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**DOI**

[10.1177/1548051816662615](https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051816662615)

**Publication date**

2017

**Document Version**

Final published version

**Published in**

Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies

**License**

Article 25fa Dutch Copyright Act

[Link to publication](#)

**Citation for published version (APA):**

Gündemir, S., Dovidio, J. F., Homan, A. C., & De Dreu, C. K. W. (2017). The Impact of Organizational Diversity Policies on Minority Employees' Leadership Self-Perceptions and Goals. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 24(2), 172-188.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051816662615>

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# The Impact of Organizational Diversity Policies on Minority Employees' Leadership Self-Perceptions and Goals

Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies  
2017, Vol. 24(2) 172–188  
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sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav  
DOI: 10.1177/1548051816662615  
journals.sagepub.com/home/jlo



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## Abstract

We examined how formal organizational diversity policies affect minorities' leadership-relevant self-perceptions and goals in two experiments. Organizational mission statements were manipulated to reflect policies acknowledging and valuing subgroup differences (Multiculturalism), de-emphasizing subgroup differences while valuing interindividual differences (Value-in-Individual Differences), or de-emphasizing differences in favor of an overarching group membership (Value-in-Homogeneity). Study 1 ( $N = 162$ ) showed that, compared with Value-in-Homogeneity policies, Multiculturalism or Value-in-Individual Differences policies increase perceptions of an open diversity climate, which in turn enhance leadership self-efficacy of situational minority employees. Focusing on racial–ethnic minority and majority employees, Study 2 ( $N = 119$ ) replicated and extended these findings by revealing similar results on anticipated leadership self-efficacy, positive outcome expectations, and the willingness to apply for higher level leadership positions.

## Keywords

diversity, leadership, organizational diversity policies

Despite a rapidly diversifying labor force, racial and ethnic minorities remain underrepresented in higher level leadership positions (e.g., Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015; Catalyst, 2015; Diversityconnection, 2015; Military Leadership Diversity Commission, 2011; Süßmuth, 2007). For instance, in 2014, a mere 4% of the CEOs in Fortune 500 companies in the United States had a racial–ethnic minority background (Fortune, 2014). There has been little change in racial minority representation over the past decade. For instance, at its highest, there were seven African American Fortune 500 CEOs in 2007; there were only six in 2013, and five in 2015 (Wallace, 2015). Moreover, the number of board seats held by racial minorities in Fortune 100 companies has shown minimal changes over the years. The percentage of seats held by African Americans was 10% in 2002, 9.4% in 2010, and 9.2% in 2012. For Hispanics, it was 3.8%, 3.8%, and 4.3% in 2002, 2010, and 2012, respectively (Catalyst, 2013). Similar patterns emerge in Europe; for example, in the Netherlands, racial–ethnic minorities hold only 1% of corporate top leadership positions (Dekker, 2013). This underrepresentation is undesirable because, in an increasingly diversified workplace, minority leadership is crucial to optimally utilize the talent of all employees for competitive advantage (Ospina & Foldy, 2009). Organizational diversity is associated with many positive outcomes such as increasing the quality of decision making, stimulating creativity, and

enhancing performance (Galinsky et al., 2015; Homan, van Knippenberg, Van Kleef, & De Dreu, 2007; Page, 2007; Sommers, 2006). Greater diversity at the organizational top is associated with higher performance (Barta, Kleiner, & Neuman, 2012; Brown, 2002). Moreover, minority leadership has many other advantages for multiethnic organizations, such as reducing prejudice (Plant et al., 2009) and increasing minorities' performance outcomes (Marx, Ko, & Friedman, 2009).

Considering this importance, many firms are presented with the challenge of increasing minority presence in the upper echelons of organizational hierarchies. In addressing this challenge, some organizations use human resource tools and interventions to stimulate the recognition and development of minority leadership talent through structural, top-down approaches such as affirmative action

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policies (Harrison, Kravitz, Mayer, Leslie, & Lev-Arey, 2006). These initiatives, however, are often accompanied by unintended negative consequences for their beneficiaries including perceived incompetence and distrust by others as well as feelings of incompetence (Leslie, Mayer, & Kravitz, 2014). The current study is concerned with the following research question: Can cultural interventions—namely diversity policies specifying the norms around how to approach diversity in a given organizational context—be instrumental at stimulating minority leadership in a more bottom-up fashion by their impact on leadership self-perceptions and goals?

Considering that leadership is a two-way phenomenon where both (potential) leaders and followers engage in dyadic role-making processes (DeRue & Ashford, 2010) and where such processes are indisputably affected by organizational contexts (Hogue & Lord, 2007), it is crucial for companies to introduce diversity initiatives which target stimulating and strengthening minority employees' leadership-related self-perceptions and behaviors. Because positive leadership self-perceptions and ambitions are important precursors of leadership emergence, the success of any intervention focusing on enhancing minority representation in higher hierarchical layers is dependent on its impact on leadership-relevant intrapersonal processes of high-potential minority employees.

In the current study, we distinguish among three different types of diversity policies: Multiculturalism, Value-in-Homogeneity, and Value in Individual Differences. Our goal is to demonstrate that, because minorities have more limited leadership opportunities in companies and face more biases and challenges in their leadership emergence than do majority group members (Gündemir, Homan, de Dreu, & van Vugt, 2014; Rosette, Leonardelli, & Phillips, 2008; Wyatt & Silvester, 2015), to the extent that such policies succeed in evoking an open climate for diversity, they will positively influence minority employees' leadership-relevant self-perceptions and thus their willingness to pursue leadership roles in companies. Considering contextual supports can diminish the negative effects of biases and prejudice on targets (Lent & Brown, 2013), our work focuses on contextual variations of leadership self-perceptions and goals of minority individuals.

In two studies, we highlight this critical, yet underinvestigated area of how diversity initiatives affect bottom-up processes of minority leadership emergence. Organizational cues play a role in the general expectations that minority group members have about organizations (Purdie-Vaughns, Steele, Davies, Dittmann, & Crosby, 2008; Walton & Cohen, 2007), but *whether* and *how* these can play a pivotal causal role in shaping minority group members' leadership-related perceptions is a largely unknown area. The present work complements earlier work on the underrepresentation of ethnic-racial minorities in leadership positions that focused

on ethnic-racial minorities as *targets* (Gündemir et al., 2014) by focusing on ethnic-racial minorities as *actors* in leadership development. Moreover, although some research suggested that minority groups may have less strong leadership self-perceptions than Whites because of existing biases toward minority leadership (Festekijan, Tram, Murray, Sy, & Huynh, 2013), the current studies uncover the contextual variability of these self-perceptions.

Our focus on diversity policies as a way of encouraging minority leadership not only refines and extends existing diversity theory but also offers promising practical tools for managing minority leadership talent in organizations. Below, we first discuss the relevant literature on diversity policies and diversity climates. Then, building on the social cognitive career theory (e.g., Lent & Brown, 2013), we explain how these can affect minorities' leadership relevant self-perceptions and goals.

## Background and Hypotheses

### *Diversity Policies and Diversity Climates*

Many modern companies employ diversity policies to create a company-wide understanding on how to approach employee diversity. Diversity mission statements are often part of these policies and are usually derived from so-called diversity ideologies. These ideologies “signal social identity contingencies—judgments, stereotypes, opportunities, restrictions, and treatments that are tied to one’s social identity in a given setting” (Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008, p. 615).

The interethnic ideologies framework is the most widely used theoretical framework for understanding how diversity ideologies affect perceptions and behavior in diverse groups (Wolsko, Park, Judd, & Wittenbrink, 2000). Despite different ideologies' common goal of achieving harmonious intergroup relations, the varying views in the literature have contrasting means to achieve that goal. *Multiculturalist ideologies* focus on explicitly acknowledging and valuing characteristics of the members of diverse social groups, promoting harmonious intergroup relations, and equitable treatment of individuals with different group memberships (Park & Judd, 2005; Wolsko et al., 2000). *Colorblind ideologies* focus on de-emphasizing social group membership because suppressing the categorization of people into distinct social groups is believed to eliminate negative consequences of intergroup relationships such as prejudice and conflict (e.g., Apfelbaum, Norton, & Sommers, 2012; Wolsko et al., 2000). This de-emphasizing can take different forms. On the one hand, this ideology can communicate a Value-in-Homogeneity ideal, making only common group membership salient, focusing on equality or uniformity of treatment. On the other hand, it can communicate a Value-in-Individual Differences ideal, focusing on recognition of interindividual differences and individual uniqueness while

de-emphasizing subgroup identities. This variant explicitly conveys acknowledgement of differences on the interindividual rather than the ethnic subgroup level. Although some previous work combined components of Value-in-Homogeneity and Value-in-Individual Differences to define and operationalize a single type of diversity policy (e.g., Gutiérrez & Unzueta, 2010; Stevens, Plaut, & Sanchez-Burks, 2008; Wolsko et al., 2000), in the current work, we disentangle these forms since they may evoke different perceptions of an open diversity climate.

### *From Formal Policy to Climate Perceptions*

Organizational initiatives, such as diversity policies, determine formal social systems in these settings. How these formal, visible practices affect employees' personal perceptions of an organization's climate is of importance for their self-perceptions and career views (Denison, 1996). Climate perceptions are subjective perceptual outcomes of multiple objective and subjective variables in the environment including organizational, individual, and intergroup factors (Cox, 1994; Guion, 1973). These perceptions are by definition associated with certain organizational domains (e.g., safety). Here, our focus is the organizational diversity climate, that is the extent to which organization is perceived as being open to diversity, where differences can be safely expressed, are accepted, and appreciated (e.g., Mor-Barak, Cherin, & Berkman, 1998).

By its nature, multicultural policy is inherently open and accepting of diversity. A multicultural ideology both affirms minority group identity and communicates acceptance of minority groups within an inclusive organizational or national identity (Verkuyten, 2005). Dovidio, Gaertner, and Saguy (2008) propose that the recognition of an individual's minority group identity communicates respect for this group, which satisfies a primary need from members of socially disadvantaged groups (Bergsieker, Shelton, & Richeson, 2010; Shnabel, Nadler, Canetti-Nisim, & Ullrich, 2008). Acceptance within the organizational identity satisfies the personal need of minority group members to belong, which not only improves personal well-being (Walton & Cohen, 2011) but also promotes positive expectations of being treated fairly (Tyler & Blader, 2003) and being able to succeed within the organization or society as a whole (Walton & Carr, 2012). Thus, multiculturalism is likely to serve minorities' motivation to maintain group values and distinctiveness (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2009; Hehman et al., 2012; Ryan, Hunt, Weible, Peterson, & Casas, 2007; Verkuyten, 2006) and more directly communicates respect for their distinctive social identity by an organization (Bergsieker et al., 2010). As a consequence, this ideology is likely to communicate an open diversity climate to minority employees.

The communication of an open climate may seem less apparent for the other two ideologies. The assimilative

value-in-homogeneity ideology makes only the common group membership salient and communicates equality or uniformity of treatment while, at the same time, requiring an abandonment of subgroup membership, and prevents treatment that acknowledges (and potentially compensates) for traditional unfair disadvantages or current barriers created by contemporary bias faced by minority group members in the context (Dovidio et al., 2008). Accordingly, this ideology does little to satisfy or respect the needs of members of minority groups (Bergsieker et al., 2010) and may not communicate equitable treatment within an organization (Huo, Smith, Tyler, & Lind, 1996). The value-in-individual differences ideology, may be perceived as more positively by minority employees since it caters *personal* needs for esteem as partly achieved through group membership (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This policy communicates recognition and respect for individual qualities and may thus directly promote feelings of personal worth and esteem among minority group members, without necessarily making their subgroup identity salient. As such, by communicating openness to differences, albeit on the individual level, a value-in-individual differences policy may fare well in empowering individual ethnic-racial minority members by communicating an open climate. In short, minority employees' diversity climate perceptions should be more positive when the policies of a company value multiculturalism or individual differences than when a company values homogeneity.

### *From Climate to Leadership Self-Perceptions*

Social cognitive career theory (Bandura, 1986; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 2000) posits that career development results from an interaction between personal, cognitive, and contextual variables. Three variables are identified as crucial antecedents of career behavior (e.g., choosing a career path) and outcomes: (a) actors' self-efficacy (i.e., context-specific convictions to execute tasks successfully to attain desired outcomes; Bandura, 1977); (b) outcome expectancies (i.e., beliefs about the consequences of one's actions; Lent & Brown, 2006); and (c) goals (i.e., behavioral intentions to achieve specific outcomes, Bandura, 1986; Lent & Brown, 2013). Importantly, these variables are not isolated from their environment. Contextual supports (e.g., relevant role models) facilitate, while contextual barriers (e.g., discriminatory hiring practices) suppress, these personal and cognitive variables (Lent & Brown, 2013).

Empirical work on the social cognitive career theory suggests that open diversity climates can be instrumental for minorities in organizations by forming contextual supports, empowering them in their career development. For instance, one study showed that diversity-related contextual supports (e.g., a positive campus diversity climate) are positively associated with minority students' academic self-efficacy

and goal pursuit in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics areas in which they are typically underrepresented (Byars-Winston, Estrada, Howard, Davis, & Zalapa, 2010). Whereas much of the existing literature has focused on how diversity policies affect intergroup perceptions (for a review, see Rattan & Ambady, 2013), we investigate whether and how different formal diversity policies can affect perceptions of organizational diversity climates to stimulate (or suppress) positive leadership self-views and goals of minorities.

An organizational environment that communicates openness to differences can be instrumental in suppressing high-potential minorities' concerns regarding leadership barriers by signaling respect, encouraging positive-self views (Van Laar, Derks, & Ellemers, 2013) and stimulating feelings of safety and trust toward the organization (Jansen, Vos, Otten, Podsiadlowski, & van der Zee, 2016; Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008). Recent research demonstrates that racial-ethnic minority managers experience expressing unconventional views and raising race-ethnicity-related concerns at work as an impediment for their career progress into leadership roles (Wyatt & Silvester, 2015). This suggests that an open diversity environment where expressing differing views is accepted can boost high-potential minorities' positive expectancies regarding leadership roles by limiting these hindrances. Also, these open environments can lessen anticipated resistance to minority leaders' authority (MacKay & Etienne, 2006), and increase anticipated organizational and subordinate support for their leadership. Recent research offers indirect evidence for this argument by showing that increased perceptions of value-in-diversity heighten religious minorities' general work motivations and expectations for work ability (Van Laar et al., 2013).

Accordingly, our research focuses on the processes that make some policies more effective than others, specifically with respect to promoting minority group members' leadership orientations. Because minorities are particularly responsive to cues of respect (Shnabel & Nadler, 2015) and environment cues of openness and belonging increase minorities' aspiration and motivation (Walton, Spencer, & Erman, 2013), our overall expectation is that organizational diversity policies will affect minorities' leadership-related self-perceptions, expectations, and aspirations to the extent that they communicate an open climate for diversity. Our specific hypotheses are as follows:

**Hypothesis 1:** Minorities will perceive the climate in a company with Multiculturalism or Value-in-Individual Differences policy as more open to diversity than a company endorsing Value-in-Homogeneity policy.

**Hypothesis 2:** Minorities will report more positive leadership self-perceptions and leadership-related goals in a company with Multiculturalism or Value-in-Individual Differences policy than in a company with a Value-in-Homogeneity policy.

**Hypothesis 3:** There will be an indirect relationship between diversity policy and minorities' leadership self-perceptions and goals through perceived diversity climate.

## Overview of the Studies

In the current work, we propose that organizational diversity policies are important determinants of leadership self-perceptions and ambitions. In the studies, besides perceived organizational diversity climate, we measured three variables that serve as operationalization of our leadership self-perceptions and goals: (a) leadership self-efficacy, (b) positive outcome expectancies, and (c) goals. These variables are crucial antecedents of leadership-related career behavior (e.g., pursuing and actively seeking leadership roles) and outcomes, and have helped illuminate leadership self-selection processes in traditionally underrepresented groups (e.g., women; Yeagley, Subich, & Tokar, 2010; Beaman, Duflo, Pande, & Topalova, 2012).

Study 1, employing a minimal group paradigm, investigated how situational minorities respond, in terms of perceptions of a company's diversity climate and in their leadership self-efficacy, when organizations have a Multiculturalism or Value-in-Individual Differences rather than a Value-in-Homogeneity policy. Study 2, focusing on the responses of racial-ethnic minorities, replicated and extended the findings of Study 1, showing that racial minorities perceive Multiculturalism or Value-in-Individual Differences policies as creating a more open climate which in turn positively affect their leadership self-perceptions and goals.

Both studies had experimental designs. We chose to focus on experimental designs in order to be able to make casual attributions. That is, leadership pursuits can be affected by a large number of interacting personal and contextual factors. However, to isolate the causal effects of diversity policies and climates on leadership self-perceptions, an experimental design offers the most ideal strategy. We chose to conduct the studies online in order to reach large numbers of participants who are more diverse and have more work and organizational experience than student populations that are common in experimental research in the laboratory (Krantz & Dalal, 2000).

## Study 1

In Study 1, U.S. participants were experimentally placed in a situational minority group of employees in a company based on a personal quality unrelated to race or ethnicity, using a procedure modeled after the minimal group paradigm (e.g., Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971). Minimal group procedures help illuminate underlying processes experimentally because they randomly assign individuals to groups and make statuses salient in the immediate situation

in ways independent of group positions, status, or roles outside of the experimental context. In this paradigm, any type of real or bogus personal choice or tendency (e.g., choice of a painting; Chen & Li, 2009) can form the basis of a situational group membership with substantial impact on individuals' reactions. These responses typically resemble reactions in actual group memberships such as race or gender, while providing the experimental advantage of drawing cause-and-effect inferences because people are randomly assigned to the conditions. In Study 1, participants responded to a short survey and received a fictitious personality feedback with statements that apply to most people, which ostensibly reflected that they had a particular personality type. Participants were actually randomly assigned to receive feedback that they were a Personality D or Personality E (actually fictitious personality types), which they would subsequently learn made them numerical minorities in a company. Previous work successfully demonstrated that bogus personality dimensions can form a basis for minimal groups (Schmader & Major, 1999).

One advantage of this minimal group approach was that we were able to use the same dimension, personality/individual differences, as the basis for both Multicultural and Value-in-Individual Differences policy conditions. Consistent with earlier research which showed that situational minorities' reactions to diversity policy contexts resemble racial-ethnic minorities' reactions as a function of numerical representation in a context (Hehman et al., 2012), we expected that to the extent that diversity ideologies communicate an open climate, they would evoke higher leadership self-efficacy for minorities.

## Method

**Participants and Design.** One hundred and sixty-two participants (70 males, 91 females, 1 missing;  $M_{age} = 32.08$  years,  $SD_{age} = 12.63$ ) were recruited online using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011; Krantz & Dalal, 2000; Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010). Mechanical Turk is an online research platform, which offers a large participant pool to academic researchers. Extensive studies showed that MTurk provides reliable and representative data, which do not differ from more conventional participant pools (Mason & Suri, 2012). Participants were randomly assigned to one of the three conditions (Multiculturalism vs. Value-in-Individual Differences vs. Value-in-Homogeneity) of a between-subjects design. All participants were residents of the United States and the racial-ethnic composition of the sample was the following: 64.2% White, 12.3% African American, 10.5% Latino/Hispanic American, 9.3% Asian American, 2.4% other, 1.2% missing. Participants had on average 8.65 ( $SD = 10.49$ ) years of full-time, and 5.38 ( $SD = 6.38$ ) years of part-time work experience. Educational background distribution was as follows: 16.7% completed high school, 40.1% completed

some college, 9.9% completed a 2-year college, 21% completed a 4-year college, 8.6% had a master's degree, 2.4% had a PhD or professional degree.

**Procedure.** After electronically signing the statement of informed consent, participants filled out the short questionnaire. Sample items are "I like loud music" and "People should honor traditional values, not question them" (adapted from McCrae, Costa, & Martin, 2005). Participants were told that their answers would determine whether they had a (fictitious) "D" or an "E" type personality. After a filler task, all participants received feedback stating that they had a typical "D" personality. All participants received the following personality feedback: "Your results have shown that you have a typical D personality. You are an independent thinker and do not accept other people's opinions without solid proof. When you are assigned to a task, you are motivated to perform well. There are times that you have doubts whether you considered all the possibilities and made the right choice. You can sometimes be extraverted and sociable, and sometimes you can be introverted and reserved." This personality feedback was based on Forer's (1949) classical work on general statements that are likely to apply to everyone. Participants were asked to imagine they worked as an entry-level manager for a company called Terra that used the personality scale for its employees. They received information (e.g., number of employees, gender distribution) about the company, including information that employees with a "D"-type personality were a clear numerical minority of 15%.

Next, participants were presented with the company's diversity mission statement. This statement was modeled after materials used by Purdie-Vaughns et al. (2008) and Wolsko et al. (2000) to reflect (a) Multiculturalism (e.g., "appreciating and recognizing personality type diversity creates an exciting work environment"), (b) Value-in-Individual Differences (e.g., "focusing on individual characteristics creates an exciting work environment"), (c) Value-in-Homogeneity (e.g., "focusing on what we have in common creates an exciting work environment").

Participants then completed the measure for the perceived climate and the leadership self-efficacy scale. They also answered questions about the manipulation and the accuracy of the personality feedback. Finally, participants provided demographic information, including gender, age, race and ethnicity, and education.

## Measures

**Perceived Open Diversity Climate.** A common focus of measuring diversity climate perceptions has been the extent to which an environment is open to different voices, appreciates varying opinions, and where individuals can express these opinions without fear of negative repercussions (e.g., Herdman & McMillan-Capehart, 2010; Hobman, Bordia, & Gallois,

2004; Mor-Barak et al., 1998). Based on prior work, we developed the following questions to measure climate perceptions: (a) “To what extent do you think that differences (e.g., in opinion) can be expressed in this company?” (b) “To what extent do you think that expressing differences is accepted in this company?” and (c) “To what extent do you think that expressing differences is appreciated in company?” Participants indicated their answer on a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *completely*). A principal component analysis revealed a single underlying factor with an eigenvalue of 2.65. The scale was highly reliable ( $\alpha = .93$ ).

**Leadership Self-Efficacy.** We adapted the items from Paglis and Green’s (2002) 12-item scale. Participants indicated their confidence for performing leadership tasks described in the items (e.g., “I think I can identify the most critical areas for making meaningful improvements in this project team’s effectiveness” and “I think I can develop trusting relationships with the employees in the team such that they will embrace goals with me”) on an 11-point response format (0% = *not at all confident*, 100% = *completely confident*). In their original work, Paglis and Green concluded that leadership self-efficacy measure was highly reliable and had strong construct validity (i.e., convergent, discriminant, and criterion-related validity). The scale was highly reliable in the current study as well ( $\alpha = .96$ ).

**Other Measures.** To assess whether the manipulation was successful, participants rated (1 = *not at all true*, 7 = *completely true*) the extent to which each of the following statements was true about the company’s perspective: (a) Terra Company believes that one should focus on being a part of the organization instead of on being a member of a certain personality type group (Value-in-Homogeneity), (b) Terra Company believes that one should focus on individual characteristics instead of personality type differences (Value-in-Individual Differences), and (c) Terra Company believes that one should value personality type diversity (Multiculturalism). The participants also rated the accuracy of the personality feedback (1 = *completely inaccurate*, 7 = *completely accurate*), and reported their personality type (Type D vs. Type E) and the percentage of the employees with the same personality type (15% vs. 85%), and indicated their sex, age, race, and work experience.

## Results

**Preliminary Analyses.** On average, participants perceived the personality description to be significantly more accurate ( $M = 5.75$ ,  $SD = 1.14$ ) than the midpoint (i.e., neutral) of the scale,  $t(160) = 19.49$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = 3.08$ , and this did not differ between conditions ( $p = .993$ ). All but two participants reported their personality type correctly, and all but three accurately identified the percentage of D-type employees in

**Table 1.** Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations Between Study 1 Variables.

	N	M	SD	1	2	3
1. Value-in-Individual Differences <sup>a</sup>	162	0.38	0.49			
2. Multiculturalism <sup>b</sup>	162	0.31	0.46	-.52**		
3. Leadership Self-Efficacy	161	7.56	1.99	-.10	.08	
4. Perceived Climate	162	4.61	1.73	.25**	.11	.17*

Note. All tests are two-tailed.

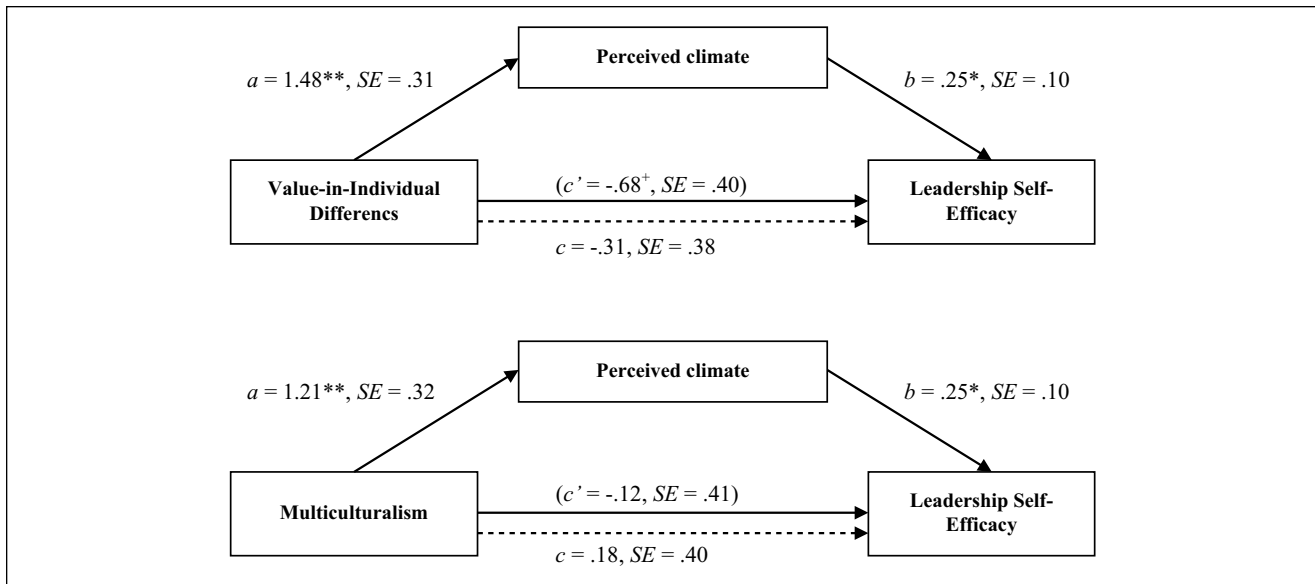
<sup>a</sup>Dummy 1: 0 = Value-in-Homogeneity and Multiculturalism, 1 = Value-in-Individual Differences. <sup>b</sup>Dummy 2: 0 = Value-in-Homogeneity and Value-in-Individual Differences, 1 = Multiculturalism.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

the organization. We retained these participants in our analyses; removing them does not change our results. Because participants’ racial–ethnic background (i.e., White vs. racial–ethnic minority) or gender did not have main or interactive effects on any of the dependent variables ( $F_s < 1.58$ ,  $p_s > .21$ ), we do not separately discuss these. Table 1 provides the means, standard deviations, and correlations for all Study 1 variables.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) across the three conditions for each manipulation check was followed by pairwise comparisons using the Tukey honestly significant difference procedure to control for Type I errors. The pattern of results for the three manipulation check questions supported the intended manipulations.

There was a significant effect of experimental condition for the Value-in-Homogeneity manipulation check item,  $F(2, 158) = 14.37$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .15$ . As expected, participants in the Value-in-Homogeneity condition ( $M = 5.78$ ,  $SD = 1.75$ ) agreed more strongly with the Value-in-Homogeneity manipulation check item than participants in the Value-in-Individual Differences ( $M = 4.62$ ,  $SD = 1.85$ ,  $p = .003$ ), and participants in Multiculturalism condition ( $M = 3.86$ ,  $SD = 1.81$ ,  $p < .001$ ). There was a significant effect of condition for or the Value-in-Individual Differences manipulation check item,  $F(2, 158) = 15.27$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .16$ . Participants in Value-in-Individual Differences condition ( $M = 5.10$ ,  $SD = 1.92$ ) agreed with this statement more strongly than those in the Value-in-Homogeneity condition ( $M = 4.08$ ,  $SD = 2.03$ ,  $p = .012$ ) and participants in the Multiculturalism condition ( $M = 3.16$ ,  $SD = 1.53$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Finally, there was an effect for experimental condition on the Multiculturalism manipulation check item,  $F(2, 158) = 9.55$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .11$ . As anticipated, participants in the Multiculturalism condition tended to agree more with this statement ( $M = 4.78$ ,  $SD = 2.12$ ) than those in the Individual Differences ( $M = 3.93$ ,  $SD = 2.15$ ,  $p = .083$ ) and more than those in the Value-in-Homogeneity ( $M = 2.98$ ,  $SD = 1.88$ ,  $p < .001$ ) conditions.



**Figure 1.** Unstandardized regression path coefficients for the indirect effect analyses in Study 1.

Note. SE = standard error. Dotted lines represent the total effect (i.e.,  $c' + ab$ ) of diversity ideology on leadership self-efficacy. Independent variables represent dummies comparing the focal condition with the reference condition, Value-in-Homogeneity. Each analysis includes the nonfocal diversity ideology dummy as a covariate.

\* $p < .10$ . \*\* $p < .05$ . \*\*\* $p < .01$ .

**Hypothesis Tests.** To test Hypotheses 1 to 3, we first examined the effect of the three ideology conditions on the organization's diversity climate perceptions (Hypothesis 1) and participants' leadership self-efficacy (Hypothesis 2), and then employed a regression-based path analysis (Hayes, 2013) to test the hypothesized (Hypothesis 3) indirect path from ideology to leadership self-efficacy through perceived climate.

Supportive of Hypothesis 1, there was a significant effect of diversity ideology on perceived openness,  $F(2, 158) = 12.53, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .14$ . As expected, compared with Value-in-Homogeneity ( $M = 3.69, SD = 1.80$ ), participants in the Value-in-Individual Differences condition ( $M = 5.16, SD = 1.47$ ),  $F(1, 159) = 23.60, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .13$ , and those in the Multiculturalism condition ( $M = 4.89, SD = 1.58$ ),  $F(1, 159) = 14.34, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .10$ , perceived the organization to be more open to differences. Inconsistent with Hypothesis 2, there was no direct effect of diversity ideology on leadership self-efficacy  $F(2, 158) = 0.87, p = .421, \eta_p^2 = .01$ . Participants' leadership self-efficacy in the Value-in-Homogeneity condition ( $M = 7.82, SD = 1.72$ ) did not differ from participants in the Multiculturalism ( $M = 7.80, SD = 1.98$ ) or from those in Value-in-Individual Differences ( $M = 7.51, SD = 2.19$ ) conditions ( $F_s < 0.67, ps > .41$ ).

To test the predicted indirect effect (Hypothesis 3), we employed a regression-based path analysis (Hayes, 2013). Using the PROCESS procedure for SPSS (Model 4; Hayes, 2013), we estimated the indirect effect of diversity ideology on leadership self-efficacy through perceived diversity

climate (Hypothesis 3, the product of the paths  $a$  and  $b$  in Figure 1). Prior to the analyses, we performed indicator coding to create two ( $k - 1$ ) dummy variables for the independent variable (Hayes & Preacher, 2013). These were used to examine the relative effect of being in the reference condition (Value-in-Homogeneity coded as 0) to one of the other two conditions (Value-in-Individual Differences and Multiculturalism coded as 1). We ran the analyses entering either dummy as independent variable, while controlling for the other, nonfocal dummy (Hayes, 2013).

To test the indirect effect, we calculated bias-corrected confidence intervals (CI) for the indirect effect based on 10,000 bootstrap samples (Hayes, 2013; Preacher & Hayes, 2004). The null hypothesis regarding the indirect effect is rejected if the CI excludes zero. The regression coefficients are presented in Figure 1. The results supported Hypothesis 3: There was a significant indirect effect of Value-in-Individual Differences on leadership self-efficacy through perceived open diversity climate (point estimate = 0.37, standard error = 0.17, 95% bias corrected CI [0.089, 0.777]). Similarly, there was a significant indirect effect of Multiculturalism on leadership self-efficacy through perceived open diversity climate (point estimate = 0.30, standard error = 0.15, 95% bias corrected CI [0.072, 0.690]).

## Discussion

The results showed that as situational minorities' perceptions of organizational open diversity climate are increased by



salient diversity policies (in Value-in-Individual Differences and Multiculturalism conditions), they feel more capable of fulfilling leadership roles successfully. A methodological strength of Study 1 is that it isolates the experience of being a minority in a given context from other social factors. For instance, depending on the nature and priorities of an organization and the size of different units, members of different units (e.g., accounting) may experience minority status and react to salient diversity policies differently.

However, a limitation of the methodological approach in Study 1 is that it is unlikely that participants had a strong connection with the attribute determining their minority status, in contrast to racial or ethnic identities, which may have stronger effects. One consequence might be that Value-in-Individual Differences was as effective at indirectly promoting minority efficacy as Multiculturalism because participants did not have to forfeit a highly valued social identity (as racial and ethnic minorities might have to do) to have their distinctiveness recognized in the Value-in-Individual Differences condition. Study 2 examined the effects of organizational diversity policy (Multiculturalism vs. Value-in-Homogeneity vs. Value-in-Individual Differences) on racial-ethnic minority and majority group members' leadership self-efficacy, positive outcome expectations, and intentions to apply.

## Study 2

To replicate and extend the results of Study 1, in Study 2, we focused on racial-ethnic groups and expanded the outcomes assessed. Focusing on racial-ethnic groups permits a conceptual replication of our findings in Study 1 and helps us assess the generalizability of the findings for racial groups. In Study 2, we illuminate the impact of salient diversity ideologies on this group's perceptions of the organizational climate as well as whether these affect how they view their own leadership perceptions and goals in a given organizational setting.

Although majority groups generally endorse colorblindness more than minorities do (e.g., Ryan et al., 2007), we do not expect their self-cognitions, goals, and behavior to be affected by diversity ideologies or organizational diversity climate. Being "different" is seen as a minority attribute. Typically, the White majority group is considered the default racial-ethnic category (McDermott & Samson, 2005), and being "diverse" is associated more strongly with racial-ethnic minorities than with majorities by the members of both minority and majority groups (Unzueta & Binning, 2010). Group membership is a more central and salient aspect of both racial-ethnic and situational minorities' self-concept than of majorities' (Leonardelli, Pickett, & Brewer, 2010; McGuire & McGuire, 1988; McKay et al., 2007). Consequently, both colorblindness and multiculturalism are more strongly associated with "the self" by minorities than by majorities (Plaut, Garnett,

Buffardi, & Sanchez-Burks, 2011). As such, different diversity approaches should affect minorities' self-perceptions, while they should not affect majorities (e.g., Holoien & Shelton, 2012; Perkins, Thomas, & Taylor, 2000; Walker, Field, Bernerth, & Beckon, 2012). Accordingly, we expected only minorities' leadership self-perceptions to be affected by the salient diversity policy and perceived organizational diversity climate.

In Study 2, additional to perceived organizational diversity climate and leadership self-efficacy, we also include scales measuring positive outcome expectancies regarding leadership positions (e.g., Bandura, 1994; Lent et al., 1994), and intentions to apply for a higher leadership position (*leadership-related goals*), because these strongly guide actual leadership relevant actions (see Ajzen, 1988; Lent et al., 2005; Locke & Latham, 1990).

## Method

**Participants and Design.** Nonstudent, working adult participants in the Netherlands were targeted through advertisements on newsletters, mailing lists, and networking organizations to complete an online study on "perceptions at work." This recruitment strategy enabled us to reach a diverse sample of individuals who worked for and were thus representative of different companies. They were asked to participate and send the link to others. We reached 227 potential participants, and 120 completed the research (52.8%). We identified one participant who completed the study twice and eliminated the second session. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the three experimental conditions (Multiculturalism vs. Value-in-Individual Differences vs. Value-in-Homogeneity) in a between-subjects design.

Participants were 119 adults (39 males, 80 females;  $M_{\text{age}} = 32.03$ ,  $SD_{\text{age}} = 11.31$ ). The racial-ethnic composition was 53.8% majority/native Dutch and 46.2% ethnic minorities (14.3% Turkish Dutch, 6.7% Surinamese Dutch, 5.9% Moroccan Dutch, 0.8% Antillean Dutch, 12.6% other, non-Western background, 5.9% other minority, some Western background).<sup>1</sup> With respect to education, 27.7% had a master's degree, 26.0% a bachelor's degree, 42.0% only completed high school, and the remaining participants completed primary education. In terms of employment, 91.6% of the participants had a job, working on average 28.01 ( $SD = 15.08$ ) hours a week. Removing the participants without a job did not change our results, and we retained them in the analyses. Six randomly chosen participants received a gift-card for their participation.

**Procedure.** The procedure resembled Study 1 with some alterations. The manipulations and the scales were translated into Dutch prior to administration. All participants were given identical information about the company's

hierarchical structure (e.g., project teams working under specific divisions, which are managed by heads of divisions). The diversity ideology manipulation was identical to that used in Study 1, except “personality type” diversity information was replaced by “racial–ethnic group” information. For instance, in the Multiculturalism condition, the mission statement included phrases like “appreciating and recognizing racial–ethnic diversity creates an exciting work environment,” in Value-in-Individual Differences phrases like “focusing on individual characteristics creates an exciting work environment,” and in Value-in-Homogeneity it included phrases like “focusing on what we have in common creates an exciting work environment.”

Participants next answered questions about the company’s diversity climate. They then read that the head of one company division (a middle to high leadership position in the organizational hierarchy) was leaving. Participants were asked to imagine that they had an entry-level managerial position at the company and that they were potentially suitable for the position as the division head. They completed the 12-item leadership self-efficacy scale, a positive outcome expectations scale regarding the division head position, and indicated their willingness to apply for this position. Finally, participants responded to three manipulation-check items adapted from the Study 1 and provided demographic information.

## Measures

**Perceived Open Diversity Climate.** The items were identical to Study 1. A principal component analysis revealed a single underlying factor with an eigenvalue of 2.54. The scale was highly reliable ( $\alpha = .91$ ).

**Leadership Self-Efficacy.** Like in Study 1, participants completed the adapted 12-item anticipated leadership self-efficacy scale from Study 1 (Paglis & Green, 2002), imagining themselves in this higher leadership position ( $\alpha = .95$ ).

**Positive Outcome Expectations.** We developed a four-item positive outcome expectations scale. The items were, “If I were to get this promotion, I expect...” (a) “the subordinates to fully accept my authority,” (b) “other heads of divisions to treat me as a valuable colleague,” (c) “the board of directors to accept my vision for the division,” and (d) “the subordinates to execute my strategic decisions enthusiastically.” Participants indicated on a 7-point scale (1 = *not at all*, 7 = *completely*) their agreement with each item. A principal component analysis revealed a single underlying factor with an eigenvalue of 2.59. The scale was reliable ( $\alpha = .81$ ).

**Willingness to Apply.** We measured participants’ willingness to apply for the higher level leadership position (leadership goals) using two items: (a) “I would like to apply for this

higher leadership position,” and (b) “It is very probable that I would apply for this higher leadership position.” The scale was highly reliable,  $r(117) = .86, p < .001$ .

## Results

**Preliminary Analyses.** First, we created a dichotomous “racial–ethnic group” variable (native Dutch vs. ethnic-minority).<sup>2</sup> Participants’ racial–ethnic group did not have main or interactive effects on diversity ideology manipulation checks ( $F$ s  $< 2.04$ ,  $p$ s  $> .14$ ). As in Study 1, we performed a one-way ANOVA across the three conditions (Multiculturalism, Value-in-Homogeneity, and Value-in-Individual Differences) for each manipulation check measure, followed by pairwise comparisons using the Tukey honestly significant difference procedure to control for Type I errors. The pattern of results for the three manipulation check questions supported the intended manipulations.

There was a significant effect of experimental condition for the Value-in-Homogeneity manipulation check item,  $F(2, 116) = 27.35, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .32$ . As expected, participants in the Value-in-Homogeneity condition ( $M = 5.61, SD = 1.94$ ) agreed more strongly with the Value-in-Homogeneity manipulation check item than participants in the Value-in-Individual Differences ( $M = 4.40, SD = 1.97, p = .022$ ), and participants in Multiculturalism condition ( $M = 2.50, SD = 1.78, p < .001$ ). There was a significant effect of condition for the Value-in-Individual Differences manipulation check item,  $F(2, 116) = 43.64, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .43$ . Participants in Value-in-Individual Differences ( $M = 5.80, SD = 1.94$ ) agreed with this statement more strongly than those in the Value-in-Homogeneity ( $M = 2.35, SD = 1.60, p < .001$ ) and participants in the Multiculturalism ( $M = 2.71, SD = 1.77, p < .001$ ). Finally, there was an effect for experimental condition on the Multiculturalism manipulation check item,  $F(2, 116) = 42.12, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .42$ . As expected, participants in the Multiculturalism condition agreed more with this statement ( $M = 6.42, SD = 0.68$ ) than those in the Value-in-Individual Differences ( $M = 3.70, SD = 2.15, p < .001$ ) and more than those in the Value-in-Homogeneity ( $M = 3.32, SD = 2.07, p < .001$ ) conditions. Table 2 provides the means, standard deviations, and correlations for all Study 2 variables.

**Hypothesis Tests.** We employed multiple ANOVAs to test Hypotheses 1 to 3. We conducted planned contrasts comparing minority and majority participants’ reactions with the measures dependent on the salient diversity policy, comparing the Value-in-Homogeneity condition with the Value-in-Individual Differences condition and to the Multiculturalism condition. Although some of the interactions do not reach significance, we performed and reported all the planned contrasts because our hypotheses specifically focus

**Table 2.** Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations Between Study 2 Variables.

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Value-in-Individual Differences <sup>a</sup>	0.34	0.47						
2. Multiculturalism <sup>b</sup>	0.40	0.49	-.59**					
3. Racial-ethnic group <sup>c</sup>	0.54	0.50	-.09	.04				
4. Perceived climate	5.13	1.43	-.02	.24**	.13			
5. Leadership self-efficacy	8.24	1.57	.01	.25**	-.08	.44**		
6. Positive outcome expectancies	5.24	0.96	-.03	.14	-.20*	.35**	.48**	
7. Goals (willingness to apply)	4.94	1.72	-.08	.13	-.22*	.21*	.39**	.50**

Note.  $N = 119$ . All tests are two-tailed.

<sup>a</sup>Dummy 1: 0 = Value-in-Homogeneity and Multiculturalism, 1 = Value-in-Individual Differences. <sup>b</sup>Dummy 2: 0 = Value-in-Homogeneity and Value-in-Individual Differences, 1 = Multiculturalism. <sup>c</sup>0 = Ethnic minority, 1 = White-majority.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

**Table 3.** Means and Standards Deviations for the Study 2 Dependent Measures Per Condition and Racial-Ethnic Group.

Group	Ideology	Measures			
		Openness	LSE	Outcome Expectancies	Goals
Minorities		4.94 (1.56)	8.36 (1.81)	5.45 (1.10)	5.35 (1.70)
	Value-in-Homogeneity	3.69 (1.47)	7.05 (2.22)	4.96 (1.18)	4.50 (2.03)
	Value-in-Individual Differences	4.90 (1.57)	8.48 (1.76)	5.56 (1.02)	5.38 (1.65)
Majorities	Multiculturalism	5.75 (1.07)	9.06 (1.08)	5.63 (1.09)	5.86 (1.37)
		5.30 (1.29)	8.13 (1.33)	5.06 (0.79)	4.59 (1.66)
	Value-in-Homogeneity	5.15 (1.64)	7.77 (1.24)	5.10 (0.61)	4.94 (1.33)
All	Value-in-Individual Differences	5.30 (1.06)	8.03 (1.33)	4.82 (0.82)	4.05 (1.94)
	Multiculturalism	5.40 (1.21)	8.44 (1.37)	5.21 (0.85)	4.72 (1.61)
		5.13 (1.43)	8.24 (1.57)	5.24 (0.96)	4.94 (1.72)
	Value-in-Homogeneity	4.54 (1.71)	7.47 (1.72)	5.04 (0.88)	4.76 (1.64)
	Value-in-Individual Differences	5.09 (1.35)	8.27 (1.57)	5.21 (0.99)	4.75 (1.89)
	Multiculturalism	5.55 (1.15)	8.71 (1.28)	5.40 (0.98)	5.22 (1.60)

Note. LSE = leadership self-efficacy. Standard deviations are reported in parentheses.

on these (i.e., minorities' reactions as a function of the salient policy; see Bedeian & Mossholder, 1994). Means and standard deviations per condition and racial-ethnic group are reported in Table 3.

Results showed a significant main effect of ideology,  $F(2, 113) = 6.82, p = .002, \eta_p^2 = .11$ , and a main effect of ethnic group,  $F(1, 113) = 3.95, p = .049, \eta_p^2 = .03$ , on perceived open diversity climate. These main effects were qualified by a significant interaction,  $F(1, 113) = 4.21, p = .017, \eta_p^2 = .07$ . Supporting Hypothesis 1, compared with Value-in-Homogeneity condition, minorities in Value-in-Individual Differences condition,  $F(1, 113) = 6.60, p = .012, \eta_p^2 = .06$ , and in Multiculturalism condition,  $F(1, 113) = 18.93, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .14$ , perceived the organization to have a more open climate. White majority participants' climate perceptions were not affected by diversity ideology ( $F_s < 0.37, p_s > .55$ ).

For leadership self-efficacy, there was a significant main effect of ideology,  $F(2, 113) = 7.41, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .12$ , a

nonsignificant main effect of racial-ethnic group,  $F(1, 113) = 0.18, p = .675, \eta_p^2 = .02$ , a nonsignificant interaction,  $F(2, 113) = 2.03, p = .136, \eta_p^2 = .04$ . Testing the contrasts supported Hypothesis 2. Compared with Value-in-Homogeneity condition, minorities in the Value-in-Individual Differences condition,  $F(1, 113) = 7.41, p = .008, \eta_p^2 = .06$ , and in the Multiculturalism condition,  $F(1, 113) = 14.50, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .11$ , reported higher levels of leadership self-efficacy. White majority participants' leadership self-efficacy was not affected by diversity ideology ( $F_s < 2.18, p_s > .14$ ).

For positive outcome expectations, there was a nonsignificant main effect of ideology,  $F(1, 113) = 1.73, p = .182, \eta_p^2 = .03$ , a marginally significant effect of racial-ethnic group,  $F(1, 113) = 3.81, p = .053, \eta_p^2 = .03$ , and a nonsignificant interaction,  $F(2, 113) = 1.92, p = .151, \eta_p^2 = .03$ . Simple contrasts generally supported Hypothesis 2. Compared with Value-in-Homogeneity condition, minorities in the Value-in-Individual Differences condition,  $F(1, 113) = 3.30, p = .072$ ,

**Table 4.** Conditional Indirect Effects with 95% Bias-Corrected Confidence Intervals Pertaining to Study 2.

Predictor	Leadership self-efficacy		Outcome expectations		Goals	
	Value-in-Individual Differences <sup>a</sup>	Multiculturalism <sup>b</sup>	Value-in-Individual Differences <sup>a</sup>	Multiculturalism <sup>b</sup>	Value-in-Individual Differences <sup>a</sup>	Multiculturalism <sup>b</sup>
Point estimates						
Minority	<b>0.505 (0.273)</b>	<b>0.855 (0.315)</b>	<b>0.294 (0.161)</b>	<b>0.498 (0.182)</b>	<b>0.284 (0.203)</b>	<b>0.482 (0.275)</b>
Majority	0.063 (0.201)	0.103 (0.201)	0.036 (0.118)	0.060 (0.117)	0.035 (0.124)	0.058 (0.123)
95% CIs						
Minority	<b>0.090, 1.192</b>	<b>0.371, 1.594</b>	<b>0.051, 0.700</b>	<b>0.195, 0.924</b>	<b>0.013, 0.850</b>	<b>0.036, 1.134</b>
Majority	-0.276, 0.537	-0.230, 0.568	-0.171, 0.311	-0.144, 0.337	-0.153, 0.380	-0.115, 0.422

Note. Standard errors are reported in parentheses. Significant conditional indirect effect estimates and confidence intervals are in boldface.

<sup>a</sup>Dummy 1: 0 = Value-in-Homogeneity and Multiculturalism, 1 = Value-in-Individual Differences. <sup>b</sup>Dummy 2: 0 = Value-in-Homogeneity and Value-in-Individual Differences, 1 = Multiculturalism.

$\eta_p^2 = .03$ , and in the Multiculturalism condition,  $F(1, 113) = 4.13, p = .044, \eta_p^2 = .04$ , reported increased levels of positive outcome expectancies. White majority participants' positive outcome expectancies were not affected by diversity ideology ( $F_s < 0.29, p_s > .59$ ).

For intentions to apply, there was a nonsignificant main effect of ideology,  $F(2, 113) = 1.69, p = .189, \eta_p^2 = .03$ , a significant effect of racial-ethnic group,  $F(1, 113) = 4.73, p = .032, \eta_p^2 = .04$ , and a marginally significant interaction,  $F(2, 113) = 2.91, p = .058, \eta_p^2 = .05$ . Partially supporting Hypothesis 2, simple contrasts showed a single significant effect: Compared with Value-in-Homogeneity condition, minorities in the Multiculturalism condition,  $F(1, 113) = 5.45, p = .021, \eta_p^2 = .05$ , reported increased willingness to apply for a higher leadership position. The remaining contrasts were nonsignificant ( $F_s < 2.71, p_s > .10$ ).

In order to test Hypothesis 3, we used a regression-based path analysis to estimate conditional (i.e., depending on participant's group membership) indirect effects of diversity ideologies on the dependent measures through perceived open diversity climate (Hayes, 2013). Similar to Study 1, we created two dummies for the independent variable comparing Value-in-Individual Differences and Multiculturalism with Value-in-Homogeneity (Hayes & Preacher, 2013). Using PROCESS for SPSS (Model 8), we estimated ordinary least squares regression coefficients and relied on bootstrapping to infer the conditional indirect effects. Following Hayes (2013), we ran the analyses for each dependent variable entering either dummy as independent variable while controlling for the effects of the other, nonfocal dummy.

The conditional indirect effect point estimates and CIs are reported in Table 4. Results support Hypothesis 3: As minority employees perceive an organization either endorsing Value-in-Individual Differences or Multiculturalism as having a more open diversity climate, their leadership self-efficacy, positive outcome expectancies and willingness to apply increase. No such effect was found for majority employees.

## Discussion

The results of Study 2 replicated and extended the findings of Study 1. Racial-ethnic minorities perceived an organization endorsing Value-in-Individual Differences or Multiculturalism as having a more open diversity climate than an organization that endorses Value-in-Homogeneity. Second, the pattern of results was in line with the predictions that compared with Value-in-Homogeneity, Value-in-Individual Differences and Multiculturalism increase minority participants' leadership self-efficacy, positive outcome expectancies, and leadership goals. It should be noted that in Study 1, we did not find comparable direct effects on leadership self-efficacy. Possible reasons for this may be that racial-ethnic minority status is more visible, unconcealable, and fixed, whereas personality may be viewed as concealable and malleable, and thus less of a barrier when managed. Also, participants may have had previous experience facing barriers because of their race/ethnicity but have had few such experiences with personality dimensions. Thus, race/ethnicity may be experienced as potentially a more salient obstacle to leadership efficacy and may benefit more from contextual supports.

Importantly, and in line with Study 1, we observed the strongest findings for the indirect effects. That is, to the extent that an organizational policy communicates an open diversity climate, it positively affects minorities' leadership-related self-cognitions and goals. This finding supports the idea that diversity environments can act as support mechanisms and encourage minority leadership self-selection because they create a space that is open to and accepting of the differences of employees, either as members of their racial-ethnic groups or as individuals. Consistent with research showing that diversity initiatives are less likely to affect majority groups' self-cognitions (e.g., Holoien & Shelton, 2012; Perkins et al., 2000; Walker et al., 2012), we did not observe divergent reaction patterns as a function of the salient diversity ideology for majority members.

## General Discussion

In the Western world, minorities are underrepresented in leadership positions (e.g., Dekker, 2013; Fortune, 2014). Because intrapersonal factors such as whether minorities perceive themselves as capable of executing leadership tasks successfully and aspire higher leadership roles are patent precursors of leader emergence (DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Lent et al., 1994, 2000) and because these leadership self-perceptions are almost always embedded in an organizational context (Hogue & Lord, 2007), it is especially important to understand whether and how these intrapersonal processes are affected by organizational factors. This work shows that certain organizational diversity policies can provide supportive environmental contexts and encourage minorities' leadership claims to the extent that they communicate an open diversity climate.

Our studies demonstrated that when (situational) minorities imagined working for a company endorsing Multiculturalism or Value-in-Individual Differences, they felt more capable of fulfilling an imagined leadership role (Study 1), reported higher expectations of fulfilling higher level leadership roles successfully, had more positive expectations regarding those roles, and aspired to those roles more strongly (Study 2). Although some of the effects of these diversity ideologies are more direct in their nature, the most consistent ones are the indirect effects through a perceived open diversity climate. That is, some diversity ideologies encourage minorities' leadership self-perceptions and goals more than others by creating a context that is open to and accepting of different views and perspectives.

### *Theoretical Contributions and Practical Implications*

The current work offers a unique contribution to racial-ethnic minority leadership literature by focusing on minorities' self-perceptions, and by highlighting how organizational diversity context differentially affects employees' leadership-related self-perceptions as a function of their minority status (see Festekijan et al., 2013). Including minorities as actors instead of mere targets in our research underscores the importance of studying minorities as participants in research that investigates issues which have real implications on their daily lives (Shelton, Alegre, & Son, 2010). Our work integrates diversity policies literature (e.g., Dovidio et al., 2009; Plaut et al., 2011; Wolsko et al., 2000) with the social cognitive career theory (e.g., Lent & Brown, 2013; Lent et al., 1994) and reveals that by creating an open diversity climate, formal policies can act as contextual supports, which can have a large impact on minority employees' leadership goals and pursuits. As such, the current work offers new knowledge and perspectives on how different approaches to diversity can differentially affect minorities'

leadership relevant experiences and behavior by addressing their group-based needs more or less strongly. Moreover, our methodological approach of combining experimentally manipulated situational minority status in Study 1 with racial-ethnic group membership in Study 2 provides complementary evidence of internal and external validity of the minority experience.

Earlier research showed that multiculturalism has more positive outcomes for minorities than colorblindness (e.g., Plaut, Thomas, & Goren, 2009). The present set of studies expands research on diversity policies, showing that specific definition of colorblindness determines the effect of colorblind organizational policies for minorities. Whereas colorblindness focusing merely on an overarching level of identity may be perceived less positively by minorities than multiculturalism, colorblindness emphasizing interindividual differences may be perceived more positively. As such, our results indicate that earlier research's findings regarding the positive outcomes of multiculturalism over colorblindness may represent a specific contrast between multiculturalism and colorblindness including a single overarching identity. By identifying perceived open diversity climate as the underlying process, the implications of this work reach beyond diversity ideologies literature, and suggest that any organizational context that communicates openness to differences will act as a support system for minority employees (Byars-Winston et al., 2010; Lent & Brown, 2013), positively affecting their leadership-related self-cognitions and goals.

Our experimental approach enables the testing of causal relationships and suggests concrete interventions to stimulate high-potential minorities' leadership pursuits in companies. A clear practical implication is that creating a work environment where the expression of differences is allowed, endorsed, and appreciated will help utilize minority employees' talent by encouraging them to self-select for higher leadership positions as these environments not only communicate safety for the minority identity promoting trust in and commitment to organizations (Jansen et al., 2016; Plaut et al., 2009; Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008) but they also appear to encourage minorities to optimize their potential at work and pursue vertical career development. As such, our work offers organizations practical tools to create an environment that stimulates minority representation in all hierarchical layers.

Minority leadership is of great importance for multiethnic societies: It decreases implicit bias (Plant et al., 2009), offers salient role models (Marx et al., 2009), and helps optimally utilize the available talent to gain competitive advantage (Ospina & Foldy, 2009). Thus, applying insights from the present work to organizational policies has great advantages for both companies and the society. Because our findings are not limited to racial-ethnic minorities, these implications are relevant for a large variety of organizational settings with situational minorities (e.g., educational, professional backgrounds) as well.

### Limitations and Future Research Directions

In the current research, we focused on imagined situations and fictitious companies. Although the use of experimental design enabled us to investigate causal relationships between the investigated variables, future work needs to determine the external validity of our findings. This work paves the way for nonexperimental research to replicate and extend the findings in more realistic organizational settings.

Furthermore, the materials used in the current work stated that participants had a lower level management role in the company. This may have implied an organizational context; that is, at least at lower levels, open to minority leadership and where at least some workers with a minority background have overcome barriers to attain leadership positions. Although this information (which was consistent over conditions) does not explain the observed response differences between conditions, it is valuable for future work to study minorities' leadership self-selection as an interactive function of diversity ideology and varying levels of minority representation in leadership positions. This may show that co-occurrence of effective diversity ideologies with high minority representation especially promotes leadership self-selection tendencies (see Purdie-Vaughns et al., 2008). Additionally, we recommend future studies to include a control condition without a salient diversity policy given that recent research demonstrates that having a diversity ideology in itself (as opposed to not having one) can have a substantial impact on how organizational diversity climates are perceived (Kaiser et al., 2013).

The studies were conducted in the United States and the Netherlands, which are individualistic countries (Hofstede, 1984). One might wonder whether the findings may hold in more collectivistic cultures. It should be noted that most of the minority participants in Study 2 are in research contexts considered to be collectivistic oriented (e.g., Yaman, Mesman, van Ijzendoorn, & Bakermans-Kranenburg, 2010). Thus, their relatively positive response to Value-in-Individual Differences ideology suggests that this ideology can be instrumental for the leadership self-perceptions and goals of more collectivistic oriented persons as well. Moreover, considering the majority of the participants in Study 1 were individualistically oriented members (i.e., White majority) of an individualist country (i.e., United States) who reacted positively to Multiculturalism when situational cues put them in a minority position, our findings strongly hint that our results are not driven by the cultural context but rather by the minority status of the perceivers.

In the current work, we demonstrated that Value-in-Individual Differences and Multiculturalism promote positive leadership self-perceptions and leadership aspirations among individual minority group members. There may, however, be different longer term effects of these ideologies

on *intergroup* relationships. For instance, increased perceptions of personal mobility, such as that supported by Value-in-Individual Differences, may reduce perceptions of group-based inequity and may be less likely to promote collective action by members of minority groups than Multiculturalism, which can draw attention to group-based disparities (Ellemers, Van Knippenberg, & Wilke, 1990; Saguy, Tausch, Dovidio, & Pratto, 2009; Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1990). We note, however, that whether collective action is instrumental and beneficial or not depends on the values and goals of an organization and the meaning and legitimacy (or illegitimacy) of these group-based disparities in the organization.

Finally, the current work has interesting implications for future research in a number of other areas. One area of interest would be how women respond to difference aware versus difference blind organizational policies. Although some new research suggests that women prefer gender-aware diversity approaches (Apfelbaum, Stephens, & Reagans, 2016), others argue that women benefit more from gender-blind than gender-aware diversity policies (Martin, Phillips, & Sasaki, 2016). How diversity policies with a focus on subgroup or individual differences versus a focus on homogeneity would affect women's leadership self-perceptions would be a valuable area to investigate in the future, especially considering the fact that women—like racial minorities—continue to be underrepresented at the organizational top. Another interesting area is how the current findings relate to large multinational companies where racial or nationality diversity is the norm rather than the exception. For instance, would acknowledging differences where there is an above average racial diversity without a clear majority group in fact be detrimental? That is, although we show that acknowledging differences of numeric minorities in the presence of a clear high-status majority group can be beneficial, how this works in environments with a large number of smaller groups remains an empirical question.

### Conclusion

Encouraging minority leadership is crucial; it helps organizations retain and optimally utilize minority talent, enables emergence of salient role models, and has positive effects on intergroup relations. The current work demonstrates that to the extent that organizational diversity policies communicate an open environment for diversity, they encourage minority leadership by positively affecting minority employees' leadership-relevant self-perceptions and goals.

### Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## Funding

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This work was supported by a Mosaic Grant (NWO Grant No. 017.007.012) and a Fulbright Grant awarded to the first author.

## Notes

1. Specific group membership had no significant main or interactive effects on the dependent variables.
2. Because some research demonstrated that perceivers' ethnic identification can affect reactions to diversity ideologies (e.g., Verkuyten, 2005), we included an ethnic identification scale to Study 2 for exploratory purposes. Correcting for identification does not change our results or interpretations.

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