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Understanding inclusion in the retail industry: incorporating the majority perspective

Paper type: Research paper

Purpose: The aim of this paper is to move away from the focus upon the drivers of diversity to consider the drivers of inclusion in the workplace. The research outlined addresses this by considering the views of all employees, not just those who would be considered members of minority groups.

Design/ methodology: The paper draws on an extensive set of case study data from a range of methodological sources. The case study is of a major high street retailer.

Findings: Findings focus upon what leads to employees feeling included in the workplace. In addressing this we explore both the drivers of, and barriers to, inclusion. We argue that inclusion is complex and that individuals may feel included by some aspects of organisational culture whilst simultaneously feeling excluded by others.

Practical implications: The implications of our results for HR practitioners are that organisations need to pay attention to general HR policies for the majority as ways of enhancing inclusion, for example development practices, but also pay attention to the different needs of diverse groups.

Originality / value: The paper is original in that in recognising that equality, diversity and inclusion are all closely related, we demonstrate that an understanding of the effectiveness of diversity strategies needs to be fundamentally informed by a consideration of inclusion which can only occur through an engagement with employees' understandings of organisational culture and their place or otherwise within it. Without this employee engagement, many well-intentioned diversity initiatives may go awry. Moreover, the value of the research is that it demonstrates that in order to be successful an inclusion strategy needs to embrace both minority and majority perspectives

Understanding inclusion in the retail industry: incorporating the majority perspective

Managing diversity has long been of interest to management researchers and practitioners and the business case for diverse workforces, for example, remains a focal point of debate (Nkomo & Hoobler, 2014; Theodorakapoulos and Budhwar, 2015; Mor Barak, Lizano, Kim, Duan, Rhee, Hsiao,and Brimhall, 2016). Although the business case has been increasingly critiqued by academics, for a variety of reasons it remains an enduring narrative that many companies have signed up to. Indeed the successful management of diverse groups is linked into a varied range of commercial benefits, for example having access to a wider number of consumer markets; being able to respond to a variety of demographic trends; and making the most of a diverse range of talented individuals in the workplace (CIPD, 2011; Őzbiglin, Tatli, Gulce and Sameer, 2014). As Theodorakapoulos and Budhwar (2015) suggest, the management of diversity and inclusion are increasingly regarded as key to the strategic agenda of a company because of the impetus of the business case.

Oswick and Noon (2014) analyse the discourses that have characterized and shaped the diversity debate during the last 40 years. They note how whereas it may have been important to talk about equal opportunities, it became more fashionable to talk about the management of diversity and the underpinning business case for its progression. However, there is evidence now of a move towards a discourse of inclusion (Chung et al., 2020). Oswick (2010) highlights how a discourse of inclusion has been widely adopted across the US, especially by practitioners, and that as a consequence in some areas, including the UK, it is becoming a more popular way of framing these debates than that of diversity. However, despite the popularity of this discourse in some quarters there is less research that has directly addressed inclusion and how companies can successfully facilitate staff to feel included (Mor

Barak, 2005; Roberson, 2019). Hamrin (2019) suggests that where practitioners and researchers do seek to progress and investigate inclusion, their interventions seem to focus upon diversity policies rather than seeking the thoughts and views of those that they are wanting to include. Inclusion is integrally linked to the culture of an organisation (Shore, Cleveland & Sanchez, 2018), and diversity policies may not always produce inclusive cultures (Kirton and Greene, 2019).

The aim of this paper is to move away from the focus upon the drivers of diversity to consider the drivers of inclusion in the workplace. Through an in-depth multimethod case study of a high street retailer, we identify what leads to employees feeling included at work. In doing so, we respond to calls from Nishii (2013) and Mor Barak et al., (2016) to advance studies which examine inclusive organisational climates by exploring the drivers of, and barriers to, inclusion. Recognising that equality, diversity and inclusion are all closely related (Köllen, Kakkuri-Knuuttila and Bendel, 2018), we contend that an understanding of the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion strategies needs to be fundamentally informed by a consideration of inclusion which can only occur through an engagement with employee's understandings of organisational culture and their place or otherwise within it. Without this employee engagement, many well-intentioned diversity initiatives may go awry (Nishii, 2013). Our research focuses on employees at all different levels of the organisation from customer service workers to board level. We argue that a comprehensive understanding of inclusion needs to embrace the views of the majority as well as those groups who traditionally suffer from exclusion.

The paper is structured in the following way. First we explore the literature on diversity and inclusion before introducing the case study and our methodological approach. We then present the findings of our study to highlight what from a variety of organisational stakeholders works in relation to inclusion, and what doesn't. It is important to note that

employees play a key role in our data. We conclude by discussing the implications of our analysis for both researchers and practitioners within the diversity field and arguing that embracing the views of the majority as well as the minority enables a more holistic understanding of inclusive practices. We now turn to the literature to set the scene for our research.

Managing diversity and inclusion in the workplace

It is now over 25 years since management researchers and consultants started using the term 'managing diversity' as a way of addressing equality of opportunity in the workplace (Authors, 2020). Informed by a business case built on the idea that all differences between groups and individuals within the workforce should be celebrated and managed (Thomas and Ely, 1996); the management of diversity and inclusion has increasingly gained currency within organisations. Moreover, since those origins, there has been considerable empirical research about diversity management, together with a series of comprehensive reviews critiquing the field (Ashkanasy, Härtel, & Daus, 2002; Özbilgin, Beauregard, Tatli, & Bell, 2011; Roberson, 2006; Rodríguez-García, 2010; Roberson, 2017; Sparkman, 2019). The business case for diverse workforces remains a focal point of debate among academics and practitioners as the populations of Western nations like the United Kingdom (UK) become increasingly diverse (Oswick and Noon, 2014; Nkomo & Hoobler, 2014). A business case sees equality as essential to the achievement of organisational goals but also as an important contributory factor to the management of talent in organisations. A wide range of interventions can be considered as part of managing diversity initiatives (Roberson, 2017; Sparkman, 2019). These may include facilitating networks for traditionally excluded staff, such as LGBT workers, and career development opportunities aimed at those groups traditionally under-represented at the top, for example, women or minority ethnic staff.

The business case for managing diversity is critiqued within the academic literature from a variety of perspectives, including a lack of evidence of its effectiveness (Tatli, 2011; Authors, 2000); as a transient shift in popularity from equality (Oswick and Noon, 2014); and in excluding certain groups (Woodhams and Danieli, 2000; Mor Barak, 2005). Notwithstanding the rapid technological and structural changes taking place in the increasingly competitive retail sector – the focus of this study - the gender composition of senior management has changed very little over the past 25 years, with women remaining under-represented at senior levels (Broadbridge, 2010). Past research in retail has found that the lack of diversity management is due to confusion about how best to transform diversity concepts into business practice that surpass legal compliance criteria, in addition to finding the balance between acknowledging individual differences and providing equal treatment across the workforce (Foster and Harris, 2005). This highlights the shortcomings of both the 'discrimination-and-fairness' paradigm based on equal treatment of all, and the 'access-and-legitimacy' paradigm based on the business case: either employees feel pressurised to ensure that any significant differences between them do not matter; or, cultural differences are emphasised and employees may feel exploited when engaging with specific target consumer markets (Thomas and Ely, 1996). Hence, the shift to diversity management is only fractional and unaccompanied by substantial change in business practice (Tatli, 2011).

There is also some concern within the literature and amongst practitioners that the business case for managing diversity may be implemented for reasons of management fashion rather than anything else (Oswick and Noon, 2014; Kirton and Greene, 2019). This can lead to potential resistance from employees. Authors (2020) highlight that resistance is a topic rarely addressed in the literature as managing diversity is promoted as being in the interest of all groups regardless of their differences. However, Tang et al. (2015) suggest that the recent change in discourse from one of diversity to one of inclusion is recognition of the

potential hostility that may emerge from those who do not see themselves as benefitting from diversity initiatives. Indeed Kirton and Greene (2019) in their study of diversity and inclusion consultants, highlight how many of the diversity and inclusion consultants they interviewed believed that a focus upon inclusion enabled a more positive way of working with their clients, rather than engaging with some of the potentially problematic moral issues surrounding the business case. Furthermore, organisational policies and practices that create inclusive environments can themselves increase employee perceptions of inclusion and so, counteract any potential hostility (Chung et al. 2020). Similarly, Murphy (2018) concludes that both majority and minority employees can feel marginalized by diversity and inclusion programmes; the failure of such programmes being due to misunderstanding and treating diversity and inclusion as one, instead of two separate and distinct concepts.

The role of inclusion

The link between diversity and inclusion is usually noted within both the literature and practice though there is less exploration of how the two work together (Nishii, 2013; Mor Barak et al., 2016). There is debate as to whether the concepts of diversity and inclusion are interchangeable (Shore, Cleveland & Sanchez, 2018) and so, there is no universal definition of inclusion (Chung et al. 2020). Oswick and Noon (2014: 26) suggest that commentators tend to agree that "While diversity is concerned with recognizing the differences within the workforce and managing them for commercial advantage, inclusion is concerned with the processes that incorporate differences into business practices and therefore help to realize the value". As such, in inclusive organisational cultures, staff feel both feelings of belongingness; yet retain their uniqueness as individuals (Shore et al., 2011). Inclusion may be seen as a more useful approach to facilitate change, as it goes beyond visible and non-visible diversity characteristics. This leads to Bendick and Egan (2000) suggesting that a lack of diversity in a

workforce itself may not be the problem, rather it is a symptom of a more important underlying concern around the extent to which an organisational culture is inclusive or otherwise. Bendick, Egan and Lanier (2010) progress this view by highlighting how some diversity practices that address demographic characteristics may not have the expected consequences. For example, they suggest that businesses should not always seek to match the ethnic demographics of customers in their workforce. They argue that this essentialises all members of a minority group and that simply hiring more of a particular group does not necessarily make organisational cultures more inclusive, rather the culture needs to change. Mor Barak et al., (2016) also suggest that recruiting diverse individuals is not enough and that attention to inclusion should focus on all levels of the organisation. Empirical testing by Chung et al., (2020) of work group inclusion models by Mor Barak (2005) and Shore et al. (2011) supports this notion, as the authors conclude that cultures which incorporate both belongingness (members feeling valued and respected) and uniqueness (viewing diversity as a resource) are more likely to have positive organisational outcomes, though Shore et al. (2011) also highlight that this is an ongoing tension in the diversity literature.

This emphasis upon the dynamics of culture is supported by Hamrin's (2019) research with immigrants working in care homes in Sweden. Once language barriers were overcome, the quality of the relationships that they developed in the workplace led to feelings of inclusion, rather than any specific policies. Moreover, the workers suggest that line managers should give time to encourage development of such relationships and the authors highlight the importance of accessing the employee viewpoint on inclusion. Indeed, leaders are important in fostering a spirit of inclusion in the workplace (Nishii & Mayer, 2009; Gotsis and Grimani, 2017). Inclusive leaders increase employee perceptions of inclusion by encouraging both belongingness and uniqueness in their staff work groups (Shore et al. 2011) and also act as role models in replicating these desired behaviours (Randel et al., 2018).

When leaders ensure that their employees feel respected (Shore et al. 2011) and able to fully contribute their opinions on workplace matters (Roberson, 2006), staff in these work groups feel included and engaged in their work, and, ultimately workplace performance increases (Randel et al., 2018). In a similar vein, there is a need to understand both different organisational factors (Kulkarni, Boehm and Basu, 2016) and HR employment practices (Meacham et al., 2017) when considering the inclusion of people with disabilities in multinational firms across different national locations. Indeed Mor Borak (2018) suggests it is effective multiculturalism policies at the national level and diversity management activities at a local level that can lead to cultures of inclusion.

A focus upon inclusion also potentially addresses some of the concerns expressed by writers that local context has a particular impact upon how diversity discourses are both interpreted and implemented (e.g. Mor Barak et al., 2016; Shore, Cleveland & Sanchez, 2018). For instance, Heres and Benschop (2010) highlight how alternative translations of US conceptions of diversity into the Dutch context may lead to local discourses remaining intact rather than changing accordingly. In their study of diversity management statements on company websites they found that statements were differentiated between the firm's Dutch and international websites suggesting that although diversity management discourses may have been adopted across Europe and the Netherlands, they have not necessarily replaced the meritocratic and equality based focus of local discourses. This translation problem has been highlighted elsewhere, for example, Jaiswal and Dyaram (2019) highlight the importance of contextual factors in understanding diversity in India. Roberson's (2019) review concluded that much of the research in the diversity literature has been conducted within a single nation context which limits its generalizability. However, it may be that inclusion is a more agile concept to integrate into a variety of local contexts as it is more universal as a concept yet agile enough to fit into local conditions.

One challenge to an enhanced focus upon inclusion is the lack of research or evidence around what works and the actual outcomes of inclusion. Sparkman (2019) concludes that inclusion is an area where there is room for theoretical development and Green, Bond, Miller and Gifford (2018) suggest, "There is very little robust research that explores the outcomes for organisations of having an inclusive culture". This is in spite of a growing recognition of the importance of inclusion. As the authors continue; "Inclusion should not be ignored – organisations must think not only of minority group representation in their workplace, but understand their own inclusion climate" (Green et al, 2018: 11). One exception is the study by Webster, Adams and Maranto (2018) who examined the impact that a variety of workplace supports had on work attitudes, psychological strain, disclosure and perceived discrimination as experienced by LGBT employees. They found that having positive LGBT policies and practices had the least impact upon the outcome measures, whereas supportive LGBT climates were most related to disclosure and discrimination followed by work attitudes and strain. This research highlights that the development of an inclusive climate requires far more than policies and procedures.

Finally, in terms of inclusion, there is the recognition that the importance of exploring and understanding new categories of difference has led to some arguing that there is a need to move away from a minority-specific approach. Fujimoto, Rentschler, Le, Edwards and Härtel (2014: 518) argue that "work oriented inclusion processes have largely involved human resource management interventions which have not being particularly effective in developing inclusive organizations". To encourage change, they suggest that a more community perspective to diversity and inclusion is required, where there is a broader vision and scope of inclusion both inside and outside of organisations. For managers, this means moving away from a minority-specific approach to focus upon non-minority common interest activities.

The aim of the research reported here is to consider the drivers of, and barriers to, inclusion in the workplace from the perspective of a wide range of employees. In order to access these we draw upon empirical data from a case study of a large high street retailer which has an expressed commitment to both managing diversity and seeking to develop an inclusive culture. While traditionally conceived as a highly-feminised sector, due to both its staff and customers (Pettinger, 2005; Broadbridge, 2010), creating an inclusive culture, which also attracts and mirrors the customer target market may have a significantly valuable impact upon the retailer's image as an environment in which to both shop and work (Foster and Resnick, 2013). We draw on data from both senior stakeholders and a diverse set of employees at all levels of the company to consider the key factors that lead to employees feeling included in the workplace. As such, we make a distinctive contribution to the literature by seeking the views of the majority as well as the minority, on what encourages people to feel included. We now turn to the methodology underpinning the research.

Research methodology

The case study company

The research reported here focuses on a major British retail company, and draws from research findings from an ongoing broader research project that seeks to explore diversity and inclusion within the UK retail sector. The total value of UK retail sales in 2019 was £394 billion (Retail Economics) and the sector is fairly evenly distributed across the regions of the UK, ranging from 10.5% of employment in the South West to just over 8% in London. However, retail has changed considerably in recent years with growth in internet retailing, store closures and changing consumer preferences (e.g. large malls as opposed to high street, small format grocery stores). For example, internet sales has increased from 5% of retail sales in 2008 to 19% in 2019. The sector is facing intense economic challenges, as

retailers struggle to respond proactively to changing technologies and customer behaviours and expectations. These trends have had a damaging impact upon high street retailers in recent years. A number of prominent retailers have closed stores, gone bust or have been the subject of takeovers. For example in the UK, 2019 saw the end of big chains such as Toys R Us and Maplin whilst shops such as Homebase, Mothercare, Carpetright and New Look engaged in restructuring deals leading to the closure of 100s of shops (BBC, 2019). The covid pandemic has also recently exacerbated this situation. The case study company is a major British high street retailer that is considered to be a household name in the UK.

Data collection

The research design for the wider study uses multiple methodologies during a three-year longitudinal study. For this paper, we focus on three datasets. The first is a series of 15 senior leader interviews, the second 74 interviews with a cross section of employees, and the third, a shadowing study.

Senior leader interviews

The details of the interviewees can be found in Table 1, though in some cases we have removed job title to ensure anonymity.

Insert Table One about here

The sample of 15 Senior Leaders composed eight company Directors including the Chair of the Board of Directors and the Chief Executive Officer, plus the Company Secretary and elected Chair of the Employee Representative Group. In addition there were five Heads of Departments who were members of the senior leadership team. Of the total sample seven were female and eight were male. Four were members of the Board of Directors and eight were members of the main Executive Committee of the company. We used purposive

sampling in consultation with the HR team at the company to obtain the sample. The senior leader interview schedule covered questions such as the strategy and culture of the organisation; approaches to diversity; and career progression within the company.

Employee interviews

The second dataset were interviews conducted with 74 employees at different job grades, office and store locations across the UK. We sampled a 'diagonal slice' throughout the company including head office and store staff, professional, commercial and financial roles, leaders of diversity groups, individuals representing different protected characteristics under UK equality legislation and with a broad range of time served within the company. The participants were selected in collaboration with the company's HR department and Inclusion Team. The objective was to have representation from the Head Office and retail divisions of the business. The authors created a template which specified the posts to be selected. This provided a framework for the research project administrator to work with an HR administrator at the company and select appropriate people for interview. The template consisted of a number of business units and specified the job roles with each business unit where an interviewee should be sourced. The business units were 4 retail regions – two in the north and two in the south of England; the corresponding Regional management teams, 3 business units within the Head Office, the Diversity Networks and the Employer Representatives Group. The interviews to fill the template were drawn from the company's HR database and conversations held with the regional or business unit head to arrange access to interview the specified employees. The resulting sample closely reflects the intended targeting and the composition by location, gender, ethnicity, age and job role is shown in Table 2.

Insert Table 2 about here

Interviews lasted between 60-90 minutes and were conducted mainly at the participant's places of work. Participants were provided with a brief overview of the study and were assured of both confidentiality and anonymity.

Shadowing study

The third set of data comes from a three week shadowing exercise where three members of the research team shadowed a senior member of the company in one of three UK regions. We are confident that this dataset enabled us to have access to a wide range of different views on inclusion and importantly both minority and majority perspectives. Shadowing is a research method in which a researcher closely follows an organisational member over a period of time. This involves the researcher 'shadowing' the individual, during the various organisational processes that are part of their everyday work. This can include meetings or individual chats with other members of staff. It allows the researcher and the research team to understand more about the culture and how things actually work at the company. In addition to observation, the researcher asks questions (at convenient intervals) throughout the shadowing period to get any further clarification from the individual being shadowed.

The Shadowing study was undertaken by the three Post-doctoral Research Fellows who were members of the research team. They each shadowed a Regional Team within the company for one week. The primary consideration for selection of the regions was to provide some geographical variation in the sampling. The Fellows each shadowed their respective Head of the Region and the associated HR Partner throughout their working week, either together in team meetings or individually as they carried out their regular duties across the region. The time split between each Head of Region and Head of HR was decided in consultation with the company. Throughout the shadowing exercise, extensive notes were

taken by the Fellows and, where appropriate, audio recordings of the conversations and short interviews were made with the permission of the member of staff being shadowed. For each region there was an initial kick-off interview on the Monday morning with the Head of Region (approximately 30 minutes) and a 15 minute interview at the end of each day with the member of staff being shadowed in order to get further insights or clarify any issues that may have emerged during the day.

Data analysis

All interviews were recorded and transcribed by a professional transcribing service. Template analysis (King, 2012; King and Brookes, 2016) was used to categorise the data into a variety of different themes in line with the research questions. Given the vast amount of qualitative data to be managed, NVIVO (a software data management tool) was used to help the categorisation process. King and Brookes (2016: 6) highlight how "Template analysis does not have a single fixed position in the induction-deduction balance; this will vary according to the kind of methodological approach within which it is being used". The data analysis in this case began as a collective process in that through ongoing discussion the research team generated a number of key themes. Detailed notes from the researcher's shadowing notebooks were also fed into the analytic process.

Each of the data excerpts was entered into the analytic template to enable a holistic view of the different themes and sub-themes in the data. There were there two particular higher order themes where the data that underpins the analysis for this paper was categorised. These were entitled 'drivers of inclusion' and 'barriers to inclusion'. Each of these had sub-themes into which the different data from the interview transcripts and the shadowing notes was coded. An overview of the template themes and sub-themes together with examples of data excerpts can be found in table 3.

Insert table 3 about here

As the coding process developed, the template evolved in an inductive way to capture the different nuances of the data. The first author coded this data into the relevant sections of the template, however the coding and findings were regularly discussed with the other members of the project team. We met regularly to discuss how the process was going and to cross-check our different coding of the excerpts. Given the iterative process between the researcher who had designed the initial template and the regular reflexive discussions with the research team, we were confident that we had met the conditions for an internally reflexive audit trail (Johnson et al, 2006).

At the conclusion of the analysis all the pertinent data had been coded into the template leaving the data structured in such a way to highlight clearly the drivers and barriers to inclusion. These form the basis of the findings section that follows.

Findings

Our report of the findings is divided into two sections. In the first we report on what are seen to be the drivers of inclusion, and in the second we discuss the barriers to inclusion. In each section illustrative excerpts from the data transcripts are used to highlight the key points from the analysis.

Drivers of inclusion

In assessing what made people feel included, we identified five drivers to inclusion: visible commitment from the top to an inclusive culture; a responsiveness to individual concerns; going beyond protected characteristics; interventions by the company designed to include those traditionally excluded; and the support of diverse networks. We now address each of these in turn.

Visible commitment from the top to an inclusive culture

All the senior staff interviewed believed that the company was committed to diversity and inclusion, particularly at senior levels. For example:

> "I feel really confident actually that all our senior leadership team are very supportive ….There's a Board message that's very strong around we want a diverse workforce and culture. We want people to feel that they are valued and supported in the workplace". [Senior Leader 03]

The commitment of the senior team was seen to be an important driver of inclusion because it sent an important message throughout the company about the priority of the inclusion agenda. This was also evident in the shadowing data where researchers could see the practical consequences of these commitments, for example a commitment to employing disadvantaged members of the local community in one of the regional locations. Therefore across all the data from other sources, there was evidence that staff thought those senior in the organisation were committed to an inclusive company, though there were concerns about some aspects of the culture that were preventing this from happening, a point we return to later. However, the messaging from above was seen as a crucial driver of perceptions of inclusion.

Responsiveness to individual concerns

One of the ways in which employees felt included was when the company and colleagues more generally were sympathetic to employees who might have individual situations of difficulty. There were many examples of collegiality amongst employees and the interview participants recognised that the company was very supportive of its employees and is a considerate and a caring employer. This was evidenced by many stories of employees being treated very well and especially when major problems had arisen. For example:

'My wife was seriously ill, … she had a stroke … and then she tore her artery and we were in hospital, and when I came back the business was very supportive, the management team were and they allowed me to go part time with no loss of salary, and I

actually worked I think until 2 pm, until lunchtime. I came in early but I worked until 2 and then I was able to go home for about four to five months to look after my wife whilst she was recovering.' [Employee 35]

Other examples were where staff had had time off sick or had other family difficulties. The fact that individual circumstances were taken into account made staff feel cared for, and also meant that those who were not necessarily from diverse groups felt included. It also highlights the significance of relationships to inclusion in that it was often the line manager who would take the decision to support a member of staff who was struggling. The shadowing data also highlighted that these circumstances may be varied depending on the economic circumstances of the region where a store was located.

Not just focusing on non-protected characteristics

Diversity initiatives tend to focus upon the characteristics of individual groups traditionally excluded in the workplace. The UK Equality Act of 2010 notes ten protected characteristics: age; disability; marriage or civil partnership; sex; sexuality; gender re-assignment; pregnancy and maternity; race, religion or belief; and age. It was apparent from the shadowing data that there are a number on non-protected diversity characteristics that were recognised by the company's staff as having just as an important impact as those that are currently protected by law. These tended to link into the challenges that a particular region faced, for example in relation to mental health, class or poverty. In these cases, regions or local stores would make local inclusion interventions. This ability to create inclusive policies and interventions to deal with local and regional challenges led to employees feeling very positive about the company.

This positivity about the company could be seen in the metaphors that staff used regarding what it was like to work for the company. Two examples are offered below from two different interviewees:

"It's my second family. Yeah, it is, my second family, my true friends. Yeah, yeah, definitely, not just colleagues, they're my friends". [Employee 17]

"I just think it's like my second family. It's just, as I say, the camaraderie here. So working for the company, for me, is like coming to my second home, the warmth and the camaraderie with my colleagues, I'm very contented and very happy to work here". [Employee 49]

In one particular region it was interesting that being positive and inclusive about diversity was seen as related to being part of the company. As the researcher who shadowed in this region suggested:

> "*They were all very emotional about the company. They were so committed and also just really believed that the company wanted to do their best for them and felt personally responsible for their communities as well, and that's maybe why diversity and inclusion made so much sense to them, is that they really viewed themselves as participants in the community as large employers. They were really inspired by a lot of the charity initiatives and were all really bought into the idea that as a retail store, they could make a very positive difference in the community in terms of employment, in terms of mental health, and in terms of ethnic diversity as well".* (Shadowing notebook)

Hence this was not just a result of leadership recognising the significance of inclusion, but also of using it as a way of defining what was distinctive about working for the organisation, and the culture of the company.

Interventions to include those traditionally excluded

In including the majority in our research, we are not denying that traditionally excluded groups are important. Indeed, a key part of creating an inclusive culture was seen to involve paying attention to those groups traditionally excluded and our next two drivers of inclusion fit in to this category. Our data from the different sources showed that the company had become increasingly involved in some important inclusion initiatives such as LGBT Pride. There were also a number of longstanding inclusion initiatives that staff felt proud of which were related to the employment of people with disabilities and those from traditionally disadvantaged backgrounds. Other examples include changing the uniform policy so that the uniform worn by the customer services workers was less gender binary; the introduction of a diversity calendar used in all stores which captured key annual inclusion events such as Black

History month and religious festivals such as Diwali which is used in all stores. Additionally attention had been paid to try and make the brand more inclusive which was also having commercial benefits. Examples included a move to stocking a diverse range of products to promote religious celebrations such as Eid. These interventions led to staff believing that the company were keen to support the inclusion of a more diverse range of customers as well as staff.

Support of diverse networks

One of the ways in which the company sought to be more inclusive around traditionally disadvantaged groups was through the creation of networks explicitly to support these groups. The longstanding women's network for example was seen as way of supporting women colleagues to progress. These networks had been successful and were helping the company in supporting the needs of diverse groups. However, there were some concerns about the extent to which they contributed to an inclusive culture. Colleagues who belonged to the network groups viewed this work as hugely important for advancing inclusion in the company, however doubt was expressed about how other peers viewed membership of a group both in terms of why the networks were thought to be necessary, what purpose they served and the time factor/effort involved. For example:

> *'I can see there are lots of things they're trying to do. So you know, the different networks they've set up and that kind of thing, so I kind of think they're being really proactive to try and do those things. A lot of it's centre [London] based, it's the nature of our organisation, so is there more we could be doing in the field?. I don't know, maybe there is. But we haven't got resource.'* [Employee 12]

It is interesting that an initiative originally designed to enhance inclusion may also unintentionally lead to some feeling excluded.

Barriers to inclusion

We now turn to the barriers to inclusion that were identified in the research. These included a perceived lack of accountability for maintaining and developing an inclusive culture; the difficulties of accessing some particular groups; culture and fitting in; lack of inclusive role models; and competing organisational priorities and high pressure work.

Lack of accountability

We noted earlier that the company was perceived to be committed to an inclusive culture. However, there is still some way to go in embedding diversity policies and practices into the everyday culture of the organisation. Even more important perhaps is the fact that there is no accountability for managers in relation to the extent to which they are seen to implement the strategy successfully. So inclusion is not a part of management objectives at an individual level, something that would encourage future buy-in. An example would be KPIs for store and regional managers which would demonstrate to all staff that inclusion was taken seriously within the company. For example:

> *"It is such a big organisation and it's how do you get the right people to buy in to the change that you want to do and to take accountability for it. I think that is the challenge, it's such a big unwieldy organisation, change takes such a long time to land. And there's always so many priorities, how do you make this stuff seem important to the people that can really make a difference when actually they're just interested in profit for the shareholders, ultimately. So it's how we build the business case for diversity and inclusion to make it compelling."* [Employee 54]

The shadowing data also highlighted the differential commitment of managers across the different regions.

Difficulties in accessing particular groups

Although a key focus of our paper is on majority views of inclusion, some groups and individuals will always feel more comfortable in an organisation's culture than others. In

seeking to address this, and to avoid exclusion, our interviewees recognised that some groups were easier to include than others. For example, this interviewee when talking about LGBT colleagues said:

> *'It's more mainstream, and also it's quite trendy. It's quite trendy to say that I'm not gay but I'm going to Pride, it's quite trendy to say I'm not gay but I'm wearing a Rainbow top, or I'm so not homophobic; look at me. It's very trendy."* Employee 1]

However, it was clear that for other groups there were greater challenges. There was recognition that more discussions about disability were required within the business to better understand the day-to-day experiences of colleagues working with a disability. The quote below reflects the desire by a disabled employee to be included and have the same opportunities as able-bodied colleagues:

> *'I think sometimes people worry about whether I can cope with things and I think the knowledge that I have this disability, I think that people have chosen not to include me in things because of that, just because they're worried that they're putting too much on me or giving me stress, rather than allowing... I suppose what I would like is to actually be allowed those opportunities and if I do find it too much that is for me to raise. Yeah, I think there has been occasions where I have felt a bit stifled by that, whereas I would have preferred to be given the opportunity, the same as anybody else. And I've seen it with managers, I've had some managers who were very cautious and treated you like a china doll and I've had managers at the other end of the spectrum where you've needed them to step up and help and they haven't quite done that.'* [Employee 21]

What is clear from this quote is some of the challenges an individual faces, but also that managers may not always know what to do. Some staff highlighted how it was sometimes difficult to facilitate an inclusive culture for particular groups. For example:

> *"Every shop will have somebody who has either got a disability or a mental health issue, and there might be more than one... the challenge that shop floor working has for a lot of people is it's quite a physical job, putting stock out, standing on the till, it's stressful at times when it's busy and therefore we have had cases where people with mental health issues really struggled, because it's too busy, too much pressure and then we end up then trying to find them a role that takes them away from those pressures of busy customers. You can imagine, lunchtime, people on their lunch break trying to get in and get out, it's busy, and depending on what your illness around mental health might be, that might be too much, so we*

ended up having to ...what can they do? Where can we put them that doesn't make them more poorly?" [Employee 63]

This quote illustrates how seeking to create inclusive cultures can be challenging in relation to particular groups. However, there may also be other groups that unexpectedly feel excluded. The strong nature of the culture of this company meant that newcomers could feel different:

> *"I think one of the big things for us is that I sort of feel that it's better to fit in than stand out in the company, and I don't think we're brilliant at always bringing in new people… I think we kind of intellectually get that we should be doing that, I don't think we're always able to do it. "Oh, they're not very ****." And I think we need to think about that quite hard".* [Senior Leader 04]

Many of our research participants recognised that the organisational culture could be difficult for someone coming into employment to the company from the outside. New employees taking up posts within the company, and bringing with them a wealth of external experience and knowledge can feel like outsiders. Interview participants reported how externally recruited staff found various aspects of the culture challenging. An example is that decision-making processes were seen as very slow. In addition, when newcomers put forward ideas there was too frequently the response, 'Oh we tried that before' or 'That's not how we do it here'. This highlights how there are a range of people who might have a reason to feel included or excluded, not just those who are protected under the law.

Culture and fitting in

The strong culture of the company meant that there was considerable emphasis on fit, in that those that fitted in with the culture were seen to be most likely to both thrive and progress. However, various practices could lead to others feeling excluded. Socialising after work was mentioned as problematic by a number of interviewees and for those who did not engage in such activities, this could lead to feelings of being left out. The issue was

particularly problematic if the social 'organiser' was in a leadership role. Examples given included the difficulties encountered by non-drinkers when most of the social activity revolves around drinking, and also not taking account of vegetarian diets.

> *'I find it hard to socialise after work, because if they say 'work drinks', I don't drink, so it's difficult to go out for work drinks if you don't drink. If I do go out, I'm only going to be there for 30 minutes or an hour at most, because again, I don't drink so there's no point in me being out there. There are little things like that, but they are aware of that. They do make fun of it because they think that I don't like to socialise. It's said as a joke, which is fine...'* [Employee 20]

Another example is the dress code for those above the grade where a uniform is required. The hierarchical feel to the organisation was reinforced by a formal dress code which seemed to apply more to men, e.g. the necessity (for men) to wear a suit and white shirt and tie:

> '*It still is quite ... old school ... a lot of ties, shirts, that sort of culture ... for example, everyone on our floor wears suits, pretty much. And then the women wear kind of smart equivalent'* [Employee 36]

> *'But I was specifically told that, "by the way, you need to wear a white shirt or a blue shirt but you can't wear a check shirt, it's got to be white".* [Employee 22]

Discussions about fitting in and how to fit in were found in all of the different data sources. For example from one of the staff interviews:

> *'Some areas of the business I view as being a closed shop. Yeah, so if your face doesn't fit, I think you're just not coming in, sort of thing, and I guess with a lot of organisations it's about the relationships you have, and a lot of those relationships are forged through what people have in common, the same background, same sort of schooling, dress the same, like the same sort of things, etc.'* [Employee 58]

There was a considerable amount of recognition that the organisational culture within the company was changing and this was welcomed, however some thought that cultural change was happening too slowly.

Lack of inclusive role models

A lack of diversity in senior management appeared to be a key issue leading to feelings of exclusion. It is important that this was noted not just by minority ethnic staff but by many of our research contributors. The almost non-existent minority ethnic representation at senior levels was very noticeable, e.g. at regional meetings and conferences. At regional level, the lack of female representation was also very apparent. Participants therefore advocated for greater minority ethnic representation at senior levels, both at Head Office and in the stores. They wanted to see role models they felt they could identify with and aspire to be. The lack of role models at senior levels and, in particular, minority ethnic role models was a recurring theme:

"Probably if you look at the race side of it, it probably is still quite white dominated in terms of the management structure, white British male or female, and there's the odd person who comes from an ethnic background dotted around. But I don't know why that is." [Employee 45]

"Definitely, there is no role model. I think, for me, a role model is someone who looks like me; there isn't a role model for me, that looks like me. ... No, there isn't. There was, but that person has gone now. I mentioned that to my old line manager actually, and they said they'd look for one [a mentor]*, they didn't do that, so I'm stuck where I'm at. ... In terms of diversity, I think there are more mentorship opportunities for, let's say, women, than there would be for someone of my skin colour, or just from a minority stand point, to be honest."* [Employee 20]

Participants acknowledged that the retail sector had been attempting to increase workforce, yet hiring minority ethnic workers into senior positions was still rare. It is important to note that the lack of role models was noted by many of our research participants, not just those from minority ethnic backgrounds. Although those who were minority ethnic staff could speak about the impact on them personally, other colleagues still saw this as a key issue.

Competing organisational priorities and high pressure work

A final barrier to inclusion was seen to be the highly pressurised nature of the work. This can be seen to work as a barrier in different ways. The first is a consequence of the perception and reality of a long hours' culture at senior levels. In all three of the regions where the shadowing took place, it was evident that the work was extremely high pressured. Our researchers noted in their shadowing notebooks that staff rarely took breaks or had time to eat on the job. As one of the researchers said: "They don't eat, they don't stop; they never got to have breaks". There was also evidence that staff were working very long hours. One of the researchers for example was shadowing someone who regularly did 12/13 hour days not including travel time. It is interesting that this behaviour was seen as relatively normal and not questioned by the senior staff in situ. The assumption was that that was the time required to get the job done. However, the difficulty with this was that junior staff who might aspire to senior positions would rule them out because they didn't want to commit to this kind of working life. Those with families could particularly feel excluded.

A second example is that as noted earlier, the challenges currently facing the retail sector meant that staff, in the face of many organisational priorities including diversity and inclusion, had to focus on the economic success of the company which was measured by sales. Hence this meant that inclusion and diversity, although recognized as important, were never at the top of the priority list.

Discussion and conclusions

The distinctive contribution of our empirical work is in surfacing how individuals and groups experience the drivers and barriers to inclusion in organisations. Hence we respond to the calls of those who have reviewed and devised models of the area (e.g. Mor Barak et al., 2016; Roberson, 2019; Sparkman, 2019) for the need for qualitative insights into the experience of inclusion. Whereas diversity is essentially about difference (Oswick and Noon,

2014), our findings support the model of Shore et al. (2011), that inclusive cultures are those that manage the tension between belongingness and uniqueness. This helps to explain our findings that people can feel included and excluded at the same time by different organisational processes and practices, or feel included by some and not others. This takes us beyond the potentially static nature of the models in the literature to highlight that individual and group sensemaking around inclusion (Roberson, 2019) can shift over time. It also explains why some interventions, such as working with networking groups for example, can have both positive and negative impacts on perceptions of inclusion.

Our analysis responds to calls by Fujimoto et al. (2014) and others to move away from inclusion research that focuses on a minority based approach to examine the perceptions of the majority to offer a more holistic view of inclusion and what works. In focusing upon this rather than diversity, our analysis has highlighted a number of interesting issues. First, our findings suggest that the majority are also cognisant of and impacted by exclusionary practices. For example, the lack of women and minority ethnic colleagues in senior positions does not just impact on whether women and minority ethnic colleagues feel included. Rather, it is noted by a range of different staff across the organisation who make conclusions about the extent to which the culture is inclusionary or exclusionary accordingly. So exclusionary practices do not just affect minority groups, but impact upon all the members of an organisation. Having said that, we recognise that their impact upon minority groups will be considerably more severe. Second, this analysis also enables us to lend attention to those differences that may be above and beyond those that are protected by legislation such as education, class and poverty. Again, we would argue that this should not be at the expense of paying attention to those groups that have traditionally been excluded. However, this approach enables us to explore a more diverse range of factors that impact upon both inclusion and exclusion, responding to the calls in the literature to broaden our conceptions of

diversity (e.g. Roberson, 2019). So inclusion is not an all or nothing state, rather it is something that shifts over time.

Hence in understanding inclusion theoretically, our contention is that we need to consider organisational experience holistically which requires the inclusion of the majority view. We therefore extend Shore et al.'s (2011) conceptual notion of belongingness and uniqueness by suggesting that in practice, this is achieved by the incorporation of the majority.

Previous research has also focused on the notion of inclusive leadership (Randel et al., 2018). Randel et al., (2018) suggest that further research should look at how leaders balance belongingness and uniqueness in groups and our findings here echo this by highlighting that the role of line managers is crucial to perceptions of inclusion within this retail context. However, our informants also thought that the visible commitment from the top of the organisation was important and that a lack of accountability was perceived to facilitate feelings of exclusion. Randel et al. (2018) note the significance of support at top management and across the organisation, but the focus on individual leader behaviours also needs to be seen in context and issues like accountability are important here. This implies that inclusive behaviours on their own are not enough and that policies and practices designed to further inclusion also need to be embedded in the organisation.

Our investigation also shows the importance of the commercial context within which a company operates. In a fast moving retail environment where there is considerable pressure, the inclusion challenges may be different from other organisational environments. Our data highlights some of the concerns our participants had, for example in relation to mental health and disability, which may be more distinctive in this than other environments where inclusion research has taken place (Hamrin, 2019). There is also another important dimension here that

impacts upon the experiences of retail workers, which is the customer. We found evidence that despite the best efforts of managers and colleagues, the behaviour of customers sometimes enhanced the perceptions of individuals feeling excluded. Hence, although we can highlight the organisational factors that led to our participants feeling either included or excluded, the customer adds an additional unknown dimension. This also suggests that models of inclusion that focus upon internal practice and policies (e.g. Shore et al., 2011, Mor Barak et al., 2015) need to be viewed in the framework of distinctive contextual factors. Within the retail sector for example, our empirical work demonstrates that one of these key factors is the role of the customer. Future research could also seek to identify the distinctive contextual factors at work in other sectors or industries.

There are a number of implications of our work for practitioners. Previous research has focused upon the role of organisational culture in inclusion and here we have highlighted how important culture is for influencing the extent to which members of an organisation feel included or excluded. Our research participants all talked about the culture of the organisation. However, culture is multi-faceted. It can enhance inclusion in some ways but also lead to exclusion in others, hence our comment above about inclusion being a shifting state. The implication of this is that HR practitioners, leaders, managers and others need to continuously nurture an inclusive culture. It is not something that is achieved, but rather it can be fragile and ongoing attention is needed. Green et al. (2018) highlight the lack of research to demonstrate what works around inclusion. Our analysis would suggest that in striving to achieve an inclusive culture, an organisation needs a multi-faceted approach that enables interventions aimed at both the majority and the minority. A company should strive to create an inclusive culture by paying attention to what can be seen as majority issues such as staff development and progression, whilst also taking account of the experience of minority groups. This would address the need for both belongingness and uniqueness as

highlighted elsewhere (Shore et al., 2011; Randel et al., 2018). For example, in our research we highlighted how perceptions of inclusion are influenced by an individual's relationship with their line manager and others in the organisation. Within the culture of our case study organisation, this had a significant impact on whether an individual felt included or excluded. Therefore, this could be the focus of inclusion interventions alongside those designed to facilitate inclusion of traditionally excluded groups, such as diversity networks and mentoring. Future research could also seek to explicitly identify the ways in which line mangers and leaders can incorporate both belongingness and uniqueness into their inclusion practices.

To summarise, the empirical contribution of our work is to provide a rich understanding of how employees experience both inclusion and exclusion in the retail context though a unique set of qualitative data. Our theoretical contribution here has been to support the notion that both belongingness and uniqueness are important for an inclusive culture, but also to extend the literature to highlight the importance of the interests of the majority and to demonstrate that perceptions of an inclusive culture can continuously shift and are not static. Practically we have explored some suggestions for practitioners in terms of paying attention to the needs of both diverse groups and the majority.

We would conclude that managing diversity strategies need to be fundamentally informed by a consideration of inclusion which can only occur through an engagement with employee's understandings of organisational culture and their place or otherwise within it. Moreover, we contend that a comprehensive understanding of inclusion needs to embrace the views of the majority as well as those groups who traditionally suffer from exclusion. Hence, in terms of what works in relation to inclusion, our answer is that inclusion is a multi-faceted process that can shift depending on a variety of organisational, cultural and contextual influences.

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Table 1: Details of the senior leader interviewees

	Position	Gender	Committee/Group
1	Director and Chair	M	Board
2	Director	M	Executive Committee
3	Head of	F	Senior Leadership Team
4	Head of	F	Senior Leadership Team
5	Director	M	Executive Committee
6	Chair of employee group	M	Senior Leadership Team
7	Head of	F	Senior Leadership Team
8	Director	M	Executive Committee
9	Head of	F	Executive Committee
10	Head of	F	Senior Leadership Team
11	Director	M	Executive Committee
12	Director and CFO	F	Board and Executive Committee
13	Company Secretary	F	Board
14	CEO and Director	M	Board and Executive Committee
15	Director	M	Executive Committee

Table 2: Details of the employee interviewees

No		Location	M/F	Age	Ethnicity	Job role
1	Store	Central London	F	25-34	Black British	People Policy Specialist
2	Store	Central London	F	35-44	British Asian	People Policy Specialist
3	Store	South	F	45-54	White British	Store Manager
4	Store	South	F	45-54	White British	Section Manager
5	Store	South	F	55-64	White British	Customer Assistant
6	Store	South	F	25-34	White British	Section Coordinator
7	Store	North West	M	25-34	White British	Store Manager
8	Store	North West	F	25-34	White British	Section Manager
9	Store	North West	F	19-24	White British	Section Manager
10	Store	North West	F	45-54	White British	Customer Assistant
11	Store	North West	F	19-24	Mixed	Customer Assistant
12	Region	North West	F	25-34	White British	Region HR Business Partner
13	Region	North West	M	35-44	White British	Head of Region
14	HQ	London	M	35-44	White British	Head of IT
15	Store	North West	F	35-44	White British	Store Manager
16	Store	North West	F	25-34	White British	Section Manager
17	Store	North West	F	45-54	White British	Section Coordinator
18	Store	North West	M	55-64	British Asian	Customer Assistant
19	Store	North West	F	45-54	White British	Hospitality Manager
20	HQ	London	M	25-34	Black British	Leadership & Talent Admin
21	HQ	London	F	25-34	White British	On-site Search Specialist
22	HQ	London	M	45-54	White British	Head of Division
23	Store	Central London	M	35-44	British Asian	Commercial Manager
24	Store	Central London	M	45-54	White British	Section Manager
25	Store	Central London	F	19-24	British Asian	Section Coordinator
26	Store	Central London	M	45-54	Black British	Section Manager
27	Store	South	F	25-34	White British	Commercial Manager
28	HQ	London	F	35-44	Black British	Head of Food Space
29	HQ	London	F	35-44	White British	Head of HR - Clothing
30	HQ	London	F	35-44	White British	Head of Merchandising
31	HQ	London	M	35-44	White British	Merchandiser
32	HQ	London	M	25-34	White British	Head of HR - Food
33	HQ	London	F	35-44	White British	Technical Manager
34	HQ	London	F	45-54	White British	Product Dev Manager - Food
35	HQ	London	M	45-54	White British	Forecast Inventory Planner
36	HQ	London	F	19-24	White British	Graduate Trainee
37	HQ	London	F	35-44	White British	Foods IT
38	HQ	London	F	35-44	White British	Planning Lead - Clothing
39	Store	Yorkshire	M	35-44	White British	Store Manager
40	Store	Yorkshire	M	45-54	White British	Section Manager
41	Store	Yorkshire	F	35-44	White British	Section Manager
42	Store	Yorkshire	F	45-54	White British	Customer Assistant

43	Store	Yorkshire	F	55-64	White British	Finance & Operations
44	Store	Yorkshire	F	25-34	White British	Section Manager
45	Store	Yorkshire	M	45-54	White British	Store Manager
46	HQ	North	F	35-44	White British	Head of Division
47	Region	South	F	35-44	White British	Head of Region
48	Store	Central London	M	19-24	White British	Customer Assistant
49	Store	South	F	45-54	White British	Recruitment
50	Store	South	F	25-34	White British	Commercial Manager
51	Store	South	F	55-64	White British	Customer Assistant
52	Store	South	F	35-44	White British	Section Manager
53	Store	South	M	25-34	White British	Store Manager
54	HQ	London	F	25-34	White British	Projects Manager - Retail
55	HQ	London	M	25-34	White British	Store Manager
56	HQ	London	M	35-44	White British	Head of IT - Retail
57	HQ	London	M	45-54	Black British	Forecast Inventory Manager
58	Store	Central London	M	35-44	Black British	Store Manager
59	Store	Central London	F	25-34	Black British	Customer Assistant
60	Store	Central London	F	19-24	White British	Visual Merchandiser
61	Store	Central London	F	25-34	Sudanese	Section Manager
62	Store	Central London	F	25-34	Polish	Operations Manager
63	Region	North West	F	35-44	White British	Head of Region
64	Region	North West	F	35-44	White British	Region HR business partner
65	HQ	Yorkshire	F	55-64	White British	Section Manager
66	HQ	Yorkshire	M	25-34	White British	Commercial Ops Manager
67	Region	North	M	35-44	White British	Head of Region
68	Store	Central London	F	35-44	White British	Store Manager
69	HQ	London	F	25-34	Mixed	Merchandising Admin Assist
70	Region	Central London	M	45-54	White British	Head of Region
71	Region	Central London	F	25-34	White British	Region HR business partner
72	HQ	London	M	25-34	British Asian	Senior Demand Forecaster
73	Region	South	F	45-54	White British	Head of HR - two regions
74	HQ	London	F	25-34	White British	Diversity Manager

Table 3: Analytic template coding structure

Theme	Sub-theme	Example data excerpt
Drivers of inclusion	Visible commitment from the top to an inclusive culture	"The CEO needs to be championing the agenda for it to be really effective … To get real success, it will be for our line managers at whatever level, to be driving it in their own business areas on a day to day basis. So that's a critical success factor, the line management understanding".
	Responsiveness to individual concerns	"I've got two small grandchildren, one who is in hospital this week and has been since Monday, he's not very well; he is only six months old. But, again, my boss has been absolutely amazing, you know, anything I need, if I need to go, it's not a problem. They're very supportive when it comes to family life."
	Going beyond protected characteristics	"If you find a way to help people, they're generally incredibly grateful and responsive to the encouragement they get from thinking that somebody cares enough to find a way to make it work. Quite often these things are temporary, so it's a question of accommodating people for a period of time and getting the upside when they've got through whatever it is they're dealing with. You can apply that as much to issues of mental health as you can to issues of domestic situations, just showing understanding".
	Interventions to include the traditionally excluded	"I think there's a hell of a lot more focus, by our business, of understanding mental health as an issue in terms of the wider society and recognising potentially some of the signs, how you're able to deal with it, how you can actually create an environment which actually helps the individual before anything starts to escalate. So I think in that sense we've absolutely made progress about it as an agenda point".
	Support for diverse networks	"I can see there are lots of things they're trying to do. So you know, the different networks they've set up and that kind of thing, so I kind of think they're being really proactive to try and do those things".

Barriers to inclusion	Lack of accountability in management	"I would say the majority of the time it can depend on what manager you get... Yeah, it depends on what manager you get, really and truly, because you get some managers that are very open, honest, okay, they stick to the policy but they're very fair and general and don't favourtise, whereas you do get some managers that pick favourites and if you're not one of their favourites then you don't get anything"
	Difficulties in accessing particular groups	'I know in the area of the LGBT they've done a lot of work in terms of talking a bit more openly about that as well. You don't really hear many people talking about disability and that openly, nor do I hear anyone talking openly about race either, so I suppose there is more work to be done on that".
	Culture and fitting in	"I suppose it goes back to culture, and if you fit the culture you can navigate your way around. You've got to be able to navigate your way, and I mentioned this before, you've got to be able to navigate your way around the business. If you can't then you will be met with immediate barriers, because obviously you need people to support and back you. If you haven't got great people skills then people aren't going to back you and thus will make it difficult for you to progress."
	Lack of inclusive role models	"I've only ever heard once recently somebody from HR just saying that we're doing all this work to look at diversity for women and help and support women in the workplace, but that the biggest elephant in the room is the fact there's no black or Asian or Chinese people that are in a senior position in the business, they're all white men".
	Competing organisational priorities and high pressure work	"So my work life balance at the moment is dreadful, in reality. …. I'm away a lot, I'm late home a lot, leaving early. I left at 7 this morning, I left at 6 the morning before and I left at 6 the morning before that. So it is dreadful. But it will get better, it will even out, I think. … I wouldn't necessarily have chosen to go full time but at the moment it feels like I'd be working full time and not getting paid for it if I didn't go full time, so you know."