Article

Work Group Inclusion: Test of a Scale and Model

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Abstract

We develop a theoretically based 10-item measure of work group inclusion comprised of two components (belongingness and uniqueness) and use this measure to empirically test the nomological network of work group inclusion developed by Shore et al. In Phase 1, we use two samples of full-time employees to develop and refine items as well as establish content validity. In Phase 2, we demonstrate convergent, discriminant, and incremental validity with both conceptually related and unrelated constructs. In Phase 3, we use data from an additional sample of employees and supervisors to test criterion-related validity and mediation by examining the multilevel relationships between inclusion and important antecedents and outcomes. Across the three phases of our study, the results demonstrate support not only for the factor structure, reliability, and validity of our work group inclusion measure but also for a theoretical model in which the construct of inclusion has important implications for individuals and organizations.

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Keywords

Diversity management has become an important topic of interest among both practitioners and academics for more than 40 years. Recently, the discussion has increasingly shifted from "diversity management," which has emphasized solving the challenges associated with diversity, to "inclusion," which is focused on promoting the integration and value of diversity (Nishii, 2013). The appeal of inclusion is in its positive stance of being focused on appreciating and valuing individual differences (Ferdman & Deane, 2014), and the target group is everyone, regardless of majority or minority status. Furthermore, inclusion extends beyond diversity, as "simply valuing diversity might not be sufficient to harness diversity for innovation, effectiveness, and well-being" (Guillaume et al., 2014, p. 797). The inclusive workplace is based on a pluralistic value framework that respects all cultural perspectives represented among its employees (Mor Barak & Daya, 2014) and allows different groups to support each other in an effort to be fully engaged at all levels in the organization as their complete selves (Shore, Cleveland, & Sanchez, 2018).

Although inclusion is a growing area of research and practice, there has been a lack of consistency in the definition of inclusion used by researchers as well as a need for more theoretical grounding. In response to these challenges, Shore et al. (2011) created a conceptual model of inclusion based on two themes (i.e., fulfillment of belongingness and uniqueness needs) that is suggested in optimal distinctiveness theory (ODT; Brewer, 1991)—themes that also emerged in the diversity and inclusion literature. They defined inclusion within a work group as the "degree to which an employee perceives that he or she is an esteemed member of the work group through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness" (Shore et al., 2011, p. 1265). This definition departs from previous inclusion research by focusing on *both* belongingness and uniqueness as components of inclusion.

The current article establishes the validity of a theoretically based measure and model of work group inclusion involving the two components of belongingness and uniqueness (Shore et al., 2011). While past research has centered on other definitions and various foci of measurement, Shore et al. (2011) specifically focused on inclusion in the immediate *work group*. Measuring perceived inclusion in the work group is important as it is the experiences within one's immediate work environment that help an individual to feel included (Hackman, 1992). That is, inclusion in the work group is likely a more proximal influence than inclusion at the organizational level.

Since the Shore et al. (2011) article was published, there has been some speculation regarding whether the components of belongingness and uniqueness are related or orthogonal. Although Shore et al. (2011) used ODT as an organizing framework for reviewing the literature on inclusion, they presented the two components as related and not in opposition to one another. In the current research, we test some of the key tenets of Shore et al.'s (2011) model and the nomological network surrounding work group inclusion. We do this by (a) examining convergent and discriminant validity evidence for our work group inclusion measure, (b) testing the incremental validity of our measure relative to existing measures of inclusion and related constructs, and (c) testing a multilevel model of antecedents and supervisor-rated outcomes of work group inclusion. As the Shore et al. (2011) conceptual definition of inclusion has become widely accepted in the academic world (Tang et al., 2015), this study fills a gap in the literature by testing the validity of that model and advancing knowledge of the antecedents and outcomes of inclusion.

Theoretical Background

The Construct and Measurement of Inclusion

Brewer's (1991) ODT states that "social identity derives from a fundamental tension between human needs for validation and similarity to others and a countervailing need for individuation and uniqueness" (p. 477). Brewer (1991) suggested that social identification is achieved through a balance between the two needs, which Shore et al. (2011) referred to as belongingness and uniqueness. The need to belong is the motivation to form and maintain strong and stable relationships with others. To fulfill a fundamental human need for belongingness, people need to have frequent and positive interactions and to feel accepted in a stable group (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Individuals also have a fundamental need to see themselves as unique, differentiated beings (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980). Some researchers believe that the two needs of belongingness and uniqueness might be opposing if strived for at the same level (e.g., intragroup level, Brewer & Roccas, 2001).

Although Shore et al. (2011) based their conceptualization of the components of inclusion on ODT, they posited that belongingness and uniqueness are both necessary to create perceptions of inclusion and are thus correlated and not orthogonal. In line with Shore et al. (2011) and Shore et al. (2018), we conceptualize inclusion as the satisfaction of both belongingness and uniqueness in that an increased sense of belongingness does not necessarily imply a diminished sense of individual uniqueness (Hornsey & Jetten, 2004). In other words, we argue that belongingness and uniqueness are related but

distinct components of work group inclusion, and the satisfaction of both components through an employee's experiences in the work group contributes to perceptions of inclusion. According to Bettencourt, Molix, Talley, and Sheldon (2006), individuals can simultaneously satisfy belongingness and uniqueness needs by assuming a specific role within the group or by joining a group that encourages group members to express their individuality. Further evidence is reflected in the concept of inductive social identity formation in which retaining individuality is not only reconcilable with belonging to the group but is also a defining aspect of the group's identity (Jans, Postmes, & van der Zee, 2012). Taken together, this work suggests that individuals can belong to a group and retain their uniqueness concurrently within that group (Jansen, Otten, van der Zee, & Jans, 2014).

There have been measures of inclusion used in past research; however, many of the measures used have been limited in theoretical grounding or have not been validated (e.g., Avery, McKay, Wilson, & Volpone, 2008; Downey, van der Werff, Thomas, & Plaut, 2014). Although Jansen et al. (2014) used Shore et al. (2011) as a conceptual starting point for measuring inclusion, they diverged substantially from Shore et al. in their final framing and measurement of inclusion. Specifically, they posed that the belongingness dimension has two subcomponents—group membership and group affection—and that the uniqueness dimension has two components—room for authenticity and value in authenticity. They created authenticity items based on scales measuring authentic personality, perceived authenticity, and personal autonomy, which, while meaningful, departs from Shore et al.'s conceptualization of perceived uniqueness in a work group. In our study, we present and validate an inclusion measure that is consistent with Shore et al.'s (2011) conceptual model reflecting the concurrent satisfaction of belongingness and uniqueness needs in the work group. Specifically, we provide evidence that the belongingness and uniqueness components of inclusion are distinguishable, but that together they provide the experience of work group inclusion.

Most published studies using a validated inclusion scale have tended to use the inclusion-exclusion scale (or subscales) developed by Mor Barak and Cherin (1998) and revised by Mor Barak (2005). Mor Barak and Cherin (1998) defined inclusion-exclusion as "a continuum of the degree to which individuals feel a part of critical organizational processes . . ." (p. 48), and the most recent version of the instrument (Mor Barak, 2005) considers five "system levels" (p. 325), whereas our measure is grounded in Shore et al.'s (2011) definition of inclusion and focused on the work group.

Given that studies using Mor Barak's instruments have varied in how much of the measure was used (i.e., one or two dimensions vs. the whole scale), the nomological network of validation evidence is somewhat unclear

in terms of the conceptualization of inclusion and which foci are most important for which outcomes. Nevertheless, Mor Barak and her coauthors' work has provided an important foundation in inclusion research by showing the value of inclusion perceptions in the workplace. Thus, in Phase 2, we test the convergent validity of our measure by examining correlations with Mor Barak's (2005) work group inclusion subscale.

The Shore et al. (2011) article has become a seminal article in the area of work group inclusion, but no known research has directly tested its conceptualization and model. We attempt to do so in this study.

Distinctiveness of Work Group Inclusion From Other Concepts

In the following section, we discuss constructs that have similarity to work group inclusion (and its components of belongingness and uniqueness) as a foundation for subsequent empirical testing of convergent and discriminant validity. These variables were chosen either because they were mentioned by Shore et al. (2011) as being important correlates (e.g., self-verification, perceived organizational support [POS]) or because they were established constructs used in definitions of inclusion (e.g., voice, social identification). We first consider variables that are conceptually related to the belongingness component of work group inclusion, followed by variables that are conceptually related to the uniqueness component of work group inclusion.

The belongingness component of work group inclusion is defined as employees' perceptions that supportive and caring relationships have been formed and maintained with their work group members (Shore et al., 2011). Two concepts that have some similarity to belongingness are organizational/team identification and POS. Organizational identification is defined as perceived oneness with an organization and the experience of the organization's successes and failures as one's own (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). It is a form of social identification in which the individual defines himself or herself in terms of membership in a particular organization. Identification can also be applied to the team or work group; social identities change as people incorporate group aspects into their self-concept (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Team identification develops when group members share norms and behavior codes within the group; this in turn evolves into a sense of cohesion and interdependency (Tajfel, 1981; Wheelan, 1994). Although team/work group identification has some similarity to the concept of belongingness, belongingness reflects feeling accepted, valued, and cared for by other group members. Identification with the team/work group is a self-perception of oneness with the group and therefore being part of the group, but does not necessarily involve the perception of positive regard or concern from other group members.

Another concept that is similar to belongingness is POS (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). Organizational support theory purports that in an effort "to determine the organization's readiness to reward increased work effort and to meet socioemotional needs, employees develop global beliefs about the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being" (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002, p. 698). Although there is some conceptual similarity in that both concepts are about being cared for and satisfying socioemotional needs, POS involves expectations of receiving assistance, while belongingness involves being valued by and connected to a collective (the work group) without necessarily expecting anything from the work group or organization.

The uniqueness component of work group inclusion involves employees' perceptions that they can be different from others in their work group, that they can have different views, and that those differences are valued and respected by other work group members (Shore et al., 2011). Two concepts that have some conceptual similarity to uniqueness are voice and self-verification. Voice is defined as "non-required behavior that emphasizes expression of constructive challenge with an intent to improve rather than merely criticize," such as "when a group member makes an innovative suggestion for change . . . even when such a suggestion might upset others" (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998, p. 854). Although voice and uniqueness reflect ways in which employees may differ from one another but still be included in group processes such as decision making, voice is focused on efforts to enact change, whereas uniqueness reflects employees' perceptions that they are allowed to be different from their group and still be valued as group members.

Self-verification is defined by Swann (1987) as people's tendency to "promote the survival of their self-conceptions, regardless of whether the self-conceptions happen to be positive or negative" (p. 1039). Self-verification has been articulated as a basic human need in that all individuals are motivated to self-verify. Cable and Kay (2012) advanced the concept by measuring self-verification striving and found that it is distinct from concepts such as self-disclosure, self-monitoring, and core self-evaluations. Although self-verification striving has some similarity to uniqueness, self-verification involves striving to preserve continuity in individuals' self-views by bringing others to see them as they see themselves (Swann, 1983), whereas uniqueness is the perception that individuals are able to be themselves and hold perspectives that are different from the group. According to Shore et al. (2011), self-verification theory was useful for building upon the uniqueness theme in their inclusion framework and was therefore included as a variable to use for construct validity in this study.

In what follows, we discuss the development and validity of our measure of work group inclusion in three phases. Phase 1 details the development and initial testing of the work group inclusion measure. In Phase 2, we use a different sample to demonstrate convergent, discriminant, and incremental validity as compared with measures of conceptually related and unrelated constructs. Specifically, we examine the correlations that work group inclusion has with POS, work group identification, voice, and self-verification. We expect work group inclusion to have moderate correlations with these similar concepts as compared with the higher correlations that our work group inclusion scale should have with Mor Barak's (2005) subscale of work group inclusion. Second, evidence of discriminant validity is anticipated through examining the lower correlations that work group inclusion should have with the Big Five personality dimensions, which are conceptually different variables. The Big Five and other personality variables have often been used in studies as a basis of distinction to show discriminant validity (e.g., Eby, Durley, Evans, & Ragins, 2008). Next, we test the incremental validity of our measure above and beyond Mor Barak's subscale of work group inclusion as well as several measures of antecedent and outcome variables suggested by Shore et al. (2011): overall justice, diversity climate, leader inclusiveness, turnover intentions, helping behaviors, and health. Finally, in Phase 3, we test the concurrent validity of a multilevel model of work group inclusion that includes employee-rated antecedents and supervisor-rated outcomes.

Method

Phase 1: Item Generation and Reduction

During Phase 1, the authors worked both independently and as a team to review the existing literature on inclusion and to create and refine items. In generating items, we used a deductive approach where theoretical grounding existed (Hinkin, 1998). We followed Hinkin's (1998) recommendations to begin with a strong theoretical framework and used a sorting process to match items to construct definitions. Each member of the research team generated items, which we then discussed and vetted for redundancy and representativeness of the construct. This process initially yielded a set of 30 items, which we subjected to an exploratory factor analysis.[1] Based on the factor analysis results and further discussion of the items, we narrowed the set of items to 18. We next sought to assess content validity with an item-sort task (Anderson & Gerbing, 1991). We provided 13 subject matter experts (SMEs), all scholars in the field of diversity/inclusion, with definitions of belongingness and uniqueness and asked them to identify whether each item assessed

belongingness, uniqueness, or neither. For 17 of the 18 items, 10 or more of the SMEs correctly classified the item. Guided by the ratings as well as SMEs' written comments, we revised the wording for the remaining item. Based on the SME feedback as well as the initial exploratory factor analysis results, we retained a set of 10 items (see Table 1).

Next, we conducted confirmatory factor analyses of our measure. Using a snowball sampling approach, we administered the items to 437 participants who were recruited by undergraduate students enrolled in a management course at a large university in the Western United States. (Sample 1). Each student was given extra class credit for recruiting one participant (someone other than himself or herself) who worked full-time (i.e., 30 or more hours per week). Participants were 49.9% male and 49.7% female (0.4% did not report their sex) and 51.9% Caucasian American, 17.2% Asian American, 16.0% Hispanic American, 8.0% International, 3.7% African American, 2.7% biracial/multiracial, and 0.5% Native American or Alaskan Native. Of the 91.3% of participants reporting age, the average age was 37.2 years (*SD* = 13.7 years).

The work group inclusion measure uses a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Using the items in Table 1, participants were asked for their perceptions of belongingness and uniqueness with the instructions, "Please indicate the degree to which you personally agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the work group in which you work (not including your supervisor or manager)." The correlation between belongingness (*M* = 3.90, *SD* = 0.69, α = .90) and uniqueness (*M* = 3.90, *SD* = 0.69, α = .88) was .73.

Consistent with recommendations that multiple fit indices be used in assessing model fit (Kline, 2005), we report the comparative fit index (CFI; value greater than .95 indicates good fit), standardized root mean square residual (SRMR; value less than .08 indicates good fit), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA; value less than .06 indicates good fit) (Hu & Bentler, 1999). We first ran a single-factor model for which the fit was not very good: χ^2 = 429.88 (*df* = 35), CFI = .87, SRMR = .06. RMSEA = .16. We next ran a two-factor model in which we allowed the two factors to correlate. Fit statistics for that model were generally good, χ^2 = 114.19 (*df* = 34), CFI = .95, SRMR = .04, RMSEA = .07, and were significantly better than the single-factor model, $\Delta\chi^2_1 = 315.69$, *p* < .001. As expected, these results support that the work group inclusion scale comprises the two components of belongingness and uniqueness.

To verify the factor structure of our measure, we administered the items to 397 participants recruited by students in a management course at a university in the Western United States (Sample 2). This was the same course as Sample

Table 1. Work Group Inclusion Measure With Belongingness and Uniqueness Components, With Factor Loadings for All Samples.

Item	Sample 1 N = 437	Sample 2 N = 397	Sample 3 N = 747[a]
I am treated as a valued member of my work group. (B)	.80	.85	.84
I belong in my work group. (B)	.89	.85	.86
I am connected to my work group. (B)	.85	.87	.90
I believe that my work group is where I am meant to be. (B)	.74	.76	.73
I feel that people really care about me in my work group. (B)	.76	.83	.83
I can bring aspects of myself to this work group that others in the group don't have in common with me. (U)	.61	.74	.64
People in my work group listen to me even when my views are dissimilar. (U)	.83	.85	.81
While at work, I am comfortable expressing opinions that diverge from my group. (U)	.85	.88	.85
I can share a perspective on work issues that is different from my group members. (U)	.86	.88	.86
When my group's perspective becomes too narrow, I am able to bring up a new point of view. (U)	.76	.79	.83

Note. B = belongingness component of work group inclusion; U = uniqueness component of work group inclusion.
[a]Some participants in Sample 3 had missing data for these items.

1 but involved a section of the course offered during a later semester, so there was no overlap between Samples 1 and 2. Participants were full-time employees (working 30 or more hours per week), and their demographic characteristics were very similar to those of Sample 1.

As in Sample 1, we first ran a single-factor model, which resulted in poor model fit, $\chi^2 = 453.38$ ($df = 35$), CFI = .87, SRMR = .06, RMSEA = .17. We next ran a two-factor model in which we allowed the two factors to correlate. Fit statistics for that model were generally good, $\chi^2 = 112.19$ ($df = 34$), CFI = .95, SRMR = .04, RMSEA = .08, and were significantly better than the single-factor model, $\Delta\chi_1^2 = 341.19$, $p < .001$. As expected, these results suggest that work group inclusion comprises belongingness and uniqueness as related but distinct components. Table 2 provides descriptive

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics, Alpha Reliabilities, and Correlation Matrix for Sample 2.

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1. Belongingness	3.92	0.73	.91																			
2. Uniqueness	3.98	0.64	.77**	.91																		
3. Work group inclusion (whole scale)	3.95	0.64	.95**	.93**	.94																	
4. Work group inclusion (Mor Barak)	4.03	0.63	.67**	.68**	.72**	.79																
5. Perceived organizational support	3.81	0.77	.58**	.54**	.59**	.47**	.93															
6. Work group identification	3.79	0.60	.55**	.54**	.58**	.53**	.37**	.78														
7. Self-verification striving	3.77	0.58	.19**	.27**	.24**	.26**	.08	.19**	.83													
8. Voice	3.62	0.95	.50**	.52**	.55**	.54**	.40**	.43**	.24**	.94												
9. Helping	4.14	0.58	.45**	.51**	.51**	.46**	.25**	.37**	.26**	.39**	.85											
10. Diversity climate	3.88	0.72	.56**	.56**	.60**	.48**	.74**	.43**	.16**	.39**	.27**	.85										
11. Turnover intentions	3.36	1.22	-.46**	-.30**	-.41**	-.28**	-.52**	-.22**	-.02	-.25**	-.12*	-.46**	.89									
12. Overall justice	3.97	0.71	.43**	.42**	.45**	.34**	.72**	.32**	.06	.25**	.16**	.71**	-.46**	.89								
13. Leader inclusiveness	3.67	0.77	.45**	.45**	.48**	.46**	.54**	.40**	.19**	.40**	.24**	.58**	-.34**	.51**	.78							
14. Positive health	2.61	0.65	.29**	.27**	.30**	.24**	.31**	.18**	.17**	.34**	.12*	.27**	-.23**	.22**	.27**	.90						
15. Negative health	1.74	0.61	-.31**	-.23**	-.29**	-.28**	-.37**	-.08	-.01	-.21**	-.07	-.33**	.32**	-.38**	-.23**	-.11*	.83					
16. Extraversion	3.48	0.90	.25**	.21**	.25**	.18**	.19**	.12*	.11*	.20**	.11*	.19**	-.13*	.15**	.09	.18**	-.18**	.64				
17. Agreeableness	3.67	0.71	.15**	.16**	.16**	.16**	.18**	.11*	.14**	.10*	.23**	.16**	-.07	.17**	.12*	.09	-.18**	.11*	.26			
18. Conscientiousness	4.21	0.67	.21**	.21**	.22**	.25**	.18**	.18**	.24**	.18**	.56**	.18**	-.13*	.12*	.18**	.16**	-.23**	.18**	.23**	.57		
19. Emotional stability	3.83	0.74	.20**	.25**	.24**	.27**	.24**	.18**	.20**	.22**	.22**	.26**	-.15**	.26**	.29**	.22**	-.40**	.12*	.33**	.38**	.56	
20. Openness to experience	3.86	0.70	.11*	.19**	.16**	.18**	.11*	.17**	.26**	.24**	.27**	.16**	.02	.08	.18**	.13*	-.15**	.27**	.28**	.38**	.34**	.48

Note. Alpha reliabilities are on the diagonal; N = 390 to 397 due to missing data.
*p < .05. **p < .01.

statistics, alpha reliabilities, and the correlation between belongingness and uniqueness.

Summary of Phase 1. We generated and refined a set of items to measure the belongingness and uniqueness components of work group inclusion. Confirmatory factor analyses demonstrated support for a two-factor model of belongingness and uniqueness. This is consistent with Shore et al.'s (2011) conceptual model and premise that work group inclusion consists of the two components such that belongingness without uniqueness, or vice versa, does not yield work group inclusion experiences.

Phase 2: Construct Validity

To establish a nomological network to further validate our measure, we used data from Sample 2 to show convergent, discriminant, and incremental validity. Table 2 provides descriptive statistics, alpha reliabilities, and correlations for Phase 2. As evidence for convergent validity, we found that our work group inclusion scale was significantly correlated with Mor Barak's (2005) work group inclusion subscale ($r = .72$, $p < .01$; see Table 2), as expected, given that each is designed to assess work group inclusion.

Next, we considered the relationships between work group inclusion and conceptually related measures: POS (eight items, Eisenberger et al., 1986), work group identification (six items modified from Mael & Ashforth, 1992), self-verification striving (eight items, Cable & Kay, 2012), and voice (six items, Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). Table 2 shows that work group inclusion was strongly related to POS, work group identification, and voice (rs = .59, .58, and .55, respectively; all ps < .01), and it was related, to a lesser extent, to self-verification ($r = .24$, $p < .01$). It is worth noting that the magnitude of the correlations between work group inclusion and the four related constructs was significantly lower than the magnitude of the correlation between work group inclusion and Mor Barak's work group inclusion subscale (zs ranged from 3.72 to 10.15, ps < .01; Lee & Preacher, 2013), as expected.

As a test of discriminant validity, we collected data with the Ten-Item Personality Inventory (Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003), which has two items for each of the five personality dimensions. As shown in Table 2, correlations between work group inclusion and the five personality dimensions were generally low (rs ranged from .16 to .25, with all ps < .01) and were significantly lower than the correlations between our work group inclusion scale and the Mor Barak work group inclusion subscale and the conceptually related measures (zs ranged from 9.51 to 11.35, all $p < .01$; Lee & Preacher, 2013). This pattern of results indicates additional evidence of discriminant

validity as dimensions of personality would not be expected to have conceptual overlap with work group inclusion.

Incremental Validity

Finally, we tested whether our 10-item work group inclusion scale provided an incremental contribution above and beyond Mor Barak's (2005) three-item work group inclusion measure as related to antecedent and outcome variables suggested by Shore et al. (2011). Specifically, we measured three proposed antecedents of inclusion: overall justice (six items, Ambrose & Schminke, 2009), diversity climate (four items, McKay, Avery, & Morris, 2008), and leader inclusiveness (four items, Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006). We also measured three proposed outcomes of inclusion: turnover intentions (three items, Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1983), self-reported helping behaviors directed toward the work group (four items, Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990), and positive and negative health (six items each, Vieweg & Hedlund, 1983). With respect to the proposed antecedents of work group inclusion, semipartial correlations showed that our inclusion scale was significantly related to overall justice ($sr = .60$, $p < .01$), diversity climate ($sr = .29$, $p < .01$), and leader inclusiveness ($sr = .56$, $p < .01$) when controlling for Mor Barak's work group inclusion measure. With respect to the proposed outcomes of work group inclusion, regression analysis showed that our work group inclusion scale was significantly related to turnover intentions ($\Delta R^2 = .09$, $p < .01$), helping ($\Delta R^2 = .07$, $p < .01$), and positive and negative health ($\Delta R^2 = .03$ for both, $p < .01$) over and above Mor Barak's work group inclusion measure. Thus, although our measure and Mor Barak's are conceptually related in that they both measure work group inclusion, our measure explains unique variance in the antecedent and outcome variables.

Summary of Phase 2. We demonstrated convergent validity in that our work group inclusion scale was highly related to an existing measure of work group inclusion and moderately related to several conceptually related scales. We provided evidence of discriminant validity in that work group inclusion was distinct from the Big Five personality dimensions. Finally, we demonstrated incremental validity in that our work group inclusion scale was significantly related to proposed antecedents and outcomes of inclusion above and beyond an existing measure (Mor Barak, 2005).

Phase 3: Test of the Nomological Network

In Phase 3, we used data from employees and supervisors to test a model of the mediating effects of work group inclusion using variables proposed in the

Shore et al. (2011) framework. Given practical data collection limitations, we focused on variables that we expected to have the strongest relationships with work group inclusion and were most central to work group inclusion, based on their theoretical relevance as described by Shore et al. (2011).

Proposed antecedents of work group inclusion. For antecedents, we examine three organizational context variables that serve as possible influences on perceptions of work group inclusion: overall justice, diversity climate, and leader inclusiveness. These variables set a tone that the organization and leadership care about employees and want employees to feel that they are included and treated fairly.

Although there is little empirical research on fairness and justice as related to perceptions of inclusion, Shore et al. (2011) argued that organizational practices that are consistent regarding fair treatment of all social groups are important for establishing a climate of inclusion. Building on the group engagement model of procedural justice, Ellemers, Sleebos, Stam, and Gilder (2013) found a positive relationship between perceived respect (by group members) and feeling included.

Diversity climate involves the extent to which employees perceive that policies, practices, and rewards are geared toward promoting diversity, which should theoretically be related to inclusion. Brimhall, Lizano, and Mor Barak (2014) found that diversity climate was positively related to job satisfaction through inclusion. Furthermore, a positive diversity climate was associated with lower intention to leave through both inclusion and job satisfaction.

Finally, leadership behavior should play an important role in increasing inclusion as leaders model and reward desired behaviors (Nishii & Mayer, 2009). Particularly relevant to work group inclusion is the construct of leader inclusiveness, defined as "words and deeds exhibited by leaders that invite and appreciate others' contributions" (Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006, p. 941). They found that leader inclusiveness was related to psychological safety and team engagement. More recently, Randel, Dean, Ehrhart, Chung, and Shore (2016) found a positive relationship between leader inclusiveness and supervisor-directed and work group–directed helping behaviors, and these effects were greater when accompanied by a positive diversity climate. Other studies have found positive relationships between leader inclusion and enhanced unit performance (Hirak, Peng, Carmeli, & Schaubroeck, 2012).

Hypothesis 1: Work group inclusion is positively related to overall justice.
Hypothesis 2: Work group inclusion is positively related to diversity climate.
Hypothesis 3: Work group inclusion is positively related to leader inclusiveness.

Proposed outcomes of work group inclusion. In line with Shore et al.'s (2011) model and past research, we also examine three important outcomes of work group inclusion: helping, creativity, and in-role job performance.

According to Shore et al. (2011), feelings of inclusion should influence individual discretionary behaviors such as organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) and, more specifically, helping. When an individual feels included in the group, he or she is more likely to want to help other group members. This is also related to the concept of social exchange (Blau, 1964), such that if an individual is receiving favorable treatment, he or she reciprocates in kind. In fact, Brenner, Lyons, and Fassinger (2010) found that gay and lesbian employees displayed more helping behaviors in organizations that displayed less heterosexism. Similarly, Den Hartog, De Hoogh, and Keegan (2007) reported a positive relationship between perceptions of belongingness and supervisor-rated OCBs, and Cottrill, Lopez, and Hoffman (2014) found that inclusion was positively related to self-rated OCBs.

Although no known empirical studies have reported a direct link between inclusion and creativity, creativity has been found to be enhanced with diverse groups that engage in collaboration (Levine & Moreland, 2004) and in groups where differing ideas are shared (Simonton, 2003). More recently, Han, Han, and Brass (2014) showed that the interaction of team-bonding social capital (emotional support with other team members) was positively and significantly related to team creativity. In addition, psychological safety and support for creativity from coworkers and supervisors, which provide indications of belongingness and value for uniqueness, have been found to contribute to employee creativity (Gong, Cheung, Wang, & Huang, 2012). These studies suggest that good work group relations, as reflected in inclusion behaviors, could enhance creativity.

In-role job performance refers to work-related duties and responsibilities that are usually contained within a formal job description (Murphy, 1989). Based on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), high-quality social exchange relationships (Wayne, Shore, Bommer, & Tetrick, 2002) that involve mutual investment and concern create an obligation to reciprocate favorable treatment and are associated with enhanced job performance as a result. That is, if employees perceive that they are included in their work group, they are more likely to want to perform at a high level. Consistent with this, Cho and Mor Barak (2008) showed that perceptions of inclusion predicted job performance and Pearce and Randel (2004) found that low levels of inclusion lead to low levels of job performance.

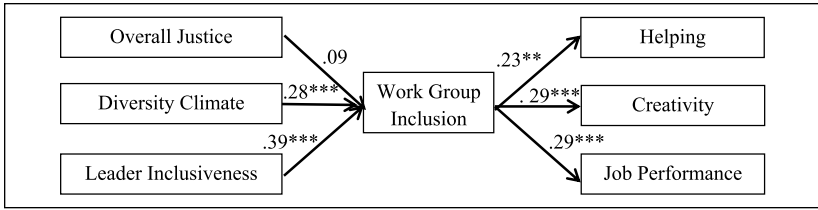**Hypothesis 4:** Work group inclusion is positively related to employee helping behavior.

Figure 1. Results of hypothesized model.
***$p < .001$.

Hypothesis 5: Work group inclusion is positively related to employee creativity.
Hypothesis 6: Work group inclusion is positively related to employee job performance.

Overall, we hypothesize that work group inclusion mediates the relationships between the proposed antecedents and the proposed outcomes (see Figure 1).

Hypothesis 7: *Work group inclusion mediates the relationships between theoretically relevant antecedents (overall justice, diversity climate, and leader inclusiveness) and outcomes (helping, creativity, and job performance).*

We administered surveys to 2,015 employees (faculty and staff) of a large university in the Western United States and received 821 responses, for a response rate of 40.7%. We eliminated 15 participants' responses due to a substantial amount of missing data, yielding a final data set of 806 participants (Sample 3, representing a final response rate of 40.0%). Employee participants were 31.5% male, 51.6% female, and 0.1% transgender (with 16.8% not reporting sex) and 49.7% Caucasian American, 11.8% Hispanic American, 6.2% Asian American, 4.6% International, 4.2% African American, 3.6% biracial/multiracial, and 0.9% Native American or Alaskan Native (with 19.0% not reporting racio-ethnicity). Of the 68.4% of employees who reported age, the average age was 46.3 years ($SD = 12.0$ years).

We also administered surveys to 234 supervisors from the same university and received 86 responses, for a response rate of 36.8%. Supervisor respondents were 43.0% male and 57.0% female, and 70.9% Caucasian American, 9.3% African American, 7.0% Asian American, 4.7% Hispanic American, 3.5% International, and 2.3% biracial/multiracial (with 2.3% not reporting

racio-ethnicity). Of the 96.5% of supervisors who reported age, the average age was 50.2 years (*SD* = 11.2 years). These 86 supervisors, on average, had 10.1 employees reporting to them (*SD* = 12.1). On average, 3.5 employees responded for each supervisor (*SD* = 2.9), with an average response rate of 54.9% across all 86 supervisors. We had 306 employees for whom we had a corresponding supervisor survey, but we used the entire data set of participating employees (*N* = 806) and supervisors (*N* = 86) in the analyses.

All measures were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), with the exception of job performance. Employees were asked for their perceptions of inclusion (10 items, Table 1), overall justice (six items, Ambrose & Schminke, 2009), diversity climate (four items, McKay et al., 2008), and leader inclusiveness (four items, Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006). Supervisors were asked to evaluate their employees' helping (four items, Podsakoff et al., 1990), creativity (five items, George & Zhou, 2001), and job performance (one item: "How would you rate the employee's job performance?" ranging from 1 [*consistently below expectations*] to 5 [*consistently exceeds expectations*]).

Results

In Table 3, we provide descriptive statistics, alpha reliabilities, and a full correlation matrix. We first conducted confirmatory factor analyses to ensure that the variables emerged as distinct factors. A single-factor model including all the variables (i.e., overall justice, diversity climate, leader inclusiveness, work group inclusion, helping, creativity, and job performance) did not fit the data well (χ^2 = 8,992.85, *df* = 529, CFI = .36, SRMR = .30, RMSEA = .14). A seven-factor model in which each of the variables loaded on a separate factor fit significantly better than the single-factor model (χ^2 = 1,510.39, *df* = 507, CFI = .92, SRMR = .05, RMSEA = .05; $\Delta\chi^2_{22}$ = 7,482.46, *p* < .001).

To test the relationships between the antecedents, work group inclusion, and employee outcomes, we used type=complex in Mplus version 7.2 (Muthén & Muthén, 2014) to take into account the multilevel nature of the data (i.e., employees nested within supervisors). The model fit the data well (χ^2 = 30.68, *df* = 14, CFI = .99, SRMR = .03, RMSEA = .04). As shown in Figure 1, diversity climate and leader inclusiveness were significantly related to inclusion (β = .28 and β = .39, respectively, *p*s < .001), but overall justice was not (β = .09, *p* = .11). These results support Hypotheses 2 and 3 but not Hypothesis 1. With respect to the proposed outcomes, inclusion was positively related to helping (β = .23, *p* < .01), creativity (β = .29, *p* < .001), and job performance (β = .29, *p* < .01). These results support Hypotheses 4, 5, and 6.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics, Alpha Reliabilities, and Correlation Matrix for Sample 3.

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Overall justice	3.14	0.92	.93						
2. Diversity climate	3.40	0.86	.65**	.86					
3. Leader inclusiveness	3.71	1.05	.65**	.54**	.91				
4. Work group inclusion	3.79	0.81	.59**	.52**	.57**	.94			
5. Helping	4.10	0.89	.13	.20**	.23**	.19*	.94		
6. Creativity	3.86	0.97	.04	.12	.17*	.26**	.61**	.98	
7. Job performance	4.01	0.94	.12	.16*	.22**	.25**	.75**	.74**	N/A

Note. Alpha reliabilities are on the diagonal (Job performance is a single-item measure). Employee $N = 806$ (measures of overall justice, diversity climate, leader inclusiveness, and work group inclusion); Supervisor $N = 86$ (measures of helping, creativity, and job performance).
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

Finally, we tested the mediated model proposed in Hypothesis 7. We interpreted the standardized coefficients, indicating the strength and direction of the path from the antecedent to the mediator and from the mediator to the outcome, to test the significance of the indirect effect. For the relationships between the antecedent variables and helping as mediated by inclusion, the specific indirect effects were significant for diversity climate ($\beta = .07$, $SE = .03$, $p < .05$) and leader inclusiveness ($\beta = .09$, $SE = .04$, $p < .05$), but not overall justice ($\beta = .02$, $SE = .02$, $p = .18$). For the relationships between the antecedent variables and creativity as mediated by inclusion, the specific indirect effects were significant for diversity climate ($\beta = .08$, $SE = .03$, $p < .01$) and leader inclusiveness ($\beta = .11$, $SE = .03$, $p < .01$), but not overall justice ($\beta = .03$, $SE = .02$, $p = .14$). With regard to the relationships between the antecedent variables and job performance as mediated by inclusion, the specific indirect effects were significant for diversity climate ($\beta = .08$, $SE = .03$, $p < .05$) and leader inclusiveness ($\beta = .11$, $SE = .04$, $p < .01$), but not overall justice ($\beta = .03$, $SE = .02$, $p = .15$). Overall, these results provide some support for Hypothesis 7.

Summary of Phase 3

We found support for most of our hypotheses. Diversity climate and leader inclusiveness significantly predicted work group inclusion, and work group inclusion significantly predicted helping, creativity, and job performance. The results were consistent with the proposal that work group inclusion plays

a mediating role in the relationships between diversity climate and leader inclusiveness and helping, creativity, and job performance.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to create a reliable and valid measure of work group inclusion and to test a model of antecedents and outcomes based on Shore et al.'s (2011) theoretical framework. Our study comprised three separate samples of full-time employees, including one sample with multisource data. Our confirmatory factor analysis results in Phase 1 suggested that work group inclusion involves two key components, belongingness and uniqueness, both of which are necessary to an understanding of individuals' experiences of inclusion within their work groups. As proposed in Shore et al.'s model, work group inclusion requires that employees experience belongingness and uniqueness concurrently. The theme of satisfaction of belongingness needs has long been a thread in the diversity and inclusion literature, however, the current study highlights the importance of uniqueness as well. Although the importance of satisfying uniqueness needs was suggested by Brewer (1991), it has received much less attention in the literature on work group inclusion.

Across the three samples, the psychometric properties of the inclusion measure were supported through several lines of evidence, including factor analyses, internal consistency, and construct validity. Our measure of work group inclusion not only displays convergent validity with but also provides an incremental contribution above and beyond Mor Barak's (2005) work group inclusion measure. Specifically, we showed that our measure was significantly related to overall justice, diversity climate, leader inclusiveness, turnover intentions, helping, and health above and beyond Mor Barak's measure. This suggests the distinctive value of our theoretically derived inclusion measure beyond the Mor Barak (2005) subscale of work group inclusion. We also showed discriminant validity of our work group inclusion measure in terms of its relationship with the Big Five personality dimensions.

In Phase 3, we tested a model of work group inclusion based on Shore et al. (2011) and found support for two of the proposed antecedents (i.e., diversity climate and leadership inclusiveness) and three supervisor-rated outcomes (i.e., helping, creativity, and job performance). Moreover, our findings were consistent with our proposal of mediation in that diversity climate and leader inclusiveness were significantly related to work group inclusion, which was significantly related to helping, creativity, and job performance. The lack of support for overall justice as a proposed antecedent of work group inclusion in Phase 3 was surprising in light of significant findings for

overall justice in Phase 2, but one possible explanation might be the positive relationship between overall justice and the other antecedent variables in the overall model. Moreover, the breadth of the overall justice measure may have played a role compared with the more narrowly targeted measures of diversity climate and leader inclusiveness.

Limitations and Future Directions

As with any study, there are limitations that should be acknowledged. First, given our research design, we should use caution in making causal inferences. As described by Mathieu and Taylor (2006), an experimental design can provide strong evidence for conclusions about the causal ordering of our variables. Nevertheless, our study is consistent with the two other approaches Mathieu and Taylor described to support causal inferences: temporal precedence (the temporal ordering of our model is consistent with the natural sequencing of the variables) and theoretical guidance (our review of the literature revealed consistent treatment of the variables in the suggested causal ordering). We acknowledge, however, that it is possible that our proposed antecedent variables could be tested as outcomes of work group inclusion, and our proposed outcomes could be tested as antecedents of work group inclusion. Thus, future experimental research could provide evidence of the causal sequence we proposed. Second, we acknowledge that the magnitude of some of our findings was not large (e.g., in Phase 2 some of the incremental ΔR^2 values were relatively small), such that research should further investigate the practical significance of these findings. Our statistically significant results, however, demonstrate the distinctiveness between our measure and Mor Barak's (2005) as related to variables that have been studied as antecedents and outcomes of inclusion. We believe that our work group inclusion measure is complementary to Mor Barak's measure and can provide guidance for organizations regarding possible areas of improvement in terms of belongingness and uniqueness.

Future research would benefit by exploring additional antecedent or outcome variables suggested by Shore et al. (2011). Due to data collection constraints, we were not able to examine the large number of antecedents (five) and outcomes (nine) that they discussed. On a related note, personality and demographic variables could be explored as potential moderators of these relationships. Future research could also examine the conditions under which one component of inclusion is more strongly related to particular antecedent and/or outcome variables (e.g., Is LMX more related to belongingness than uniqueness? Is creativity more related to uniqueness than belongingness?). However, we believe that if the goal is to measure overall work group

inclusion, then both components are needed and the whole scale should be used. If the goal is to see whether the components are related to certain antecedents or outcomes, then the components could be separated but the construct or concept should be called work group belongingness or work group uniqueness by itself and not "work group inclusion."

Theoretical and Practical Implications

From a theoretical standpoint, our research extends work by Shore et al. (2011) and others (e.g., Bettencourt et al., 2006) that have suggested that both belongingness and uniqueness contribute to experiences of work group inclusion. Our study tests many of the theoretical assertions made by Shore et al. (2011) as well as the model they proposed. The value of studying the components of work group inclusion in tandem is revealed in the current research by the support shown for the model in Phase 3. In this way, our research provides conceptual and quantitative refinement of the inclusion construct. In addition, our findings show convergence with results found by Nishii (2013) and Dwertmann and Boehm (2016) that policies and practices that create an environment of inclusion can increase perceptions of inclusion and buffer against negative effects created by diversity (e.g., conflict). Furthermore, our results support predictions made by the integration-and-learning perspective (Ely & Thomas, 2001) that those work groups that incorporate both belongingness (members feeling valued and respected) and uniqueness (viewing diversity as a resource) are more likely to have positive outcomes.

Our study also extends knowledge about the potential effects of work group inclusion on individual-level outcomes and is one of the few to do so (e.g., Dwertmann & Boehm, 2016) as research has more typically focused on how diversity climate affects team effectiveness (Hajro, Gibson, & Pudelko, 2017). Another key contribution of our work is that we extend the focus beyond creating a sense of belongingness to also recognizing how important it is for individuals to feel that they are valued for what makes them unique from others in the group. This is consistent with a core theme in diversity research, which shows that, when women and disadvantaged racial-ethnic groups are in the numerical minority (and hence, unique relative to the work group or organization), a positive diversity climate (Gonzalez & DeNisi, 2009) or other indicators that the organization is providing an identity-safe environment can facilitate retention (Hall, Schmader, Aday, Inness, & Croft, 2018). Past research has emphasized how creating team identification (a belongingness construct) is critical for realizing positive outcomes in diverse teams (Huetterman, Doering, & Boerner, 2017). We suggest that uniqueness is also an important quality to realize not only work group inclusion but also

retention and performance-related outcomes. Additional research is clearly needed to fully examine the value of Shore et al.'s conceptualization and our associated measure of work group inclusion.

Practically speaking, our results suggest that managerial and organizational efforts to increase inclusion can pay off in terms of important outcomes. Our research highlights that there may be ways of realizing inclusion by targeting facets of climate and/or leader behaviors to explicitly address belongingness and uniqueness perceptions. For example, we encourage organizations to foster inclusion by creating policies, practices, and behaviors that facilitate belongingness and uniqueness, such as utilizing selection methods that facilitate uncovering unique aspects about a candidate, promoting the development and measurement of inclusion competencies, rewarding leader and work group member behaviors that support inclusion, or coaching leaders on behaviors that are inclusive (Randel et al., 2018). To some extent, human resources (HR) practices that support experiences of belongingness and uniqueness may be distinct, depending on the context. For example, the design of professional development, which creates unique competencies or perspectives, may be quite varied depending on the position. For scientific jobs that are very detail-oriented, encouraging development of a big-picture, strategic perspective could be a unique competency.

Another practical implication of our research is that leadership development training intended to foster work group inclusion should include consideration of how leaders not only encourage belongingness (through visioning and team building) but also how they indicate that they value uniqueness. Leaders can indicate a value for uniqueness to their followers by showing support for differing opinions and ideas while developing a sense of unity as a work group. Leadership training programs that effectively develop leaders to foster both belongingness and value for uniqueness will be quite impactful to organizations seeking to achieve a competitive advantage through work group inclusion.

Training managers to utilize employees' unique perspectives may be quite different depending on work requirements or organizational boundaries. We encourage organizations to identify unique competencies and perspectives and how they contribute to team and organizational success, and develop ways to incorporate and reward such unique employee offerings. In addition, organizational processes (e.g., involvement in the work group, decision making) and systems (e.g., recruitment, selection, promotion, and compensation) could be aligned with a focus on promoting inclusive behaviors (Shore et al., 2018).

We are optimistic that our measure and test of a model of work group inclusion provide a foundation to build on past theoretical and empirical work as well as open new research frontiers. In light of the large body of

literature suggesting that diversity in work groups can undermine group effectiveness (cf. Jackson, Joshi, & Erhardt, 2003), examining inclusion as a means of addressing these challenges (Nishii, 2013) holds real promise. We look forward to future research that employs our theoretically based and quantitatively validated measure to advance both research and practice.

Authors' Note

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Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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Note

1. More information about this analysis is available from the second author.

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