

# How and when stereotypes relate to inclusive behavior toward people with disabilities

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**How and When Stereotypes Relate to Helping Behavior toward People with  
Disabilities**

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## **Abstract**

The guidelines of the European Commission on corporate social responsibility stress the importance of sustainable employment for people with disabilities. The road to employment is however paved with obstacles, such as the often negative stereotypes and attitudes of employers and employees, which influence the treatment of people with disabilities at the work floor. In the present study, we build upon the reasoned action approach to illuminate how and when stereotypes of employees toward people with disabilities relate to helping behavior at work. In a sample of 313 employee-colleague dyads, we found that the relationship between stereotypes (rated by employees) and helping behavior (rated by colleagues) is mediated by employee attitudes toward the employment of people with disabilities (targets). Moreover, work pressure functions as a boundary condition that shapes the relationship between stereotypes and helping behavior, in such a way that the relationship is stronger when work pressure is low. Research and practical implications are discussed in conclusion.

**Keywords:** stereotypes; attitudes; people with disabilities; work pressure; helping (inclusive) behavior

## **Introduction**

In recent years, the employment of people with disabilities has become a central issue in Europe. The European Commission states that people with disabilities are to be facilitated to reach higher levels of acceptance, integration, and social inclusion in society (Coles & Scior, 2012; European Commission, 2011; Scior, 2011). One way to achieve this goal is through gaining a higher degree of sustainable employment for people with disabilities. Since work has a central place in people's lives, being employed will therefore not only facilitate integration in society (Jahoda, 1981), but will also benefit physical and mental health (Schuring et al., 2011). In this setting, there is a need for more corporate social responsibility to constitute a new mindset on employment issues. Especially inclusive organizations, which aim to harbor a diverse work force, might provide a solution to reach higher levels of employment for people with disabilities (Zijlstra et al., 2012). However, when entering the job market, one of the boundaries that people with disabilities face are the stereotypes and attitudes of employers and employees (Bruyère, Erickson, & Ferrentino, 2002; Hunt & Hunt, 2004; Schur et al., 2005; Scior, 2011). This, often negative, perception (Mackelprang & Salsgiver, 1996) is one of the reasons why people with disabilities experience a bias in the way they are treated at the work floor (Colella & Bruyère, 2011; Hunt & Hunt, 2004). Moreover, negative attitudes of coworkers have been shown to prevent people with disabilities from fulfilling goals, and limit them from having access to every aspect of life (Akrami, Ekehammar, Claesson, & Sonnander, 2006). Especially in organizations aiming at becoming more inclusive, the treatment by colleagues and supervisors is important for the workplace inclusion of people with disabilities (Colella & Bruyère, 2011), mainly because it pertains to their job success and job satisfaction (Wehman, 2003).

Whereas research on people with disabilities in the context of work has often focused on the legal protection of people with disabilities to provide equal employment opportunities (Kruse & Schur, 2003), and on the employer perspective with regard to physical adaptations and costs that have to be made to accommodate people with physical disabilities (Peck & Kirkbride, 2001), as well as on employers' attitudes regarding their recruitment (Hunt & Hunt, 2004), we aim to address factors that contribute to the workplace inclusion once people with disabilities are already employed. In this frame of mind, we leave aside factors that originate from people with disabilities themselves, such as proactive or impression management

behavior (Colella et al., 1997), or whether disclosing one's disability is warranted by legal or personal means (Santuzzi et al., 2014). Instead, we advocate to rather use industrial-organizational knowledge on the individual, team and organizational level, to develop interventions in order to address factors such as stereotypes, attitudes and colleague behavior, climate perceptions and organizational interventions to facilitate workplace inclusion (Nelissen et al., 2014). However, research that focuses on factors that facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities into their work teams is scarce and has been suggested as an area in need of further research (Colella & Bruyère, 2011). Therefore, with the present study we intend to advance this line of research by identifying factors that may facilitate people with disabilities from reaching their full potential in the labor market. Our ultimate goal is to identify factors at the individual level that might have an influence on inclusion at the workplace for people with disabilities.

Research on workplace inclusion has been addressed from various angles. A recent study on the attitudes of employers towards employing people with disabilities conceptualized work inclusion as the way that people with disabilities have access to employment (Nota et al., 2014). Another study described workplace inclusion as being able to interact with one's (non-disabled) colleagues (Wehman, 2003). However, inclusion as a broader concept can also be referred to as 'not being excluded', which implies that workplace inclusion is possible when "people with disabilities are accepted, helped and treated as others by their coworkers" (Colella & Bruyère, 2011, p.492-493). As stated in this definition of workplace inclusion, and similar to the beneficial effects of social support during the socialization process (Fisher, 1985), we concur that providing help and support to people with disabilities is one of the anchors that might lead to a higher degree of inclusion. In this paper we therefore particularly address factors that might contribute to how people with disabilities are helped at the workplace by their coworkers. Hence, we focus on employees' stereotypes and attitudes towards people with disabilities and how these influence the extent to which they provide help towards colleagues with disabilities at the work floor.

Providing help for one's colleagues with disabilities will be referred to as "inclusive behavior". This new concept refers to extra-role behaviors that are not part of the formal role description, but (indirectly) support the organization, as does the concept of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) (N. P. Podsakoff et al., 2014; Williams & Anderson, 1991). More

specifically, and in line with the concept of OCBI (Organizational Citizenship Behavior directed at the Individual) which was put forward by Williams and Anderson (1991), inclusive behavior is directed toward the benefit of other individuals. The individuals targeted by inclusive behavior are people with disabilities who are part of the work team or department of which the employees are thought of to display this behavior. We therefore define inclusive behavior as extra role behavior that is intended to benefit people with disabilities at work. It is operationalized as the courtesy and altruism dimension of OCB, analogous to the concept of OCBI (Lepine, Erez, & Johnson, 2002; M. Podsakoff, Mackenzie, & Moorman, 1990; N. P. Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009; Williams & Anderson, 1991). The goal of inclusive behavior, as it is for OCBI, is to benefit other individuals (people with disabilities) by means of providing help with a relevant problem at the workplace (altruism) or by preventing such work-related problems (courtesy). In concreto, all questionnaire items concerning inclusive behavior are referenced toward a specific individual beneficiary: the colleague with a disability.

The relationships between stereotypes, attitudes and inclusive behavior are framed within the theoretical framework of the Reasoned Action Approach. This most recent approach of the Theory of Planned Behavior describes how, among others, cognitions and attitudes predict behavior. Within the limits of this study, the application of this well tested and extensive model can provide the grounds to research the link between stereotypes, attitudes and behavior towards people with disabilities. This should consequently provide more insights on employment issues of people with disabilities, which may ultimately be used to inform organizational strategies to foster workplace inclusion.

In addition to investigating relationships between stereotypes, attitudes and inclusive behavior, we aim to shed light on boundary conditions of these relationships. Exploring boundary conditions will facilitate more precise knowledge on the nature of the stereotype – inclusive behavior relationship. Employees might only be able to display inclusive behavior when the circumstances allow them to. We will therefore investigate the role of work pressure as a boundary condition. As many employees claim to experience work pressure, a subjective sensation of strain during the execution of work related tasks (Roe & Zijlstra, 2000), it might have an impact on the opportunities that one has to display inclusive behavior.

Dependent on experience of strain, employees might or might not feel the need to exceed the mandatory tasks, and thus perform inclusive behavior.

Moreover, most studies on attitudes towards people with disabilities have a qualitative nature (Scior, 2011). Therefore, the goal of the present study is to quantitatively illuminate how and when stereotypes of coworkers lead to inclusive behavior in the workplace. Figure 1 depicts the corresponding model.

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Insert Figure 1 about here

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### ***Stereotypes and inclusive behavior***

Some of the important barriers that people with disabilities face, in the road to employment, are the stereotypes and attitudes of employers and their employees (Bruyère et al., 2002; Colella & Bruyère, 2011; Stone & Colella, 1996). Even when employed, some people with disabilities are not rated as much on their performance, but rather on the grounds of the stereotypical beliefs of their employers (Colella & Varma, 1999). The lack of experience in working with people with disabilities, inclines employers to lean on their stereotypes to portray them as poor performers, frequently absent and as bringing along a feeling of unease to the people that surround them (Kaye et al., 2011). Especially this last example of stereotypical behavior might hinder the inclusion of people with disabilities at the workplace. To look at how stereotypes might impede inclusion, in the next section we will first clarify the concept of stereotypes and how it is different from prejudice, to consequently discuss the stereotype content model to further explain why stereotypes might have an influence on the amount of displayed inclusive behavior.

Stereotypes refer to the way a group of people is viewed by society and have been defined as 'shared beliefs about person attributes, usually personality traits, but often also behaviors, of a group of people' (Leyens, Yzerbyt, and Schadron 1994, p.11). It is a description of similar characteristics of a certain group, without passing judgment. Stereotypes need not

necessarily have a negative connotation; they can be positive or negative, and can be accurate or inaccurate. In general, stereotypes allow for easier information processing by relying on previously stored heuristics instead of new information (Hilton & von Hippel, 1996). The usage of stereotypes may yield pragmatic knowledge to swiftly assess what others' goals and intentions might be (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002). While this tactic may have its advantages (e.g. in threatening situations where one has to think fast), they are mostly based on oversimplified group features (Stone & Colella, 1996). Notably, although in common language the terms stereotype and prejudice are often used interchangeably, they do not equate. Whereas stereotypes refer to cognitive ideas a person has of a group of people, prejudice is a negative affective response towards the stereotyped group (Akrami et al., 2006; Amodio & Devine, 2006). Furthermore, people can be conscious of various stereotypes, without approving them or having feelings of prejudice (Leyens et al., 1994). For instance, to assess stereotypes towards people with disabilities, one might ask participants: 'As viewed by society, how good natured are people with disabilities?' (Fiske et al., 2002, p.884). Such a question will not lead to a cognitive evaluative response, but merely shows a positive or negative view or valence of the target group. In contrast, prejudices are typically captured with items like 'People with intellectual disabilities do not have the character strength that people without intellectual disability have' (Akrami et al. 2006, p.616).

Fiske, Cuddy, Glick and Xu (2002) argue that stereotypes can vary over two dimensions; warmth and competence. These dimensions respectively refer to the amount of 'like' and 'respect' one has for others. The warmth-dimension can be based on an assessment of what others' goals are, and the competence-dimension refers to whether they are able to execute these goals. People that one considers to be warm and competent, have positive goals (in line with the beholders') and are able to fulfill them. While this group of people is admired, and is usually similar to the beholder of the stereotypes, people that score low on warmth and competence are perceived in a negative manner and as inadequate to pursue their goals. In general, people with disabilities, are rated to be warm but not competent (Fiske et al., 2002). The high score on warmth therefore reflects having no intent to harm one's own reference group, while the low competence catches the lack of ability to harm. This sort of paternalistic stereotype is characterized by disrespect and pity towards the stereotyped group.



It is therefore important to assess whether these stereotypes will influence employees' inclusive behavior towards people with disabilities at work. However, very few disability studies focus on the relationship between stereotypes and (positive) behavior towards another group. Stone and Colella (1996) have suggested, but not empirically tested, that stereotypes will affect employees' responses to work with people with disabilities. Accordingly, stereotypes influence employees' expectancies towards working with people with disabilities, which in turn will have an effect on how people with disabilities are treated and helped within the organization. Employees use stereotypes to evaluate others and will consequently make assumptions on how they will perform at work. This performance expectation may affect the treatment of people with disabilities, in such a way that a negative stereotype view (e.g. low warmth and low competence) will inhibit inclusive behavior at the workplace and thus inclusion (Stone & Colella, 1996). One could also argue that pity, as a result of high warmth and low competence, would facilitate acts of kindness and consequently inclusive behavior. We state, however, that the feeling of pity might lead to a single positive action but that this behavior will not endure over a longer period of time, which is one of the assumptions of citizenship behaviors (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000).

Although the research presented above did not directly test the relationship between stereotypes and behavior, it does give reason to expect that the more warmth and competent people with disabilities are rated, the more inclusive behavior will be displayed by their colleagues. In the present study we will directly test this relationship in the context of work.

*Hypothesis 1a: High stereotype warmth toward people with disabilities is positively related to inclusive behavior.*

*Hypothesis 1b: High stereotype competence toward people with disabilities is positively related to inclusive behavior.*

***How: attitudes as a potential underlying mechanism***

In the preceding section we proposed that stereotypes are related to inclusive behavior. In trying to illuminate the processes underlying this relationship we build upon the

Reasoned Action Approach (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010) and argue that this relationship is mediated by coworkers' attitudes towards the employment of people with disabilities.

Attitudes, in general, can be defined as 'a latent disposition or tendency to respond with some degree of favorableness or unfavorableness to a psychological object' (Fishbein and Ajzen 2010, p.76) and can therefore be seen as more proximal antecedent of inclusive behavior than stereotypes. According to the Reasoned Action Approach, attitudes will only be predictive of behavior if they correspond to one another (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). Thus, to predict inclusive behavior, attitudes should specifically relate to the employment of people with disabilities. An example of such an attitude is: 'Everyone, regardless of the level or the type of disability, has the capability to do some job' (Schneider 2008, p.1821). Consequently, based on the Reasoned Action Approach, employees who are favorable to the notions of employment, cooperation, and inclusion of people with disabilities will be more inclined to display inclusive behavior. The amount of displayed inclusive behavior will be based on the expectations people have about performing inclusive behavior, which, in turn, will guide the valence of the attitudes (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010).

The idea that attitudes are proximal predictors of behavior in general has been corroborated in a plethora of individual studies and a number of meta-analyses (e.g. Kraus 1995; Glasman and Albarracín 2006). For instance, employee attitudes toward safety climate have been shown to be related to safety behavior (Fogarty & Shaw, 2010) and workplace attitudes, such as perceived organizational support, fairness and affective commitment, have been shown to be related to interpersonal helping behavior (Choi, 2006). In general, research on attitudes towards people with disabilities and how these shape behavior towards these people is scarce and nearly non-existent in the context of work (see Fraser, Ajzen, Johnson, Hebert, and Chan 2011 for an exception). Yet, researchers have already theoretically argued that positive attitudes towards the employment of people with disabilities are important for acceptance and inclusion (Coles & Scior, 2012).

In sum, based on the theoretical advances and empirical evidence on the Reasoned Action Approach, we expect attitudes towards the employment of people with disabilities to be proximally related to inclusive behavior at work. Furthermore, we expect these attitudes to mediate the relationship between stereotypes (warmth and competence) towards people

with disabilities and inclusive behavior. This idea is grounded in research suggesting that attitudes towards people with disabilities stem from stereotypes and beliefs that are based on a lack of accurate knowledge, education level, and prior contact with persons with disabilities (Hunt and Hunt 2004; Scior 2011). Based on the beliefs employees have about people with disabilities and how it would be like to work side by side, attitudes are generated (Fishbein and Ajzen 2010). Attitudes will thus attribute meaning to certain beliefs in order to be interpreted (L. A. James & James, 1989). Similarly, in a study on immigration policies, it was found that attitudes towards several immigration groups are based on stereotypes about immigrants (Reyna, Dobria, & Wetherell, 2013).

Accordingly, by following the Reasoned Action Approach, we argue that stereotypes form the basis for attitudes, which will attribute meaning to these beliefs and will consequently lead to corresponding behavior. We therefore hypothesize that the relationship between stereotypes (warmth and competence) toward people with disabilities and inclusive behavior is mediated by the attitudes employees have about the employment of people with disabilities.

*Hypothesis 2a: The relationship between stereotype warmth toward people with disabilities and inclusive behavior is mediated by attitudes toward the employment of people with disabilities.*

*Hypothesis 2b: The relationship between stereotype competence toward people with disabilities and inclusive behavior is mediated by attitudes toward the employment of people with disabilities.*

***When: work pressure as potential boundary condition***

The argumentation presented above suggests that stereotype warmth and competence should, overall, be positively related to inclusive behavior. However, there may very well be boundary conditions which influence and shape this relationship. Specifically, we argue that that work pressure has a significant influence on the positive relationship between stereotypes and the occurrence of inclusive behavior. Work pressure can be defined as an enduring 'subjective state of tension associated with the current and/or anticipated execution of work tasks' (Roe and Zijlstra 2000, p. 29). Work pressure is a phenomenon to be taken into

account according to a recent review of the European working conditions (Eurofound, 2012). The majority of European workers reported to experience high work pressure, as a result of high work intensity and high work demand (Eurofound, 2012; Sonnentag & Zijlstra, 2006). Employees, who experience work pressure, feel strain while performing work tasks, conditional on the employee's assessment of the amount of future work. One of the main outcomes of work pressure is strain (Roe & Zijlstra, 2000). Thus, as more than one in every two employees claims to be subject to work pressure, and as this consequently might lead to strain dependent upon the magnitude of upcoming work tasks, it does not seem likely that these employees are keen on taking on additional extra-role tasks such as displaying inclusive behavior. In sum, it appears that although employees with a positive view on people with disabilities are more inclined to display inclusive behavior, those who feel pressured by work, and are subjectively overloaded with work tasks, will not be likely to take on any extra tasks regardless of the stereotypes they hold towards people with disabilities. To avoid stress, their main focus will probably be predominantly on the mandatory job tasks, and less on discretionary and volitional ones, intended to benefit others. Under conditions of low work pressure, however, we expect that employees' stereotypes will shape behavior much more strongly. To conclude, although we expect an overall positive relationship between stereotype warmth and competence and inclusive behavior, we expect this relationship to be stronger under conditions of low work pressure, when employees have the necessary resources to be able to display inclusive behavior.

*Hypothesis 3a: The relationship between stereotype warmth toward people with disabilities and inclusive behavior is moderated by work pressure; in such a way that the relationship is stronger when work pressure is low.*

*Hypothesis 3b: The relationship between stereotype competence toward people with disabilities and inclusive behavior is moderated by work pressure; in such a way that the relationship is stronger when work pressure is low.*

## **Method**

### ***Participants and procedure***

Respondents were 372 employees from seven organizations located throughout the Netherlands, which were selected on the basis of employing people with disabilities (response rate = 35%). The organizations were active in e.g. the healthcare sector, retail stores or the super market industry. Employees worked in teams with a minimum of three colleagues (maximum reported of nine colleagues in one team) and were eligible for our research if one of the team-members had a disability. In the Netherlands, people with disabilities are examined and tested on their capability to work by governmental institutions and may receive wage dispensations for the work they perform. Within this regulation no distinction based on disability type is made by the Dutch government. Therefore no distinction on disability type was made or recorded; various physical, cognitive, mental, sensory, and developmental impairments (e.g. deafness, learning disability, autistic spectrum disorder) were included. Employees were aware that certain team members had a disability; however specifics on their situation were not automatically communicated to the staff by their supervisors due to privacy reasons. All team-members (except for the team member with a disability) were invited to fill in questionnaires and consequently provided self-ratings on stereotypes and attitudes towards people with disabilities and work pressure. Employee inclusive behavior was assessed by peer-ratings, provided by 313 work colleagues (response rate 29.4%). These peers were selected by the first participant, who was instructed to choose a colleague with whom they had regular contact, but not the coworker with a disability. Independently choosing a peer is common procedure to obtain reliable multiple source data, coworkers are very well suited to assess such behavior as they work closely together and have adequate opportunities to observe one another (Rioux & Penner, 2001). Furthermore, as employees and their colleagues were paired, 59 employees who failed to provide a colleague report were dropped from our analyses, resulting in a final sample of 313 employees, who work together with a total of 86 people with disabilities. Jobs of employees entailed e.g. shelf re-stockers (41%), nurses (6%), or cashiers (5%). Respondents were 46% male, with a total average tenure of 12.45 years ( $SD = 10.38$ ), and 38 years of age ( $SD = 13.90$ ).

### ***Measures***

Most measures were adopted from English and translated into Dutch with a translation and back-translation process, whilst taking into account the guidelines for test

translation and adaptation (Hambleton, 2001). The work pressure scale was originally published in Dutch.

Employees provided ratings on stereotypes and attitudes towards people with disabilities, and self-rated their work pressure.

#### *Stereotypes towards people with disabilities*

Participants completed 7 out of 9 items of the warmth and competence dimensions of stereotype content model measure put forward in the first study by Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, and Xu (2002). The scale was assessed on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). Two items (confidence and warmth) were not included in our measurement due to conceptual overlap when translated into Dutch. Participants were requested to give their opinion upon the prevailing view of society on people with disabilities. In order to reduce social desirability, respondents were asked to evaluate how people with disabilities are viewed by others, and not by their personal beliefs (L. M. Finkelstein, Ryan, & King, 2013; Fiske et al., 2002). The items on the warmth dimension were 'As viewed by society, how tolerant/good natured/sincere are people with disabilities?', and for the competence dimension: 'As viewed by society, how competent/ independent/competitive/intelligent are people with disabilities?'. Cronbach's Alpha for the warmth dimension was  $\alpha = .67$ , and  $.80$  for the competence dimension.

#### *Attitudes towards the employment of people with disabilities*

Participants completed five items of the attitudes towards the employment of people with disabilities scale developed by Schneider (2008). The scale was assessed on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The items were 'Everyone, regardless of the level or the type of disability, has the capability to do some job', 'Disabled people are more loyal employees than non-disabled employees', 'Disabled people have a right to work', 'Employing disabled people is good for a business's image', and 'Disabled people should earn equal wages to co-workers doing similar jobs' ( $\alpha = .61$ ).

#### *Work pressure*

Participants completed the 10 items of the Tilburg Work Pressure Questionnaire (T-WPQ) by Roe and Zijlstra (2000). The scale was assessed on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from

1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Sample items were 'I have the feeling that I am under pressure at work', 'I feel the burden of responsibility at work'. Cronbach's Alpha was  $\alpha = .86$ .

Peers (work colleagues) provided ratings on the target person's inclusive behavior.

#### *Inclusive behavior*

We assessed inclusive behavior with an 8-item scale adapted from the altruism and courtesy subscales as introduced for Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) (P. M. Podsakoff et al., 1990). The scale was assessed on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The scales were adapted to the viewpoint of the participant, peers' questionnaires referred to their colleague ( $\alpha = .89$ ). The instruction stated that the questions referred to the person with a disability in their work team. The questions were; 'My colleague does not abuse the right of people with disabilities', 'My colleague tries to avoid creating problems with people with disabilities', 'My colleague considers the impact of his/her actions on people with disabilities', 'My colleague helps people with disabilities who have been absent', 'My colleague helps people with disabilities who have heavy workloads', 'My colleague helps orient new people with disabilities even though it is not required', 'My colleague willingly helps people with disabilities who have work related problems', 'My colleague is always ready to lend a helping hand to people with disabilities around him/her'.

#### *Statistical analysis*

Confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were conducted in the R environment (R Core Team, 2012) by using the lavaan package (Rosseel, 2012). Mediation and moderation was analyzed using the Preacher and Hayes process plugin for SPSS version 21 (Preacher and Kelley 2011; Hayes 2013). Confidence intervals were computed using a bootstrapped standard error (SE) (n=5000). Significance of the indirect effect is determined by examining the 95% confidence interval by resampling the indirect effect to represent the population (Hayes, 2009). Coefficient estimates outside the 95% bias-corrected and accelerated (BCa) bootstrap confidence limits are considered significant mediation effects, comparable to the regular alpha cutoff of  $p = .05$  (Preacher & Kelley, 2011). We first used statistical model 4 to

assess mediation, whereupon we utilized model 5 to concurrently check for mediation and moderation of the direct effect (Hayes 2013).

## **Results**

First, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on the constructs stereotypes of people with disabilities and attitudes towards the employment of people with disabilities to assess whether they were distinct from each other (Hu and Bentler 1999, Ilies, Scott, and Judge 2006; Hoffman, Blair, Meriac, and Woehr 2007). A two-factor model fit the data very well ( $\chi^2(34, N=301)= 49.11$ , RMSEA = 0.04, SRMR = 0.04, NNFI = .96, CFI = .98), particularly when compared to a one-factor model ( $\chi^2(135, N=290)= 945.13$ , RMSEA = 0.14, SRMR = 0.13, NNFI = 0.45, CFI = 0.52, in which both stereotypes and attitudes loaded on one factor).

Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations between study variables of this cross-sectional study are displayed in Table 1. Regression analysis did not reveal a significant direct relationship between warmth or competence and inclusive behavior (respectively  $b = 0.074$ ,  $p = 0.198$ ;  $b=0.044$ ,  $p=0.439$ ), thereby rejecting hypotheses 1a and 1b. As there is no need for these direct effects to be significant in order to carry on with the mediation analysis (Hayes, 2009), we continued to search for the indirect effect proposed in hypotheses 2a and 2b, which are shown in Table 2. With regard to hypothesis 2a, results of mediation analyses indicated a significant indirect effect of stereotype warmth on inclusive behavior through attitudes towards the employment of people with disabilities ( $b = 0.056$ , BCa 95% CI[0.0209;0.1068],  $K^2=.054$ ; BCa 95% CI [0.0202; 0.1028]). For hypothesis 2b, the indirect effect of stereotype competence on inclusive behavior via attitudes towards the employment of people with disabilities, a similar significant indirect effect was found ( $b = 0.043$ , BCa 95% CI[0.0151;0.0848],  $K^2=.044$ ; BCa 95% CI [0.0157; 0.0865]), thereby confirming both hypotheses on the indirect effect of stereotypes on inclusive behavior via attitudes towards the employment of people with disabilities. Both Kappa squared values are situated between .01 and .09, corresponding to a small effect that reflected 4.4-5.4% of the largest possible indirect effect (Preacher & Kelley, 2011).

As can be seen in the lower part of Table 2, hypothesis 3a concerning the moderating effect of work pressure on the direct effect of stereotype warmth on inclusive behavior, while controlling for the indirect effect, was not significant ( $b = -0.013$ ,  $p = 0.84$ ). Hypothesis 3b



which tested the moderating effect of work pressure on the direct effect of stereotype competence, while controlling for the indirect effect, was significant ( $b = -0.128$ ,  $p = 0.42$ ). Results of the sample showed a clear antagonistic interaction between stereotype warmth and work pressure on inclusive behavior. The overall pattern was significant in the total interaction, although the conditional effects were not (CI low [-0.0490;0.2401]; medium [-0.1163;0.1048]; high [-0.2577;0.0435]). A graphical depiction of this interaction effect is shown in Figure 2, the results.

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Insert Table 1 about here

Insert Figure 2 about here

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## **Discussion**

Work is central in peoples' lives, but for people with disabilities employment might be hindered due to stereotypes and attitudes of their coworkers. Our premise is that if inclusive behavior is displayed, people with disabilities should become better integrated into their work team and inclusion will be facilitated. Therefore this study set out to examine how and when stereotype warmth and competence towards people with disabilities relate to inclusive behavior. This way, we aim to shed light on the factors that influence the inclusion of people with disabilities at the workplace, stated to be one of the research areas in which I/O Psychology should focus on (Colella & Bruyère, 2011). Thus, in this research we studied the work situation of people with disabilities who were already employed, and how the stereotypes and attitudes of their coworkers relate the amount of displayed inclusive behavior.

Our study shows that stereotypes towards people with disabilities are not directly related to inclusive behavior (hypothesis 1a and 1b), but by building on the Reasoned Action Approach (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010) we have been able to demonstrate that there is an indirect relationship of stereotypes through attitudes towards the employment of people with disabilities on inclusive behavior (hypothesis 2a and 2b). The cognitive appraisal that attitudes give to the beliefs employees have, gives rise to behavior that corresponds to these attitudes.

Therefore we claim that employees who have positive attitudes towards the employment of people with disabilities will be more likely to perform inclusive behavior, to allow people with disabilities to perform better, which is a prerequisite on the road to inclusion and possibly even sustainable employment.

With regard to our moderator analyses, while controlling for the indirect effect, we found mixed results. Hypothesis 3a, which was concerned with the moderating effect of work pressure on the relationship between stereotype warmth and inclusive behavior did not yield a significant effect. Hypothesis 3b, that explored the same effect for stereotype competence, on the other hand, did show a significant interaction. This would mean that employees would display inclusive behavior irrespective of the amount of work pressure they experienced if they rate their colleagues with disabilities high on stereotype warmth. Alternatively, for stereotype competence, it does depend on work pressure whether inclusive behavior will be displayed. The relationship is positive when work pressure is low, but negative when work pressure is high. From these findings, we might infer that 'liking' will more frequently lead to displaying inclusive behavior, whereas 'respect' will only do so in the right circumstances. Perhaps when a person is deemed to be competent at the workplace, there is less need to continuously display inclusive behavior, only when the opportunity presents itself. Being (perceived as) competent is an indispensable facet of work which might lead employees to believe that their colleague with a disabilities are able to fend for themselves and do not need continuous help.

Additionally, this research shows that stereotypes toward people with disabilities need not necessarily lead to prejudice, and thus have a negative connotation. Better still, it might lead to an array of positive behavior. That is, the way stereotypes are interpreted depends on the cognitive appraisal of coworkers who will check their opinion on the willingness to display the corresponding volitional inclusive behavior. To conclude, stereotype warmth and stereotype competence, via attitudes, toward people with disabilities play an important role in the amount of displayed inclusive behavior. Since inclusive behavior is thought to have positive consequences to the inclusion of people with disabilities, work in such a setting is essential for inclusive organizations.

### **Strengths, Limitations, and Directions for Future Research**

A notable strength of this study is the multiple source data we used (predictors assessed by team members and inclusive behavior by work colleagues) allowing for independent assessments of inclusive behavior and the reduction of common method bias.

The present study is not without its limitations, which should be considered in future research. First, our results are based on cross-sectional data. Our mediation analysis does not warrant a causal pathway. However, based on the Reasoned Action Approach, this setup of variables seems the most plausible. We therefore assume that the pathways of variables presented cannot be reversed or be seen as reciprocal. Second, as our study was framed on only a section of the Reasoned Action Approach, future research might want to study the complete theory and incorporate perceived norms and perceived control into their model. This way, the additive value of these variables can provide this line of research with a broader view on how to influence inclusive behavior.

Our study provided valuable insights into the factors that contribute to the inclusion of people with disabilities once they have entered the labor market. More empirical research is needed to address the aspects that might influence the work situation of people with disabilities. Moreover, with regard to the potential positive consequences of inclusive behavior, relationships to performance, productivity, and well-being need to be addressed in future research; in order to make sure that inclusive behavior does indeed lead to a higher degree of inclusion and ultimately more sustainable employment for people with disabilities.

### **Practical Implications**

Inclusive organizations should keep in mind that the employment of people with disabilities will activate certain stereotypes and beliefs within their staff that have an impact on the treatment of people with disabilities at work. Attitudes toward the employment of people with disabilities and perceived work pressure play a role determining the nature of this relationship. Both can be malleable by organizational interventions, therefore inclusive organizations need to adapt their strategy to their corporate social responsibility goals. These strategies aimed at an increase inclusive behavior can be implemented on three levels; individual, team, and organizational level.

Interventions can be planned throughout entire organizations to focus on individual change. Stone and Colella (1996) have argued that organizations should develop training programs that counter the misleading information that may have been engendered by stereotypes, on norms of day to day interaction, and on decreasing feelings of anxiety while working with people with disabilities. Hunt and Hunt (2004) state that attitudes can only be changed by challenging peoples' beliefs. They therefore devised an educational intervention which increased knowledge on and yielded positive attitudes towards people with disabilities in the workplace. This indicates the importance of an active inclusive organization that needs to put organizational goals into practice. Secondly, also at team level there are many factors that might have an influence on the amount of displayed inclusive behavior. It has been shown that work environments that are fair and responsive are specifically beneficial for people with disabilities (Schur et al., 2009). Team leaders can thus have major influence on the daily practices and procedures that constitute a work climate and should therefore be made aware of the important role they play in the display of inclusive behavior. Lastly, inclusive organizations that wish to attain a diverse workforce are advised to incorporate corporate sustainable responsibility in their mission statements. An active implementation of the values that foster belonging is key to achieve sustainable employment for people with disabilities (Schur et al., 2009).

**Table 1**

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, reliability estimates and intercorrelations of study variables

<i>Variable</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>α</i>	1	2	3	4	5
1 Stereotype Warmth	309	3,31	0,63	.67	-				
2 Stereotype Competence	309	2.65	.66	.80	.39**	-			
3 Attitudes toward the employment of people with disabilities	313	3,85	.63	.61	.32**	.24**	-		
4 Work Pressure	311	2,58	.80	.86	.02	-.06	.02	-	
5 Inclusive Behavior	310	4,09	.62	.89	.07	.04	.19**	-.01	-

Note: \*\* $p < .01$ .

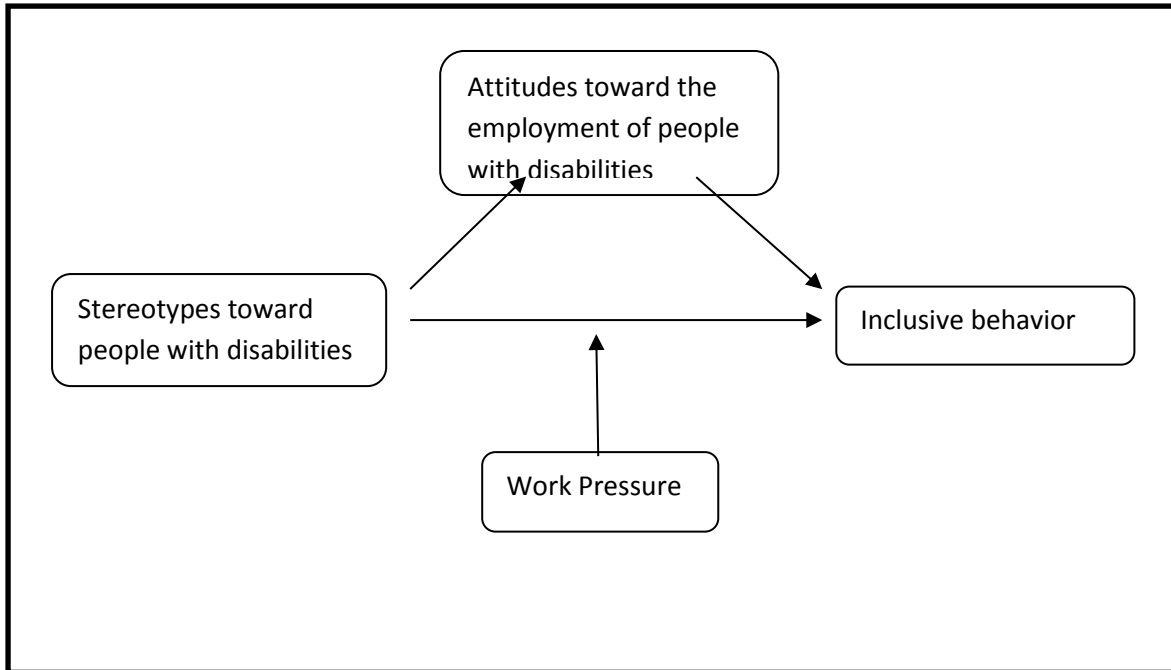


Figure 1. Mediation and moderation model of stereotypes toward people with disabilities on inclusive behavior.

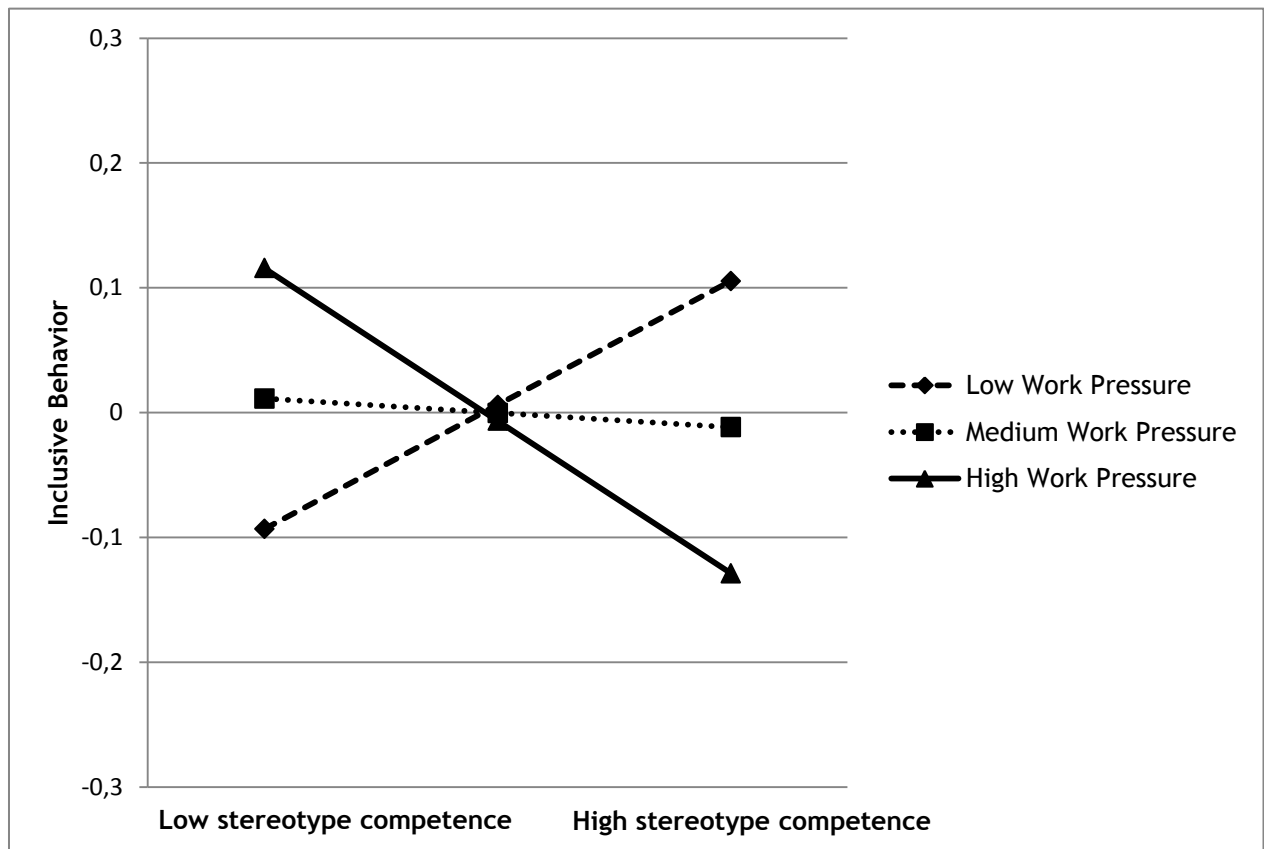


Figure 2. Interaction of work pressure and stereotypes toward people with disabilities on inclusive behavior.