Workplace Inclusion:
A Social Network Perspective

Taurean Butler
University of Pennsylvania
tbutler@falklab.org

Emily Falk
Annenberg School of Communication
Wharton School of Business
Department of Psychology
Annenberg Public Policy Center
University of Pennsylvania
emilybfalk@falklab.org

Adam M. Kleinbaum
Tuck School of Business
Dartmouth College
adam.m.kleinbaum@tuck.dartmouth.edu

September 25, 2025

Under Review
at
Research in Organizational Behavior

Abstract

Workplace inclusion is fundamental to fostering diversity and equity in organizations, yet it remains inconsistently defined and operationalized in the literature. This paper integrates research on the psychology of belonging with social network analysis to propose a framework that bridges organizational practices of inclusion, meso-level network dynamics, and individual experiences of belonging. We define inclusion as the organizational structures, policies, and practices that foster a sense of individual belonging; we conceptualize belonging as stemming from an individual's experience of value, reciprocity, and fit. And we argue that organizational practices of inclusion shape individuals' experiences of belonging in part by re-shaping the social networks that comprise their daily interactions. Drawing from social network research, we posit key structural indicators of individual-level belonging, including network centrality, bidirectional ties, and structural equivalence, which shape employees' experiences within organizations. Applying this framework, we then highlight how employees from marginalized groups are disproportionately excluded from informal networks, restricting their access to information, mentorship, and advancement opportunities, and changing the affordances of network positions. We argue that social network analysis provides a potential tool to diagnose and address these disparities, enabling organizations to measure and intervene in structural barriers to inclusion. By linking organizational-level practices of inclusion to the richly theorized individual-level experience of belonging, with networks serving as the bridge, we provide a roadmap for future research and practical interventions that promote retention, well-being, and engagement among diverse groups of employees and advance a more coherent and actionable approach to fostering inclusion in the workplace.

Introduction

In 2018, Monroe Gamble, a recent college graduate, joined the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco as a research assistant. His hiring was unremarkable, save for the fact that he was Black. In fact, he was the first African-American ever to hold a research assistant job at the San Francisco Fed. And despite several summers spent working on economics research projects with college professors, he immediately felt out of place there. He struggled to feel a sense of belonging and was soon looking to leave (The New York Times, 2021). Gamble's experience reflects a broader pattern of social exclusion in professional environments, particularly for marginalized workers, that was eloquently summarized by Malhotra (2022): "No one can see me here anyway, I kept thinking. ... It took a toll, … the daily acts of exclusion. Eventually, I quit."

Gamble was fortunate to forge a connection with Fed President Mary C. Daly, whose similar working-class background helped him feel connected. With her support, he flourished and eventually became her personal research assistant. That support network proved pivotal and he went on to the PhD program at MIT Sloan. Although Gamble's experience was undoubtedly multiply determined, it underscores the importance of social networks in fostering inclusion and belonging. Without systematic attention to these constructs, organizations risk losing talented team members and hindering employee morale (Blake-Beard et al., 2019b; Mor Barak, 2015; Shafaei & Nejati, 2024)

There is growing recognition among organizational scholars that "without a strategic plan to encourage supportive relationships or to shape a more inclusive culture, recruiting diverse talent will likely result in a revolving door of high turnover," (Blake-Beard et al., 2019, pg. 151). Further, although research exploring diversity and equity has surged in recent years, research on inclusion has remained the least developed of the diversity, equity, and inclusion trio. The literature offers some insight into why diversity and equity remain in short supply in many organizations (Elliott & Smith, 2004; Kraus et al., 2022) and what organizations can do to counter such problems (Bernstein et al., 2022; Guillaume et al., 2013). Structural changes can promote equity and fairness in organizational processes such as hiring and promotion (Amis et al., 2020; Rivera & Tilcsik, 2016), but HR practices alone are not sufficient to create inclusion (Amis et al., 2020; Goldin, 2014; Kabanoff, 1991).

Inclusion is now recognized as essential to achieving and maintaining diversity in organizations (Barak, 2022; Blake-Beard et al., 2019b; Mor Barak, 2015; Roberson, 2006). Even as many workplaces have become more diverse, research shows that many women, Black workers, and members of other underrepresented groups are excluded from decision-making, training, and social support, posing barriers to both their well-being and the retention of a diverse workforce (Avolio et al., 2020; Carton & Rosette, 2011; Hekman et al., 2017; Ibarra, 1993; McGuire, 2000; Pettigrew & Martin, 1987). And although inclusion has garnered significant scholarly interest, it lacks unified theoretical underpinnings: despite the burgeoning research describing the benefits of inclusion in the workplace, there is, to our surprise, no widely agreed-upon definition of inclusion. Inclusion remains inconsistently defined and operationalized (Mor Barak, 2015; Roberson, 2006) and, consequently, solutions have proven difficult to systematically advance. Some scholars have described inclusion at the individual level as a psychological experience (e.g., Mor Barak 2018, Shore et al. 2011); others define inclusion at the organizational level, as practices that remove inequities (Combs et al., 2019; Nishii, 2013); still others, as a process of ongoing negotiation between diverse perspectives and organizational power structures (Dobusch, 2021; Ferdman & Deane, 2013).

To begin to disentangle this theoretical muddle and identify potential opportunities for intervention, we define inclusion as *an organization-level construct comprising the structures, practices, and policies that foster an individual-level sense of belonging in employees*. In doing so, we build on the well-established literature on the psychology of belonging, which encompasses the need for individuals to feel that their contributions are valued, that their efforts are reciprocated, and that they fit within the organization (Mahar et al., 2013). We highlight ways that belonging is crucial to individual well-being, group cohesion, and organizational performance (Knapp et al., 2014). As a firm-level construct, inclusion might include flat hierarchies designed to promote psychological safety and openness to diverse input; mentoring and other career development programs; or employee resource groups that create opportunities for interaction over shared values or experiences.

The meso-level bridge between these organization-level structures, policies, and practices and individual belonging in our theoretical synthesis is the organization's informal social network[1]. Voluminous prior research from diverse disciplinary perspectives has argued that the social

[1] Informal networks comprise the "water cooler chats," text threads, after hours socializing, and broader personal relationships that comprise the daily interactions and social relationships within organizational life (McEvily et al., 2014). Informal networks may also capture the interactions around advice, leadership, and the informal social relationships that individuals leverage to complete their work.

network that an individual inhabits shapes their beliefs, attitudes, and experiences. Early conceptual work by Berger and Luckmann (1966) argues that people's reality is socially constructed through interactions with those around them. Bourdieu (1986) similarly argues that one's *habitus* – their dispositions, values, and ways of seeing the world – are shaped by their social networks. For Zerubavel (1999), networks comprise the "social mindscapes" through which people experience the world. And social ties causally shape people's attitudes, beliefs, and choices (Salganik et al., 2006). Building on this foundation, we argue that the network within which one is embedded shapes one's psychological experience of belonging.

To close this theoretical loop, we argue that networks, as a meso-level construct, are shaped by organizational factors (e.g., Allen, 1984; Kleinbaum, 2012). As such, an individual's egocentric network – the individual and their direct connections – is influenced by the organization's structures, practices, and policies of inclusion and comprises the environment in which each individual experiences belonging (or doesn't). In this way, network science can serve as a bridge between research on organizational practices of inclusion and psychological experiences of belonging.

After establishing this framework linking organizational level structures, policies and practices of inclusion with meso level social networks and individual level experiences of belonging, we apply it to consider how marginalization might exert effects on and interact with key variables in the framework. Specifically, we highlight research that shows that marginalized workers often experience lower levels of belonging due to social exclusion and barriers to advancement (Kraus et al., 2022; Pearce & Randel, 2004; Randel, 2023), which mirrors broader societal inequities (Elliott & Smith, 2004; Rowe, 1990). This may stem, in part, from direct differences in the extent to which people from marginalized groups have access to positions of power. But people's identities also shape their networks (e.g. Ibarra, 1995; Lu, 2022) and we consider how our theoretical framework sheds light on organizations' ability to include people from marginalized identity groups, and foster a sense of belonging. We also explore the ways that different network positions might confer different benefits, depending on marginalization.

In sum, we hope to make three contributions with this paper. First, we review the very broad literature on inclusion and why it matters in organizations. In doing so, we seek to advance research on inclusion through a more coherent theoretical framework that integrates organizational and individual levels of analysis by building on the well-established foundations of the psychology of belonging. Focusing on inclusion as an organization-level concept, and

belonging as an individual measure enables researchers to build on existing evidence of how belonging promotes group cohesion and individual well-being, and to operationalize constructs in ways that disentangle the organizational practices of inclusion from the individual outcome of belonging.

Second, to build a meso-level bridge between inclusion and belonging, we identify a set of social structural conditions that result from the organization-level practices of inclusion and, in turn, give rise to belonging. Social networks model the interpersonal relationships between individuals, which in aggregate can surface insights about individuals, teams, and larger organizational units (Grosser, Sterling, Piplani, Cullen-Lester, et al., 2023; McPherson et al., 1992; Tasselli et al., 2015). By identifying a set of multi-level social structural conditions that give rise to belonging, we enable both a richer empirical approach at the individual level and a path to identifying opportunities for intervention at a more macro level.

Third, we shed light on how marginalized workers experience different levels of value, reciprocity and fit within organizations, arguing that a network perspective can help diagnose and remedy these disparities. For organizations, this framework provides tools to analyze hidden social structures that hinder inclusion and suggests organizational interventions that could, by re-shaping employees' networks, promote a more inclusive workplace.

A Coherent Theoretical Framework for Inclusion

Why Inclusion Matters

Inclusion benefits organizations in several important ways, such as through reduced turnover, increased employee involvement , and greater creative output. (Boroş & Curşeu, 2013; Chung et al., 2020; Knapp et al., 2014; Qi et al., 2019). An inclusive environment fosters meaningful work, where employees feel a sense of belonging, leading to both personal and organizational benefits (Shafaei & Nejati, 2024). In such settings, group members contribute their skills and organizations provide individualized support in return (Pearce & Randel, 2004). When employees feel they belong, they are more likely to identify with the organization, and identify with the organization Mael & Ashforth (1992). Higher levels of organizational identification, in turn, have been linked to stronger commitment to organizational goals (Edwards, 2005; He & Brown, 2013; Mael & Ashforth, 1992). This increased identification also translates to greater motivation, engagement, and job performance (Pearce & Randel, 2004; Wegge et al., 2006).

Organizations that promote inclusion enjoy improved retention, reduced absenteeism, and enhanced overall performance (Chen & Tang, 2018; Jansen et al., 2017; Leask & Carroll, 2011).

One study (Brimhall & Mor Barak, 2018) examined the consequences of inclusion for a hospital. Over 250 employees across ten organizational work groups reported the degree to which they felt included in the information, decision-making, and social activities within their immediate work teams. The researchers defined a *climate for inclusion* as an aggregate of how employees perceived the inclusiveness of their team, using items like, “In my lab section/work group, I am rarely invited to join my coworkers when they go for lunch or drinks after work” (reverse-scored).[2] Here, employees reported on practices of inclusion (e.g., lunch invites) as well as their subjective feelings of engagement. They found that a climate for inclusion within the work group directly affected both individuals’ job satisfaction and their perception of the work group’s climate for innovation, measured with items like “My lab section/work group is always moving toward the development of new answers.” Further, inclusion had an indirect effect on quality of patient care, the hospital’s primary objective, through its direct effects on employee job satisfaction and innovation climate.

Moving beyond a mere absence of inclusive practices, research also highlights the poisonous effects of exclusion from groups. In this overview, we conceptualize exclusion as being at the opposite end of the inclusion spectrum, though we acknowledge that it is possible for organizations to implement both inclusive and exclusive practices, and for people to feel a sense of belonging in particular facets of their work while feeling alienated[3] from others (D. E. Jackson, 2024) (and as such, future research might also fruitfully disentangle the effects of these competing processes).

In an experiment to understand the effects of exclusion on social motivation, (Twenge et al., 2007) examined how social exclusion affects individuals' willingness to help others. Across a

[2] One potential issue with terminology in the literature is that researchers sometimes refer to "aggregate inclusion" to represent the overall sense of belonging experienced by individuals within a team or organization. However, as we advocate to use the term, “inclusion” should reflect the organization's broader actions and policies—what some scholars describe as a climate of inclusion. In this context, organizational practices of inclusion lead to *a climate of inclusion* – the social norms and individual attitudes that foster inclusive environments. Although organizations may choose to assess the effects of their organizational inclusion practices by measuring aggregate perceptions of belonging, it's important to note that inclusion and a lack of sense of belonging can coexist within the same environment. For instance, an organization might attempt to implement inclusive policies or establish affinity groups, yet individuals may still be excluded, due to discrimination or organizational or societal norms that categorize them as different. As such, the presence of inclusive practices does not guarantee that all members feel a genuine sense of belonging, and these ideas should be disentangled in the literature.

[3] In parallel to our use of the word “inclusion” to indicate organizational practices designed to foster belonging, we refer to “exclusion” as the organizational practices that lead people to feel disconnected and alienated. We explore these individual level feelings of belonging and alienation below.

series of experiments, they found that individuals who experienced social exclusion—such as being left out of group activities or rejected by others— “donated less money to a student fund, were unwilling to volunteer for further lab experiments, were less helpful after a mishap, and cooperated less in a mixed-motive game with another student,” (Twenge et al. 2007: p. 56). The emotional distress of exclusion undermined the fundamental need to belong, leading people to withdraw and forgo future social connections. On the other hand, another study by DeWall (2010) showed that following social exclusion, people were more likely to change their attitudes to fit in with new ties. These results suggest that when one’s sense of belonging is threatened, it can threaten their motivation to build or repair social bonds, or discourage sharing of divergent thinking, perpetuating a cycle of social disconnection or homogeneity.

In addition, Cacioppo & Cacioppo (2014) highlight how prolonged experiences of social exclusion impair cognitive functioning, problem-solving abilities, sleep quality, and overall mood. In workplaces, continued distress from social ostracism can adversely impact job satisfaction and productivity (Reece et al., 2021) and lead employees to proactively seek out collaborative work with others in order to reduce their exclusion (Maner et al., 2007). These cognitive and emotional disruptions of social exclusion can significantly hinder workplace performance by reducing employees' ability to complete tasks and engage in effective interpersonal interactions (Hitlan et al., 2006; P. B. Jackson & Stewart, 2003; Pearce & Randel, 2004). More broadly, exclusion can negatively impact psychological well-being, increasing feelings of loneliness and depressive symptoms (Howard et al., 2020; K. D. Williams & Nida, 2011; K. L. Williams & Galliher, 2006). Exclusion also signals social threats, raising stress levels, decreasing motivation, and causing individuals to withdraw from organizational participation and, ultimately, leave the organization (Hitlan et al., 2006).

By contrast, fostering inclusion at the work group level is beneficial for individual employees as well as for the organization: inclusion is associated with positive feelings towards the organization and employees’ self-identification with it (Chung et al., 2020). This identification can improve self-esteem, with employees finding positive aspects of themselves through their connection to the organization (Chung et al., 2020; Lee & Robbins, 1998). More broadly, an individual’s sense of belonging is linked to improved health and well-being (Begen & Turner-Cobb, 2015; Chung et al., 2020; Eisenberger et al., 2001; Hartung et al., 2015). For example, Hartung and colleagues (2015) conducted a longitudinal study that looked at the impacts of both inclusion defined in network terms and belonging, as defined by actual integration in social networks and self-perceived belonging, respectively, on students’ health.

Inclusion was measured as the number of fellow students who nominated each participant as one of three peers they like the most. The researchers assessed sense of belonging as a self-report of the degree to which a student felt integrated in the group (sample item: “Thinking of your fellow students during last week, how much did you feel integrated?”). Results indicated that students who had a stronger sense of belonging also reported better health. The study’s longitudinal design also permitted assessing within-student associations of inclusion and health: in weeks when a student’s network inclusion was high, they reported both higher perceptions of inclusion and better health.

Inclusion also promotes strong individual performance. Stadtfeld et al. (2019) collected data on friendship and collaboration ties for a sample of students across their freshman year and found that over time, initial friendship ties developed into collaboration (i.e., studying) ties, a result that echoes findings from research on multiplexity in workplace social networks (Ingram & Roberts, 2000; Krackhardt et al., 1992). As a result, students who were less well integrated into the social network had reduced access to task and collaboration support and, consequently, their academic performance suffered. The researchers argue that being included, and building informal ties, becomes the pathway for collaboration and academic support that students need to succeed.

Inclusion and Belonging: An Integrative Framework

Despite consensus on the value of inclusion, different researchers from different fields have conceptualized, defined, and measured it differently, slowing progress and development of the literature. The attentive reader may have noticed that in the research cited above, Brimhall and Mor Barak (2018) conceptualize inclusion as an organizational climate, whereas for Hartung et al. (2015), it is about how one is perceived by oneself and others. Pearce and Randel (2004) focus on employees' perceptions of being part of organizational activities and feeling acceptance by co-workers, while Hitlan et al. (2006) measure inclusion based on interactions with supervisors and coworkers. Mor-Barak & Cherin (1998) operationalized inclusion by examining employees' perceptions of being part of critical work systems, while Shore and team (2011) linked inclusion to feelings of belonging and uniqueness.

We argue that this “conceptual pluralism” serves to obfuscate the concept of inclusion and preclude the cumulative development of inclusion research. We hope that by reviewing the

extant literature and surfacing both similarities and differences in how inclusion has been defined and measured, we can establish a common foundation, create better theoretical integration, and chart a course for more coherent research. To do this, we begin with the long-established literature on the psychology of belonging.

Individual Level: The Subjective Experience of Belonging

In this paper, we distinguish the practices, policies, and processes of *inclusion* at the organization level from the subjective experience of *belonging* at the individual level. To both distinguish them from one another and link them together, we define the subjective experience at the individual level in terms of the well-established literature on the psychology of belonging. Thus we will refer to the individual's sense of being included as *belonging*; later, we will discuss the impact of organizations' policies and practices of inclusion, and people's positions within the workplace social network, on the sense of belonging felt by their members.

Belonging refers to an individual's need to feel connected to a social group or community. Baumeister & Leary (1995) argue that individuals are fundamentally motivated to seek out frequent, positive, and enduring social interactions. Their "need to belong hypothesis" argues that belonging is a fundamental human need and that, as social beings, humans are motivated to seek belonging. A person's sense of belonging is influenced by their position within a social network and their identity (Ahn & Davis, 2020). Belonging benefits individuals by improving their well-being, their job performance, and their organizational commitment which, in turn, drive identification with the organization and retention (Knapp et al., 2014).

The need to belong hypothesis (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) has led to extensive research on how social exclusion and a lack of group identification can negatively impact both health and performance. People's sense of belonging—or lack thereof—can shape key psychological outcomes. For instance, in one study, Greenaway and colleagues (2015) investigated how belonging to a group might influence students' mental health during a particularly stressful period: their senior year of college, when the students faced the dual pressures of thesis work and graduation. Researchers measured students' identification with their thesis cohort at the start of the academic year and followed up seven months later. The study found that students who developed a stronger sense of belonging with their thesis cohort, operationalized as identification with the group, reported better psychological outcomes, including a greater sense of meaning in life and greater control over their personal circumstances. These factors mediated the relationship between students' identification with their cohort and their levels of depression,

demonstrating that a heightened sense of belonging can buffer against mental health challenges during times of stress.

Belonging also plays a central role in motivating prosocial behaviors that promote interpersonal connection. Conversely, feeling disconnected or alienated motivates antisocial disengagement and counterproductive, antisocial behaviors (Ferris et al., 2008). In line with our use of the term *inclusion* to refer to organizational practices, we follow (Hitlan et al., 2006), who defined exclusion in terms of the actions carried out at the organizational level as the “rejection, or ignoring of an individual (or group) by another individual (or group)” (pg. 217). Exclusion has downstream effects on the individual and can limit their social integration within the organization, as it “hinders one’s ability to establish or maintain positive interpersonal relationships, work-related success, or favorable reputation within one’s place of work” (Duffy et al., 2002, pg. 332).

(J. O’Reilly et al., 2015) measured people’s feelings of being excluded (e.g., being “treated as nonexistent”) and belonging (having a sense of being valued at work) in populations of full-time working adults to explore potential negative outcomes of being excluded. They found that individuals’ sense of belonging mediated the path between exclusion and negative outcomes such as psychological withdrawal, personal esteem, and commitment to the organization. To contextualize the magnitude of the effect, they compared the consequences of exclusion with those of workplace harassment; surprisingly, they found that exclusion was associated with more negative self-reported consequences and was a better predictor of turnover than workplace harassment, speaking to the seriousness of this problem.

Social exclusion can elicit substantial physiological and psychological stress responses that affect both employee well-being and workplace productivity (Cacioppo et al., 2009; Hitlan et al., 2006). One tool for studying the effects of exclusion on stress physiology and psychology is the experimental paradigm *cyberball*, in which participants believe they are playing a virtual game of catch with other individuals (who are actually computer-controlled) (K. D. Williams & Jarvis, 2006). Although the game begins with equal participation from all players, the program eventually excludes the participant by ceasing to pass them the ball. This form of simulated ostracism reliably produces emotional distress and measurable stress responses (K. D. Williams & Jarvis, 2006).

Conversely, increasing people's sense of belonging exerts a causal effect to reduce feelings of alienation, especially among marginalized groups, and to enhance both individual well-being and organizational performance (Jansen et al., 2017; Randel, 2023; Walton et al., 2012, 2023). The social belonging intervention (Walton & Cohen, 2011), for example, has been used to reduce individuals' feelings of uncertainty about belonging in higher education and in specific industries, like health care. The intervention typically has people recognize that belonging gradually builds overtime, that their experience is not particular to them, and that multiple people likely experience moments where they feel as if they don't belong. The intervention has been repeatedly successful: Black students who experienced the intervention showed increased GPA and retention in engineering fields compared to control groups, and women in STEM majors showed increased retention and intention to choose academic STEM fields.

Walton and Brady (2017) propose two reasons why belonging interventions are so effective. First, reducing uncertainty that one belongs and is part of the social system changes one's interactions within the system: when people feel confident that they belong, negative or ambiguous interactions are viewed with less fear and are experienced as less threatening. This can promote social interaction and reinforce engagement with the social setting (Oyserman, 2006), giving rise to greater motivation or help-seeking behaviors (O'Keeffe, 2013; Pedler et al., 2022; Won et al., 2021). Second, belonging is, at least in part, a self-fulfilling prophecy: feeling like one belongs may promote behaviors that further one's belonging such as connecting with others warmly, but feeling excluded may promote behaviors that further one's exclusion such as avoiding others (Walton & Brady, 2017). For instance, if a person believes they aren't valued at the workplace, they may withhold their perspective or fail to foster social connections at a workplace, ultimately leading to their de-valuation and exclusion. This latter possibility is also consistent with the data highlighting that exclusion can motivate conformity, which may reduce people's sense of being able to authentically express or present the full complexity of their experiences or views.

Taken together, belonging derives from the "subjective feeling of value and respect derived from a reciprocal relationship to an external referent built on a foundation of shared experiences, beliefs or personal characteristics," (Mahar et al., 2013)[4]. Building on this foundation, we identify

[4] Although Mahar et al. (2013) focus on belonging in the disability community, they draw extensively on work in psychology more generally. They argue: "Feeling a sense of belonging to the community has been identified as a core dimension of social inclusion of persons with disabilities. Because the psychosocial experience of disability has been overwhelmingly associated with social exclusion, stigma and discrimination, effective community-based rehabilitation programmes must increase users' sense of belonging to their social groups," (p. 1027). We argue that their synthesis of the literature is not specific to the disability community, but equally applicable to employees in work organizations.

three antecedent conditions to belonging: *value, reciprocity,* and *fit* (Mahar et al., 2013). Value maps employees feeling recognized and appreciated for their input and efforts (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Shore et al., 2011). Reciprocity maps the belief that one's investments in others are matched in a mutual exchange of effort and emotional support. Finally, fit maps employees' feelings of alignment with the organization and its members, either in terms of attributes or values.

Value

One step toward feeling a sense of belonging in an organization is feeling valued. Feeling valued within an organization stems from being recognized and respected by others for one's contributions (Pierce et al., 1989). For instance, when a manager shows trust by delegating authority to a subordinate or shows respect by acknowledging an individual's contribution to the organization, this can be indicative of their valuing the employee and, as a result, contribute to the employee's sense of belonging (Fairhurst, 1993; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). More broadly, Leary and Allen argue that one's sense of belonging comes, in part, from "the degree to which other people value interacting with and having relationships with him or her," (Leary & Allen, 2011: p: 38). Leary & Allen (2011) position value as being relationally defined: being valued is determined through social interactions and gives individuals access to social opportunities and material outcomes, in the form of social support, financial opportunities, and influence.

Reciprocity

Individuals also derive a sense of belonging from reciprocal relationships with other people, in which their own feelings and actions toward others are matched and returned (Liu et al., 2013; Mahar et al., 2013). Reciprocity is the degree to which one's social connections offer a proportionate exchange of positive feelings, time, material, and commitment (Eisenberger et al., 2001a; Gouldner, 1960; Uhl-Bien & Maslyn, 2003). Individuals must get something in return for their contributions to the group (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Molm, 2010). According to Rook's (1987) equity theory, people expect their social investments to be met with equal investment, and inequitable relationships can cause resentment (Uhl-Bien & Maslyn, 2003). At times, organizations—particularly those with high levels of cooperation—require individuals to rely on others to provide their personal resources (e.g., time, knowledge, skills, effort) in order to complete their tasks.

When individuals perceive that their social connections at work offer access and resources–both professional and social–they experience a strong sense of organizational support. Eisenberger and colleagues (2016) found that this support motivates individuals to engage in additional work and actions to help the organization achieve its goals. Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) examines the relationship between managers and employees, highlighting that high-quality LMX relationships are based on trust, assistance, and reciprocated esteem, leading to increased influence and decision-making power for employees. In contrast, low-quality LMX relationships are transactional and one-sided and can lead to employee disengagement. High-quality relationships foster reciprocity, benefiting both parties beyond mere transactions.

Fit

Lastly, an individual's sense of belonging derives from their experience of "fitting in." In the introduction of this paper, we discussed Monroe Gamble, whose experience of being demographically dissimilar to others in their organization was a reminder of his lack of fit within the organization. Fit is commonly associated with similarity; however, research on organizations has found that teams and groups can form around multiple dimensions of similarity. These dimensions may include shared values, beliefs, physical traits, aspects of identity (such as religion, culture, or language), having a similar role to a peer in the organization, or even superficial cues like wearing the same color shirt (Chattopadhyay, 1999; van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007). Fit promotes group identification, a psychological attachment to a group that influences behavior, self-concept, and self-esteem (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). When individuals perceive that they fit within a group, their self-concept improves, and they experience a reduced perception of social threats in their environment (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

Organizational fit is the compatibility between an organization and an individual (Cable & Judge, 1996; Kristof, 1996; C. A. O'Reilly et al., 1991). Person-organization fit is important for job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover, and job performance (Hoffman & Woehr, 2006). Interventions that emphasize leveraging one's strengths and motivations may allow people to recognize their value to the organization or create alignment between their motivations and the organization, their fit (Allen et al., 2022; Holt et al., 2008). As a result, they tend to adopt the behaviors and norms of the organization. They may also view themselves as stewards of the organization's mission and goals, which can enhance both performance and commitment. Additionally, when individuals feel a sense of fit, social interactions that might

otherwise be perceived as negative or hostile are less likely to be seen as threatening. As such, fitting in can also be understood as a reduction of perceived threats, allowing individuals to interpret workplace interactions as more conducive to their professional and personal well-being. Within an organizational context, fitting in serves as a source of security and validation, reinforcing an individual's sense of belonging and commitment.

Organization Level: The Structures, Practices, and Policies of Inclusion

Building on the well-established foundation of theory and evidence on the psychology of belonging, we suggest that individuals' sense of belonging in an organization is influenced by the organization's efforts that cultivate a sense of value, reciprocity, and fit for each individual. These efforts can operate by shaping individuals' positions in the workplace network, which in turn relate to individuals' sense of belonging.

There are multiple pathways through which organizations can foster inclusion through formalized practices and policies that shape individual experiences directly. Diversity and inclusion training programs can increase awareness, reduce bias, and encourage inclusive behaviors across the workforce (Dobbin & Kalev, 2018). Inclusive leadership, characterized by openness, accessibility, and support, signals to employees that their perspectives are important to their colleagues (Randel et al., 2018). Practices that enhance psychological safety, such as encouraging risk-taking without fear of negative consequences, further enable employees to share ideas and raise concerns (Edmondson, 1999; Carmeli, Reiter-Palmon, & Ziv, 2010). Additional mechanisms include clear anti-discrimination policies (Dobbin & Kalev, 2018), transparent performance evaluations that reduce bias and promote fairness (Castilla, 2008), and policies ensuring equitable access to organizational resources and information, which support participation and engagement across the workforce (Nishii, 2013).

These practices and policies act by formalizing social norms around employee interactions, thereby reinforcing the antecedents of belonging. Value signaling occurs when recognition and fair treatment affirm an employee's worth to the organization (Shore et al., 2011). Reciprocity emerges from balanced exchanges of support and resources, facilitated by collaborative structures and mutual recognition (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008; Deci, Olafsen, & Ryan, 2017). Cultural fit is fostered when people feel that their identities are in line with organizational norms, a perception strengthened through onboarding, employee resource groups, and flexible work arrangements (Allen, 2006; Friedman & Holtom, 2002; Kossek, Baltes, & Matthews, 2011).

Perceptions of fairness and psychological safety cut across these pathways, cultivating an environment in which employees feel comfortable contributing and engaging (Edmondson & Lei, 2014; Colquitt et al., 2013). Taken together, the organizational features that comprise inclusion—such as formal organizational structures, practices, and policies, leadership styles, organizational norms and culture, and social network structure—create the environment in which individuals' sense of belonging can thrive (Chavez & Weisinger, 2008; Nishii, 2013).

An Integrated Perspective: Social Networks as a Mechanism Linking Organizational Practices of Inclusion with Individuals' Experience of Belonging

One important mechanism through which organizational practices of inclusion can translate to individuals' experience of belonging is through the structures of relationships they induce. In other words, we argue that organizational efforts to induce individual belonging are mediated, in part, by the structure of the networks that comprise the individual employees' social environments. In Figure 1, we offer a theoretical model that integrates the organization-level construct of inclusion with the individual-level construct of belonging. Interactions are a core feature of organizations and both formal and informal structures influence the social environment (Barnard, 1968; McEvily et al., 2014). Therefore, in our framework, inclusion is an organization-level construct that fosters individual belonging within the workplace, in part through its role in re-shaping social networks.

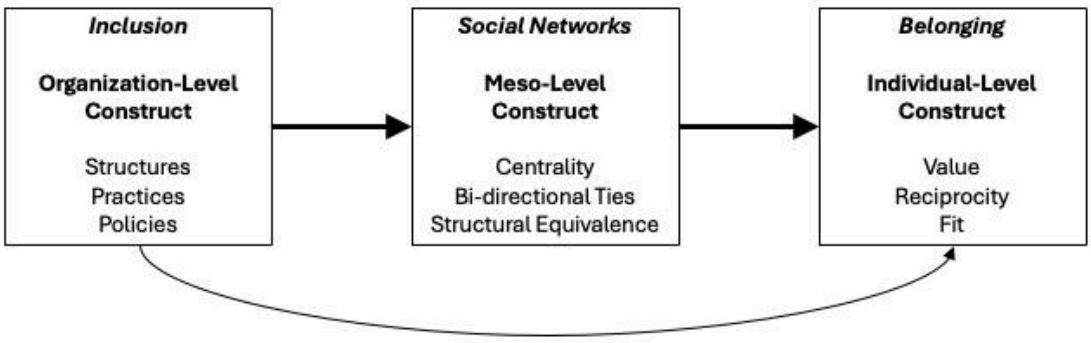

Figure 1 visualizes our framework linking inclusion, an organization-level construct, with belonging, an individual-level construct. Here, inclusion constitutes the structures, policies, and practices that shape individuals' sense of belonging, partially through their effect on meso-level social network structures. Existing research has proposed inclusive policies and practices that can impact a sense of belonging. Since belonging is relationally driven, we argue that these practices are mediated, in part, by their impact on the social networks of individuals' which impact their experiences of belonging.

For example, organizations' practices of inclusion can operate by initially architecting the networks around employees as they join the organization, and subsequently shaping those networks as relationships evolve, to foster a greater experience of belonging (Friedman, Kane, & Cornfield, 1998; Dobbin & Kalev, 2016). Inclusive onboarding and socialization practices are one important example. Beyond conveying job-related tasks, inclusive onboarding connects new employees to diverse peers, mentors, and cross-functional teams early in their tenure. This integration into multiple relationship pathways facilitates faster trust-building and helps employees access a wider range of information, resources, and support (Kim, Cable, & Kim, 2005). When onboarding emphasizes shared values, cultural competence, and opportunities for early collaboration, it strengthens relational ties across demographic and functional boundaries, which in turn deepens employees' embeddedness in the organization's social fabric (Cable, 2013).

Mentorship and sponsorship programs are another network-based mechanism for inclusion. Formal and informal mentoring relationships provide guidance, career advice, and psychosocial support, while sponsorship actively involves influential leaders advocating for protégés in promotion and project opportunities (Ragins & Kram, 2007; Thomas, 2001). By linking employees to well-connected and high-status individuals, these programs expand employee visibility and access to otherwise closed networks. This integration into influential relational structures not only accelerates career progression but also strengthens employees' sense of belonging and legitimacy within the organization.

Employee resource groups (ERGs) represent a collective form of network-based inclusion, fostering connections among employees who share certain identities, experiences, or goals. ERGs provide members with a community of mutual support, while also creating bridges to allies, leadership, and organizational decision-making structures (Friedman, Kane, & Cornfield, 1998; Dobbin & Kalev, 2016). In doing so, they help members cultivate both bonding ties within the group and bridging ties across different parts of the organization, increasing their access to information, influence, and opportunities. Other practices, such as cross-departmental collaboration initiatives, structured networking events, and rotational leadership assignments, operate similarly by deliberately engineering relational opportunities that broaden employees' network reach, fostering an environment where diverse voices are integrated into the organizational mainstream.

Analysis and Measurement of Social Networks as a Mechanism of Inclusion

Network analysis also provides opportunities to quantify a mechanism by which organizational practices of inclusion affect individual belonging. Social network analysis can be used to determine the degree to which an individual is central to the network, or the relative number of people they are connected to; the strength of their relationships in the network; and their role, their uniqueness, and their similarity to others within the organization. Being central, having mutually acknowledged connections, and having (or not) a well-defined role all affect individuals' experience of belonging (Eisenberger et al., 2001b; Leary & Allen, 2011). Above, we identified three antecedent conditions to belonging: value, reciprocity, and fit. Building on that foundation, we conceptualize three different network measures that may correspondingly give rise to belonging[5]. In the following section we will discuss each of these measures as potential tools for measuring the meso-level link between organizational practices and individual experiences. We will also attempt to synthesize how these network measures may relate to underlying features that enhance or detract from belonging, pointing to the potential for inclusion interventions that re-shape social networks to increase employees' sense of belonging.

Centrality & Value

We operationalize the degree to which an individual is valued within her organization as network centrality[6]. Although there are numerous measures of network centrality, it is most simply quantified based on how well-connected an individual is within the organization (Freeman et al., 1979). More connections within networks imply more access to information and knowledge, which can serve as individual and social assets (Bonacich, 1987; Mason & Watts, 2012). Shore (2011) described information as the primary exchange resource within organizations (Shore et al., 2011). Further, network analysts distinguish between people who *seek* information broadly (out-degree centrality) and those who *share* information broadly (in-degree centrality). People who are central in the information-sharing network may be highly valued by their peers for the information they provide (Saito et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2015), and people who are central in

[5] Although we propose relationships between value, reciprocity and fit and various network operationalizations using a one-to-one mapping of terms for simplicity (i.e., value and network centrality, reciprocity and bidirectional ties, fit and equivalence), in reality, we imagine that these constructs are likely to covary and be mutually reinforcing, and that multiple other network measures may also capture relevant aspects of belonging. We expand on this idea in the section outlining future research directions.

[6] Throughout this section, we argue for particular operationalizations of value, reciprocity, and fit, respectively in network structure. We theorize why these structures may be the best ones, but ultimately, this is an empirical question. Our broader point is that some network structures – perhaps these, perhaps others – serve as a meso-level mechanism.

the information seeking network may make others feel appreciated (Brooks et al., 2015). Everett and Borgatti (1999) argue that central actors often participate in social interactions that reinforce both their influence and perceived value.

Greater centrality in information and advice-sharing networks can enhance the feeling of value (Grosser, Sterling, Piplani, Cullen-Lester, et al., 2023). Grosser et al. (2023) examined the association between being nominated by others as a source of information (i.e., in-degree centrality in the informal information network) and a sense of belonging. Studying employees in a large pharmaceutical company, researchers asked respondents the degree to which they felt included in the organization, participated in the activities at the organization, and felt like outsiders within the workplace (reverse-scored). The respondents were also asked who they turned to for information within the company to complete their daily tasks and their work. Although employees may not explicitly know their position in the network, social interactions in which they are asked for information could convey that their skills and knowledge are valuable to others within the organization. Results indicated that members with higher in-degree centrality – people whom many others nominated as someone to turn to for information – had a greater overall sense of belonging. This finding is consistent with the idea that network centrality can signal feeling valued, and being more central to the network may promote belonging.

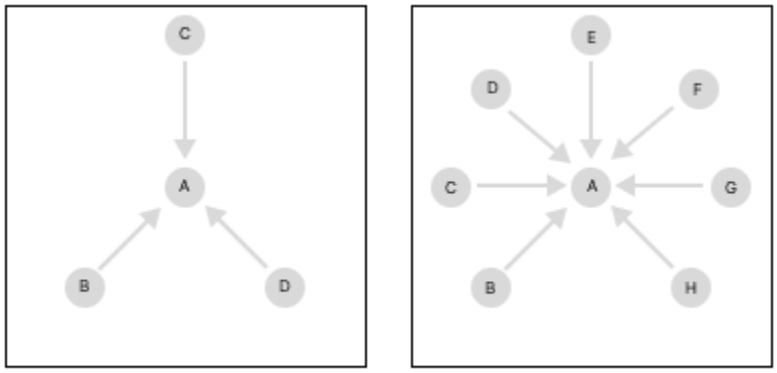

Figure 2. In the image on the left, person A has 3 directed ties. In the image on the right, person B, has 7 directed ties. Person B has greater in-degree centrality, both granting them more resources and affirming their value within the organization.

Other research finds that being central in support networks is associated with a greater sense of belonging within the organization. For instance, in a study of a teacher education program, Bjorklund et al. (2020) found that teachers who reported that they were supported by or received advice from a larger number of peers had a greater sense of belonging. Here, belonging consisted of peer support and resulted in commitment to the program. Likewise, centrality in networks of professional support or information can promote self-esteem about one's capability. For instance, being sought after for information or having others reach out to you for support might be indicative of one's own expertise or skill. In the study on teacher support networks, being central not only promoted one's sense of belonging, but also one's self-efficacy or belief in their own teaching ability (Bjorklund et al., 2020). Having a large number of indegree connections is also affirming, in that one can recognize their influence within an organization (Brass & Burkhardt, 1993).

Peripheral actors, by contrast, were more marginalized and excluded from key resources and influence. Central actors not only have greater access to resources and integration into the network, but they also wield significant influence over organizational norms and culture. In contrast, individuals who are peripheral or excluded from informal networks—such as those for information, mentorship, or advice—may feel devalued or "invisible" (Barak, 2022; Farh et al., 2021). This exclusion can happen when individuals are left out of critical information needed to perform their jobs, leading them to feel that their contributions are unrecognized and not beneficial to the organization.

In summary, being central within a network can enhance feelings of belonging. Centrality in information and friendship networks indicates that an individual holds influence, knowledge, or resources that others value. Organizations may be able to foster belonging by intervening to increase workers' network centrality and increasing the connections individuals have within the network.

Reciprocity and Bidirectional Ties

A second antecedent to belonging is reciprocity: the perception that one's social investments in others are returned (Gouldner, 1960; Homans, 1993; Molm, 2010). Reciprocity is a crucial factor in social networks, operationalized by the presence of bidirectional ties, where both parties acknowledge and value their relationship with the other. Following Rook's (1987) equity theory, having more congruent, bidirectional relationships implies a more equitable exchange of

resources, which promotes a sense of belonging. For example, when two coworkers nominate each other as friends, this bidirectional acknowledgment suggests a meaningful and supportive relationship (Brass, 2022; Granovetter, 1973). Granovetter (1973) argues that strong ties, such as those involving mutual confiding and reciprocal services, are essential for fostering close, reciprocal relationships. These mutual ties contribute to a greater sense of inclusion at the organizational level, where social relationships are supportive and meaningful (Vaquera & Kao, 2008).

In contrast, relationships marked by imbalance—where only one person perceives the connection as strong—are less stable and may weaken over time (S. B. G. Roberts & Dunbar, 2015; Vaquera & Kao, 2008). Such one-sided friendships, mentorships, or collaborations lack the reciprocity needed for sustained support and are more likely to decay (Kleinbaum, 2018). Similarly, unreciprocated ties are weaker (Granovetter, 1973), making them less reliable for long-term support (Marsden & Campbell, 1984). And relationships where one party consistently gives without receiving can indicate power imbalances.

And as with value, research emphasizes the role of reciprocity in fostering belonging. Vaquera and Kao (2008) examined 80 schools to assess whether having a reciprocated best friend impacted students' sense of belonging and academic performance. Students with high levels of reciprocity in their friendship networks reported a greater sense of belonging and were more likely to achieve higher GPAs. This suggests that networks with more bidirectional ties, indicating greater reciprocity, support a sense of belonging and positive downstream outcomes.

Myers (2021) examined bidirectional and reciprocal relationships of vicarious learning in work organizations. The study measured how much members of consulting teams listened to or found meaning in the experiences or knowledge of other members within their team.They found that membership on a team with higher numbers of bidirectional ties provided access to more perspectives members could gain while working on the project. Multiple perspectives offer more opportunities for insights. More broadly, greater access to others' perspectives enhances an individual's skills and knowledge by providing multiple takes and ways of thinking towards a specific problem. Myers suggests that resources exchanged in information or knowledge networks also provide individuals with a portfolio of skills and perspectives they can use when facing future problems. Although this work doesn't directly measure belonging, future research could examine how reciprocity in knowledge enhances belonging through access to resources.

Myers (2021) also claims that the enhanced performance from greater reciprocity may be due to a shared mental schema. Suppose group members share information, and the information is bidirectional. In that case, members share a similar mental model and are aware of each other's modes of thinking. In addition, increased reciprocity in the network reduces information gaps. Thus, individuals are informed equally and aware of the skills and gaps within their group. If individuals have social connections and similar types of thinking, they have information on their skills and role within the organization, which may foster a sense of belonging (Galinsky et al., 2005).

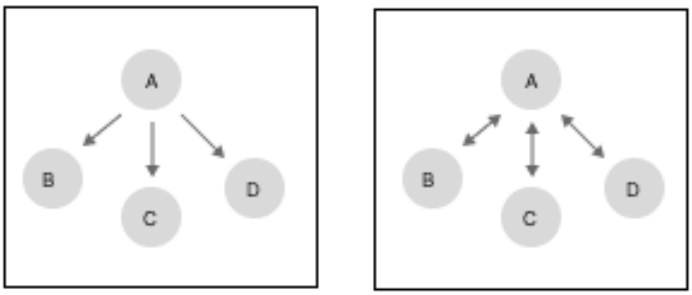

Figure 3. In the image on the left, person A only has only one-directional ties (A going to B, C, D, but not the reverse), meaning A's social investments in others are not returned. In the image on the right all ties are bi-directional, meaning A's social investments in others are reciprocated. As a result, we expect A to feel a greater sense of belonging in the second image than in the first.

Other research has extended this perspective to show that not only specific reciprocity but also generalized reciprocity can enhance belonging. Linos and colleagues (2021) applied a belonging intervention to reduce burnout and foster social connection amongst frontline workers, who experience high levels of stress and turnover. In the intervention, which lasted six weeks, 911 dispatchers across nine U.S. cities were given messages of support from other dispatchers across other cities and also asked to write messages of support to another dispatcher with professional advice or ways they cope with difficulties of the work. This intervention, which relied on generalized reciprocity (Sahlins, 1972) with a like-minded community, was framed as an opportunity to both benefit from and give back to the dispatcher community. The researchers measured dispatcher turnover and feelings of burnout four months

after the intervention. They found that dispatchers who participated in the intervention experienced greater social belonging, reduced burnout, and lower turnover rates relative to the participant dispatchers in the control condition who did not receive the intervention.

In summary, reciprocal relationships, indicated by bidirectional network ties within networks, contribute to an individual's sense of belonging in their organization. These mutual relationships enhance belonging, while the absence of reciprocity can reflect imbalance or marginalization.

Fit & Equivalence:

A third antecedent to belonging is fit: the sense that one has a well-defined place within the broader organization or community (Mahar et al., 2013; Walton & Brady, 2017). Organizational processes that increase people's sense that they fit in should drive belonging. The concept of "fit" has a long history in management research. In classic work in organization theory, (Whyte, 1956), who worried about rising conformity in corporate culture, defined cultural fit as the degree to which an individual was willing to subvert his[7] values, behavior, and even his identity to the needs of the organization. Within this context, fit emerged as an important determinant in hiring – more important, even, than technical skill. Writing more than a half-century later, Rivera (2012) argued that hiring, at least in elite professional services firms, is a process of cultural matching in which recruiters try to identify well-fitting candidates who are "similar to themselves." In her review of the literature on person-organizational fit, Kristof (1996, pg. 4) described "the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when: a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or b) they share similar fundamental characteristics." O'Reilly, Chatman and Caldwell (1991) found that greater person-organization fit on the importance of values like "being team oriented," "emphasizing stability," or "being innovative" – is associated with higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment. As we describe above, inclusive onboarding is one way to connect people to others who are similar to them, and cultures of inclusion can include affinity groups and other means for people to find a sense of fit.

Research on the psychology of organizational fit also suggests that individuals perceive greater fit when they have structurally-equivalent peers with shared experiences and characteristics like their own. We argue that this notion of fit once employees are part of an organization can be operationalized in network analytic terms as structural equivalence[8], a network-based indicator

[7] As the title of his book implies, virtually all the subjects of Whyte's research were men and most of them were white.
[8] A weaker form of the same argument would be that people experience fit when they have greater *role equivalence* with peers in the organization. Whereas structural equivalence requires two people to be connected to the same network contacts, role equivalence has the weaker requirement that two people be connected to different people

of the extent to which people have peers who occupy similar structural positions in their organizational network. Within our framework, this suggests another example of how network features can bridge organizational practices of inclusion and employee's sense of belonging. As illustrated in Figure 4, "two people are structurally equivalent to the extent that they have the same network contacts, "(Burt, 1992, pg. 66). When two individuals are structurally equivalent – that is, when they share the same network ties to the same actors, they are both members of "precisely the same social circles," (Pizarro, 2007, pg 776).

Structurally equivalent individuals often adopt similar perceptions or attitudes due to having similar peers, connections, and exposure to the same information – what Dougherty (1992) described as occupying the same "thought world." Structural equivalents can be important sources of knowledge (Shah, 1998). In information or knowledge networks, this equivalence offers a peer group with whom one can confirm one's skills and expand one's influence within the organization. Having people with shared roles can also confirm one's experiences by determining if their equivalent has similar attitudes or challenges within the organization (Shah, 1998). Being structurally equivalent to other members in the organization should therefore promote belonging by increased perception of fit or shared experience. In comparison, having no structural similarity means individuals may not have a social referent to compare and feel shared experience.

Carley (1986) explored how individuals in structurally equivalent positions share similar perceptions and cognitive maps within organizations. Her study found that employees occupying equivalent positions develop similar mental models of organizational problems and solutions, validating their behavior and leading to similar decision-making patterns, particularly when facing complex challenges. Connecting with structurally equivalent peers could foster belonging by giving people validation to their experience, heightening their sense of fit.

occupying the same roles. As an example, a professor of organizational behavior might be structurally equivalent to her OB colleagues, in that they share contact with other colleagues in the department, the department chair, department admins, and senior administrators. But they are role equivalent with finance faculty, whose networks include contacts to the same senior administrators, but to finance faculty, the finance department chair, and finance department admins.

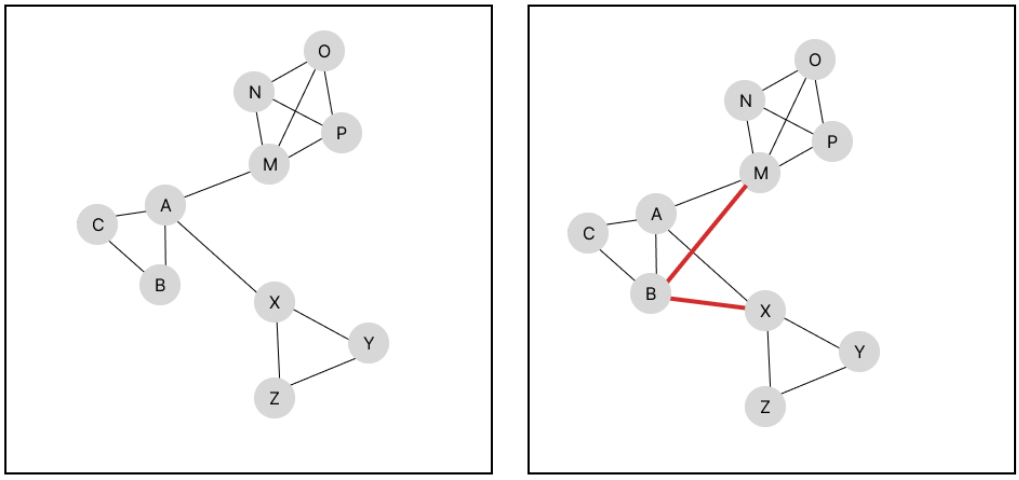

Figure 4. In the image on the left, person A is part of the ABC cluster, but is structurally unique because she is also connected to M and X. In the image on the right, person A's network is identical, but because B is also connected to M and X, A and B are now structurally equivalent. This structural equivalence should provide a greater sense of fit for A and increase her sense of belonging.

In sum, our discussion of centrality, bidirectional ties, and structural equivalence are examples of potentially broader ways in which structural positions in an organizational network may predict employees' sense of belonging by shaping their experience of value, reciprocity, and fit. Social relationships are key to finding one's sense of belonging and network positions may indicate the strength of connections, one's access to resources, both social and professional, as well as the access to what some may consider to be "their people." Importantly, as we lay out in the next section, this work should take into consideration the extent to which workers have historically been on the periphery, and thus have been marginalized societally and within organizational life.

How Marginalization Impacts Belonging

Within organizations, access to social capital and social resources are not evenly distributed. Elliott and Smith (2004), for instance, found that women and minorities are less likely than white men to hold positions of power within organizations. This highlights how the social systems in organizations often reflect the larger societal systems in which they are embedded, with inequities in workplaces mirroring the inequities in the societies of which they are a part (Elliott & Smith, 2004; Rowe, 1990). Marginalization is the isolation or distancing of certain individuals or

groups in society, typically based on social characteristics derived from systems of oppression (Lamont & Molnár, 2002). Systems such as racism or sexism have created political, economic, and structural inequities that advantage individuals who possess certain characteristics and disadvantage others of different identities or characteristics (Feagin, 2013; Feagin & Eckberg, 1980). Such systems are historically and culturally ingrained and thus shape attitudes and behaviors towards individuals belonging to specific groups (Berry & Bell, 2012a; Quinn, 2020).

Despite many workplaces embracing inclusive practices and diversity goals, historically underrepresented workers still report feelings of exclusion or isolation at far higher rates than their majority-group peers (Berry & Bell, 2012a; Douglass, 2023). People whose identities are marginalized typically feel a lesser sense of belonging than people who are part of dominant groups within their workplaces (Seifert & Umbach, 2008; Zatzick et al., 2003). Decades of research has documented the ways that people from marginalized groups feel excluded, and experience more barriers to advancement within organizations (Fassinger, 2008), with consequent costs to their wellbeing (Gyllensten & Palmer, 2005; Hall et al., 2012; P. B. Jackson & Stewart, 2003). As such, we focus the final part of our review on these disparities impacting workers with marginalized identities and develop theory that aims to advance practices around inclusion for organizations to reduce these disparities.

Prior research explores how identity may exert a direct effect on one's position in a social network, with consequences for their sense of belonging (i.e., mediation). Identity may also change one's experience of a given network position; as such, the relationship between network position and a sense of belonging may differ for people with marginalized identities, compared with majority group members (i.e., moderation). We lay out ways in which a network perspective sheds light on the experiences of marginalized workers, and how different network positions might affect belonging differently as a function of one's identity. We place particular focus on the experience of Black American workers to illustrate a set of broader arguments about inclusion of people with marginalized identities, a choice that we elaborate below.

Although Black American employment in organizations has proliferated following the Civil Rights movements and policies such as affirmative action, Black workers have consistently faced hurdles in predominantly White organizations, which have limited their career access, mobility, and opportunity (Baldi & McBrier, 1997; Berry & Bell, 2012b; Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004; Grodsky & Pager, 2001) and a substantial body of research has explored the factors that underlie the effect of marginalization on organizational attainment (e.g., Berry & Bell, 2012;

Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004; Grodsky & Pager, 2001). We argue that the marginalization that Black Americans experience in organizations is likely to affect their experiences of belonging (value, reciprocity and fit), both directly and also indirectly, mediated by the structure of the social network within which they are embedded. Further, we argue for moderation effects, in which the effects of network centrality, bidirectional ties and structural equivalence on feelings of belonging differ depending on whether someone is part of a marginalized group. Although we focus especially on the experience of Black Americans, we believe that the theoretical propositions we offer are applicable to a range of marginalized groups.

How Network Position Mediates the Effects of Marginalization on Belonging

Marginalization within organizations can have a profound effect on individuals' sense of belonging. People from marginalized identity groups feel, on average, a lesser sense of belonging to their organizations compared with their majority group peers and voluminous literature has explored myriad reasons for this belongingness gap (e.g., Blake-Beard et al., 2019; Dickens et al., 2019; Friedman et al., 1998; Good et al., 2012; Ibarra, 1993; Walton & Brady, 2017). We add to this conversation by building on our arguments above and focusing on how networks may partially mediate the effect of marginalization on the key antecedents of belonging: value, reciprocity and fit.

First, marginalization may diminish one's sense of belonging by reducing network centrality and, consequently, one's sense of feeling valued. Negative stereotypes are one way that marginalization impacts individuals' sense of being (de)valued, both directly and through a network mechanism. Stereotypes, especially around competence and warmth (Cuddy et al., 2008; Fiske et al., 2007), reinforce these feelings. For instance, Black workers are often stereotyped as lacking both competence and warmth (Gilbert et al., 2003; Knight et al., 2003). In predominantly White organizations, such stereotypes can devalue Black workers, leading to fewer opportunities for recognition and praise (Berry & Bell, 2012a; Remedios & Snyder, 2018). As a result, negative stereotypes may cause co-workers to consciously or unconsciously invest less in building ties with colleagues with marginalized identities, contributing to their reduced network centrality. In her study of four Fortune 500 firms, Ibarra (1995) found that minority employees had fewer social connections within the workplace. Ibarra (1993) also found that women and Black employees often faced barriers to becoming central within organizational networks, limiting their access to valuable information and advancement opportunities. McGuire

(2000) found that informal social networks in organizations tend to exclude women and people of color, limiting their access to work-related support and advancement opportunities.

More recent research has similarly found that Black Americans have smaller networks than white Americans in data from the General Social Survey (Hedegard, 2018; Marsden & Campbell, 1984) and from a sample of public sector employees in Tennessee (Sloan et al., 2013). Within workplace social networks, Black workers are less likely to be referred by colleagues for career opportunities and growth (Pedulla & Pager, 2019). Aligned with these findings, DiPrete and colleagues (2011) found that social networks are highly segregated by race, including weak ties. Okafor (2022) argues that this unwillingness to help across social differences limits marginalized individuals' access to relational resources.[9]

For their part, people from marginalized groups may be less proactive in initiating network ties. Steele and colleagues' (2002) work on stereotype threat highlights that targets of negative stereotypes, such as people from marginalized groups, often feel they do not belong in environments where they are underrepresented. As a result, people from these groups may anticipate fewer rewards from building ties or taking social risks (e.g., reaching out to someone new). The added cognitive load of stereotype threat may also reduce capacity to build new ties (Steele et al., 2002; Walton & Brady, 2017). This suggests the possibility of a vicious cycle in which lower network centrality induces a lack of belonging in people with marginalized identities, which leads to further reduction in network centrality.

Turetsky (2023) looked at how social inclusion mediates the effect of gender on people's confidence and success at negotiating in workplace settings. Voluminous prior research has shown evidence of a gender gap in workplace negotiations: men are generally more successful in negotiations in the workplace compared to women (Bowles et al., 2005; Mazei et al., 2015; Stuhlmacher & Walters, 1999). In their experiment, MBA students were randomly assigned to negotiate deals with peers, trying to get the better outcome. Women tended to be less central in the classroom social network and women experienced greater apprehension, threat, and stress levels about negotiating than men did. But critically, the study found that psychological factors like apprehension, stereotype threat, and stress did not mediate the relationship between gender and the gap in negotiation outcomes; instead, being more socially integrated within the

[9] We have been surprised and dismayed at how thin the base of empirical evidence on racial differences in workplace social networks is, relative to what scholars generally accept as a taken-for-granted truth (e.g., Small, 2007).

classroom mediated the relationship. This work sheds light on how social integration into an organization (i.e., through practices of inclusion) may help to overcome a marginalized identity.

Marginalization may also undermine the formation of reciprocal social ties, the second antecedent to belonging. Homophily – the propensity for people to build ties and affiliate with similar others (McPherson et al., 2001) – often leads underrepresented workers to form fewer strong, reciprocal ties than their majority-group peers. For example, due to racial homophily, Black workers, who are often underrepresented, have fewer opportunities to form close, bidirectional connections with same-race peers in the workplace (Ibarra, 1995; Kanter, 1977). Because shared identities are often a strong basis for reciprocal relationships, the limited presence of people "like them" reduces the likelihood of forming reciprocal relationships, which, in turn, diminishes their social integration.

Ibarra (1995) examined the role of homophily in managerial relationships and found that members of marginalized groups had fewer reciprocal relationships, especially when they were underrepresented in the organization. Black workers in her study had more diverse but less intimate connections. Similarly, in interviews with Silicon Valley tech workers, Franklin (2022) found that Black workers, who typically made up 2% of the workforce in Silicon Valley companies, were often tasked with initiating relationships and reaching out to build connections with their non-Black colleagues. Here, the building of meaningful connections with members of the majority group comprised a form of “relational labor” that Black individuals had to take on and that was usually not fully reciprocated (Franklin, 2022). The relational labor of being expected to initiate ties that are unlikely to be reciprocated reduces Black employees’ sense of belonging.

Finally, marginalization can prevent individuals from feeling like they fit within the organization because people from marginalized groups may experience less structural equivalence than people who are not part of marginalized groups. There are several reasons why marginalization may reduce structural equivalence. First, if stereotypes or discrimination lead others to not reciprocate the social initiative of marginalized people, they may have a more difficult time building relationships – especially those outside the formally required interactions (McEvily et al., 2014) – than their white counterparts. Conversely, homophily may lead marginalized people to connect with their co-ethnics at a greater rate than their white counterparts. For both of these reasons, marginalized people may have networks that look different from those of people in otherwise similar roles. And such network dissimilarity may lead them to get access to different

information and inhabit different thought worlds (Dougherty, 1992) than peers in otherwise similar roles. Further, this reduced structural equivalence heightens "belonging uncertainty" (Walton & Cohen, 2007), which reflects individuals' lack of clarity about whether they truly fit within the organization. This uncertainty becomes particularly pronounced when marginalized individuals face backlash for breaking racial or gender hierarchies, which further threatens their sense of fit within the organizational structure. Reduced structural equivalence should reduce their sense of fit and, consequently, their sense of belonging.

How Marginalization Also Moderates the Effects of Network Position on Belonging

In addition to reducing people's sense of belonging by affecting their network position (i.e., a *mediating* relationship), marginalization could also *moderate* the relationship between network position and belonging, meaning that network positions may not confer the same benefits for everyone equally. In this section, we seek to integrate the psychology of marginalization with the structural antecedents of belonging. Specifically, we argue that being central, having bidirectional ties, and having structural equivalents may not translate as directly or consistently to feelings of belonging for people who are minoritized.

In the preceding section, we argued that network centrality might be related to people's perception of being valued, and thus a greater sense of belonging. However, research highlights that this is not equally true for all groups. Brass (1985) examined workplace interactions – such as who offered job-related input, how tasks were distributed, and who individuals considered close colleagues. While both women and men demonstrated strong network-building skills, men – who frequently occupied positions of greater formal authority – were less likely to include women in their informal networks. This dynamic led to the formation of two largely segregated networks: one centered around men, and the other around women. The researchers also did follow-up analyses on promotions in the network and who supervisors found to be influential within the organization. Notably, both promotion and influence were more closely linked to centrality within the male-dominated networks, and did not appear to share the same relationship in the women's network. This provides an example of how a meso-level feature, centrality in informal work networks, may impact one's perceived value in the organization differently for people according to their identities.

In addition, people with highly central positions in workplace social networks tend to have increased social interactions and visibility in the organization, relative to less central people. Although visibility can confer benefits, such visibility may also render their actions subject to

greater scrutiny, creating pressure to actively manage impressions to play down one's differences (Buchanan & Settles, 2019). That is, centrality may magnify the racialized effects of hypervisibility (Buchanan & Settles, 2019). Hypervisibility is the feeling that one's presence within an organization is overly scrutinized (Buchanan & Settles, 2019; Settles et al., 2019). For example, Settles et al. (2019) found that faculty of color were often tasked to deal with "diversity work" because that was what White coworkers expected they were interested in (and because White colleagues may prefer to avoid these issues). Other work has found that Black workers may alter their hair, laughter, or even physical presence to reduce their visibility (Dickens et al., 2019; Settles et al., 2019). Marginalized individuals describe this magnification as shaped by their differences and stigmatization (Buchanan & Settles, 2019). Hypervisibility is associated with surveillance of an individual's performance, discrimination, magnification of mistakes, and the inability to control how one is perceived in the organization (Brighenti, 2007; Lewis & Simpson, 2012; Settles et al., 2019). This increased visibility leads to vigilance about impression management, which may cause stigmatized individuals to feel pressure to perform above others (Settles et al., 2019) or add pressure to change aspects of one's self-presentation to conform to "professional" norms (i.e., to code switch) (Johnson, 2024; McCluney et al., 2021) Therefore, network centrality may interact with marginalization in their joint effect on belonging, such that the effect of network centrality on belonging – by making people feel valued – is weaker for individuals with marginalized identities.

Reciprocal ties may also be less beneficial to people with marginalized identities. Reciprocal ties may, in general, be indicative of the strength of a relationship or the types of resources shared (Granovetter 1973). However, due to racialized social dynamics within the workplace, reciprocal ties may confer less benefit for people from marginalized groups. For example, one benefit of reciprocal ties is social support (Molm, 2010; Vaquera & Kao, 2008). However, research shows that Black workers may share different types of information or share less deeply with their white colleagues than they do with Black colleagues (Cohen & Steele, 2002; Dumas et al., 2013; Shelton et al., 2014) and that women may share different information with women than they do with men (Obukhova & Kleinbaum, 2022). For marginalized workers, it may be the case then that the relationship between reciprocal ties and sense of belonging may be more sensitive to the "with whom" or "what's discussed" than simply whether the ties exist.

Arnett (2023) examines the question of what is discussed in her work on social exchanges between cross-racial dyads. The researcher found that when minority professionals shared cultural information that revealed aspects of their inner self or illuminated their cultural history

(e.g., “Who is a person with a similar cultural background [i.e., family origin, nationality, race, ethnicity, or area where you grew up] to you who has had a big impact on shaping who you are today, and how?”), majority member professionals felt a closer connection. The study goes on to showcase that rich cultural identity expressions, in contrast to surface-level cultural identity expression (e.g., discussing a movie featuring a character from your cultural or ethnic background or mentioning going to a cultural event) or small talk (e.g., “Who is your favorite actor”), could be a mechanism for inclusion and building ties. But not all social exchanges across colleagues may be intimate or culturally insightful and thus there is potential that reciprocal ties with racially dissimilar others may make contrasts between individuals more salient (Cohen & Steele, 2002). Sharing a story about one's personal life, weekend, or family may highlight distinct racial or cultural experiences between coworkers, and therefore bidirectional ties may not result as directly in a sense of belonging. For example, Dumas et al. (2013) examined whether activities aimed at bridging one’s personal and professional lives – such as bringing partners to a work party or sharing personal stories – brought coworkers closer. Across samples of both MBA students and workers in the United States more broadly, they found that such “integration behaviors” led to closer relationships with co-workers for majority group members, but not for people with marginalized identities. In their discussion, they highlight that employees who are racially distinct from their colleagues may feel intensified or amplified contrast when revealing personal details within the workplace (Dumas et al, 2013: 1377). Disclosure also creates other risks, as raising identity-relevant issues can put others on guard or elicit negative consequences (Dumas et al., 2008; Ragins, 2008), making sharing identity-relevant information with dissimilar others potentially costly.

For people with marginalized identities, not sharing identity-relevant information can also be costly, as it leads to feelings of inauthenticity (Arnett 2023). On the other side of a relationship, when a person’s identity is hypervisible, it may make others uncomfortable to discuss it (Goff, 2008). Franklin (2022) found that non-Black workers were unwilling to discuss issues of race, the lack of Black presence in their workplace, and while acknowledging that Black workers’ experiences were difficult, they believed it may not be their place to discuss. “To discuss” or “not to discuss” race can be challenging in navigating relationships with non-minoritized employees. Research on identity negotiation and authenticity at work suggests that reciprocated ties only foster belonging when they allow marginalized employees to be authentic; when reciprocity requires monitoring or suppressing identity, these ties can actually undermine belonging (Roberts, Cha, Hewlin, & Settles, 2009; Hewlin, 2013; Wingfield, 2019). Thus, when building

relationships with dissimilar others, people with marginalized identities may be more conscious about the degree to which they can share or be open. More generally, although everyone makes choices about what to share, and about their self-presentation more generally (i.e., everyone code switches to some degree to adjust to different social situations), code switching that is performed to avoid racism has particular costs for workers (e.g., increased feelings of stress and vigilance) (Johnson, 2024; Settles et al., 2019).

Black workers also benefit from building homophilous ties with other Black professionals (Blake-Beard et al., 2019a; Debrosse et al., 2025; Friedman et al., 1998; Gilkes Borr, 2019). Typically these relationships offer benefits through enhanced mentoring and promote career optimism (Friedman et al., 1998). Therefore, for people with marginalized identities, reciprocity with similar alters may have a stronger effect on belonging than reciprocity with dissimilar alters. For majority group members, we expect no such difference.[10]

Finally, consistent with our framework, structural equivalents can enhance individuals' confidence in the appropriateness and value of their organizational role. These equivalents may be especially important for fostering belonging when they share salient life experiences. Debrosse et al. (2025) demonstrated that while both same-race and cross-race friendships provide understanding, same-race friendships offer unique benefits by affirming one's worldview, increasing positive affect, and enhancing flourishing. Understanding between typically marginalized structural equivalents can bolster overall organizational belonging as well. Thelamour et al. (2019) found that same-race Black friendships mediated students' sense of connectedness to campus, as peers with shared social contexts affirmed social identity and facilitated integration into the broader environment. In settings where social identity is threatened by hypervisibility and pressures of impression management, minoritized individuals often rely on demographically similar peers to validate their experiences. Our framework therefore posits that demographically similar structural equivalents exert a stronger influence on belonging than dissimilar ones.

[10] Our argument suggests that if majority group members were more skilled and motivated to have conversations about difference and if organizational practices of inclusion enabled truly authentic relationships, then reciprocity would be as important between groups as within groups.

Research Agenda For Inclusion & Belonging: A New Direction for Social Network Research

In a recent review, the late Dan Brass observed: “The challenge is to answer the question ‘What's next in social network analysis?’” (Brass, 2022, pg. 225). Indeed, Brass is hardly alone in noting that although structural holes have been the dominant paradigm in the social network literature for several decades (Brass, 2022, pg. 232), the question of what’s next looms large. Our framework suggests that belonging represents an important outcome variable for network researchers, and that network structures represent a key pathway for organizational researchers interested in inclusion to consider. The extensive literature on the psychology of belonging that we review here provides ample reason to consider belonging to be an experience of significant importance: it is associated with individual well-being and mental health, as well as organizationally-relevant measures of individual performance like creativity, motivation, engagement, and job retention. We suggest that network scholars would benefit from focusing on the consequences of networks for individuals’ belonging in the workplace, and the ways that a sense of belonging might shape people’s behaviors and positions in networks. And insofar as networks mediate between inclusion and belonging, researchers of social networks should collaborate with DEI scholars to explore the organizational practices of inclusion that re-shape social networks for greater belonging. Likewise, research in management and organizational behavior focused on inclusion can benefit from connections to network science and psychologists who study individual experiences of belonging.

Taken together, our hope is that the framework we propose here (see Figure 1) will be generative in building future research focused on organizations’ practices of inclusion, individual experiences of belonging, and the social network structures that bridge between them. First, we highlighted existing literature that showcased current practices of inclusion. Next, we theorized different ways in which organizational practices of inclusion might result in people occupying different positions within the social networks of an organization. In turn, we highlight the ways that these positions may affect a person’s sense of value, reciprocity, fit, and, in turn, belonging in their organization. Finally, we discussed how a marginalized identity may affect both one’s network position itself and the effect of network position on their sense of belonging. Although each of these ideas is founded on large literatures in organizational behavior and the psychology of belonging, we integrate them in novel ways, and an important next step for this research program is to test the correlational and causal relationships implied by our framework. Below we unpack this possibility, as well as additional fruitful research paths.

Empirically test the framework

Although our framework is grounded in a substantial body of past theory and empirical evidence, an important next step is to specifically, empirically test the links between organizational practices of inclusion, social network structures, and individual sense of belonging. Within this framework, researchers should continue to explore direct paths in which organizational inclusion practices improve belonging directly. A central focus of the future research agenda is to examine the direct pathways through which inclusion initiatives foster belonging, and to identify the conditions under which these effects are strongest, weakest, and equitable.

We further argue that organizational practices can influence people's social network positions, but future research is needed to empirically document which organizational practices, policies and structures most effectively shape networks, and in what ways. Inclusive practices such as mentoring programs, affinity groups, and cross-functional collaboration initiatives may directly influence employees' centrality, access to bi-directional ties, and opportunities for structural equivalence. For instance, Ibarra (1995) demonstrated that organizational context shapes who employees form relationships with, particularly along gender and racial lines. This perspective is consistent with the idea that belonging is largely shaped by the relational context of the workplace (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), which is experienced differently by people from different social-identity groups. A network perspective extends the current knowledge base by theorizing that organizational practices do not function independently, but rather are embedded within and enacted through the structure and quality of employees' social ties. More recent work suggests that diversity initiatives can unintentionally reinforce homophily or tokenism if not carefully designed (Ely & Thomas, 2001). A key research agenda, therefore, is to investigate which organizational-level practices promote equitable access to influential network positions, rather than reinforcing existing inequalities.

Researchers should also test our proposal that the structure and quality of workplace social networks are important in shaping employees' feelings of belonging. Our claims that individuals who occupy central, reciprocal, or structurally equivalent positions are more likely to perceive value, reciprocity, and fit within their organization should be empirically tested. Research on social capital has consistently shown that network embeddedness facilitates access to emotional and instrumental support, which in turn enhances psychological safety and belonging (Burt, 2005; Morrison, 2002). Thus, future research should investigate how the same network

structures may foster belonging for some groups while undermining it for others, and whether reciprocity moderates these effects. Such tests could be carried out using longitudinal social network surveys paired with belonging measures, allowing researchers to examine whether changes in employees' network centrality, reciprocity, or structural equivalence predict changes in belonging over time.

Putting these pieces together, our theoretical framework implies a mediation: organizational structures and practices of inclusion should both directly enhance people's sense of belonging and indirectly shape belonging through their effects on network structures. This could be tested through field experiments that introduce new inclusion practices and track their downstream effects on employees' networks and belonging over time. For instance, one might want to study how transparent performance evaluation, that acknowledges contributions across roles and identity groups, can influence belonging. The policy may have direct impacts on belonging such as affirming employees' value and signaling their inclusion in the organizational community (Shore et al., 2011; Tyler & Blader, 2003). From a mediated network perspective, this recognition may also reshape informal social networks by increasing employees' visibility, fostering reputations for competence and prompting others to initiate collaboration or offer support (Ibarra, 1993; Kilduff & Krackhardt, 2008). This could also be tested through programs that more directly operate on the structure of employees' networks, such as inclusive onboarding and mentorship programs. Such programs could have effects on both employees' ties and on their feelings of belonging. These expanded and strengthened ties can, in turn, provide greater access to resources, influence, and social affirmation, reinforcing a sense of belonging through embeddedness in supportive relational structures (Morrison, 2002; Burt, 2005).

Although our framework highlights centrality, reciprocity, and structural equivalence as key network mechanisms shaping belonging, future research should also examine other network structures and antecedents that may be influential. This research should also address the extent to which these relationships are specific (e.g., a one-to-one mapping between centrality and value; bidirectional ties and reciprocity; structural equivalence and fit), or whether there are more complex relations between each of these factors. Exploratory research that links other network features with feelings of value, reciprocity, fit, and ultimately belonging will also be fruitful. Expanding to other operationalizations of value, reciprocity and fit, brokerage positions can provide employees with access to diverse resources but may simultaneously create tension or isolation if brokers are perceived as outsiders (Burt, 1992; Burt, 2005; Podolny & Baron,

1997; Vedres & Stark, 2010). Conversely, network closure and clustering may foster trust, solidarity, and mutual support, yet limit exposure to new information or cross-group connections (Coleman, 1988; Reagans & McEvily, 2003). Tie multiplexity, the extent to which relationships combine instrumental, emotional, and social support, has also been linked to stronger identification and belonging (Krackhardt, 1992; Methot et al., 2016). Beyond network structure, antecedents such as leadership behaviors (Carmeli, Brueller, & Dutton, 2009), organizational culture (Chatman & O'Reilly, 2016), and technological infrastructures for collaboration (Leonardi, 2014) can shape the kinds of ties employees form and the degree to which they experience belonging through them.

Likewise, we have focused on belonging as a crucial outcome, but glossed over some nuances about its operationalization. Delving more into this example, we see fruitful possibilities in integrating more affective experiences into network research about belonging. Belonging is not merely a cognitive assessment of one's role in an organization, it is a deeply emotional experience. Yet affect is often underrepresented in models of workplace networks. Future research should investigate how affective states mediate or moderate the relationship between network structures and experiences of belonging. For example, perceived centrality may not yield feelings of value if individuals simultaneously experience stress, distrust, or anxiety within their social environment. Emotions such as pride, gratitude, or social anxiety may help explain why certain network configurations foster belonging for some employees but not others. Emerging methods in affective science, such as real-time experience sampling, sentiment analysis of workplace communication, and physiological measures, offer promising tools to complement social network data. These tools could help researchers assess not just who is connected to whom, but how those interactions are felt and interpreted. Investigating the emotional texture of workplace relationships may also shed light on phenomena like "emotional contagion" (Barsade, 2002), in which affective states spread through networks, potentially reinforcing inclusive or exclusionary climates. Ultimately, incorporating affect into network-based models of inclusion could offer a richer, more human account of how belonging is cultivated – or undermined – at work. The same is true for other core concepts, where deepening our understanding of the interplay between cognition, affect and behavior will provide more tractable pathways for understanding and intervention.

Future research could further build on these foundations by exploring the longitudinal impacts of inclusion on behavior using dynamic network analysis, perhaps in conjunction with experience sampling, sentiment analysis of workplace communication, and physiological measures as

noted above. This combination could be employed to observe how changes in the network – such as an employee's shift from a peripheral to a central role – might affect their behaviors and psychological well-being over time. For example, do changes in social network position correlate with changes in job satisfaction, productivity, or innovation? Conversely, how does persistent exclusion predict disengagement, burnout, or even exit from the organization? This line of research would not only enrich our understanding of inclusion and exclusion as evolving processes but also provide actionable insights for organizations interested in developing interventions looking to foster more inclusive environments that enhance employee well-being. Even absent intentional intervention from the organization, employees' positions in informal networks shift over time, as do their experiences of belonging. Longitudinal network analysis could reveal whether increasing centrality or forming new bidirectional ties leads to subsequent increases in belonging, or whether shifts in belonging precede changes in network position. Analysis of network dynamics may also help disentangle the reciprocal nature of belonging and behavior – whether a sense of belonging makes individuals more likely to form new connections or whether forming those connections catalyzes a greater sense of value, reciprocity, and fit – and how this in turn shapes people's willingness to engage with and change organizational policies that impact both.

In considering empirical tests of our framework, we also see enormous potential for descriptive observational research and natural experiments as well. For example, the context of remote and hybrid work offers a generative testbed for considering how network structures relate to inclusion and belonging. As organizations increasingly adopt remote and hybrid work, the formation and maintenance of informal networks are undergoing profound change. In physically co-located environments, proximity and serendipitous encounters often foster relationship-building and contribute to employees' sense of belonging. In digital environments, however, these informal moments are less frequent or entirely absent. The shift to remote and hybrid work has reshaped employees' networks in ways that carry important implications for belonging. The Leonardi et al. (2024) "refraction" framework argues that remote work increases psychological, temporal, technological, and structural distances, altering interaction patterns and potentially distancing individuals from social resources. Supporting this perspective, in a study of 61,182 US Microsoft employees Yang et al.(2021) found that when employees shifted to fully remote work their collaboration networks became more static, with less changes in whom they collaborated with per month, and more siloed, with less ties across different team units. Emerging research suggests hybrid work can partially restore lost weak ties from completely

remote work, however this benefit may depend on intentional coordination of in-person interactions (Carmody et al., 2022). These network shifts matter for belonging because embeddedness in diverse, cross-cutting ties fosters visibility, trust, and access to resources (Ibarra, 1993, 1995; Shore et al., 2011) , whereas network fragmentation can undermine inclusion, particularly for newcomers and marginalized employees. Studying belonging in these contexts should integrate social network measures into longitudinal designs to examine how work configurations influence inclusion over time, as the mechanisms through which practices foster belonging in remote networks may differ substantially from the spontaneous, proximity-driven pathways common in in-person networks. We hope that empirical research will test the basic premises of our framework by combining organizational policy analysis with social network analysis and psychological measures, deepen our understanding of how to operationalize key elements of the framework, and take advantage of cultural shifts such as moves toward hybrid work environments.

Finally, the proposed framework linking organizational inclusion, network structure, and individual belonging is grounded in research largely conducted in Western, educated, industrialized, rich, and democratic (WEIRD) societies (Henrich et al., 2010). However, cultural norms strongly shape how value, reciprocity, and fit are experienced, as well as how social networks form and function within organizations. Future research should test the generalizability of this model in diverse cultural contexts, asking whether centrality, bidirectional ties, and structural equivalence operate similarly in other cultures. For example, in collectivist settings, belonging may derive less from personal centrality and more from embeddedness within tightly-knit subgroups. Additionally, the interpretation of network structures may vary across cultural schemas. In some cultures, reciprocal ties may be indirect, asymmetric, or embedded in long-term obligation, rather than equal exchange. Comparative studies across regions and industries can help clarify which components of the inclusion-belonging framework are culturally specific and which are universal.

Investigate how organizations' practices of inclusion induce belonging in marginalized workers

Although inclusion can benefit all employees, it may be especially important in the health, retention, and wellbeing of employees who are marginalized by society. Thus it is important to understand specifically how marginalized workers are currently impacted by organizational dynamics. Policies like diversity training, recognition programs, and flexible work structures may

improve belonging for some groups but fail for others (Dobbin & Kalev, 2018). Researchers should examine how current workplace practices and policies shape individual workers' positions in social networks, then test how positions in networks may shape the experience of value, reciprocity, and fit that marginalized workers feel in their workplaces. In addition, we believe that network analysis offers a tool to quantify many of the social experiences marginalized workers discuss. For example, being hypervisible or invisible may be also explored through network features.

As one example, hypervisibility is characterized by being highly visible and scrutinized within an organization. In terms of the network features we proposed here, one may consider having a high number of incoming ties (indegree) or outgoing ties (outdegree) that are one-directional. A hypervisible employee may be named as a source of advice or collaboration, while reciprocating few or none of these ties. In this case, the employee may be expected to be a frequent point of contact or a visible "go-to" person, yet without the mutual exchange, trust, or social embeddedness that typically comes with belonging. They may be expected to "give" without receiving in return (Grant, 2013). This structural pattern could reflect a form of tokenization: the individual is highly central in terms of others' awareness and demands, but peripheral in terms of supportive, mutual relationships. By contrast, invisibility can be characterized by having very few incoming or outgoing ties in key workplace networks, indicating limited recognition, contact, or integration.

Related to this point, in the current review, we have operationalized inclusion and exclusion as opposite ends of a continuum; however, future research should expand this understanding to explore if and when inclusion and exclusion are induced by related forces. For example, employees may experience inclusion through a promotion or other change in formal organizational authority while simultaneously perceiving exclusion through subtle interpersonal slights, identity-based marginalization, or being on the periphery of decisions for their level (Jansen et al., 2017; Roberson, 2006). More broadly, we emphasize that each of the links described in our framework should be tested in diverse groups of people, and that it is crucial to document how the identities that people hold may change the relationships theorized in our framework.

Develop interventions to increase inclusion and belonging

Our integrative framework suggests that one approach to increasing inclusion in organizations would be to develop interventions that target changes in network structures within organizations

that would enhance employees' sense of belonging. Some inclusion interventions that have already been tried act on the network: for example, affinity groups and employee resource groups (ERGs) are designed to facilitate network-building among demographically similar people; mentorship and sponsorship programs pair junior employees from marginalized groups with senior leaders who advocate for them. However, by shining a light on networks as a mediating mechanism, we hope to stimulate new ideas about how to promote inclusion more effectively.

Network interventions also offer an opportunity to establish clearer causal pathways from organizational inclusion to belonging in individuals. By intentionally reshaping formal and informal structures, researchers and organizations could assess how altering patterns of communication, collaboration, and influence (i.e., changing the social network structure) affect individuals' experience of belonging. Such interventions might involve opportunities for individuals to showcase their knowledge and skills, which might increase their network centrality and improve their sense of being valued in the organization. They might involve "reverse mentoring" programs (Jordan & Sorell, 2019) that encourage the exchange of different expertise and the formation of reciprocal network ties. They might increase people's sense of fit by leveraging technology to help people identify structurally equivalent (or otherwise similar) peers. Evaluating the outcomes of these changes can provide insights into how network structures influence social integration and how strategic modifications can foster a more inclusive, connected workforce.

By taking a more systematic approach that targets people's position and/or directly seeks to impact their sense of value, reciprocity, and fit, we might be able to promote inclusion more effectively. Organizations that adopt network analytics tools may have opportunities to proactively manage inclusion by managing the informal network; after all, "what gets measured gets done," (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992, pg. 146). Such research might also examine whether people in particular organizational roles or job functions tend to be more isolated, have more or fewer reciprocal ties, or more structural equivalents than others. This could fundamentally change how organizations discuss inclusion by providing a lens for examining paths to increasing not only representation overall, but also in positions that are likely to facilitate a sense of belonging.

What are the consequences of restructuring informal networks?

Although intentional interventions aimed at reshaping workplace networks, such as cross-functional team rotations, mentorship matchmaking, or facilitated network-building workshops, represent a promising but underutilized tool for improving organizational inclusion and employees' sense of belonging and wellbeing, deliberately modifying organizational networks may yield both intended and unintended organization-level consequences.

On the positive side, reshaping networks could disrupt entrenched silos, promote knowledge sharing, and build more equitable access to power and information (Burt, 1992; Cross, 2004; Eisenberger et al., 2001; Ibarra, 1995). Network interventions could also serve to embed inclusive norms, enabling marginalized employees to become more central within the organizational fabric (McGuire, 2000; DiPrete & Eirich, 2006).

Conversely, these changes may provoke resistance, especially if interventions are perceived as artificial, managerial overreach, or disconnected from day-to-day work (Kellogg, 2009). Rewiring networks may reduce employees' autonomy over their social choices, create connections that lack authenticity, or inadvertently reinforce existing hierarchies if not carefully designed (Elliott & Smith, 2004). Future research should assess the systemic effects of network interventions, including whether their benefits are widely distributed or unevenly experienced.

Extending the logic that such interventions could have intended positive consequences, as well as unintended side effects, it will be crucial to document both. For instance, for some employees—particularly those who are underrepresented or structurally isolated—network interventions may increase access to mentorship, information, and emotional support, thereby strengthening their sense of belonging (Brass et al., 2004). However, for others, being integrated into new social environments may bring additional burdens: pressure to conform, emotional labor to sustain new ties, or a sense of identity threat when placed into imposed relationships (L. M. Roberts, 2005). Additionally, the restructuring of networks may inadvertently sever or deprioritize previously trusted relationships. Some research would argue that by building more social connections within the organizations, some employees may also lose potential advantages in the information they possess (Buskens & Van De Rijt, 2008). These dynamics may influence not only belonging but also individual agency, authenticity, and well-being (Allen et al., 2022; Ragins, 1997). Lastly, researchers should explore how social network interventions are perceived across identity groups or tenures and whether these perceptions mediate the relationship between network structures and psychological outcomes.

Conclusion

In this paper, we aim to unify and advance the study of workplace inclusion by offering a framework that connects organizational moves toward inclusion and individual experiences of belonging and by integrating social network analysis as a bridge between the two. We argue that inclusion is not just about formal policies but is fundamentally shaped by the informal social networks that influence employees' access to resources, mentorship, and decision-making opportunities. Our model highlights three key antecedents of belonging – value, reciprocity, and fit – and demonstrates how social networks mediate the effects of inclusive organizational structures, practices, and policies on individual belonging. We also highlight the ways that these network structures may not confer equal benefits for all employees.

By incorporating a social network perspective, we provide both researchers and organizations with tools to diagnose and address hidden barriers to inclusion, particularly for marginalized employees who often remain on the periphery of workplace networks. This framework also opens new avenues for future research, including interventions that reshape social structures to enhance inclusion and mitigate the effects of marginalization. Understanding how workplace relationships are created and maintained over time – and how they systematically differ across groups – can help organizations design more effective interventions that foster meaningful inclusion and equitable participation at all levels.

Acknowledgements

The authors wish to thank Stacy Blake-Beard, Joseph Kable, Anna Jenkins, and the anonymous reviewer for their feedback on an earlier draft of this paper. We would like to extend gratitude to editor Greta Hsu for her insight and grace through this writing and submission process. During the preparation of this work the author(s) used ChatGPT (OpenAI) in order to assist in reference searches and improve readability and clarity of the manuscript. After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the published article.

References

Ahn, M. Y., & Davis, H. H. (2020). Sense of belonging as an indicator of social capital. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, *40*(7/8), 627–642. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSSP-12-2019-0258

Allen, K.-A., Gray, D. L., Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (2022). The Need to Belong: A Deep Dive into the Origins, Implications, and Future of a Foundational Construct. *Educational Psychology Review*, *34*(2), 1133–1156. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-021-09633-6

Allen, T. J. (1984). Managing the flow of technology: Technology transfer and the dissemination of technological information within the R&D organization. *MIT Press Books*, *1*.

Amis, J. M., Mair, J., & Munir, K. A. (2020). The Organizational Reproduction of Inequality. *Academy of Management Annals*, *14*(1), 195–230. https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2017.0033

Avolio, B., Chávez, J., & Vílchez-Román, C. (2020). Factors that contribute to the underrepresentation of women in science careers worldwide: A literature review. *Social Psychology of Education*, *23*(3), 773–794. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-020-09558-y

Baldi, S., & McBRIER, D. B. (1997). Do the Determinants of Promotion Differ for Blacks and Whites?: Evidence from the U.S. Labor Market. *Work and Occupations*, *24*(4), 478–497. https://doi.org/10.1177/0730888497024004005

Barak, M. E. M. (2022). *Managing diversity: Toward a globally inclusive workplace*. Sage Publications.

Barnard, C. I. (1968). *The functions of the executive* (Vol. 11). Harvard university press.

Barsade, S. G. (2002). The Ripple Effect: Emotional Contagion and its Influence on Group Behavior. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *47*(4), 644–675. https://doi.org/10.2307/3094912

Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, *117*(3), 497–529. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.117.3.497

Begen, F. M., & Turner-Cobb, J. M. (2015). Benefits of belonging: Experimental manipulation of social inclusion to enhance psychological and physiological health parameters. *Psychology & Health*, *30*(5), 568–582. https://doi.org/10.1080/08870446.2014.991734

Berger Peter, L., & Luckmann, T. (1966). The social construction of reality. *A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*.

Bernstein, R. S., Salipante, P. F., & Weisinger, J. Y. (2022). *Performance through diversity and inclusion: Leveraging organizational practices for equity and results* (First published). Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367822484

Berry, D., & Bell, M. P. (2012a). Inequality in organizations: Stereotyping, discrimination, and labor law exclusions. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, *31*(3), 236–248. https://doi.org/10.1108/02610151211209090

Berry, D., & Bell, M. P. (2012b). Inequality in organizations: Stereotyping, discrimination, and labor law exclusions. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, *31*(3), 236–248. https://doi.org/10.1108/02610151211209090

Bertrand, M., & Mullainathan, S. (2004). Are Emily and Greg More Employable Than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination. *American Economic Review*, *94*(4), 991–1013. https://doi.org/10.1257/0002828042002561

Bjorklund, P., Daly, A. J., Ambrose, R., & van Es, E. A. (2020a). Connections and Capacity: An Exploration of Preservice Teachers' Sense of Belonging, Social Networks, and Self-Efficacy in Three Teacher Education Programs. *AERA Open*, *6*(1), 2332858420901496. https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858420901496

Bjorklund, P., Daly, A. J., Ambrose, R., & van Es, E. A. (2020b). Connections and Capacity: An Exploration of Preservice Teachers' Sense of Belonging, Social Networks, and Self-Efficacy in Three Teacher Education Programs. *AERA Open*, *6*(1), 2332858420901496. https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858420901496

Blake-Beard, S., Roberts, L. M., Edgehill, B., & Washington, E. F. (2019a). Feeling connected: The importance of engagement, authenticity, and relationships in the careers of diverse professionals. *Race, Work, and Leadership: New Perspectives on the Black Experience*, 151–168.

Blake-Beard, S., Roberts, L. M., Edgehill, B., & Washington, E. F. (2019b). Race, Work, and Leadership: New Perspectives on the Black Experience. In *Race, Work, and Leadership: New Perspectives on the Black Experience*. Harvard Business Review Press.

Bonacich, P. (1987). Power and Centrality: A Family of Measures. *American Journal of Sociology*, *92*(5), 1170–1182. https://doi.org/10.1086/228631

Boroş, S., & Curşeu, P. L. (2013). Is it here where I belong? An integrative model of turnover intentions. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *43*(8), 1553–1562. https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12104

Bourdieu, P. (1986). Habitus, code et codification. *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, *64*(1), 40–44. https://doi.org/10.3406/arss.1986.2335

Bowles, H. R., Babcock, L., & McGinn, K. L. (2005). Constraints and triggers: Situational mechanics of gender in negotiation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *89*(6), 951–965. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.89.6.951

Brass, D. J. (2022). New Developments in Social Network Analysis. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *9*(1), 225–246. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-012420-090628

Brass, D. J., & Burkhardt, M. E. (1993). Potential Power and Power Use: An Investigation of Structure and Behavior. *Academy of Management Journal*, *36*(3), 441–470. https://doi.org/10.5465/256588

Brass, D. J., Galaskiewicz, J., & Greve, H. R. (2004). TAKING STOCK OF NETWORKS AND ORGANIZATIONS: A MULTILEVEL PERSPECTIVE. *Academy of Management Journal*, *47*(6), 795–817. https://doi.org/10.2307/20159624

Brighenti, A. (2007). Visibility: A category for the social sciences. *Current Sociology*, *55*(3), 323–342.

Brimhall, K. C., & Mor Barak, M. E. (2018). The Critical Role of Workplace Inclusion in Fostering Innovation, Job Satisfaction, and Quality of Care in a Diverse Human Service Organization. *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance*, *42*(5), 474–492. https://doi.org/10.1080/23303131.2018.1526151

Brooks, A. W., Gino, F., & Schweitzer, M. E. (2015). Smart People Ask for (My) Advice: Seeking Advice Boosts Perceptions of Competence. *Management Science*, *61*(6), 1421–1435. https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.2014.2054

Buchanan, N. T., & Settles, I. H. (2019). Managing (in)visibility and hypervisibility in the workplace. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *113*, 1–5. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.11.001

Burt, R. S. (1992). *Structural Holes*. Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674029095

BURT, R. S. (1992). *Structural Holes*. Harvard University Press; JSTOR. http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1kz4h78

Burt, R. S. (2005). *Brokerage and closure: An introduction to social capital*. Oxford University Press.

Buskens, V., & Van De Rijt, A. (2008). Dynamics of Networks if Everyone Strives for Structural Holes. *American Journal of Sociology*, *114*(2), 371–407. https://doi.org/10.1086/590674

Cable, D. M., & Judge, T. A. (1996). Person–Organization Fit, Job Choice Decisions, and

Organizational Entry. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *67*(3), 294–311. https://doi.org/10.1006/obhd.1996.0081
Cacioppo, J. T., & Cacioppo, S. (2014). Social Relationships and Health: The Toxic Effects of Perceived Social Isolation. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, *8*(2), 58–72. https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12087
Cacioppo, J. T., Fowler, J. H., & Christakis, N. A. (2009). Alone in the crowd: The structure and spread of loneliness in a large social network. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *97*(6), 977. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0016076
Carley, K. (1986). An approach for relating social structure to cognitive structure. *The Journal of Mathematical Sociology*, *12*(2), 137–189. https://doi.org/10.1080/0022250X.1986.9990010
Carmody, D., Mazzarello, M., Santi, P., Harris, T., Lehmann, S., Abbiasov, T., Dunbar, R., & Ratti, C. (2022). The effect of co-location on human communication networks. *Nature Computational Science*, *2*(8), 494–503. https://doi.org/10.1038/s43588-022-00296-z
Carton, A. M., & Rosette, A. S. (2011). Explaining Bias against Black Leaders: Integrating Theory on Information Processing and Goal-Based Stereotyping. *Academy of Management Journal*, *54*(6), 1141–1158. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2009.0745
Chen, C., & Tang, N. (2018). Does perceived inclusion matter in the workplace? *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, *33*(1), 43–57. https://doi.org/10.1108/JMP-02-2017-0078
Chung, B. G., Ehrhart, K. H., Shore, L. M., Randel, A. E., Dean, M. A., & Kedharnath, U. (2020). Work Group Inclusion: Test of a Scale and Model. *Group & Organization Management*, *45*(1), 75–102. https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601119839858
Cohen, G. L., & Steele, C. M. (2002). A Barrier of Mistrust. In *Improving Academic Achievement* (pp. 303–327). Elsevier. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-012064455-1/50018-X
Combs, G. M., Milosevic, I., & Bilimoria, D. (2019). Introduction to the Special Topic Forum: Critical Discourse: Envisioning the Place and Future of Diversity and Inclusion in Organizations. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, *26*(3), 277–286. https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051819857739
Cross, R. (2004). *The hidden power of social networks: Understanding how work really gets done in organizations*. Harvard Business School Press.
Cuddy, A. J. C., Fiske, S. T., & Glick, P. (2008). Warmth and Competence as Universal Dimensions of Social Perception: The Stereotype Content Model and the BIAS Map. In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 40, pp. 61–149). Academic Press. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(07)00002-0
Debrosse, R., Thai, S., Auger, E., & Brieva, T. (2025). Understanding in same- versus cross-race close relationships predicts the well-being of people of color over time. *Scientific Reports*, *15*(1), 4968. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-86700-w
Dickens, D. D., Womack, V. Y., & Dimes, T. (2019). Managing hypervisibility: An exploration of theory and research on identity shifting strategies in the workplace among Black women. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *113*, 153–163. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.10.008
DiPrete, T. A., Gelman, A., McCormick, T., Teitler, J., & Zheng, T. (2011). Segregation in Social Networks Based on Acquaintanceship and Trust. *American Journal of Sociology*, *116*(4), 1234–1283. https://doi.org/10.1086/659100
Dobbin, F., & Kalev, A. (2018). Why Doesn't Diversity Training Work? The Challenge for Industry and Academia. *Anthropology Now*, *10*(2), 48–55. https://doi.org/10.1080/19428200.2018.1493182
Dobusch, L. (2021). The inclusivity of inclusion approaches: A relational perspective on inclusion and exclusion in organizations. *Gender, Work & Organization*, *28*(1), 379–396. https://doi.org/10.1111/gwao.12574
Dougherty, D. (1992). Interpretive Barriers to Successful Product Innovation in Large Firms. *Organization Science*, *3*(2), 179–202. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.3.2.179

Douglass, R. P. (2023). Experiences of marginalization in career development: From education to the workplace. In W. B. Walsh, L. Y. Flores, P. J. Hartung, & F. T. L. Leong (Eds.), *Career psychology: Models, concepts, and counseling for meaningful employment.* (pp. 577–590). American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/0000339-027

Duffy, M. K., Ganster, D. C., & Pagon, M. (2002). Social Undermining in the Workplace. *Academy of Management Journal*, *45*(2), 331–351. https://doi.org/10.2307/3069350

Dumas, T. L., Phillips, K. W., & Rothbard, N. P. (2013). Getting closer at the company party: Integration experiences, racial dissimilarity, and workplace relationships. *Organization Science*, *24*(5), 1377–1401.

Dumas, T. L., Rothbard, N. P., & Phillips, K. W. (2008). Self-disclosure: Beneficial for cohesion in demographically diverse work groups? In *Diversity and Groups* (Vol. 11, pp. 143–166). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Edwards, M. R. (2005). Organizational identification: A conceptual and operational review. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *7*(4), 207–230. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2005.00114.x

Eisenberger, R., Armeli, S., Rexwinkel, B., Lynch, P. D., & Rhoades, L. (2001a). Reciprocation of perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *86*(1), 42–51. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.86.1.42

Eisenberger, R., Armeli, S., Rexwinkel, B., Lynch, P. D., & Rhoades, L. (2001b). Reciprocation of perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *86*(1), 42–51. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.86.1.42

Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchison, S., & Sowa, D. (1986). Perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *71*(3), 500–507. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.71.3.500

Eisenberger, R., Malone, G. P., & Presson, W. D. (2016). *Optimizing perceived organizational support to enhance employee engagement*.

Elliott, J. R., & Smith, R. A. (2004). Race, Gender, and Workplace Power. *American Sociological Review*, *69*(3), 365–386. https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240406900303

Fairhurst, G. T. (1993). The leader‐member exchange patterns of women leaders in industry: A discourse analysis. *Communication Monographs*, *60*(4), 321–351. https://doi.org/10.1080/03637759309376316

Farh, C. I. C., Liao, H., Shapiro, D. L., Shin, J., & Guan, O. Z. (2021). Out of sight and out of mind? Networking strategies for enhancing inclusion in multinational organizations. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *106*(4), 582–598. https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000647

Fassinger, R. E. (2008). Workplace diversity and public policy: Challenges and opportunities for psychology. *American Psychologist*, *63*(4), 252.

Feagin, J. (2013). *Systemic racism: A theory of oppression*. Routledge.

Feagin, J. R., & Eckberg, D. L. (1980). Discrimination: Motivation, action, effects, and context. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *6*, 1–20.

Ferdman, B. M., & Deane, B. R. (2013). Practicing Inclusion: Looking Back and Looking Ahead. In B. M. Ferdman & B. R. Deane (Eds.), *Diversity at Work: The Practice of Inclusion* (1st ed., pp. 593–600). Wiley. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118764282.ch23

Ferris, D. L., Brown, D. J., Berry, J. W., & Lian, H. (2008). The development and validation of the Workplace Ostracism Scale. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *93*(6), 1348–1366. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0012743

Fiske, S. T., Cuddy, A. J. C., & Glick, P. (2007). Universal dimensions of social cognition: Warmth and competence. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, *11*(2), 77–83. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2006.11.005

Franklin, R. C. (2022). Black workers in Silicon Valley: Macro and micro boundaries. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01419870.2020.1866208

Freeman, L. C., Roeder, D., & Mulholland, R. R. (1979). Centrality in social networks: Ii.

experimental results. *Social Networks*, *2*(2), 119–141. https://doi.org/10.1016/0378-8733(79)90002-9
Friedman, R., Kane, M., & Cornfield, D. B. (1998). Social Support and Career Optimism: Examining the Effectiveness of Network Groups Among Black Managers. *Human Relations*, *51*(9), 1155–1177. https://doi.org/10.1177/001872679805100903
Galinsky, A. D., Ku, G., & Wang, C. S. (2005). Perspective-Taking and Self-Other Overlap: Fostering Social Bonds and Facilitating Social Coordination. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, *8*(2), 109–124. https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430205051060
Gilbert, J., Carr-Ruffino, N., Ivancevich, J. M., & Lownes-Jackson, M. (2003). An Empirical Examination of Inter-Ethnic Stereotypes: Comparing Asian American and African American Employees. *Public Personnel Management*, *32*(2), 251–266. https://doi.org/10.1177/009102600303200205
Gilkes Borr, T. (2019). The Strategic Pursuit of Black Homophily on a Predominantly White Campus. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *90*(2), 322–346. https://doi.org/10.1080/00221546.2018.1513305
Goldin, C. (2014). A Grand Gender Convergence: Its Last Chapter. *American Economic Review*, *104*(4), 1091–1119. https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.104.4.1091
Good, C., Rattan, A., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). Why do women opt out? Sense of belonging and women's representation in mathematics. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *102*(4), 700–717. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0026659
Gouldner, A. W. (1960). The Norm of Reciprocity: A Preliminary Statement. *American Sociological Review*, *25*(2), 161–178. https://doi.org/10.2307/2092623
Graen, G. B., & Uhl-Bien, M. (1995). Relationship-based approach to leadership: Development of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25 years: Applying a multi-level multi-domain perspective. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *6*(2), 219–247. https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843(95)90036-5
Granovetter, M. S. (1973). The Strength of Weak Ties. *American Journal of Sociology*, *78*(6), 1360–1380. https://doi.org/10.1086/225469
Grant, A. M. (2013). *Give and take: A revolutionary approach to success*. Viking.
Greenaway, K. H., Haslam, S. A., Cruwys, T., Branscombe, N. R., Ysseldyk, R., & Heldreth, C. (2015). From "we" to "me": Group identification enhances perceived personal control with consequences for health and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *109*(1), 53–74. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspi0000019
Grodsky, E., & Pager, D. (2001). The Structure of Disadvantage: Individual and Occupational Determinants of the Black-White Wage Gap. *American Sociological Review*, *66*(4), 542–567. https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240106600404
Grosser, T. J., Sterling, C. M., Piplani, R. S., Cullen‐Lester, K. L., & Floyd, T. M. (2023). A social network perspective on workplace inclusion: The role of network closure, network centrality, and need for affiliation. *Human Resource Management*, *62*(4), 477–490. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.22131
Grosser, T. J., Sterling, C. M., Piplani, R. S., Cullen-Lester, K. L., & Floyd, T. M. (2023a). A social network perspective on workplace inclusion: The role of network closure, network centrality, and need for affiliation. *Human Resource Management*, *62*(4), 477–490. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.22131
Grosser, T. J., Sterling, C. M., Piplani, R. S., Cullen-Lester, K. L., & Floyd, T. M. (2023b). A social network perspective on workplace inclusion: The role of network closure, network centrality, and need for affiliation. *Human Resource Management*, *62*(4), 477–490. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.22131
Guillaume, Y. R. F., Dawson, J. F., Woods, S. A., Sacramento, C. A., & West, M. A. (2013). Getting diversity at work to work: What we know and what we still don't know. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *86*(2), 123–141.

https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12009
Gyllensten, K., & Palmer, S. (2005). The role of gender in workplace stress: A critical literature review. *Health Education Journal*, *64*(3), 271–288.
Hall, J. C., Everett, J. E., & Hamilton-Mason, J. (2012). Black women talk about workplace stress and how they cope. *Journal of Black Studies*, *43*(2), 207–226.
Hartung, F.-M., Sproesser, G., & Renner, B. (2015). Being and feeling liked by others: How social inclusion impacts health. *Psychology & Health*, *30*(9), 1103–1115. https://doi.org/10.1080/08870446.2015.1031134
He, H., & Brown, A. D. (2013). Organizational Identity and Organizational Identification: A Review of the Literature and Suggestions for Future Research. *Group & Organization Management*, *38*(1), 3–35. https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601112473815
Hedegard, D. (2018). Why do blacks have smaller social networks than whites? The mechanism of racial identity strength. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *41*(14), 2464–2484. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1367019
Hekman, D. R., Johnson, S. K., Foo, M.-D., & Yang, W. (2017). Does Diversity-Valuing Behavior Result in Diminished Performance Ratings for Non-White and Female Leaders? *Academy of Management Journal*, *60*(2), 771–797. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2014.0538
Hitlan, R., Cliffton, R., & Desoto, M. (2006). Perceived exclusion in the workplace: The moderating effects of gender on work- related attitudes and psychological health. *North American Journal of Psychology*, *8*, 1–20.
Hoffman, B. J., & Woehr, D. J. (2006). A quantitative review of the relationship between person–organization fit and behavioral outcomes. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *68*(3), 389–399. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2005.08.003
Holt, L. J., Bry, B. H., & Johnson, V. L. (2008). Enhancing School Engagement in At-Risk, Urban Minority Adolescents Through a School-Based, Adult Mentoring Intervention. *Child & Family Behavior Therapy*, *30*(4), 297–318. https://doi.org/10.1080/07317100802482969
Homans, G. C. (1993). *Social behavior as exchange* (Reprint edition). Irvington Publishers Inc., Gazelle Book Service.
Howard, M. C., Cogswell, J. E., & Smith, M. B. (2020). The antecedents and outcomes of workplace ostracism: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *105*(6), 577–596. https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000453
Ibarra, H. (1993). Personal Networks of Women and Minorities in Management: A Conceptual Framework. *The Academy of Management Review*, *18*(1), 56. https://doi.org/10.2307/258823
Ibarra, H. (1995). Race, Opportunity, And Diversity Of Social Circles In Managerial Networks. *Academy of Management Journal*, *38*(3), 673–703. https://doi.org/10.5465/256742
Ingram, P., & Roberts, P. W. (2000). Friendships among competitors in the Sydney hotel industry. *American Journal of Sociology*, *106*(2), 387–423.
Jackson, D. E. (2024). *Dangling Bridge Builders: Exploring the Personal and Professional Experiences of DEI Executives With Workplace Belonging*. Southeastern University.
Jackson, P. B., & Stewart, Q. T. (2003). A research agenda for the black middle class: Work stress, survival strategies, and mental health. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 442–455.
Jansen, W. S., Otten, S., & van der Zee, K. I. (2017). Being different at work: How gender dissimilarity relates to social inclusion and absenteeism. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, *20*(6), 879–893. https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430215625783
Johnson, D. (2024). *COMMUNICATING IN THE FACE OF OPPRESSION: THE ANTECEDENTS OF CODE SWITCHING AND CONSEQUENCES OF (LINGUISTIC) RACISM AMONG BLACK AMERICANS*. University of Pennsylvania.
Jordan, J., & Sorell, M. (2019). Why reverse mentoring works and how to do it right. *Harvard*

Business Review, *3*.
Kabanoff, B. (1991). Equity, Equality, Power, and Conflict. *The Academy of Management Review*, *16*(2), 416. https://doi.org/10.2307/258869
Kellogg, K. C. (2009). Operating Room: Relational Spaces and Microinstitutional Change in Surgery. *American Journal of Sociology*, *115*(3), 657–711. https://doi.org/10.1086/603535
Kleinbaum, A. M. (2012). Organizational Misfits and the Origins of Brokerage in Intrafirm Networks. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *57*(3), 407–452. https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839212461141
Kleinbaum, A. M. (2018). Reorganization and Tie Decay Choices. *Management Science*, *64*(5), 2219–2237. https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.2016.2705
Knapp, J. R., Smith, B. R., & Sprinkle, T. A. (2014). Clarifying the Relational Ties of Organizational Belonging: Understanding the Roles of Perceived Insider Status, Psychological Ownership, and Organizational Identification. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, *21*(3), 273–285. https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051814529826
Knight, J. L., Hebl, M. R., Foster, J. B., & Mannix, L. M. (2003). Out of Role? Out of Luck: The Influence of Race and Leadership Status on Performance Appraisals. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, *9*(3), 85–93. https://doi.org/10.1177/107179190300900308
Krackhardt, D., Nohria, N., & Eccles, B. (1992). The strength of strong ties: The importance of philos in organizations. *Networks in the Knowledge Economy*, 216–239.
Kraus, M. W., Torrez, B., & Hollie, L. (2022). How narratives of racial progress create barriers to diversity, equity, and inclusion in organizations. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, *43*, 108–113. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2021.06.022
Kristof, A. L. (1996). Person-Organization Fit: An Integrative Review of Its Conceptualizations, Measurement, and Implications. *Personnel Psychology*, *49*(1), 1–49. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.1996.tb01790.x
Lamont, M., & Molnár, V. (2002). The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *28*(1), 167–195. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.28.110601.141107
Leary, M. R., & Allen, A. B. (2011). Belonging motivation: Establishing, maintaining, and repairing relational value. In *Social Motivation* (pp. 37–55). Psychology Press.
Leask, B., & Carroll, J. (2011). Moving beyond 'wishing and hoping': Internationalisation and student experiences of inclusion and engagement. *Higher Education Research & Development*, *30*(5), 647–659. https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2011.598454
Lee, R. M., & Robbins, S. B. (1998). The relationship between social connectedness and anxiety, self-esteem, and social identity. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *45*(3), 338–345. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.45.3.338
Leonardi, P. M., Parker, S. H., & Shen, R. (2024). How Remote Work Changes the World of Work. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *11*(1), 193–219. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-091922-015852
Lewis, P., & Simpson, R. (2012). Kanter Revisited: Gender, Power and (In)Visibility. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *14*(2), 141–158. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2370.2011.00327.x
Linos, E., Ruffini, K., & Wilcoxen, S. (2021). *Reducing Burnout and Resignations among Frontline Workers: A Field Experiment* (SSRN Scholarly Paper No. 3846860). https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3846860
Liu, J., Hui, C., Lee, C., & Chen, Z. X. (2013). Why Do I Feel Valued and Why Do I Contribute? A Relational Approach to Employee's Organization-Based Self-Esteem and Job Performance. *Journal of Management Studies*, *50*(6), 1018–1040. https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12037

Lu, J. G. (2022). A social network perspective on the Bamboo Ceiling: Ethnic homophily explains why East Asians but not South Asians are underrepresented in leadership in multiethnic environments. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *122*(6), 959–982. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspa0000292

Mael, F., & Ashforth, B. E. (1992). Alumni and their alma mater: A partial test of the reformulated model of organizational identification. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *13*(2), 103–123. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.4030130202

Mahar, A. L., Cobigo, V., & Stuart, H. (2013). Conceptualizing belonging. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, *35*(12), 1026–1032. https://doi.org/10.3109/09638288.2012.717584

Malhotra, R. (2022). The psychological toll of being the only woman of color at work. *Harvard Business Review*.

Maner, J. K., DeWall, C. N., Baumeister, R. F., & Schaller, M. (2007). Does social exclusion motivate interpersonal reconnection? Resolving the "porcupine problem." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *92*(1), 42–55. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.92.1.42

Marsden, P. V., & Campbell, K. E. (1984). Measuring tie strength. *Social Forces*, *63*(2), 482–501.

Mason, W., & Watts, D. J. (2012). Collaborative learning in networks. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *109*(3), 764–769. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1110069108

Mazei, J., Hüffmeier, J., Freund, P. A., Stuhlmacher, A. F., Bilke, L., & Hertel, G. (2015). A meta-analysis on gender differences in negotiation outcomes and their moderators. *Psychological Bulletin*, *141*(1), 85–104. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038184

McCluney, C. L., Durkee, M. I., Smith, R. E., Robotham, K. J., & Lee, S. S.-L. (2021). To be, or not to be…Black: The effects of racial codeswitching on perceived professionalism in the workplace. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *97*, 104199. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2021.104199

McEvily, B., Soda, G., & Tortoriello, M. (2014). More Formally: Rediscovering the Missing Link between Formal Organization and Informal Social Structure. *Academy of Management Annals*, *8*(1), 299–345. https://doi.org/10.5465/19416520.2014.885252

McGUIRE, G. M. (2000). Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Networks: The Factors Affecting the Status of Employees' Network Members. *Work and Occupations*, *27*(4), 501–524. https://doi.org/10.1177/0730888400027004004

McPherson, J. M., Popielarz, P. A., & Drobnic, S. (1992). Social Networks and Organizational Dynamics. *American Sociological Review*, *57*(2), 153. https://doi.org/10.2307/2096202

McPherson, M., Smith-Lovin, L., & Cook, J. M. (2001). Birds of a Feather: Homophily in Social Networks. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *27*(1), 415–444. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.27.1.415

Molm, L. D. (2010). The Structure of Reciprocity. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *73*(2), 119–131. https://doi.org/10.1177/0190272510369079

Mor Barak, M. E. (2015). Inclusion is the Key to Diversity Management, but What *is* Inclusion? *Human Service Organizations Management, Leadership & Governance*, *39*(2), 83–88. https://doi.org/10.1080/23303131.2015.1035599

Mor-Barak, M. E., & Cherin, D. A. (1998). A Tool to Expand Organizational Understanding of Workforce Diversity: Exploring a Measure of Inclusion-Exclusion. *Administration in Social Work*, *22*(1), 47–64. https://doi.org/10.1300/J147v22n01_04

Myers, C. G. (2021). Performance benefits of reciprocal vicarious learning in teams. *Academy of Management Journal*, *64*(3), 926–947.

Nishii, L. H. (2013). The Benefits of Climate for Inclusion for Gender-Diverse Groups. *Academy of Management Journal*, *56*(6), 1754–1774. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2009.0823

Obukhova, E., & Kleinbaum, A. M. (2022). Scouting and Schmoozing: A Gender Difference in

Networking during Job Search. *Academy of Management Discoveries*, *8*(2), 203–223. https://doi.org/10.5465/amd.2020.0075
Okafor, C. O. (2022). *Seeing Through Colorblindness: Social Networks as a Mechanism for Discrimination*.
O'Keeffe, P. (2013). A sense of belonging: Improving student retention. *College Student Journal*, *47*(4), 605+. Gale Academic OneFile.
O'Reilly, C. A., Chatman, J., & Caldwell, D. F. (1991). PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE: A PROFILE COMPARISON APPROACH TO ASSESSING PERSON-ORGANIZATION FIT. *Academy of Management Journal*, *34*(3), 487–516. https://doi.org/10.2307/256404
O'Reilly, J., Robinson, S. L., Berdahl, J. L., & Banki, S. (2015). Is Negative Attention Better Than No Attention? The Comparative Effects of Ostracism and Harassment at Work. *Organization Science*, *26*(3), 774–793. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2014.0900
Osborne, D., & Gaebler, T. (1992). *Reinventing government: How the entrepreneurial spirit is transforming the public sector*. Addison-Wesley publ. A W. Patrick book.
Pearce, J. L., & Randel, A. E. (2004). Expectations of organizational mobility, workplace social inclusion, and employee job performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *25*(1), 81–98. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.232
Pedler, M. L., Willis, R., & Nieuwoudt, J. E. (2022). A sense of belonging at university: Student retention, motivation and enjoyment. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, *46*(3), 397–408. https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2021.1955844
Pedulla, D. S., & Pager, D. (2019). Race and Networks in the Job Search Process. *American Sociological Review*, *84*(6), 983–1012. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122419883255
Pettigrew, T. F., & Martin, J. (1987). Shaping the Organizational Context for Black American Inclusion. *Journal of Social Issues*, *43*(1), 41–78. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1987.tb02330.x
Pierce, J. L., Gardner, D. G., Cummings, L. L., & Dunham, R. B. (1989). ORGANIZATION-BASED SELF-ESTEEM: CONSTRUCT DEFINITION, MEASUREMENT, AND VALIDATION. *Academy of Management Journal*, *32*(3), 622–648. https://doi.org/10.2307/256437
Pizarro, N. (2007). Structural Identity and Equivalence of Individuals in Social Networks: Beyond Duality. *International Sociology*, *22*(6), 767–792. https://doi.org/10.1177/0268580907082260
Podolny, J. M., & Baron, J. N. (1997). Resources and Relationships: Social Networks and Mobility in the Workplace. *American Sociological Review*, *62*(5), 673. https://doi.org/10.2307/2657354
Qi, L., Liu, B., Wei, X., & Hu, Y. (2019). Impact of inclusive leadership on employee innovative behavior: Perceived organizational support as a mediator. *PLOS ONE*, *14*(2), e0212091. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0212091
Quinn, D. M. (2020). Experimental Effects of "Achievement Gap" News Reporting on Viewers' Racial Stereotypes, Inequality Explanations, and Inequality Prioritization. *Educational Researcher*, *49*(7), 482–492. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X20932469
Ragins, B. R. (1997). Diversified Mentoring Relationships in Organizations: A Power Perspective. *The Academy of Management Review*, *22*(2), 482. https://doi.org/10.2307/259331
Ragins, B. R. (2008). Disclosure disconnects: Antecedents and consequences of disclosing invisible stigmas across life domains. *Academy of Management Review*, *33*(1), 194–215.
Randel, A. E. (2023). Inclusion in the Workplace: A Review and Research Agenda. *Group & Organization Management*, 10596011231175578. https://doi.org/10.1177/10596011231175578
Reece, A., Carr, E. W., Baumeister, R. F., & Kellerman, G. R. (2021). Outcasts and saboteurs:

Intervention strategies to reduce the negative effects of social exclusion on team outcomes. *PLOS ONE*, *16*(5), e0249851. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0249851
Remedios, J. D., & Snyder, S. H. (2018). Intersectional oppression: Multiple stigmatized identities and perceptions of invisibility, discrimination, and stereotyping. *Journal of Social Issues*, *74*(2), 265–281.
Rivera, L. A. (2012). Hiring as Cultural Matching: The Case of Elite Professional Service Firms. *American Sociological Review*, *77*(6), 999–1022. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122412463213
Rivera, L. A., & Tilcsik, A. (2016). Class Advantage, Commitment Penalty: The Gendered Effect of Social Class Signals in an Elite Labor Market. *American Sociological Review*, *81*(6), 1097–1131. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122416668154
Roberson, Q. M. (2006). Disentangling the Meanings of Diversity and Inclusion in Organizations. *Group & Organization Management*, *31*(2), 212–236. https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601104273064
Roberts, L. M. (2005). Changing faces: Professional image construction in diverse organizational settings. *Academy of Management Review*, *30*(4), 685–711.
Roberts, S. B. G., & Dunbar, R. I. M. (2015). Managing Relationship Decay: Network, Gender, and Contextual Effects. *Human Nature*, *26*(4), 426–450. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12110-015-9242-7
Rook, K. S. (1987). Reciprocity of social exchange and social satisfaction among older women. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *52*(1), 145–154. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.52.1.145
Rowe, M. P. (1990). Barriers to equality: The power of subtle discrimination to maintain unequal opportunity. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, *3*(2), 153–163. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01388340
Sahlins, M. (1972). *Stone Age Economics*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203037416
Saito, K., Kimura, M., Ohara, K., & Motoda, H. (2016). Super mediator – A new centrality measure of node importance for information diffusion over social network. *Information Sciences*, *329*, 985–1000. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ins.2015.03.034
Salganik, M. J., Dodds, P. S., & Watts, D. J. (2006). Experimental Study of Inequality and Unpredictability in an Artificial Cultural Market. *Science*, *311*(5762), 854–856. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1121066
Seifert, T. A., & Umbach, P. D. (2008). The effects of faculty demographic characteristics and disciplinary context on dimensions of job satisfaction. *Research in Higher Education*, *49*, 357–381.
Settles, I. H., Buchanan, N. T., & Dotson, K. (2019). Scrutinized but not recognized: (In)visibility and hypervisibility experiences of faculty of color. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *113*, 62–74. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.06.003
Shafaei, A., & Nejati, M. (2024). Creating meaningful work for employees: The role of inclusive leadership. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, *35*(2), 189–211. https://doi.org/10.1002/hrdq.21512
Shah, P. P. (1998). Who Are Employees' Social Referents? Using a Network Perspective to Determine Referent Others. *Academy of Management Journal*, *41*(3), 249–268. https://doi.org/10.5465/256906
Shelton, N., Douglass, S., Garcia, R. L., Yip, T., & Trail, T. E. (2014). Feeling (Mis)Understood and Intergroup Friendships in Interracial Interactions. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *40*(9), 1193–1204. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167214538459
Shore, L. M., Randel, A. E., Chung, B. G., Dean, M. A., Holcombe Ehrhart, K., & Singh, G. (2011). Inclusion and Diversity in Work Groups: A Review and Model for Future Research. *Journal of Management*, *37*(4), 1262–1289. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206310385943

Sloan, M. M., Evenson Newhouse, R. J., & Thompson, A. B. (2013). Counting on Coworkers: Race, Social Support, and Emotional Experiences on the Job. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, *76*(4), 343–372. https://doi.org/10.1177/0190272513504937

Small, M. L. (2007). Racial Differences in Networks: Do Neighborhood Conditions Matter?*. *Social Science Quarterly*, *88*(2), 320–343. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6237.2007.00460.x

Smialek, J. (2021, February 2). Why Are There So Few Black Economists at the Fed? *The New York Times*.

Stadtfeld, C., Vörös, A., Elmer, T., Boda, Z., & Raabe, I. J. (2019). Integration in emerging social networks explains academic failure and success. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *116*(3), 792–797. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1811388115

Steele, C. M., Spencer, S. J., & Aronson, J. (2002). Contending with group image: The psychology of stereotype and social identity threat. In *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 34, pp. 379–440). Elsevier.

Stuhlmacher, A. F., & Walters, A. E. (1999). GENDER DIFFERENCES IN NEGOTIATION OUTCOME: A META‐ANALYSIS. *Personnel Psychology*, *52*(3), 653–677. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.1999.tb00175.x

Tasselli, S., Kilduff, M., & Menges, J. I. (2015). The Microfoundations of Organizational Social Networks: A Review and an Agenda for Future Research. *Journal of Management*, *41*(5), 1361–1387. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206315573996

Thelamour, B., George Mwangi, C., & Ezeofor, I. (2019). “We need to stick together for survival”: Black college students’ racial identity, same-ethnic friendships, and campus connectedness. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, *12*(3), 266–279. https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000104

Turetsky, K. M., Curley, J. P., Carter, A. B., & Purdie‐Greenaway, V. (2023). Explaining the gender gap in negotiation performance: Social network ties outweigh internal barriers. *Journal of Social Issues*, *79*(1), 50–78. https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12536

Twenge, J. M., Baumeister, R. F., DeWall, C. N., Ciarocco, N. J., & Bartels, J. M. (2007). Social exclusion decreases prosocial behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *92*(1), 56–66. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.92.1.56

Uhl-Bien, M., & Maslyn, J. M. (2003). Reciprocity in Manager-Subordinate Relationships: Components, Configurations, and Outcomes. *Journal of Management*, *29*(4), 511–532. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063(03)00023-0

Vaquera, E., & Kao, G. (2008). Do you like me as much as I like you? Friendship reciprocity and its effects on school outcomes among adolescents. *Social Science Research*, *37*(1), 55–72. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2006.11.002

Vedres, B., & Stark, D. (2010). Structural Folds: Generative Disruption in Overlapping Groups. *American Journal of Sociology*, *115*(4), 1150–1190. https://doi.org/10.1086/649497

Walton, G. M., & Brady, S. T. (2017). The many questions of belonging. *Handbook of Competence and Motivation: Theory and Application*, *2*, 272–293.

Walton, G. M., & Cohen, G. L. (2011). A Brief Social-Belonging Intervention Improves Academic and Health Outcomes of Minority Students. *Science*, *331*(6023), 1447–1451. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1198364

Walton, G. M., Cohen, G. L., Cwir, D., & Spencer, S. J. (2012). Mere belonging: The power of social connections. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *102*(3), 513–532. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025731

Walton, G. M., Murphy, M. C., Logel, C., Yeager, D. S., Goyer, J. P., Brady, S. T., Emerson, K. T. U., Paunesku, D., Fotuhi, O., Blodorn, A., Boucher, K. L., Carter, E. R., Gopalan, M., Henderson, A., Kroeper, K. M., Murdock-Perriera, L. A., Reeves, S. L., Ablorh, T. T., Ansari, S., … Krol, N. (2023). Where and with whom does a brief social-belonging intervention promote progress in college? *Science*, *380*(6644), 499–505.

https://doi.org/10.1126/science.ade4420
Wang, H., Zhao, J., Li, Y., & Li, C. (2015). Network centrality, organizational innovation, and performance: A meta-analysis. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences / Revue Canadienne Des Sciences de l'Administration*, *32*(3), 146–159. https://doi.org/10.1002/cjas.1316
Wegge, J., Van Dick, R., Fisher, G. K., Wecking, C., & Moltzen, K. (2006). Work motivation, organisational identification, and well-being in call centre work. *Work & Stress*, *20*(1), 60–83. https://doi.org/10.1080/02678370600655553
Whyte, W. H. (1956). *The organization man*. Simon & Schuster.
Williams, K. D., & Jarvis, B. (2006). Cyberball: A program for use in research on interpersonal ostracism and acceptance. *Behavior Research Methods*, *38*(1), 174–180. https://doi.org/10.3758/BF03192765
Williams, K. D., & Nida, S. A. (2011). Ostracism: Consequences and Coping. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *20*(2), 71–75. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721411402480
Williams, K. L., & Galliher, R. V. (2006). Predicting Depression and Self–Esteem from Social Connectedness, Support, and Competence. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, *25*(8), 855–874. https://doi.org/10.1521/jscp.2006.25.8.855
Won, S., Hensley, L. C., & Wolters, C. A. (2021). Brief Research Report: Sense of Belonging and Academic Help-Seeking as Self-Regulated Learning. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, *89*(1), 112–124. https://doi.org/10.1080/00220973.2019.1703095
Yang, L., Holtz, D., Jaffe, S., Suri, S., Sinha, S., Weston, J., Joyce, C., Shah, N., Sherman, K., Hecht, B., & Teevan, J. (2021). The effects of remote work on collaboration among information workers. *Nature Human Behaviour*, *6*(1), 43–54. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-021-01196-4
Zatzick, C. D., Elvira, M. M., & Cohen, L. E. (2003). When is More Better? The Effects of Racial Composition on Voluntary Turnover. *Organization Science*, *14*(5), 483–496. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.14.5.483.16768
Zerubavel, E. (1999). *Social mindscapes: An invitation to cognitive sociology* (1. Harvard Univ. Press paperback ed). Harvard Univ. Press.