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**'The Right Thing to do' or 'Good for Business': The Importance of
Morality in Formulating Diversity Policies of Public and Private Sector Organisations**

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Abstract

This exploratory research study investigated whether using a morality-based motive, in comparison with a business-case motive, or a combination of both motives in diversity policies, affected the perceived attractiveness of public and/or private organisations by prospective employees. Additionally, it was regarded whether this effect was influenced by the perceived morality, sociability, and competence of an organisation. The results show that utilising a morality-based motive for diversity – on its own or combined with a business-case motive – lead to higher ratings of morality and sociability, and subsequent ratings of organisational attractiveness, than when using a business-case motive. Although the motive did not significantly affect ratings of competence, this measure was also found to be least important in predicting organisational attractiveness. Moreover, it was discovered that organisational attractiveness was fully mediated by ratings of morality, sociability, and competence. Further, there were no significant differences between the public and private sector, in affecting the relationship between the diversity policy motive and organisational attractiveness. These findings indicate that – in contrast to using a business-case motive – utilising a moral motive for diversity in diversity policies make both, public and private organisations, be perceived as more attractive by prospective employees.

Key Words: Diversity Policy, Morality, Business-case, Public Sector, Private Sector, Organisational Attractiveness

‘The Right Thing to do’ or ‘Good for Business’: The Importance of
Morality in Formulating Diversity Policies of Public and Private Sector Organisations

Due to the changing demographic composition of the workforce, many public and private sector organisations have started to employ diversity policies and practices, in order to effectively recruit and manage a diverse workforce (Gündemir, Homan, Usova, & Galinsky, 2017). In Europe, this organisational tendency coincides with the adoption of diversity as a central political priority by the European Union (EU) (Shaw, 2005). On an organisational level, two ways of reasoning lie at the heart of this trend towards pursuing diversity. For one, moral motives linked to enhancing equality and justice have often been used to argue for diversity (Groeneveld & Verbeek, 2012; Johns, Green, & Powell, 2012; Point & Singh, 2003). These motives are often evident in the public sector, and expressed through the Equal Opportunities Approach (EOA) (Ewijk, 2011; Saini, 2007; Verbeek, 2011). Additionally, increasing workforce diversity has been used as a business case, seeing as it can lead to higher levels of innovation, creativity and improved performance (Kirton & Greene, 2005; O’Leary & Weathington, 2006). These business-case motives find theoretical support in the Managing Diversity Approach (MDA) and are often associated with private sector organisations (McDougal, 1996; Verbeek, 2011; Wrench, 2007; Wise and Tschirhart, 2000).

Diversity initiatives often take the form of diversity policies, which act as declarations of intent concerning an organisation’s diversity approach (Ellemers & Rink, 2016; Ewijk, 2011; Gündemir et al, 2017). Depending on their framing, diversity policies have been shown to influence recruitment and employee attraction (Avery & McKay, 2006; Ellemers & Rink, 2016; Madera, Dawson, & Neal, 2016). In line with this, a study by the international auditing and consultancy organisation PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC) (2015), found that from more than 10.000 respondents, 86% of female and 74% of male millennials consider employers’ policies on diversity, equality, and inclusion when deciding which company to work for.

Next to diversity initiatives, previous research has demonstrated that the perceived morality of organisations, i.e. as measured by corporate social responsibility (CSR), affects its attractiveness as an employer to current employees (Ellemers, Kingma, Burgt, & Baretto, 2011) and job-seekers (Backhaus, Stone, & Heiner, 2002; Jones, Willness, & Madey, 2014; Turban & Greening, 1996). Empirical data further suggest that perceived morality has a larger impact on individuals’ pride, satisfaction, commitment, and positive group evaluations, than competence or sociability, which are also important measures of group-belonging (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Ellemers et al, 2011; Leach, Ellemers & Barreto, 2007).

The present research study combines insights from social and organisational psychology on morality as a source of group value (Leach et al, 2007; Ellemers, Pagliaro & Barreto, 2013) with research conducted on diversity policies, and their impact on organisational attractiveness and recruitment (Ewijk, 2011; Gündemir et al, 2017; O’Leary & Weathington, 2006). Utilising an explorative research design, it shall be investigated whether communicating a morality-based motive for diversity in a diversity policy affects prospective employees’ perceived attractiveness of an organisation differently than a business-case motive, or a combination of both motives. Prospective employees are hereby defined as all individuals that may be considered for employment. Additionally, it will be examined whether this effect is related to an organisations’ sector (public/ private), such as to ratings of organisational morality, sociability, and competence. Figure 1 displays the conceptual model of this study:

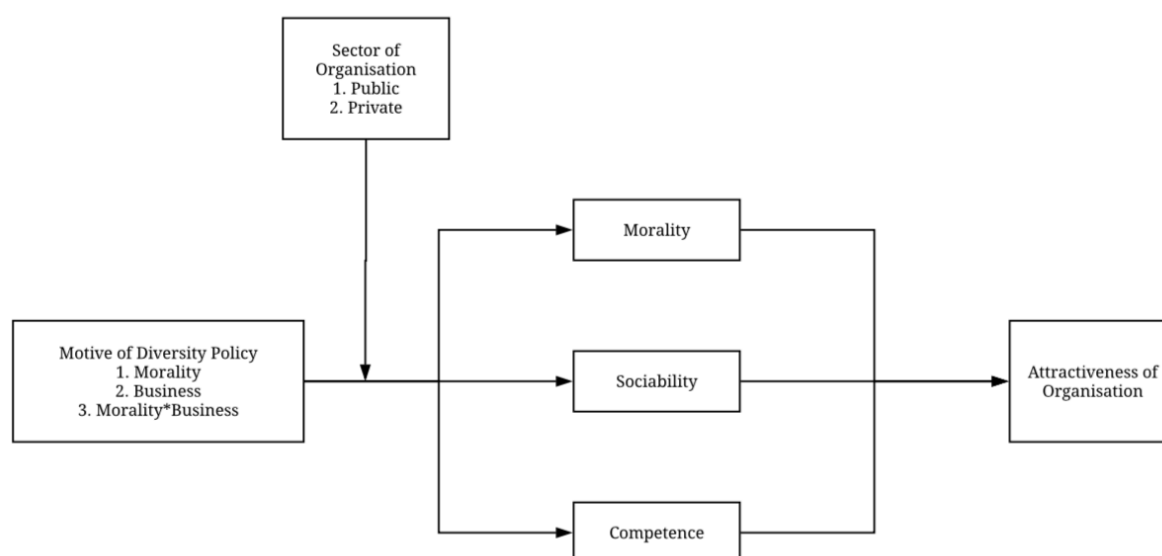


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

Diversity Policies: The Moral and the Business Case

Increasing societal diversity has substantially diversified the workforce composition (Groeneveld & Verbeek, 2012). Although definitions of diversity vary (Ewijk, 2011), organisational diversity policies mostly concern surface-level diversity, linked to more easily-detectable measures like race, gender, and age (O’Leary & Weathington, 2006). This tendency is also visible in the Dutch Diversity Charter; a charter that emerged in 2015, in the context of a European movement embraced by the European Commission, to enhance diversity and inclusion in public and private organisations (Diversiteit in bedrijf, 2017). The

five elements of diversity outlined in the charter, and embedded within the present research, are: occupational disabilities, gender, age, sexual preferences, and ethnicity/religion.

While most diversity policies regard similar diversity measures, their underlying diversity motive can differ (Ewijk, 2011; Groeneveld & Verbeek, 2012; Smith, Wokutch, Harrington, & Dennis, 2004). In literature on employment equity policies and diversity management, two of the most dominant organisational approaches to diversity are: the Equal Opportunities Approach (EOA), and the Managing Diversity Approach (MDA) (Ewijk, 2011; Johns et al, 2012; McDougal, 1996; Saini, 2007). The EOA signifies organisational policies and practices that are driven by considerations of equity, justice, and the absence of discrimination (Verbeek, 2011). Organisations following this approach make a *moral case* for diversity, by stimulating equal participation and shared responsibility, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, and sexuality (Groeneveld & Verbeek, 2012). Contrastingly, MDA's regard diversity as a *business-case*, by arguing that encouraging diversity enables people and teams to utilise their full potential, by "proactively capitalizing on the different skills, qualities and viewpoints that a diverse workforce has to offer" (Kirton & Greene, 2005, p. 178). Organisations adhering to MDA's see diversity as a way of improving organisational competitiveness and efficiency, and are driven by business purpose, market advantage, and organisational performance (Groeneveld & Van de Walle, 2010; McDougal, 1996; Saini, 2007; Thomas & Ely, 1996; Wrench, 2007; Williams et al, 1994; Wise & Tschirhart, 2000). Hence, while EOAs are based on external moral and legal arguments about equality and justice, that are formulated more or less independently of an organisations' commercial goals (Colgan, 2011; Green, & Powell, 2012; Thomas & Ely, 1996), MDAs are "driven by internal and economic arguments" (Groeneveld & Verbeek, 2012, p. 356; see also Wrench, 2007).

There are differing perspectives regarding the effectiveness of the business or moral case for diversity. On one hand, there is an enthusiastic perspective according to which the business case for diversity effectively promotes diversity based on the beneficial outcomes of "ethnic capital" (Verbeek, 2011, p.3). Hereby it has been argued that employees are attracted to organisations that value individual differences, including ethnic differences, and attempt to make these productive (Rau & Hyland, 2003; Verbeek, 2010; Wise & Tschirhart, 2000; Wrench, 2007). On the other hand, there is a critical perspective stating that business case arguments are fundamentally problematic as they hamper the social justice, or moral case, for workplace diversity; something that is not only intrinsically important from a human rights perspective, but also substantial to prospective employees (Lorbiecki & Jack, 2000; Verbeek, 2011). In line with this, O'Leary and Weathington (2006) have argued that organisations must

go “beyond the business case for diversity” (p. 283) to create a just work place. Among other things, the research at hand will address these different perspectives by regarding how moral and business case motives for diversity affect prospective employees’ attractiveness ratings of public and private organisations.

Public and Private Organisations

Organisations differ in the type of diversity policies they utilise for different reasons. One of these reasons – often discussed in Human Resource Management literature – is related to sector differences (Boyne, 2002; Madheswaran & Inghari, 2016). Research shows that public sector organisations are often driven by moral claims (i.e. to create equal opportunities) and concerned with issues of legitimacy, social justice, and social responsibility when justifying diversity measures and policies (Groeneveld & Verbeek, 2012; McDougal, 1996; Verbeek, 2011). Conversely, Ozbilgin and Tatli (2011) discovered that diversity management is more common in private sector organisations due to an emphasis on sales and profit (see also Tatli, 2010).

On one hand, research has argued that private sector organisations more frequently emphasise economic motives for diversity (i.e. in the form of MDAs) than public sector organisations (Boyne, 2002; Groeneveld & Van de Walle, 2010). Similarly, Colgan (2011) discovered that most private sector organisations in the United Kingdom “identified corporate business objectives as the major drivers shaping diversity policy and practice” (p. 731). On the other hand, a research study examining 8,382 annual diversity reports of private and public sector organisations, found that Dutch public sector organisations were more often focussed on improving the influx of ethnic minorities: an essential focus of the EAO (moral case for diversity), than private organisations (Groeneveld, & Verbeek, 2012). Further, researchers have maintained that diversity policies in the public sector are most frequently linked to equal opportunities and democracy, as public institutions are subject to political/legal pressure and ethical considerations to improve minority representation (Groeneveld & Verbeek, 2012; Madheswaran & Inghari, 2016).

Thus, the EOA and MDA do not only constitute two different ways of looking at diversity, but also often refer to sectorial differences between private and public organisations in dealing with diversity. While the MDA leads to business-case diversity policies, often used in the private sector, the EOA generates morality-based diversity policies, frequently utilised in the public sector (Groeneveld, & Verbeek, 2012; Wrench, 2007). To examine the impact of these differences, the research at hand will also regard the effect of the organisational sector

on the relationship between formulations of diversity policies, and prospective employees' ratings of organisational attractiveness.

Sociability, Competence, and Morality

In literature on organisational behaviour, Social Identity Theory (SIT) has been proposed as a framework that further aids in understanding individuals' attitudes and behaviours (Ellemers, et al, 2011; Point & Singh, 2003). SIT builds on the assumption that individuals think of themselves in terms of the groups (and organisations) to which they (want to) belong (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Accordingly, specific features of groups represent a source of value for people, leading to feelings of satisfaction, commitment, and higher pursuit intentions, the latter of which are particularly relevant for recruitment (Ellemers, 2001; Griepentrod, Harold, Holtz, Klimoski and Marsh, 2012).

The social identity tradition assumes that any characteristic ascribed to an in-group, can form the basis of positive evaluation (Griepentrod et al, 2012; Leach et al, 2007). However, while empirical research suggests morality to be a central source of personal and group-value, it has been argued that most research has focussed on characteristics associated with 'competence', and/or 'sociability', as representing the central clusters for (positive) evaluations of groups (Ellemers et al, 2011). Nonetheless, Leach et al (2007) found that despite competence and sociability being important factors, morality was an even more important explanation of positive in-group evaluation. Correspondingly, Aquino and Reed (2002) and Ellemers et al (2011) showed that the primary concern individuals have about groups are related to whether they can be considered moral (i.e. honest, truthful, and sincere). This shows that while it is important to consider sociability and competence measures when looking at group-belonging and positive evaluation (i.e. organisational attractiveness), it is also essential to regard perceived morality.

Organisational Attractiveness, Corporate Social Responsibility, and Recruitment

Previous research demonstrated that organisational attractiveness is important for effective recruitment, because it is positively associated with candidates' attitudes and behaviours towards organisations (Backhaus et al, 2002; Jones, Willness and Madey, 2014). Organisational attractiveness hereby refers to the extent to which an individual perceives an organisation as a good place to work. Next to job characteristics, organisational attributes, and recruitment practices (Reeve, Highhouse, & Brooks, 2006), different studies have found that the perceived morality of an organisation, also affects its attractiveness as an employer to

employees (Ellemers et al, 2011) and job-seekers (Backhaus, Stone, & Heiner, 2002; Riordan, Gatewood, & Barnes, 1997; Turban & Greening, 1996).

In organisational psychology and human resource management literature, the (perceived) morality of organisations is often assessed through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities of organisations (Aguilera et al, 2007; Ellemers et al, 2011). CSR can be defined as the moral principle that organizations ought to be responsible for how their behaviour affects society and the environment in an ethical sense, rather than merely focussing on economic gains (Schmidt-Albinger & Freeman, 2000; Turban & Greening, 1996). While there are increasing internal and external pressures for organisations to fulfil social goals, CSR can also be viewed as a relevant marketing and recruitment strategy for job-seekers, because it affects evaluations of organisations as (future) work places (Aguilera, Rupp, Williams & Ganapathi, 2007; Smith et al, 2004). For instance, Schmidt-Albinger and Freeman (2000) determined that expert ratings of an organisation's CSR was related to the perceived attractiveness of the organisation by different job seeking populations. Further, Turban and Greening (1996) confirmed that organisational reputation and attractiveness to prospective employees, were related to CSR. Moreover, Jones et al (2014) proposed that the link between CSR and attractiveness may be due to 1) the anticipated pride of prospective employees from being affiliated with a 'moral' organisation (see also Ellemers et al, 2011); 2) the perceived value-fit (see also Leach et al, 2007); and, 3) the expectations of job-seekers as to how an organisation treats its employees. Ellemers et al (2011) have additionally connected the impact of CSR-activities of organisation to the importance of morality as a source of identity, while further maintaining that little remains known about how organisational morality affects employee attitudes. On the basis of CSR-research, it becomes evident that perceived organisational attractiveness, which is important for recruitment, seems closely connected to perceived organisational morality.

Organisational Attractiveness and Diversity Policies

Next to morality-perceptions, several studies have demonstrated that diversity policies can also lead to more positive evaluations (and increased attractiveness) of organisations (Avery & McKay, 2008; Madera et al, 2016). Williams, Bauer and Talya (1994) for instance demonstrated that organisations were evaluated more positively by management students when reading a recruitment brochure in which the organisation had a diversity management policy than when it had none. Avery and McKay (2006), however, showed that promoting policies of equal opportunity – thus basing diversity on morality – enhanced female and

minority applicants’ perceptions of organizations. Further, Smith et al (2004) discovered that, among university students, making a moral case for diversity in the form of affirmative action programs lead to higher perceived attractiveness of universities, than if communicating a MDA. Groeneveld and Verbeek (2012) uncovered that managing diversity initiatives had a positive impact on the minority representation of commercial, or private, organisations but that this was not the case for public organisations. Thus, although diversity policies appear important for attracting prospective employees, there is no consensus on how the formulation of diversity policies (i.e. the usage of different motives for diversity) exactly affects perceived organisational attractiveness.

Overview

Research has demonstrated that organisations can approach diversity (policies) by using morality-based motives, often present in the public sector, or business-case-based motives, often evident in private sector organisations (Ewijk, 2011; Groeneveld & Verbeek, 2012). Additionally, it has been argued that morality is more important to group-belonging and positive evaluations, than measures of sociability, and competence (Ellemers et al, 2011; Leach et al, 2007). Lastly, it has been shown that organisational attractiveness is relevant for recruitment, and can be enhanced by increasing (prospective) employees’ perceptions of an organisation’s morality (i.e. CSR) and by communicating diversity policies (Aguilera et al, 2007; Avery & McCay, 2006; Ellemers et al, 2013; Jones et al, 2014; Williams et al, 2004).

However, a lack of research and consensus remains in academic literature, concerning whether making a moral or a business-case of diversity in a diversity policy, affects the perceived attractiveness of organisations. Further – to the knowledge of the researcher – no research has been conducted on the effect of combining the two approaches in one diversity policy. Additionally, ratings of morality, sociability, and competence appear to have been applied to groups mainly, which is why this research will apply these measures to an organisational level, while further looking at the relevance of the organisational sector (public and private) for before-mentioned relationships (see figure 1 for conceptual model). Generating knowledge in this field is highly relevant not only for the academic field, but also for public and private organisations in order to obtain insight into the role of morality (and business-cases) in diversity policies and to shed light on how these policies can be formulated to increase organisational attractiveness and attract prospective employees.

It is the purpose of this explorative study to fill this research gap, by answering the following research question: ‘The Right Thing to do’ or ‘Good for Business’: In which way

does using a morality, business-case, or a combination of both motives in diversity policies affect the perceived attractiveness of public and private sector organisations by prospective employees, given ratings of morality, sociability, and competence?

To answer this question, the following sub-questions will be explored in this research study:

1. Does the type of motive (morality vs. business case vs. morality*business case) communicated in a diversity policy affect the perceived attractiveness of an organisation?
2. Can this be explained by the perceived morality, sociability, and competence of the organisation?
3. Are there any differences between public and private sector organisations?

Method

Participants

Participants were obtained online by placing a questionnaire on a social media, and a survey sharing website (relevant facebook groups and surveytandem). It was relied on virtual snowball sampling for participant recruitment. Using G*power it was calculated that a total of 158 participants was required for a moderated mediation analysis $\alpha=0,8$. Initially, 348 participants fully completed the online survey. From these, 209 respondents were female, 135 male, and four identified as other. The majority were between 18 and 34 years of age (84.2%).

Procedure

Using qualtrics.com, an online questionnaire was created that took between five and ten minutes to be completed. On the introductory page of the survey, participants were informed about the general aim of the study, confidentiality, and their right to withdraw (see appendix). Participants were then asked to provide information about background variables (e.g., age, gender) in a multiple choice format. Afterwards, participants were randomly assigned to one of the six experimental conditions (see table 1). Subsequently, they were provided with fictitious diversity policies that differed in the motive used to argue for diversity and the organisational sector they belonged to: 3 (morality, business-case, or morality*business case motive) x 2 (public vs. private sector). Respondents then completed questions about the morality, sociability, competence, and organisational attractiveness measures (see figure 1).

Measures

Organisational Morality, Sociability, and Competence. Drawing on research by Leach et al (2007), participants were provided with nine traits, of which three traits each were designed to indicate (group) morality, sociability, or competence. Responses to these items were provided on 7-point likert scales, ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*completely*). The morality of the organisation whose diversity policy participants read, was assessed by using the adjectives 'honest', 'sincere', and 'trustworthy' ($\alpha=.95$, $M=4.73$, $SD=1.25$). Sociability was assessed using the traits 'friendly', 'warm' and 'likeable' ($\alpha=.96$, $M=4.97$, $SD=1.37$). Competence was examined with the items 'intelligent', 'competent', and 'skills' ($\alpha=.94$, $M=4.86$, $SD=1.29$).

Organisational Attractiveness. Organisational attractiveness was measured by asking participants to indicate how attractive they found the organisation to be on a 6-point likert scale ranging from 0= not at all, to 6 = extremely ($M=4.12$, $SD= 1.38$). Although previous research assessed organisational attractiveness using a 5-point likert scale (Turban & Greening, 1996), a 6-point scale was chosen as removing the midpoint can diminish the social desirability bias and provide clearer insight into the (positive or negative) effect on the outcome measure (Nadler, Weston & Voyles, 2015).

Manipulations

Motive Manipulation. Three fictitious diversity policies were created that differed in the motive used to argue for diversity at an organisation (see appendix for the verbatim texts). Participants were randomly assigned to a diversity policy that used a moral motive, a business-case motive, or a combination of moral and business-case motives, to argue for diversity. The diversity policies were based on the Dutch Diversity Charter, and on policy cases used in prior research on diversity policies and multiculturalism (Diversiteit in bedrijf, 2017; Gündemir et al, 2017; Jansen, Otten, & Van der Zee, 2015). In total, 60 participants (37,7%) were in the morality motive condition, 54 (34%) in the business motive condition and 45 (28,3%) in the morality*business condition (see table 1)¹.

Sector Manipulation. Next to the motive, the sector of the fictitious organisation communicating the policy, was manipulated. Participants were either told that the diversity policy they read belonged to a private sector organisation (CCT consulting) or a public sector

¹ All calculations in the methods section are based on the total number of participants that passed the manipulation checks (n=159).

organisation (Municipality of Amsterdam). They were randomly assigned to the private condition (n= 74, 46,5%) or the public condition (n=85, 53,5%). The following table illustrates the participant distribution per condition:

Table 1.

Distribution of participants per experimental condition (motive and sector)

Variable	Motive of Diversity Policy			Total
	Morality	Business case	Morality*Business case	
Sector of Organisation				
public	37	27	21	85
private	23	27	24	74
Total	60	54	45	159

Manipulation check. Participants were required to answer two manipulation checks to test the success of the chosen manipulations. These examined whether participants had read the diversity policy attentively and were aware of (1) the organisational motive (morality, business case or morality*business case), and (2) the organisational sector (public or private) they had read about.

Results

Manipulation Check. From 348 participants that completed the survey, 159 (45,7%) passed the manipulation check. Only those participants that fully completed the questionnaire, and passed the manipulation check were included in the data analyses (n=159). Of these 159 respondents, 59 were male, 99 female, and one participant identified as other. A majority of the participants were between 18 and 34 years of age (n=135, 84.9%). Most participants were students (n=108, 68%), from which some were also self-employed (n=2, 1,3%), part-time (n=28, 17,8%), or full-time employed (n=6, 3,8%). The rest of the participants were self-employed (n=11, 22,7%), full-time employed (n=30, 18,9%), part-time employed (n=6, 3,8%), retired (n=3, 1,9%) or unemployed (N=1, .6%). Further, the participants originated from 37 different countries, a majority of which held a passport from the United Kingdom (n=41, 25,8%), the Netherlands (n=28, 17,6%), the United States (n=21, 13,21%) and Germany (n=20, 12,6%).

Correlations. Initially, Spearman's Rank Order Coefficient was calculated, to examine the relationship between morality, sociability, competence, and organisational attractiveness. It was found that morality was significantly correlated with sociability, $r_s=.78$, $p<.001$, competence, $r_s=.63$, $p<.001$, and organisational attractiveness, $r_s=.74$, $p<.001$. Additionally, sociability was correlated with competence, $r_s=.65$, $p<.001$, and organisational attractiveness, $r_s=.75$, $p<.001$. Lastly, competence was correlated with attractiveness, $r_s=.62$, $p<.001$. Consistent with existing research (Leach et al, 2012), and as there was a strong, monotonic correlation between all variables, they were all utilised in further analysis.

Process Modelling

The data were analysed using Hayes' SPSS macro PROCESS (version 3, model 7), for (multicategorical) moderated mediation, with 5,000 bootstrapping iterations.

Motives, Sector, Morality, Sociability, and Competence. Initially it was tested whether there were significant differences between, and interaction effects of, the diversity policy motives and organisational sectors in predicting the mediating variables (table 3).

It was found that, in total, morality (mediator) was not significantly predicted by a combination of the direct and interaction effects of the motives and organisational sector differences, $F(153)=1.67$, $R^2=.05$, $p=.14$. However, compared with the morality motive, the business case motive (X1) did have a significant negative effect on the morality measure (table 3), $t(153)=-2.28$, $p=.02$. There was no significant difference between the morality*business case and the morality motive (X2), $t(153)=.40$, $p=.68$. Also, there was no significant difference between the private and the public sector (W1), $t(153)=-.87$, $p=.39$, such as no indirect (interaction) effect between X1 and W1, $t(153)=1.08$, $p=.283$, or between X2 and W1, $t(153)=-3.60$, $p=.72$, in predicting morality. This means that using a business case argument in a diversity policy, significantly harms the perceived morality of an organisation in contrast with using a morality motive, whereby this effect is independent of the organisational sector. Further, when combining the business case with a moral motive, this negative effect disappears.

Considering sociability, it was discovered that sociability was significantly predicted by a combination of the concepts and their interactions, $F(153)=3.11$, $R^2=.09$, $p=.01$. Moreover, similarly to morality, the business-case motive negatively affected sociability in comparison to the morality motive $t(153)=-3.1$, $p<.01$, while the morality*business case motive did not differ significantly from the morality motive $t(153)=.64$, $p=.52$ in predicting sociability.

Table 3.
Direct and indirect effects of the diversity policy motive and sector of organisation on morality, sociability, and competence

Constructs and Relationships	Effect	BootLLCI	BootULCI	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i> -value
Outcome Variable: Morality (Mediator 1)						
Direct Effects						
Constant (Intercept)	5.01	4.61	5.41	.20	24.64	.00
Business case vs. morality motive (X1)	-.71	-1.33	-.09	.31	-2.28	.02*
Morality*business case vs. morality motive (X2)	.13	-.53	.80	.34	.40	.69
Private vs. public sector (W1) ^a	-.28	-.93	.36	.33	-.87	.39
Indirect Effects ^b						
X1*W1	.51	-.42	1.44	.47	1.08	.28
X2*W1	-.18	-1.15	.80	.49	-.36	.72
Outcome Variable: Sociability (Mediator 2)						
Direct Effects						
Constant (Intercept)	5.24	4.81	5.68	.22	23.98	.00
Business case vs. morality motive (X1)	-1.03	-1.70	-.37	.34	-3.07	.00**
Morality*business case vs. morality motive (X2)	.23	-.49	.95	.36	.64	.52
Private vs. public sector (W1) ^a	-.03	-.72	.67	.35	-.07	.94
Indirect Effects ^b						
X1*W1	.51	-.49	1.51	.51	1.00	.32
X2*W1	-.37	-1.42	.68	.53	-.69	.49
Outcome Variable: Competence (Mediator 3)						
Direct Effects						
Constant (Intercept)	4.78	4.37	5.19	.21	23.04	.00
Business case vs. morality motive (X1)	-.55	-1.18	.08	.32	-1.72	.09
Morality*business case vs. morality motive (X2)	.50	-.18	1.18	.35	1.45	.15
Private vs. public sector (W1) ^a	-.04	-.71	.62	.34	-.13	.89
Indirect Effects ^b						
X1*W1	.83	-.11	1.78	.48	1.74	.08
X2*W1	.00	-1.00	.99	.50	-.01	.99

Note. BootLLCI = bootstrapping lower limit confidence interval. BootULCI = bootstrapping upper limit confidence interval. SE = Standard error. X1= business-case vs. morality motive. X2=business-case*morality vs. morality motive. (Bootstrapping = 5,000 iterations. Level of confidence = 95%).

^a W1 refers to the moderation effect of the the difference between the public and private sector on the outcome variable.

^b The indirect effects of X1*W1 and X2*W1 refer to the interaction effect between the difference of the business-case vs. morality motive (X1), or the morality*business-case vs. morality motive (X2), and the difference between organisational sectors (public or private, W1) in predicting the outcome variable.

p*<.05. *p*<.01.

Also, there was no significant difference between the private sector and the public sector (W1), $t(153)=-.07$, $p=.94$, or indirect (interaction) effect between X1 and W1, $t(153)=1.00$, $p=.32$, or X2 and W1, $t(153)=-.69$, $p=.49$. Hence, the data reveal that in contrast with morality, the business case motive for diversity decreased ratings of sociability, independently of the organisational sector. There was no significant difference between the other two motives.

The total model for competence was also significant, $F(153)=2.39$, $R^2=.07$, $p=.04$. There was further a marginally significant negative effect of the business case vs. the morality motive on competence, $t(153)=-1.72$, $p=.09$. Moreover, the relationship between the morality*business case vs. morality motive was not significant, $t(153)=1.45$, $p=.15$. Organisational sector differences (W1) were also not significant, $t(153)=-.13$, $p=.89$. While the indirect (interaction) effect between X1 and W1 was marginally significant, $t(153)=1.74$, $p=.08$, the interaction effect between X2 and W1 was non-significant, $t(153)=-.01$, $p=.99$. Thus, – compared to the morality motive – the business-case motive marginally, negatively affected the competence measure, while there was no difference between the other two motives. This effect was further marginally moderated by the organisational sector.

Organisational Attractiveness. It was discovered that organisational attractiveness was significantly predicted by the motives and the mediators, $F(153)=53.54$, $R^2=.64$, $p<.001$. With the mediators added to the model, the business-case vs. morality motive, $t(153)=-.62$, $p=.54$, and the business-case*morality vs. morality motive, $t(153)=1.52$, $p=.13$, did not significantly predict organisational attractiveness. However, morality, $t(153)=4.76$, $p<.001$, sociability, $t(153)=3.15$, $p<.001$, and competence, $t(153)=3.26$, $p<.001$, all significantly mediated the relationship between the motives and organisational attractiveness. This shows that the effect of the diversity policy motive on perceived organisational attractiveness, was fully mediated by measures of morality, sociability, and competence – with the mediators predicting 64% of the variance of the organisational attractiveness ratings. Thus, how attractive respondents (prospective employees) perceived an organisation to be, was related to morality, sociability, and competence ratings. Figure 2 illustrates the relevant effect sizes, further demonstrating morality to be the strongest predictor of organisational attractiveness, in comparison to sociability and competence:

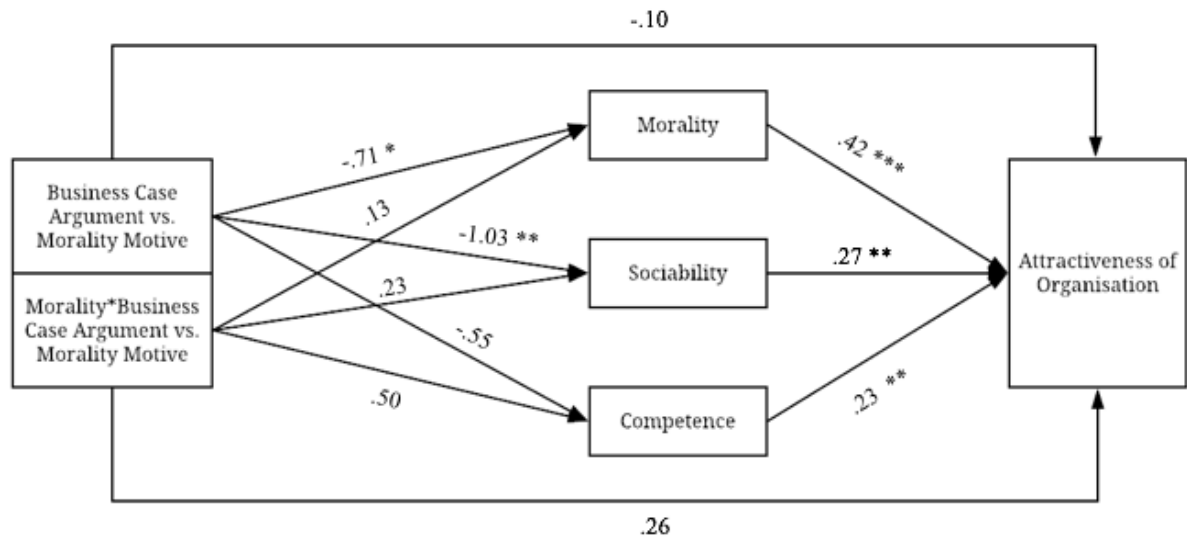


Figure 2. Full mediation model for differences between multicategorical diversity policy motives (business case motive vs. morality motive, and morality*business case motive vs. morality motive) on attractiveness of organisation, mediated by morality, sociability and competence. No significant moderation of public and or private sector. (Bootstrapping = 5,000 iterations. Level of confidence = 95%).

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

Indirect Effects of Motives, Moderators and Mediators on Attractiveness. Finally, the data revealed that there were no significant differences between the moderators (public and private) in influencing the mediation effect on organisational attractiveness. It was found, that the effect of X1 (business case vs. morality motive) on organisational attractiveness, was moderated by the public sector for the morality condition (BootLLCI=-.63, and BootULCI=-.04) with a negative effect of $-.30$. The same occurred for the public sector for the sociability condition (BootLLCI=-.61, and BootULCI =-.04) with a negative effect of $-.28$. However, there were no other significant (indirect) effects (table 4). The (indirect) moderated mediation effects are presented in table 4:

Table 4.

Indirect effects for the relationship between different motives used in diversity policies and organisational attractiveness given the mediator (morality, sociability, or competence) and moderator (public or private)

Variable (Motive)	Moderator (type of organisation)	Effect/Index	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Indirect Effect: Motive (X1 or X2) -> Morality -> Organisational Attractiveness					
X1	Public sector	-.30	.15	-.63*	-.04*
X1	Private sector	-.09	.17	-.42	.25
X2	Public sector	.06	.13	-.20	.32
X2	Private sector	-.02	.15	-.32	.29
X1	Public vs. private sector ^a	.21	.23	-.20	.72
X2	Public vs. private sector ^a	-.08	.20	-.48	.32
Indirect Effect: Motive (X1 or X2) -> Sociability -> Organisational Attractiveness					
X1	Public sector	-.28	.14	-.61*	-.04*
X1	Private sector	-.14	.12	-.42	.06
X2	Public sector	.06	.09	-.12	.26
X2	Private sector	-.04	.11	-.25	.17
X1	Public vs. private sector ^a	.14	.15	-.14	.48
X2	Public vs. private sector ^a	-.10	.14	-.40	.17
Indirect Effect: Motive (X1 or X2) -> Competence -> Organisational Attractiveness					
X1	Public sector	-.13	.10	-.32	.03
X1	Private sector	.07	.10	-.09	.29
X2	Public sector	.11	.09	-.05	.32
X2	Private sector	.11	.11	-.05	.39
X1	Public vs. private sector ^a	.19	.14	-.03	.53
X2	Public vs. private sector ^a	.00	.12	-.22	.29

Note. X1 = business case vs. morality motive. X2 = morality*business case vs. morality motive. BootLLCI = bootstrapping lower limit confidence interval. BootULCI = bootstrapping upper limit confidence interval. BootSE = bootstrapping standard error. (Bootstrapping = 5,000 iterations. Level of confidence = 95%).

^aPublic versus private sector refers to the index of moderated mediation (difference between conditional indirect effects of moderators), for motive X1 or X2 on organisational attractiveness given each mediator.

*Confidence interval does not include 0, therefore there is a significant effect (level of confidence = 95%).

The data hereby show, that the business case argument harms the morality and sociability measures and perceived attractiveness measure of public organisations significantly. Yet, this effect is not significantly different to the negative effect the business-case motive has on the private sector, when compared with using a moral motive in a diversity policy. Thereby, as seen in the difference between the public vs. private sector effects, there was no moderated mediation of the whole model for the effect of motive on attractiveness.

Discussion

This exploratory research study investigated the effect of communicating moral, business-case, or a combination of both motives in diversity policies, on the attractiveness of

organisations in the eyes of job seekers. This was examined given perceptions of morality, sociability, and competence, and potential differences between the public and private sector.

Organisational Attractiveness

The results show that in contrast with using a business case motive, using a morality-based motive for diversity – on its own, or in combination with a business-case motive – increased positive ratings of organisational attractiveness, given morality and sociability. This is in line with existing research, arguing that higher perceived morality (and CSR) of organisations, leads to more positive evaluations and attractiveness ratings (Aguilera et al, 2007; Ellemers et al, 2011; Jones et al, 2014; Smith et al, 2004). Further, these findings offer contrary evidence to some managing diversity research and theory, arguing that employees are attracted to organisations which focus on productivity arguments for diversity, rather than ethical ones (Williams et al, 1994; Wise & Tschirhart, 2000; Wrench, 2007). Instead, it is shown that focussing on equal opportunities – and morality – in diversity policies is more suitable for positive evaluations of organisations (Avery & McKay, 2006; Lorbiecki & Jack, 2000; Smith et al, 2004; Verbeek, 2011). Additionally, this research discovered that there was no significant difference between using a morality-based or a combination of a morality and business-case motive in a diversity policy, in affecting attractiveness. Thus, it appears that as long as moral values are communicated in a diversity policy, an organisation will be considered as more attractive than when simply using a business-case motive.

Further, it was discovered that morality, sociability, and competence fully mediated the relationship between the motive of the policy and organisational attractiveness. Morality was the best predictor of attractiveness, followed by sociability and, lastly, by competence (see table 3). This is in accordance with previous research on group-belonging (see Leach et al, 2007), which found that morality explained positive in-group evaluations by participants better than sociability or competence. The present finding confirms that while morality, sociability, and competence are all important for organisations to be perceived as attractive, morality is the most important measure of the three.

Morality, Sociability, and Competence

This study demonstrates that using a morality-based motive for diversity in diversity policies – on its own or in combination with a business-case motive – increased positive ratings of morality and sociability of public and private organisations, when compared with using a business-case motive. Contrastingly, using a business case motive for diversity, harmed measures of morality and sociability (see figure 2), when compared with the morality

motive. There was no significant difference between using a morality-based or a combination of a morality and business-case motives in a diversity policy. Thus, for all – public and private – organisations desiring to be perceived as sociable and moral, moral values must be provided in their diversity policy. To reach this effect, a moral motive may also be combined with a business-case motive. Interestingly, perceived competence was (marginally) not affected by the type of motive used in the given diversity policies. Competence was also seen as the weakest predictor of organisational attractiveness (see figure 2), meaning that for organisations who want to be perceived as attractive, it is more important to be perceived as moral and sociable, than as competent (see also Ellemers et al, 2011; Leach et al, 2007).

Public and Private Organisations

Further, it was found that there were no significant differences between the organisational sector (public or private) in affecting the relationship between a diversity policy's motive and organisational attractiveness. This implies that it is equally important for private and public organisations – if they want to be viewed as attractive – to argue for diversity on the basis of moral values, rather than business-cases. This finding is highly relevant because different studies have discovered that managing diversity, and corporate business objectives are highly common in diversity initiatives, particularly in private organisations, due to their emphasis on sales and profit (Boyne, 2002; Colgan, 2011; Groeneveld & Verbeek, 2012; Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2011; Tatli, 2010). By showing, however, that the moral motive for diversity positively affects organisations regardless of their sector, this study has high implications for the way how organisations should formulate diversity policies in the private sector, to benefit recruitment (see also Smith et al, 2004). Also, this finding indicates that, in the eyes of prospective employees, it is not only public organisations that are expected to comply with ethical and legal guidelines on diversity, as suggested in some existing literature (Boyne, 2002; McDougal, 1996).

Possible Limitations and Future Research

A possible limitation of this study was that it was exploratory in nature, meaning that more research is needed to support the presented findings. However, it is argued that this research addresses an important literature gap and that the findings are both theoretically plausible and in accordance with previous research on the role of morality in organisations and on diversity initiatives (Boyne, 2002; Leach et al, 2007).

Another possible limitation, is that only 45.7% of the participants passed the manipulation check. As this was an exploratory study, and the policy cases were designed by

the researcher, it is suggested that future research alters the verbatim texts of the diversity policies and, the communicated motive therein, to see if more people can be included in the analysis. It further appeared that most participants did not pass the manipulation check for the morality*business case condition (see table 1). A possible explanation for this, could be differences in language fluency and comprehension, seeing as this study was carried out in English language despite this not being the native language of many of the participants. It is suggested, that prospective studies expose participants to policies in their native tongue, to see whether this decreases the manipulation-check-dropout and enhances the explanatory power of this research design. However, as this study only used those participants for analysis that had passed the manipulation check, the desired outcome of this exploratory study has still been reached by showing that the experimental manipulations (motive and sector) have some preliminary effect on organisational attractiveness.

Due to the exploratory design of this study, it was relied on virtual snowball-sampling for participant recruitment. This raises questions about the random selection and representativeness of the sample, especially seeing as most participants belonged to the same age group (between 18 and 35) and were students. However, since this research regarded ‘prospective employees’, it is argued that the obtained participant group is particularly relevant for the present study, as students and younger individuals are a likely target group for recruitment. Still, future research could use different sampling strategies (e.g. by conducting interviews with individuals at job fairs) to validate the findings with different age-and occupational groups.

The results suggest that morality-based motives for diversity are beneficial for organisational attractiveness, when contrasted with business-case motives. However, this does not necessarily imply that potential employees always find moral motives for diversity to be decisive for their organisational attractiveness ratings. Further, as only three – fictitious – policy cases were used in this study, it is possible to question whether the findings can be generalised to all kinds of arguments made in diversity policies. However, this limitation also applies to previous research that was based on fictitious diversity policies (e.g. Gündemir et al, 2017). Future research may elaborate on these ideas by formulating diversity policies that also regard the morality-business-case-distinction, yet provide slightly different arguments than those made in this study. Additionally, it could be explored whether there are individual characteristics (e.g. personality traits like openness) that explain which motives work best for whom, and for which organisation.

Conclusion

The current research suggests that individuals value morality-based motives over mere business-case motives in organisational diversity policies. Organisations are hereby perceived as more moral, sociable, and, subsequently, attractive, if they use moral motives, rather than business-case motives, to argue for diversity. It further does not matter whether a moral motive is combined with a business-case motive or simply stated on its own, as long as a moral dimension is present in the policy. Additionally, there was no difference between the organisational sector, public or private, in influencing this effect. This means that solely articulating business oriented motives, in contrast to morality-based motives, for diversity is harmful for all organisations.

The findings highlight the need for organisations in both, the private and the public sector, to think carefully about the reasons they provide for diversity in their diversity policies. If organisations want to be perceived as attractive by prospective employees, their diversity policies should be formulated using moral values.

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Appendix

Online Questionnaire: „Thesis Research: Diversity Policies“

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1

Welcome and thank you very much for participating in the following study.

The purpose of this research is to examine how diversity policies are perceived by jobseekers. The following questionnaire will take 5 to 10 minutes of your time and is used for my master's thesis in social, health and organisational psychology at Utrecht University.

All information you provide will be treated confidentially. You can withdraw from this study at any time.

Good luck!

Charlotte Kröger

Page Break

Q2 How old are you?

- Less than 18 years old (1)
 - 18-24 years old (2)
 - 25-34 years old (3)
 - 35-44 years old (4)
 - 45-54 years old (5)
 - 55-64 years old (6)
 - 65 years or older (7)
-

Q3 Which gender do you identify with?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- Other (Please Specify) (3)
-

Q4 Which country are you from? (From which country do you hold a passport?).

List of countries (1)

▼ Afghanistan (1) ... Zimbabwe (209)

Q5 Please indicate if you have a 2nd nationality. (Fill out only if applicable).

List of countries (1)

▼ Afghanistan (1) ... Zimbabwe (209)

Q6

What is your current employment status?
More than one answer possible.

- Student (1)
- Self-employed (2)
- Employed full-time (32 or more hours per week) (3)
- Employed part-time (4)
- Unemployed (5)
- Retired (6)

Page Break

Q7 Imagine that you are looking for a (new) job.

You have found a job offer online that you find interesting. However, before applying to that job you decide to read the diversity policy of the organisation you want to apply to. On the following page you will find the diversity policy of the organisation you are looking at.

Please read the policy text carefully, and answer the subsequent questions.

Thank you!

Page Break

End of Block: Default Question Block

Start of Block: Block 1

Q8

For your job application you are looking at a position at a large consultancy firm called CCT consulting. CCT consulting is a private sector organisation. The firm offers advice, trainings and workshops to corporate organisations.

On the website of CCT consulting you can find the following diversity policy:

Striving for greater diversity and inclusion is highly important for our organisation. At CCT consulting we know that diversity is very important in order to ensure equality between all members of society and to promote social justice.

Ensuring diversity is a central value to CCT consulting. Therefore, we are happy to have employees of all ages, gender, sexual preferences, occupational (dis)abilities and cultural backgrounds.

Q9

For your job application you are looking at a position at the municipality of Amsterdam. The municipality of Amsterdam is a public sector organisation. The municipality is responsible for dealing with many different issues that concern individuals living in Amsterdam.

On the website of the municipality you can find the following diversity policy:

Striving for greater diversity and inclusion is highly important for our organisation. At the municipality of Amsterdam we know that diversity is very important in order to ensure equality between all members of society and to promote social justice.

Ensuring diversity is a central value to the municipality of Amsterdam. Therefore, we are happy to have employees of all ages, gender, sexual preferences, occupational (dis)abilities and cultural backgrounds.

Q10

For your job application you are looking at a position at a large consultancy firm called CCT consulting. CCT consulting is a private sector organisation. The firm offers advice, trainings and workshops to corporate organisations.

On the website of CCT consulting you can find the following diversity policy:

Striving for greater diversity and inclusion is highly important for our organisation. At CCT consulting we know that diversity is very important for innovation and increasing the creativity and productivity of our employees.

Ensuring diversity is a central value to CCT consulting. Therefore, we are happy to have employees of all ages, gender, sexual preferences, occupational (dis)abilities and cultural backgrounds.

Q11

For your job application you are looking at a position at the municipality of Amsterdam. The municipality of Amsterdam is a public sector organisation. The municipality is responsible for dealing with many different issues that concern individuals living in Amsterdam.

On the website of the municipality you can find the following diversity policy:

Striving for greater diversity and inclusion is highly important for our organisation. At the municipality of Amsterdam we know that diversity is very important for innovation and increasing the creativity and productivity of our employees.

Ensuring diversity is a central value to the municipality of Amsterdam. Therefore, we are happy to have employees of all ages, gender, sexual preferences, occupational (dis)abilities and cultural backgrounds.

Q12

For your job application you are looking at a position at a large consultancy firm called CCT consulting. CCT consulting is a private sector organisation. The firm offers advice, trainings and workshops to corporate organisations.

On the website of CCT consulting you can find the following diversity policy:

Striving for greater diversity and inclusion is highly important for our organisation. At CCT consulting we know that diversity is very important to promote equality between all members of society and to promote social justice. Also it is substantial for innovation, and increasing the creativity and productivity of our employees.

Ensuring diversity is a central value to CCT consulting. Therefore, we are happy to have employees of all ages, gender, sexual preferences, occupational (dis)abilities and cultural backgrounds.

Q13

For your job application you are looking at a position at the municipality of Amsterdam. The municipality of Amsterdam is a public sector organisation. The municipality is responsible for dealing with many different issues that concern individuals living in Amsterdam.

On the website of the municipality you can find the following diversity policy:

Striving for greater diversity and inclusion is highly important for our organisation.

At the municipality of Amsterdam we know that diversity is very important to promote equality between all members of society and to promote social justice. Also it is substantial for innovation, and increasing the creativity and productivity of our employees.

Ensuring diversity is a central value to the municipality of Amsterdam. Therefore, we are happy to have employees of all ages, gender, sexual preferences, occupational (dis)abilities and cultural backgrounds.

End of Block: Block 1

Start of Block: Block 2

Q14 Which sector does the organisation belong to that you just read about?

- Public sector (1)
- Private sector (2)

Q15 What kind of argument did the organisation give in order to increase diversity at their institution?

- A moral and/or ethical argument (e.g. related to justice) (1)
 - An argument to increase the functioning of their business/ performance (e.g. related to productivity) (2)
 - A combination of moral/ethical and business-related arguments (3)
-

Q16 How convincing was the argument given by the organisation?

- 1 (Not at all) (1)
 - 2 (2)
 - 3 (3)
 - 4 (4)
 - 5 (5)
 - 6 (6)
 - 7 (Completely) (7)
-

Q17 Why did you find the argument convincing (or not)?

Page Break

Q18 How credible do you find this organisation on the basis of its diversity policy?

- 1 (Not at all) (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (Extremely) (7)

Q19 Why do you find this a credible (or not credible) diversity policy?

Q20 How attractive do you find this organisation on the basis of its diversity policy? (Would you like to work there?)

- 1 (Not at all) (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (Extremely) (6)

Q21 Why do you find this an (un)attractive diversity policy?

End of Block: Block 2

Start of Block: Block 3

Page Break

Q22 Considering the diversity policy you just read, please rate the organisation on the basis of the following traits:

	Not at all (1)	Very little (2)	A little (3)	Neutral (4)	Rather (5)	Mostly (6)	Completely (7)
Honest (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sincere (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trustworthy (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Likeable (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Friendly (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Warm (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Intelligent (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Competent (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skills (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Block 3

Start of Block: Block 5

Q23 Do you have any other comments, questions or observations? (Only if applicable).

End of Block: Block 5

Start of Block: Block 4

Page Break

Q20

Thank you very much for participating in this study!

If you have any other questions or comments, then please do not hesitate to contact me at:
l.c.kroger@uu.nl.

Charlotte Kröger

End of Block: Block 4
