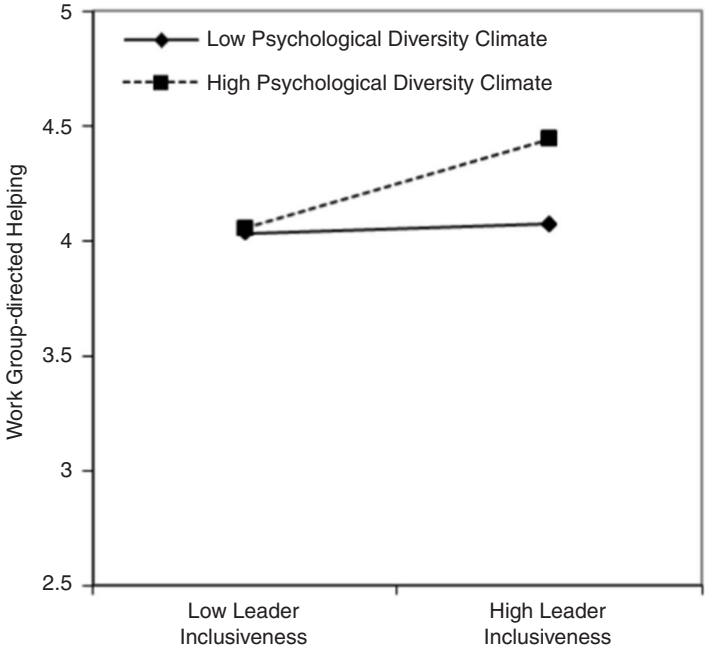

Figure 2.
Psychological diversity climate and leader inclusiveness predicting work group-directed helping

when psychological diversity climate was high ($b = 0.23$, $t = 4.09$, $p < 0.001$) but not for low psychological diversity climate ($b = 0.02$, $t = 0.44$, ns).

Moderated regression analyses indicated that the moderating effect of psychological diversity climate on the relationship between leadership inclusiveness and leader-directed

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helping was stronger for women ($\beta = 0.20$, $p < 0.01$; see Table IV) and racioethnic minorities ($\beta = 0.17$, $p < 0.05$; see Table V) than for men and racioethnic majority members. Figures 3 and 4 depict the interactions.The simple slopes for Figure 3 indicate a significant increase in leader-directed helping behavior at higher levels of leader inclusiveness in all conditions (high diversity climate, female ($b = 0.47$, $t = 4.98$, $p < 0.001$); high diversity climate, male ($b = 0.19$, $t = 2.13$, $p < 0.05$); low diversity climate, male ($b = 0.20$, $t = 2.36$, $p < 0.05$) except for low psychological diversity climate for females ($b = 0.08$, $t = 0.91$, $p = 0.36$)). The simple slopes for Figure 4 show a significant increase in leader-directed helping behavior at higher levels of leader inclusiveness for all conditions (high diversity climate, racioethnic minorities $b = 0.40$, $t = 4.43$, $p < 0.001$; high diversity climate, Caucasian-Americans $b = 0.28$, $t = 2.87$, $p < 0.01$; low diversity climate, Caucasian-Americans ($b = 0.23$, $t = 2.94$, $p < 0.01$) except for low psychological diversity climate for racioethnic minorities ($b = 0.001$, $t = 0.006$, $p = 0.995$).

H2b examined the proposed three-way interactions for work group-directed helping, but was not supported for gender ($\beta = 0.09$, $p = 0.26$; see Table VI) or racioethnicity ($\beta = 0.03$, $p = 0.71$; see Table VII).

Although we did not hypothesize what would happen when there was a mismatch between psychological diversity climate and leader inclusiveness, we found that a positive psychological diversity climate accompanied by lower leader inclusiveness yielded lower leader-directed helping for women relative to men ($t = 2.159$, $p < 0.05$). When psychological diversity climate was low, for racioethnic minorities (but not for Caucasian-Americans), high leader inclusiveness did not increase leader-directed helping behavior ($t = 3.6$, $p < 0.05$).

Discussion

We examined the combination of leader inclusiveness and psychological diversity climate as they relate to self-reported helping behavior, building on Shore *et al.*'s (2011)

Table IV.
Leader inclusiveness, psychological diversity climate, and gender predicting leader-directed helping

Variable	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Controls				
Racioethnicity	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.03
Age	−0.07	−0.08	−0.07	−0.07
Education	−0.06	−0.07	−0.06	−0.06
Main effects				
Gender		0.02	0.02	−0.05
Psychological diversity climate		0.07	0.19*	0.17
Leader inclusiveness		0.27**	0.24**	0.23**
2-way interactions				
Psychological diversity climate × Leader inclusiveness			0.13*	−0.00
Psychological diversity climate × Gender			−0.13	−0.09
Leader inclusiveness × Gender			0.05	0.06
3-way interaction				
Psychological diversity climate × Leader inclusiveness × Gender				0.20**
R^2	0.01	0.12	0.14	0.15
ΔR^2		0.11	0.02	0.02
ΔF	1.23	14.70**	3.01*	7.13**
Model F	1.23	8.04**	6.45**	6.61**

Notes: $n = 377$. *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$

Variable	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Controls				
Gender	0.05	0.02	0.02	0.02
Age	−0.07	−0.08	−0.07	−0.08
Education	−0.06	−0.07	−0.07	−0.06
Main effects				
Racioethnicity		0.01	0.02	−0.04
Psychological diversity climate		0.07	0.06	0.06
Leader inclusiveness		0.27**	0.32**	0.30**
2-way interactions				
Psychological diversity climate × Leader inclusiveness			0.13**	0.03
Psychological diversity climate × Racioethnicity			0.05	0.09
Leader inclusiveness × Racioethnicity			−0.05	−0.05
3-way interaction				
Psychological diversity climate × Leader inclusiveness × Racioethnicity				0.17*
R^2	0.01	0.12	0.13	0.14
ΔR^2		0.10	0.02	0.01
ΔF	1.52	14.39**	2.33	5.37*
Model F	1.52	8.04**	6.19**	6.17**

Notes: $n = 377$. *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$

Table V. Psychological diversity climate, leader inclusiveness, and racioethnicity predicting leader-directed helping

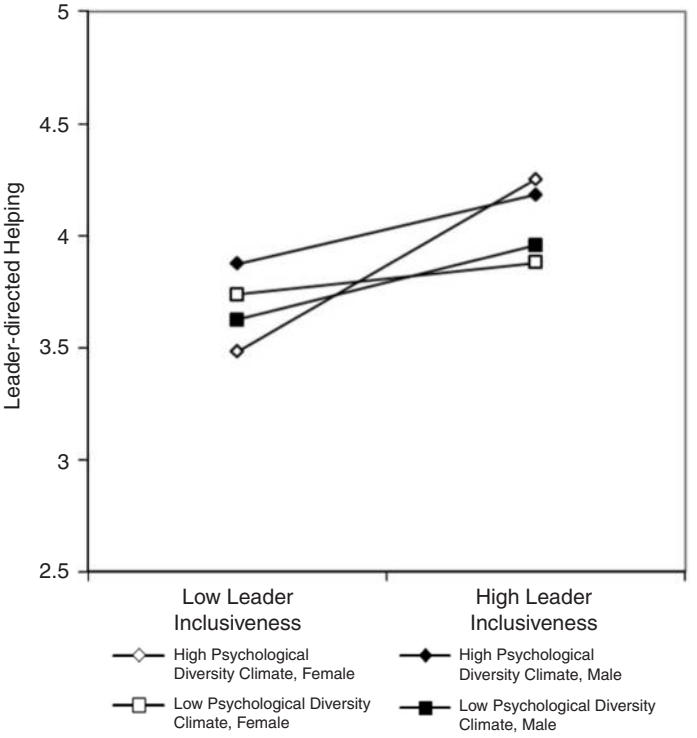

Figure 3. Psychological diversity climate leader inclusiveness, and gender predicting leader-directed helping

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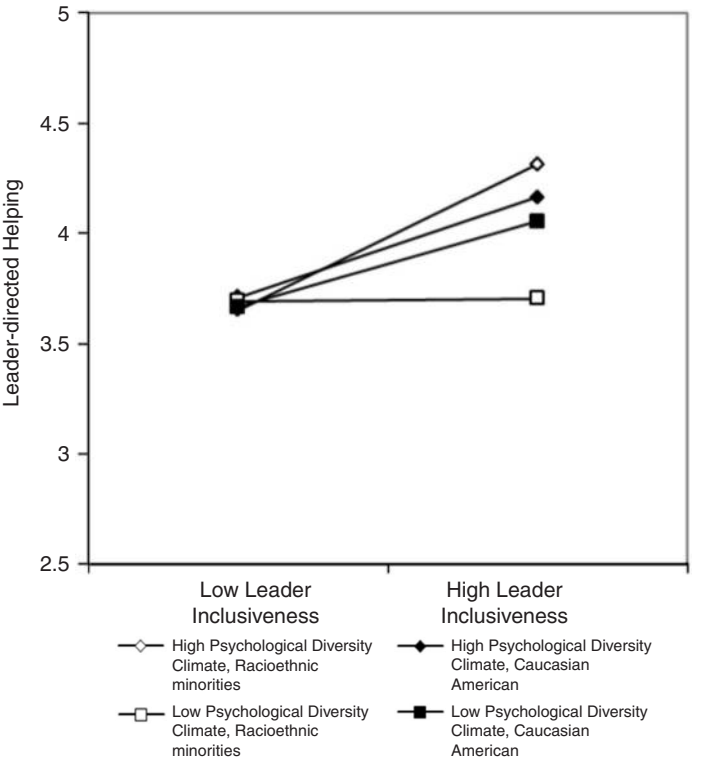

Figure 4.
Psychological diversity climate, leader inclusiveness, and racioethnicity predicting leader-directed helping

Variable	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Controls				
Racioethnicity	−0.02	−0.02	−0.01	−0.01
Age	−0.07	−0.07	−0.07	−0.07
Education	−0.01	−0.02	−0.02	−0.02
Main effects				
Gender		0.01	0.01	−0.02
Psychological diversity climate		0.13*	0.13	0.12
Leader inclusiveness		0.17**	0.16	0.16
2-way interactions				
Psychological diversity climate × Leader inclusiveness			0.18**	0.12
Psychological diversity climate × Gender			0.05	0.07
Leader inclusiveness × Gender			0.03	0.04
3-way interaction				
Psychological diversity climate × Leader inclusiveness × Gender				0.09
R^2	0.01	0.08	0.11	0.12
ΔR^2		0.08	0.03	0.00
ΔF	0.56	10.33**	4.36**	1.28
Model F	0.56	5.47**	5.20**	4.81**

Notes: $n = 377$. *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$

Table VI.
Psychological diversity climate, leader inclusiveness, and gender predicting work group-directed helping

Variable	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4
Controls				
Gender	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.01
Age	−0.06	−0.07	−0.07	−0.07
Education	−0.01	−0.02	−0.01	−0.01
Main effects				
Racioethnicity		−0.02	−0.00	0.01
Psychological diversity climate		0.13*	0.18*	0.18*
Leader inclusiveness		0.17**	0.24**	0.25**
2-way interactions				
Psychological diversity climate × Leader inclusiveness			0.17**	0.19**
Psychological diversity climate × Racioethnicity			−0.02	−0.03
Leader Inclusiveness × Racioethnicity			−0.09	−0.09
3-way interaction				
Psychological diversity climate × Leader inclusiveness × Racioethnicity				−0.03
R^2	0.01	0.08	0.12	0.12
ΔR^2		0.08	0.04	0.00
ΔF	0.65	10.24**	4.78**	0.14
Model F	0.65	5.47**	5.35**	4.82**

Notes: $n = 377$. *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$

Table VII. Psychological diversity climate, leader inclusiveness, and racioethnicity predicting work group-directed helping

theoretical inclusion framework. Our results indicate that inclusive leadership in the context of a positive psychological diversity climate is associated with enhanced leader-directed and work group-directed helping behavior. This relationship was stronger for racioethnic minorities and women with respect to leader-directed helping behavior.

Theoretical implications

Our findings contribute to the inclusion literature by demonstrating how, through its effects on helping behavior, leader inclusiveness is instrumental to realizing positive outcomes in work groups (Carmeli *et al.*, 2010). Regarding Shore *et al.*'s inclusion framework, our results showing the benefits of inclusion are consistent with the view that inclusive leaders address individuals' desire to belong and to be valued for their uniqueness. This theoretical framing is important since research on leader inclusiveness is in its early stages and has not yet been grounded in a consistent theoretical framework.

Our study also highlights the importance of considering leader inclusiveness within the context in which it occurs by examining the interaction of leader inclusiveness and psychological diversity climate. Although there is a long tradition of studying leader behavior in conjunction with situational variables (Vroom and Jago, 2007), scholars recently noted a trend of straying from this tradition (Porter and McLaughlin, 2006). Our study underscores the need to take into account leader behavior in a particular context and thus establishes a precedent for future research on leader inclusiveness to consider relevant contextual factors.

This study extends diversity climate research by providing evidence of the proximal effect that inclusive leadership provides in complementing psychological diversity climate.

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Moreover, we expand research that has called for consistent signals to be sent across the organization regarding the value of diversity and inclusion by showing how helping behavior is likely when a positive psychological diversity climate accompanies inclusive leadership (Triana *et al.*, 2010). In addition, whereas most research on diversity climate has considered attitudinal or unit-level outcome variables, we expand the range of outcomes by examining self-reported helping behaviors. Self-reported helping behaviors are important in that they are seen as extra-role behaviors which are especially vulnerable to perceptions of injustice among women and racioethnic minorities (Mamman *et al.*, 2012).

Our finding that leader inclusiveness and psychological diversity climate were important for leader-directed helping for both women and racioethnic minorities is consistent with the group-value model's argument that leaders' treatment of individuals whose status in the group is uncertain is particularly important (Lind and Tyler, 1988). We extend this tenet with the finding that, for men and racioethnic majority members, either a positive psychological diversity climate or an inclusive leadership style was associated with leader-directed helping. Conversely, for females and racioethnic minority members, a low psychological diversity climate coupled with high leader inclusiveness was not enough to increase leader-directed helping whereas for males and racioethnic majority members, a low psychological climate coupled with high leader inclusiveness was related to higher leader-directed helping. This suggests that a compensatory model exists for men and racioethnic majority members such that a single signal of good intentions may be sufficient to encourage leader-directed helping behavior as a result of the high status that these groups often enjoy (Ridgeway, 1991). By contrast, women and racioethnic minorities were more likely to engage in helping behavior toward their leader when they perceived a consistent message in terms of the organization's climate communicating commitment to diversity and the leader's inclusive behavior, thereby signaling value in the group (Tyler and Lind, 1992). This highlights the importance of research showing that employees who are most liable to experience discrimination are more likely to be positively affected by organizational support for diversity (McKay *et al.*, 2007). The mixed signals that occur when either of these elements is opposed to the other are likely to raise questions of fair treatment for these individuals.

The lack of an effect for respondents' gender or racioethnicity on self-reported work group-directed helping expands on work by Aquino (1995). He found that employee pay inequity perceptions were not significantly related to work group-directed altruism and suggested that "if an employee is mad at the organization for rewarding him unfairly, this does not justify taking it out on his co-workers by being less altruistic" (p. 29). This is consistent with literature suggesting that helping is directed toward particular recipients based on the extent to which the employee feels obligated to reciprocate good treatment (or lack thereof) (Lehmann-Willenbrock *et al.*, 2013).

Turning to our findings regarding the mismatch between psychological diversity climate and leader inclusiveness, one theoretical explanation for the lower leader-directed helping for women relative to men found when a positive psychological diversity climate accompanied low leader inclusiveness is that women are subject to biases, such as requiring higher performance ratings than men in order to be considered deserving of promotions (Lyness and Heilman, 2006). These experiences may sensitize women to unfair situations, such as when the organization appears to support a pro-diversity climate but a leader is low in inclusiveness. Perhaps women view their leaders in these situations as able to be inclusive (due to the organization's diversity climate), but choosing not to do so. When considering who is responsible for their experience of lower

inclusion, women may make an internal attribution inferring that their experience is caused by the individual leader (Jones and Davis, 1965). Such an attribution may explain the lower levels of helping provided to the leader. The finding that high leader inclusiveness did not enhance leader-directed helping behavior when psychological diversity climate was low for racioethnic minorities (unlike Caucasian-Americans) highlights that without clear signals that the organization itself is inclusive and fair, leaders are not able to inspire greater helping by compensating for these negative perceptions among racioethnic minorities.

Practical implications

Our findings suggest that organizations with positive psychological diversity climates can obtain measureable benefits with respect to self-reported helping behavior by fostering work groups in which leaders act inclusively. Consistency between leader inclusiveness and psychological diversity climate can be facilitated with regular communication between organizational leaders and work group leaders regarding the importance of reinforcing a positive psychological diversity climate through work group leaders' actions. By training and encouraging work group leaders to ask for all members' input and encourage initiative on the part of all members, organizations can promote leader inclusiveness. More development of the concept of leader inclusiveness is needed, however, to help leaders understand how to become more inclusive.

Our research suggests that to be appreciative of all employees, but especially to support women and racioethnic minorities, leader inclusiveness is important to address along with creating a positive psychological diversity climate. While organizations may be familiar with the idea that a psychological diversity climate will be beneficial for women and racioethnic minorities, our results indicate that inclusive leaders are integral to realizing the full potential of positive outcomes such as self-reported helping behaviors. Even when an organization lacks a positive diversity climate, leaders can increase self-reported helping behaviors of Caucasian-American male employees by behaving inclusively. Inclusive behavior on the part of leaders was never associated with a decrease in self-reported helping behavior, which suggests that such behavior cannot hurt. In terms of more widespread impact, more inclusive leadership coupled with a positive psychological diversity climate may have positive benefits for society in that helping behaviors may spread to other constituents such as customers. In addition, it may help build healthier work environments in which employees can thrive thus producing better products and services.

Limitations

We acknowledge that we used self-reported measures to test the hypotheses, which focussed on respondents' perceptions. Although this raises the possibility of respondents engaging in self-enhancement, our sampling across a range of organizations is likely to have decreased the perception that responses would be shared with employers. In addition, several researchers have noted that some of the concerns regarding common method variance have been exaggerated (e.g. Spector, 2006) and it is notable that we found significant interactions despite the difficulty in doing so.

Last, given the somewhat small sample sizes of each racioethnic category, we were not able to conduct analyses for specific groups separately. However, we conducted *post-hoc* analyses comparing Caucasian-Americans to the next two largest racioethnic groups in our sample, which yielded a similar pattern to our combined group results, suggesting that different racioethnic groups did not respond to the survey questions in substantively different ways.

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Future research

Our study underlines the importance of leader inclusiveness and adds to a small body of literature on this topic. The Shore *et al.* (2011) model of inclusion provides a meaningful basis for understanding the critical role of leader inclusion, but more conceptual and operational development of the leader inclusiveness construct is needed. In addition, future research could focus on related areas, such as the inclusive behaviors of group members toward one another. Our study shows that inclusion is important to all employees, but acutely important to women and racioethnic minorities. Thus, a more complete exploration of inclusive leader behaviors and the underlying mechanisms that facilitate their positive impact is warranted, including identifying specific ways to improve leaders' inclusiveness. Future research should examine other outcomes to expand our understanding of the combination of inclusive leadership and psychological diversity climate.

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