STATUS MATTERS: THE ASYMMETRIC EFFECTS OF SUPERVISOR–SUBORDINATE DISABILITY INCONGRUENCE AND CLIMATE FOR INCLUSION

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Growing workforce diversity increases the likelihood that supervisors and subordinates will differ along demographic lines, a situation that has important implications for their relationship quality and individual outcomes. In a sample of 1,253 employees from 54 work units, we investigate the effects of differences in disability status between supervisors and subordinates on leader-member exchange (LMX) quality and subsequent performance ratings, and find that incongruence in general is related to lower LMX quality and lower performance. In addition, we propose and find an asymmetrical effect of disability incongruence, such that LMX quality is worse in dyads in which the supervisor has a disability than in dyads in which the subordinate has a disability. Furthermore, we investigate the moderating role of unit-level climate for inclusion on this relationship and find support for a buffering effect of inclusive climates on the negative incongruence-LMX relationship for scenarios in which the supervisor, but not the subordinate, has a disability. We build relevant theory for the relational demography, disability, LMX, and organizational climate literatures by predicting these effects on the basis of status mechanisms. These findings have important practical implications, as they provide companies with a feasible way to manage their diverse workforce.

The demographics of the modern workforce are changing, and this increasing diversity makes it more likely that employees differ from both their peers and supervisors along demographic lines (Avery, McKay, & Wilson, 2008). The concept of relational demography (Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989) proposes that such increasing dissimilarity negatively affects group- and individual-level outcomes by weakening the social integration within dyads or workgroups and by increasing role ambiguity and conflict. In contrast to the effects of race, gender, or age differences, which have been widely investigated in the literature, differences based on disability status, which can be defined as "[...] the umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions, referring to the negative aspects of the interaction between an individual (with a health condition) and that individual's contextual factors (environmental and personal factors)" (WHO, 2011: 4),¹ have received hardly any scholarly attention (Colella & Bruyère, 2011; Dovidio, Pagotto, & Hebl, 2011). The notable exception is Colella and Varma's (2001) study, which showed that subordinates with disabilities tend to form lowerquality leader–member exchange (LMX) relationships with their supervisors without disabilities.

This lack of research is problematic, since approximately one in every six people, or one billion of the world's population, has a disability (WHO, 2011), and these numbers are only increasing. The

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¹ As this study was conducted in Germany, we also want to share the German definition of disability, as this definition forms the basis of the study participants' understanding of disability. The German definition combines the medical and social view of disability and defines "those as having a disability whose physical, cognitive, or psychological health deviates from the age-typical average for longer than six months and thereby negatively affects their inclusion in society" (German SGB IX).

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poor workplace inclusion of people with disabilities leads to costs for companies due to discrimination litigation and missed business opportunities (87% of consumers prefer to do business with companies that hire people with disabilities; Siperstein, Romano, Mohler, & Parker, 2006). In addition, the inclusion of people with disabilities has implications at the societal level, with the costs of poor inclusion reflected by increasing costs for social security systems (for instance, on average 2% of GDP is spent for disability benefits across OECD countries; OECD, 2010).

Relationship quality in supervisor-subordinate dyads serves as an important contributor to successful workplace inclusion (Gates, 1993). However, while we know that subordinates with disabilities are at risk of forming weak ties with their supervisor due to lower performance expectations and less positive affect based on stereotypes and similarity-attraction arguments (Colella & Varma, 2001), we know nothing about the effects of supervisor disability status. Furthermore, while extant research has been able to show that ingratiation behavior of the subordinate with disabilities reduces the likelihood of forming lowquality LMX relationships with the supervisor, there is no research on ways in which managers, colleagues, or human resources (HR) departments can prevent the negative outcomes of disability incongruence. For these reasons, we draw from the literature on relational demography (Chattopadhyay, Finn, & Ashkanasy, 2010), stigma (Kulik, Bainbridge, & Cregan, 2008), diversity climate (Mor Barak, Cherin, & Berkman, 1998), and climate for inclusion (Nishii, 2013; Shore et al., 2011) to extend our knowledge in two important ways.

First, Colella and Varma's (2001) finding that subordinates with disabilities form lower-quality relationships with their supervisors without disabilities covers only a part of organizational reality. Stemming from a demographic change in age and an increase in the retirement age in many industrialized countries, people have to work significantly longer than in past decades. Due to the fact that most disabilities are not present from birth but develop during the lifetime (e.g., a 20-year-old U.S. worker has a greater than one in four chance of becoming disabled before reaching full retirement age; U.S. Social Security Administration, 2015), a positive correlation of age and disability (Colella & Bruyère, 2011; WHO, 2011), and the seniority-based promotion that applies in many companies, it can be expected that the number of supervisors with disabilities will continue to rise (e.g., approximately 13% of supervisors in the sample used for this study have a disability). Therefore, it is critical to better understand the LMX quality of dyads, both in which the supervisor, but not the subordinate, has a disability and in which both the supervisor and the subordinate have a disability, in order to investigate whether arguments based on stereotypes, similarity-attraction, and stigma (Byrne, 1971; Fiske, 1993; Kulik et al., 2008) hold for such situations. This is especially relevant since both members of dyads are known to form expectations about their counterpart that influence their mutual LMX quality (Dulebohn, Bommer, Liden, Brouer, & Ferris, 2012). More importantly, relational demography researchers have highlighted the importance of status (i.e., respect and prestige) differences in dyads and groups for incongruence outcomes, and have proposed that asymmetrical effects might occur, depending on the specific congruence scenario (Chattopadhyay, 1999; Chattopadhyay et al., 2010; Schaffer & Riordan, 2013). This point is highly relevant for disability research, since disability status is associated with stigma and lower status (Clair, Beatty, & MacLean, 2005; Stone & Colella, 1996). Thus, we develop and test a theoretical framework that helps us gain a more nuanced understanding of the disability-LMX relationship by investigating all four possible disability dissimilarity scenarios within the dyad (i.e., both members of the dyad have a disability or have no disability; only supervisor or only subordinate has a disability). Consequently, we contribute not only to the disability literature, but also to the literature on relational demography and leadership more broadly.

Second, our study extends the relational demography literature and offers managers, HR departments, and companies information on how to respond to the growing diversity in the workforce by investigating the role of climate for inclusion, which is a manageable organizational factor, as a potential buffer for the negative effects of incongruence on LMX. Recently, Nishii (2013: 1754) introduced climate for inclusion and defined it as an environment in which "individuals of all backgrounds-not just members of historically powerful identity groups—are fairly treated, valued for who they are, and included in core decision-making." For diverse workgroups and companies, the positive effects of climate for inclusion, and the related construct of diversity climate, have been consistently demonstrated (Gonzalez & DeNisi, 2009; McKay, Avery, & Morris, 2009). Yet, it is surprising that there is no research investigating whether the positive effects of climate for inclusion or diversity climate extend to the dyadic level (i.e., supervisor-subordinate dyads). This study provides theoretical reasoning and an empirical test of multilevel field data to investigate whether climate for inclusion moderates the effects of supervisor–subordinate disability incongruence on LMX quality and, consequently, performance. Thus, we advance the relational demography literature by identifying a manageable remedy for some of the negative effects of supervisor–subordinate dissimilarity, and the literature on organizational climate, by discussing the potential of more nuanced effects of climate on different individuals.

Taken together, we develop and test a model in which supervisor–subordinate incongruence in disability status is hypothesized to lead to lower LMX quality, and, subsequently, to lower employee performance. Climate for inclusion at the unit level is posited as a moderator of the disability dissimilarity–LMX relationship (see Figure 1). We test these hypotheses in a multilevel framework, using a sample of 1,253 employees nested in 54 work units of a large German public service organization.

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

The Relationship Between Supervisor–Subordinate Disability Congruence Scenarios and LMX Quality

Although the number of persons with disabilities is increasing throughout the world (WHO, 2011), they are still a minority group within most organizations. Consequently, the scenario in which neither dyad member has a disability is the most common case. Therefore, we will use this scenario as our theoretical baseline and compare it to three other congruence scenarios: (a) dyads in which both of the members have a disability; (b) dyads in which the subordinate, but not the supervisor, has a disability; and (c) dyads in which the supervisor, but not the subordinate, has a disability.

Scenario 1: Both supervisor and subordinate have a disability. Congruence scenarios in which the supervisor and the subordinate have a disability should be characterized by particularly high levels of mutual affect and trust as both members belong to the same distinct minority group within the organization. In line with the concept of relational demography (Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989) and the underlying similarityattraction paradigm (Byrne, 1971), they should view and treat each other more positively (Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992) and provide more affirmative feedback to one other (Hinds, Carley, Krackhardt, & Wholey, 2000), thereby reducing uncertainty and fears of rejection, which are otherwise common reactions to disability (Stone & Colella, 1996). Moreover, arguing from a social identity and self-categorization perspective (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, 1985), subordinates and supervisors in such scenarios will share an important and especially salient social identity; i.e., their disability. As prior research has found demography-based social identities, including age, gender, or race (Avery et al., 2008; Finkelstein, Burke, & Raju, 1995; Kearney & Gebert, 2009), to be important for in-group out-group formation, we assume that supervisors and subordinates with a disability will exhibit higher levels of trust, communication, and



FIGURE 1 Multilevel Model of Supervisor–Subordinate Disability Dissimilarity Outcomes

Note. Congruent dyads in which neither the subordinate nor the supervisor have a disability serve as the baseline. Individual-level controls (i.e., temporary employment, hierarchy, gender dissimilarity, and age dissimilarity with the supervisor) and unit-level controls (i.e., unit job type, unit size, gender diversity, age diversity, and disability diversity) were deleted from the figure for simplicity reasons.

sympathy for one another, compared to out-group members without a disability. Thus, we propose that:

Hypothesis 1a. Dyads in which both the subordinate and the supervisor have a disability will exhibit a higher LMX quality compared to dyads in which neither of the members has a disability.

Scenario 2: The subordinate has a disability, the supervisor does not. For incongruence scenarios in which the subordinate, but not the supervisor, has a disability, we suggest that LMX quality will be lower. We draw from relational demography (Tsui et al., 1992; Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989), similarityattraction (Byrne, 1971), and social identity arguments (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, 1985), which all imply that dissimilar individuals communicate, cooperate, and trust each other less than similar individuals do. Such negative effects of demographic dissimilarity between supervisors and subordinates on various outcomes, including LMX, trust, satisfaction, and performance, have been demonstrated for race, sex, and age (e.g., Bauer & Green, 1996; Brouer, Duke, Treadway, & Ferris, 2009; Judge & Ferris, 1993; Wayne & Liden, 1995).

Furthermore, disability and stereotype research has shown that persons with disabilities are generally at risk of being stereotyped as helpless, inferior, dependent, submissive, and incompetent (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2007; Stone & Colella, 1996). Therefore, employees with disabilities should suffer from unfair, stereotype-based perceptions and expectations. This is in line with the review by Unger (2002), who found that people with disabilities are confronted with concerns such as reduced performance, attendance, coworker acceptance, and lack of skills, as well as increased dependence and financial costs. The outlined mechanism also applies to performance expectations, which is another relevant predictor of LMX quality (Liden, Wayne, & Stilwell, 1993). As Ren and colleagues (2008) showed in their meta-analysis, performance expectations were lower for people with disabilities than for non-disabled control groups, holding past performance constant (d = -.14). Even if these negative performance expectations are not mirrored by equally negative performance evaluations (as shown by Ren et al., 2008), the LMX quality will still be negatively affected if subordinates feel that their positive performance evaluations are based on social desirability and the norm to be kind toward persons with disabilities (Colella & Bruvère, 2011) instead of supervisors' acknowledgment of their actual performance. Lowered performance expectations are known to lead to fewer training and growth

opportunities, as well as lower promotion rates (Colella, 1996; Colella & Varma, 1999). Reduced training, growth, and promotion opportunities, in turn, are indicators and catalysts of low-quality LMX relationships. Thus, we propose the following:

Hypothesis 1b. Dyads in which the subordinate, but not the supervisor, has a disability will exhibit a lower LMX quality compared to dyads in which neither of the members has a disability.

Scenario 3: The supervisor has a disability, the subordinate does not. The negative effects of incongruence based on similarity-attraction and social identity processes should also apply if the supervisor has a disability. In fact, based on status arguments, detrimental effects of disability incongruence may be even more pronounced if the supervisor has a disability.

As prior research on relational demography has pointed out (Chattopadhyay, 1999; Schaffer & Riordan, 2013; Tsui et al., 1992), it might be a comparably new situation for members of traditional majority groups, such as male and Caucasian employees, to work for a dissimilar supervisor from a minority group of lower status (e.g., a woman, an African American, or a supervisor with a disability). Such incongruence scenarios may be perceived as less prestigious by the subordinate and as a threat to the subordinate's social identity and self-image, causing some form of distancing behavior (Petriglieri, 2011) with negative implications for LMX quality. Building on these assumptions and applying them to the case of disability, we propose that subordinates may evaluate a supervisor's disability as particularly threatening to their work-related social identity and self-esteem and posit a pronounced negative effect on LMX quality in these dyads.

Further support for this notion can be derived from the concept of stigma, which refers to an attribute that discredits a person and reduces them "from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one" (Goffman, 1963: 3). Prior research has shown that persons with disabilities are highly susceptible to perceptions of stigma (McLaughlin, Bell, & Stringer, 2004). However, these perceptions are not limited to the individual bearing the stigma, but can also be transferred to others who interact with the stigmatized person, leading to similar negative treatment and exclusion (Goffman, 1963; Pryor, Reeder, & Monroe, 2012). In order to avoid such identity threats and other negative consequences, people disengage and disidentify with the source of stigma as coping mechanisms (Ellemers, Spears, &

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Doosje, 2002; Major & O'Brien, 2005; Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2002). Building on Kulik and colleagues' (2008) notion that such stigma-by-association is also likely to occur in the workplace, we propose that subordinates might be particularly susceptible to such processes when led by a supervisor with a disability. Employees at lower levels often form relationships with managers in order to gain respect, support, and, ultimately, sponsorship to move up the organizational ladder (i.e., self-promotion; Roberts, 2005). Research has shown that high-quality LMX relationships are positively related to salary progression, promotability, and career satisfaction (Wayne, Liden, Kraimer, & Graf, 1999). Yet, not all connections with every manager are equally beneficial (Erdogan & Enders, 2007). For instance, colleagues in other departments might question the subordinate's own capabilities if the subordinate is associated with a supervisor whom the colleagues perceive to be stigmatized based on disability (e.g., less productive, competent, or admired). Such stigma-by-association can therefore lead to an identity threat for the subordinate (as well as potential negative consequences for their career progression), which may result in distancing behavior from the supervisor and have a negative impact on LMX quality.

We wish to emphasize that the stigma-byassociation effects described here should be significantly less important in the other incongruence scenario (i.e., in which the subordinate, but not the supervisor, has a disability) for several reasons. First, supervisors do not look for sponsorship from their subordinates, as such individuals do not typically possess the relevant resources and access to power within the organization. Therefore, they should be less affected by the subordinate's disability status. Second, such scenarios are likely to be more congruent with observers' stereotypes and expectations, as the individual with more status (i.e., the person without a disability) holds the more prestigious position (i.e., the supervisory role). In fact, employing a person with a disability might even be regarded as a "humanitarian act," leading not only to an absence of stigma-by-association for the supervisor but also to a "valuation by association" (Kulik et al., 2008). This, however, will not be the case if the supervisor has the disability.

Finally, although leaders might be more influential in shaping LMX quality (Dulebohn et al., 2012), subordinates are also known to form expectations about their supervisors (Engle & Lord, 1997), which, in turn, influence their mutual relationship (Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Lapierre, Hackett, & Taggar, 2006). In line with this, subordinates without disabilities should be equally prone to invoking unfavorable stereotypes concerning the skills, resilience, and performance of their supervisor with a disability. In fact, the contribution expectations should be even higher for supervisors than for subordinates due their higher status and power (Wang, Law, Hackett, Wang, & Chen, 2005). As a result, situations in which the supervisor has a disability should result in a stronger violation of, or discrepancy between, the expectations and perceptions grounded in stereotypes (i.e., the role of the supervisor with positive skill associations and disability status with negative skill associations). Drawing on discrepancy theory (Lawler, 1973; Locke, 1969) and self-discrepancy theory (Higgins, Bond, Klein, & Strauman, 1986), situations that are characterized by a larger difference between perceptions and expectations should result in stronger negative outcomes; in this case, lower LMX quality.

In sum, and in alignment with prior relational demography research (Chattopadhyay et al., 2010), we expect that status plays a key role in the outcomes of different congruence scenarios, and we expect it to contribute to an asymmetrical effect of disability dissimilarity:

Hypothesis 1c. Dyads in which the supervisor, but not the subordinate, has a disability will exhibit lower-quality LMX compared to dyads in which neither of the members has a disability, and lowerquality LMX compared to dyads in which the subordinate, but not the supervisor, has a disability.

The Relationship Between LMX Quality and Subordinate Performance

Subordinates in high-quality LMX relationships, which are characterized by mutual trust, respect, affect, and loyalty (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), are better positioned to gain access to relevant resources that help boost their performance. These resources include more job-related information, increased interaction, greater personal concern and job direction, as well as more feedback, support, training, and developmental opportunities from their supervisor (Gerstner & Day, 1997). Moreover, a higher personal affection and mutual interest, combined with more in-depth knowledge of each other's goals, strengths, and requirements, also contribute to the supervisor's ability to motivate, develop and coach the subordinate (Sue-Chan, Chen, & Lam, 2011). The subordinate, in turn, should be more willing to engage in performancerelated behaviors, including organizational citizenship

behaviors and increased organizational commitment (Major, Kozlowski, Chao, & Gardner, 1995).

Multiple meta-analyses support a positive relationship between LMX quality and employee performance, for LMX quality assessed by supervisors (r = .41) as well as by unit members (r = .28)(e.g., Gerstner & Day, 1997). Dulebohn et al.'s (2012) meta-analysis revealed a similar relationship between LMX and job performance (r = .30). Based on the theoretical and empirical evidence presented above, we propose the following:

Hypothesis 2. LMX will be positively related to individual subordinate performance.

Climate for Inclusion as an Important Boundary Condition

Recently, scholars have begun moving from a focus on diversity management and integration to a focus on inclusion. In a review of the literature. Shore and colleagues (2011) described inclusive work environments as being characterized by feelings of high belongingness (i.e., everybody is treated as an insider) and, simultaneously, by a high value placed on uniqueness (i.e., everyone is encouraged to retain their uniqueness in the work group and not to conform to a dominant culture or existing norms). Nishii (2013) further refined our understanding of inclusive climates. Central to her operationalization of inclusive climates is the addition of integration of differences (i.e., the integration of diverse employees in the social life at work), as well as inclusion in decision making (i.e., the extent to which diverse perspectives of all employees are actively sought and integrated), to measures of diversity climate (Mor Barak et al., 1998), which often focus more strongly on fairly implemented employment practices (e.g., fair and unbiased recruitment, performance appraisal, and promotion practices). In the only extant study to test this new measure, Nishii (2013) found that gender diversity in groups does not lead to increased task and relationship conflict in inclusive climates. We extend this promising new line of research and investigate whether the positive effects of unit-level climate for inclusion apply to different supervisor-subordinate congruence scenarios and, thus, to the dyadic level.

The Cross-Level Moderation Effect of Unit-Climate for Inclusion on the Relationship Between Supervisor–Subordinate Incongruence in Disability Status and LMX Quality

In Hypotheses 1a-c we suggested that multiple theoretical mechanisms will influence the LMX

quality for disability status incongruence scenarios of supervisors and subordinates. Our general argument is that incongruence in dyads leads to lower-quality LMX relationships. However, a positive unit-level climate for inclusion is likely to buffer the effects of the proposed mechanisms, which should result in similar levels of LMX quality as in the baseline scenario (neither dyad member has a disability). Inclusive climates signal to supervisors and subordinates that everybody is of worth and that evervone's contributions should be valued. Hence, a strong climate for inclusion also suggests that the team or organization benefits most if everybody is a member of the in-group. Therefore, inclusive climates should reduce social identity effects and categorization processes based on disability, as well as the associated negative stereotypes that reduce relationship quality in all incongruence scenarios (Ely & Thomas, 2001). A strong climate for inclusion should help all unit members feel safe to express themselves and their identity (Ragins, 2008), to accept each other's differences (Larkey, 1996), and to develop interpersonal trust (Polzer, Milton, & Swarm, 2002). In units with a salient climate for inclusion that provides psychological safety for everyone, subordinates with disabilities are more likely to reveal their "true selves," which increases the chance that supervisors will overcome disability stereotypes and see their subordinates for who they are, and not just as members of a stigmatized minority group (Polzer et al., 2002). Consequently, the likelihood of developing a low-quality LMX relationship in an incongruent dyad, based on similarity-attraction, social identity, and self-categorization mechanisms, as well as stereotypes, should be significantly reduced.

Hypothesis 3a. Unit-level climate for inclusion will moderate the relationship between disability dissimilarity and LMX, such that higher levels of climate for inclusion will attenuate the proposed negative relationship in scenarios in which the subordinate, but not the supervisor, has a disability.

Furthermore, in Hypothesis 1c we argued that, contrary to situations in which the subordinate has a disability, negative effects of disability incongruence caused by supervisor disability are mainly based on stigma-by-association. Subordinates who develop close connections with their supervisor with a disability may be concerned that the resulting ties do not lead to better career options but that, instead, colleagues and other managers view the disability of the supervisor as a liability. In other words, a potential instrumental connection for career advancement could not only be unhelpful, but could actually result in stigma-by-association. However, as Kulik and colleagues (2008) outlined in their theoretical model, the identification of an association between an employee and a stigmatized source (in our case, the supervisor with a disability) does not always lead to a stigma spillover. Instead, multiple "speed bumps" (Kulik et al., 2008: 220) influence whether bystanders engage in deeper cognitive processing. For example, Kulik and colleagues argued that employee value systems influence the likelihood of stigma-by-association. If colleagues hold egalitarian values, they will refrain from stereotyping in order to avoid a mismatch between their values and behavior, and the resulting feelings of guilt (Devine, Monteith, Zuwerink, & Elliot, 1991). While the value systems of colleagues do not represent organizational climate per se (Ehrhart, Schneider, & Macey, 2013), an inclusive climate acts as a strong social norm for employees not to stereotype and discriminate against people with disabilities, but instead to see them as valuable members of the organization. Analogous to personal values, a strong inclusive climate should encourage cautious decision making and prevent stereotyping (Fiske & Von Hendy, 1992). In such environments, supervisors with disabilities should be less likely to be stereotyped as inferior. Consequently, subordinates who work in a unit with an inclusive climate should be significantly less susceptible to exhibiting stigmatized thinking when interacting closely with a supervisor with a disability (Kulik et al., 2008). If unit members are less likely to stigmatize, subordinates without a disability should be less concerned with stigma-by-association when interacting and developing a positive LMX relationship with a supervisor with a disability. Thus, the LMX quality should be similar to our baseline scenario (neither dyad member has a disability):

Hypothesis 3b. Unit-level climate for inclusion will moderate the relationship between disability dissimilarity and LMX, such that higher levels of climate for inclusion will attenuate the proposed negative relationship in scenarios in which the supervisor, but not the subordinate, has a disability.

METHODS

Sample and Data Collection

Data for this study were collected in Germany and have not been used for research purposes before. To

foster the vocational inclusion of persons with disabilities, Germany uses a quota system that requires organizations with more than 20 employees to fill 5% of their positions with employees with disabilities. If they fail to do so, they must pay a monthly penalty of between €115 and €290 for each position that should have been held by a person with a disability. The revenue from this compensation levy (€486 million in 2012) is used for vocational integration measures (BIH, 2013; Kock, 2004). Our partner organization is a federal agency that has a clear internal goal of exceeding this 5% quota. In order to do so, the agency uses specialized, barrier-free recruiting and promotion tools, such as recruiting and marketing campaigns that focus on job applicants with disabilities or capability-based job interviews that focus on strengths instead of potential deficiencies. The agency also invests quite heavily in diversity and inclusion training and offers this regularly and mandatorily as an element of its leadership training.

Our survey focused on all employees from one German state. All employees were nested within units working at 43 different locations and had different job tasks. The five different types of units were: placement and consulting, IT, service center, administration and special services, and benefits. In order to increase participation in this study, we collaborated with the organizational department responsible for conducting employee surveys within the agency. We administered the questionnaire online. All employees of the agency were equipped with their own work computer and were allowed to complete the survey during work hours. Participants were assured of confidentiality and that data analyses would only be conducted on the anonymized data. We provided each employee with a link to the Web survey through the central department responsible for employee surveys.

Since climate for inclusion was assessed as a unitlevel construct, we followed Klein, Conn, Smith, and Sorra's (2001) procedure and eliminated groups with fewer than three members. This resulted in the exclusion of 20 groups. After this procedure, the average group size was 48.12 (SD = 28.37, median = 45.00) and group sizes ranged from three to 98. The relatively large group sizes result from the fact that the placement and consulting units provide one-onone consulting and services to customers. As a result, the locations in larger cities that are responsible for a large amount of customers employ a greater number of employees. Importantly, these employees usually share the same open-plan offices, conduct similar work tasks, and share cafeterias and break rooms. The units used in our study represent the natural units within the organization. Thus, we expect enough interaction for a shared climate to emerge.

A total of 1,253 employees from 54 work units participated in this study, yielding a response rate of approximately 40%. The majority of the participants were women (62.8%). Most employees (34.1%) were older than 50, with 14.5% under 30, 23.6% between 30 and 40, and 27.9% between 41 and 50. The average tenure of employees in the sample was 18.55 years. Out of all participants 13.7% reported having a disability (the rate across federal institutions in Germany is 9.5%; BIH, 2013).

Measures

Supervisor-subordinate disability (in)congruence. We measured disability similarity with the direct supervisor by surveying all employees. We first asked employees if they have a disability, according to the German disability definition (see Footnote 1), and if they possess a German disability identification card. This card is issued by specialized governmental agencies based on medical reports in an official process following clear rules and procedures. It entitles the holder to receive various benefits, such as preferred parking, qualified career advice, public placement services, vocational training measures, mobility aids, training subsidies and integration allowances for employers, as well as additional holidays and increased protection against dismissal (Kock, 2004). The card also documents the type and severity (ranging from 0–100%) of the holder's disability. When employees reported having a disability, we asked them to indicate the type of disability (physical, cognitive, or mental or psychological), as well as the percentage of their disability, as documented on their disability ID. Third, we asked for their disability similarity to their supervisor by using the following item: "Do you have the same disability status as your direct supervisor?" The four possible answers were: "Yes, neither of us have a disability," "Yes, both of us have a disability," "No, I have a disability but my direct supervisor does not have a disability," and "No, I do not have a disability but my supervisor does."

Leader-member exchange. LMX was measured with eight items from Scandura and Graen (1984) and adapted by Bauer and Green (1996) and Venkataramani, Green, and Schleicher (2010). All items were measured using a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 6 "strongly agree." A sample item was: "My direct supervisor understands my problems and needs." The individual-level Cronbach's α for this scale was .95.

Unit-level climate for inclusion. Climate for inclusion was measured with 10 items representing integration of differences and inclusion in decision making (Nishii, 2013). Sample items for the two dimensions were "This unit is characterized by a non-threatening environment in which people can reveal their 'true' selves" and "In this unit, employees' insights are used to rethink or redefine work practices," respectively.

Based on referent-shift logic (Chan, 1998), we used the unit as the referent for the items and aggregated individual responses to the unit level. In order to test the appropriateness of this procedure, we calculated common aggregation statistics. A one-way analysis of variance with climate for inclusion as the dependent variable and unit membership as the independent variable was significant. Aggregation statistics were consistent with recommended cut-off values (intraclass correlation coefficient ICC(1) = .08; *F*(73, 1182) = 2.563, p < 0.001; ICC(2) = .61; median $r_{wg(j)}$ = .87; Bliese, 2000; LeBreton & Senter, 2008). The individual-level Cronbach's α for the scale was .94.

Performance. Consistent with the procedure used by Ashford and Black (1996), we measured performance using one item that asked for the respondent's performance evaluation by the direct supervisor, a practice that has been demonstrated to yield valid results (Schoorman & Mayer, 2008). The performance evaluation in this organization is carried out in a standardized procedure, with ratings following a forced distribution and thus yielding the same mean across units. A special committee in each organizational unit ensures compliance with these rules. Values of the performance measure range from "A" to "E," with "A" representing the best grade. A maximum of 5% of employees are allowed to receive an "A" rating and no more than 25% can receive a rating of "B." We transformed the performance ratings into numerical values ranging from 1 (worst performance) to 5 (best performance).

Control variables. At the unit level, we controlled for unit job type, unit size, and demographic diversity. To do so, we included four dummy variables to capture the five job types mentioned above (i.e., placement and consulting; IT; service center; administration and special services; and benefits). In addition, we included a variable containing the unit size. To control for unit diversity, we computed the Blau index for age, disability, and gender diversity (Blau, 1977). Since there is a difference between the maximum number of age categories (four) and the maximum number of disability and gender categories (two), which results in a different maximum Blau value (Harrison & Klein, 2007), we divided the values by their theoretical maximum, yielding the standard-ized Index of Quality Variation (Marsden, 1990).

At the individual level, we added temporary employment, hierarchy, gender similarity to supervisor, and age similarity to supervisor as control variables since they could affect our focal variables (Colella & Varma, 2001; Tsui, Porter, & Egan, 2002). They were each measured with one item. We added one dummy variable for temporary employment (yes vs. no) and two dummy variables for hierarchy. One dummy variable indicated whether the employee was employed under an apprenticeship scheme and one whether they were a supervisor. The largest group of regular employees served as the baseline category. We added one dummy variable each to represent gender and age similarity, which indicated whether subordinates were similar (= 0) or dissimilar (= 1)to the direct supervisor.

ANALYSES AND RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

For simplicity and presentation reasons, only the means, standard deviations, and correlations of focal study variables are presented in Table 1 (Table A1 in Appendix A includes all control variables). Contrary to our expectations, congruent dyads in which both members have a disability do not seem to show higher levels of LMX quality (r = -.01, n.s.). As expected, supervisor-subordinate incongruence is negatively correlated with LMX in dyads in which the supervisor has a disability (r = -.09, p < .01) and in dyads in which the subordinate has a disability (r = -.08, p < .05). LMX is positively related to performance (r = .17, p < .01). Nevertheless, due to the nested structure of the data, and the fact that our hypotheses are stated in relation to dyads in which neither member has a disability, the correlation results should be interpreted with caution.

Hypothesis Testing

Because employees in our dataset were nested in different work units and as we included variables at different levels (i.e., climate for inclusion, unit job type, unit size, and diversity at the unit level; all other variables at the individual level), we applied

hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) to test our hypotheses. This allowed us to simultaneously estimate within- and between-unit variance (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000). We used grand mean centering. Following common procedures (e.g., Avery, Wang, Volpone, & Zhou, 2013; Chen, Liu, & Portnoy, 2012) we first tested for systematic variation between units. We fit two null hierarchical models for LMX and performance, respectively. The analyses resulted in significant unit-level variation in LMX $\chi^2(N_{\text{individual}} = 1226; N_{\text{unit}} = 54) = 16.96, p < .01)$ but not performance χ^2 $(N_{\text{individual}}^{\text{unit}} = 1000; N_{\text{unit}} = 54) = 1.22, p > .05).$ The variance partition coefficients indicated that 17% of the variance in LMX and 9% of the variance in performance existed between units. The absence of significant group variation in performance is unsurprising since the performance ratings of the supervisor must follow a forced distribution and yield the same mean across units in our sample. Based on the fact that LMX represents a central variable in our multilevel model, we proceeded using HLM.

The asymmetric main effects of supervisorsubordinate disability incongruence on LMX. In Hypothesis 1a, we predicted that dyads in which both the subordinate and the supervisor have a disability will exhibit higher-quality LMX compared to dyads in which neither of the members has a disability. Our results, displayed in Model 2 of Table 2, do not support this proposition, as the LMX quality does not significantly differ from dyads in which neither member has a disability (B = -.12, n.s.).²

Hypothesis 1b predicted a negative effect of supervisor–subordinate disability dissimilarity on LMX in dyads where the subordinate has a disability compared to dyads in which neither member has a disability. The results, depicted in Model 2 of Table 2, support this hypothesis (B = -.27, p < .05).

Hypothesis 1c predicted a lower-quality LMX relationship in incongruent dyads in which the supervisor has a disability, compared to congruent dyads and to incongruent dyads in which the subordinate has a disability. The results, displayed in Model 2 of Table 2, provide support for the first prediction, since dyads in which the supervisor has a disability exhibit significantly lower-quality LMX compared to congruent dyads in which neither member has a disability (B = -.57, p < .01). In order to test the second prediction, we compared the regression coefficients of the two incongruence scenarios (when

² This result should be interpreted with caution, since the number of dyads that represent this scenario was small, which reduced the power to detect an effect.

Means, Stanuaru Deviat	ions, and v	Correlatio	ons for the	rocal Sludy	variables		
Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1 Subordinate and supervisor have a disability	0.02	0.12	_				
2 Subordinate has a disability, supervisor does not	0.12	0.33	-0.05	—			
3 Supervisor has a disability, subordinate does not	0.04	0.19	-0.02	-0.07*	_		
4 Unit-level climate for inclusion	4.04	1.17	-0.03	-0.03	-0.01	_	
5 LMX	4.34	1.21	-0.01	-0.08*	-0.09**	0.17**	_
6 Performance	3.28	0.60	-0.02	-0.08*	0.02	0.02	0.17**

 TABLE 1

 Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for the Focal Study Variables

Note. Level 1: N = 1253. Level 2: N = 54. Unit-level climate for inclusion is a Level 2 variable. The first three variables are dummies and were coded (0 = no, 1 = yes). For a full table of means, standard deviations, and correlations including all controls, please refer to Appendix A.

* p < .05

** *p* < .01

the subordinate, but not the supervisor, has a disability [B = -.27] vs. when the supervisor, but not the subordinate, has a disability [B = -.57]). The test for equality of both coefficients yielded a non-significant result ($\chi^2 = 1.60$, n.s.), indicating that incongruent dyads in which the supervisor has a disability have lower-quality LMX relationships compared to incongruent dyads in which the subordinate has a disability. Thus, this finding provides support for Hypothesis 1c.

The main effect of LMX quality on performance. Hypothesis 2 predicted that individual-level LMX quality will be positively related to individual performance. The results, displayed in Model 5 of Table 2, support this hypothesis. As predicted, LMX is positively related to individual performance (B = .11, p < .01).³

The asymmetrical cross-level moderating effect of unit-level climate for inclusion on the relationship between disability incongruence and LMX. Hypothesis 3a predicted that unit-level climate for inclusion will buffer the negative relationship between supervisor–subordinate disability incongruence and individual LMX quality in dyads in which the subordinate has a disability. However, the results, presented in Model 4 of Table 2, do not support this prediction ($\gamma = .01$, n.s.).

Hypothesis 3b suggested that unit-level climate for inclusion will moderate the negative relationship between supervisor-subordinate disability incongruence and individual LMX quality in dyads in which the supervisor has a disability. More specifically, unit-level climate for inclusion is proposed to attenuate the negative effect of disability incongruence. As indicated by Model 4 of Table 2, the HLM results support this hypothesis. In situations in which the supervisor has a disability but the subordinate does not, unit-level climate for inclusion does exhibit a significant moderating effect ($\gamma = 1.17, p < .01$).

To further inspect the moderating effect, we displayed the influence of less inclusive (1 *SD* below the mean) and more inclusive (1 *SD* above the mean) climates on LMX quality for the four different supervisor–subordinate disability congruence scenarios shown in Figure 2. As we can see, climate for inclusion matters in scenarios in which the supervisor has a disability. The results of simple slopes tests (Aiken & West, 1991) support this conclusion. Whereas supervisor disability is associated with lower-quality LMX in less inclusive climates ($\gamma = -1.06$, p < .01), it does not lead to lower LMX in more inclusive climates ($\gamma = -.10$, n.s.). In sum, these results provide support for Hypothesis 3b.

DISCUSSION

Our multilevel analyses of data from 1,253 employees in 54 work units provide important insights into the effects of supervisor–subordinate disability incongruence on LMX relationships and, subsequently, performance. We extend prior research (Colella & Varma, 2001) by showing that disabilitycongruent dyads (neither member has a disability; both members have a disability) develop similar levels of LMX quality. We also show that not only subordinate disability, but also supervisor disability (i.e., disability incongruence in general), is related to lower LMX quality. Moreover, we find support for an

³ We also performed bootstrap analyses and found indirect effects of incongruence on performance via LMX in dyads in which the subordinate has a disability (b = -.03, p < .05, 95% CI [-0.075, -.002]) and in dyads in which the supervisor has a disability (b = -.06, p < .05, 95% CI [-0.133, -.023]).

		L	ΝХ		Performance
Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
1 Intercept	4.60^{**} (0.14)	4.80^{**} (0.15)	4.68^{**} (0.15)	4.69^{**} (0.15)	4.00^{**} (0.09)
2 Temporary work	0.03(0.14)	-0.01(0.17)	-0.03(0.16)	-0.03(0.16)	-0.24(0.12)
Hierarchy—apprenticeship	0.21(0.32)	0.13(0.36)	0.18(0.36)	0.17(0.36)	-0.34(0.26)
Hierarchy—supervisor	0.07(0.11)	0.05(0.13)	0.05(0.13)	0.04(0.13)	$0.32^{**}(0.08)$
Gender dissimilarity	$-0.15^{*}(0.07)$	$-0.19^{*}(0.08)$	-0.19^{*} (0.08)	-0.19^{*} (0.08)	-0.05(0.05)
Age dissimilarity	-0.18^{*} (0.09)	$-0.25^{*}(0.10)$	-0.24^{*} (0.01)	-0.23*(0.10)	-0.00(0.06)
Unit size	-0.00(0.00)	-0.00(0.00)	0.00(0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00(0.00)
Unit job type—benefits	-0.22(0.14)	-0.32^{*} (0.14)	-0.05(0.16)	$-0.08\ (0.16)$	0.01(0.08)
Unit job type—administration and special services	0.16(0.13)	$0.08\ (0.13)$	-0.00(0.12)	-0.00(0.12)	0.07 (0.07)
Unit job type—IT	-0.42(0.33)	-0.67(0.35)	-0.46(0.35)	-0.47(0.34)	0.10 (0.20)
Unit job type—service center	0.18(0.20)	0.07 (0.20)	0.01 (0.18)	0.02(0.18)	-0.06(0.11)
Age diversity	-0.40(0.53)	-0.56(0.55)	-0.18(0.54)	-0.26(0.54)	0.00 (0.36)
Disability diversity	-0.32(0.21)	-0.05(0.23)	-0.01(0.22)	.01 (0.22)	-0.05(0.14)
Gender diversity	-0.29(0.33)	-0.36(0.36)	-0.18(0.35)	-0.08(0.35)	0.34(0.23)
3 Subordinate and supervisor have a disability		-0.12(0.32)	-0.11(0.32)	-0.16(0.33)	-0.19(0.22)
Subordinate has a disability, supervisor does not		-0.27^{*} (0.13)	-0.26^{*} (0.12)	-0.27^{*} (0.12)	-0.16(0.08)
Supervisor has a disability, subordinate does not		-0.57^{**} (0.21)	-0.57^{**} (0.21)	-0.58^{**} (0.21)	0.09(0.13)
4 Climate for inclusion (ClFI)			0.45^{**} (0.14)	0.40^{**} (0.14)	
5 CIFI × subordinate and supervisor have a disability				-0.46(0.82)	
CIFI imes subordinate has a disability, supervisor does not				0.01 (0.32)	
ClFI × supervisor has a disability, subordinate does not				1.17^{**} (0.50)	
6 LMX					0.11^{**} (0.02)
Deviance	3495.46	2681.41	2670.44	2664.42	1511.67
Level 1: N	1109	854	854	854	721
Level 2: N	54	52	52	52	50
Note. Depicted are unstandardized regression coefficients (and climate for inclusion are Level 2 variables. Temporary employment	l standard errors). HLM ht (0 = no 1 = ves) hiers	[= hierarchical linear] archy (haseline categor	modeling; Unit job type. v = emnlovee) gender s	gender, age, and disab imilarity (haseline cateo	lity diversity, and orv = subordinate
TATTER A TRADUTE A TRADET A TRADET A PER A A AT A TRADET AND TATTER AND A A AT A TRADET AND TATTER A A A A A A		TO TO THE ADDRESS OF		TATES ATTENDED ATTENDED	$\sim \sim $

Results of the HLM Analyses for LMX and Performance TABLE 2

female, supervisor male), age similarity (baseline category = subordinate much younger (more than 10 years difference)), unit job type (baseline category = placement & consulting), and disability similarity (baseline category = both have no disability) are dummy variables. * p < .05** p < .01

3.1



low high Climate for inclusion

asymmetric effect of disability incongruence. Dyads in which the supervisor has a disability have lowerquality LMX relationships compared to dyads in which the subordinate has a disability. This result provides further support for the importance of status in relational demography research (Chattopadhyay et al., 2010; Schaffer & Riordan, 2013), research on people with disabilities (Stone & Colella, 1996), and research on diversity in general (Joshi, 2014). Finally, we find that inclusive unit climates can partially buffer the negative effects of dissimilarity in incongruence scenarios in which the supervisor has a disability, but not in scenarios in which the subordinate has a disability. By doing so, we add to the emerging literature on climate for inclusion by showing that the positive effects of inclusive climates are not limited to diverse workgroups (Nishii, 2013), but also apply to supervisorsubordinate incongruence (and, therefore, to the dyadic level) and to the diversity dimension of disability. We also contribute to management practice by identifying a viable intervention strategy for companies in order to manage growing workforce diversity (Kulik, 2014).

Theoretical Implications

Our results add to the literature in several important ways. First, we contribute to research on inclusion of people with disabilities in the workplace by investigating the potential impact of disability status on subordinates' relationship quality with their supervisors. In line with, but extending, Colella and Varma's (2001) field research, we show that not only subordinates with disabilities, but also supervisors with disabilities, face lower-quality LMX relationships in incongruent (i.e., disability-diverse) dyads. This finding is particularly interesting in light of growing trends in population aging, which make this scenario more common. Supervisors' greater positions of power (Dépret & Fiske, 1992; Dulebohn et al., 2012) do not seem to protect them from forming lower-quality relationships with their subordinates without disabilities. Our results support the view that supervisors and subordinates both form expectations about one another (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Sin, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2009). If these expectations are violated by either member of the dyad, the quality of LMX suffers. Therefore, it appears as if the higher status of supervisors does not mitigate negative outcomes (Stone & Colella, 1996), and that negative stereotypes based on disability status work in both directions (i.e., from supervisor to subordinate and vice versa).

Second, we predict, and find support for, an asymmetrical effect of disability incongruence, such that dyads in which the supervisor has a disability have the lowest LMX quality of all four scenarios. This asymmetrical effect may stem from distancing behaviors of subordinates from supervisors with disabilities in order to prevent stigma-by-association effects (Kulik et al., 2008), as well as different expectations for supervisors and subordinates (Wang et al., 2005). More specifically, due to their higher hierarchical status and position of power, expectations regarding the contribution and professional reputation should be higher for supervisors than for subordinates. As a result, scenarios in which the supervisor has a disability may result in a stronger violation or discrepancy between these perceptions and the higher status of the supervisor role (i.e., the role of the supervisor with positive skill associations and the disability status with negative skill associations and expectations). Situations in which there are greater discrepancies will not only be more salient to observers (Rousseau, 1995), but will also lead to stronger negative outcomes (Higgins et al., 1986; Lawler, 1973; Locke, 1969); in this case, the outcome of lowerquality LMX. Taken together, these results contribute to the relational demography literature, which has recently begun to investigate the interplay of hierarchical status and diversity dimensions such as race (Schaffer & Riordan, 2013) or professional dissimilarity (Chattopadhyay et al., 2010). Future research should follow up on this interesting finding and test whether the combination of higher status (e.g., a supervisory role) with membership in a devalued demographic group always leads to negative outcomes, as in our case, or whether status actually functions as

a buffer in some situations (e.g., depending on the level of status).

Third, this study contributes to integration of the literature on relational demography, disability, and LMX with findings on climate for inclusion (Nishii, 2013) and diversity climate (Kaplan, Wiley, & Maertz, 2011). Numerous empirical studies have pointed to the potentially negative effects of increased diversity, including conflict, communication, and coordination problems, as well as absenteeism, and increased turnover intentions (van Dijk, van Engen, & van Knippenberg, 2012; van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007), and there is consensus in the literature that the outcomes of diversity depend on boundary conditions such as unit climate (Joshi & Roh, 2009). Even though studies have consistently shown the positive effects of inclusive climates or positive climates for diverse workgroups (McKay & Avery, 2015), knowledge regarding the impact on individuals or dyads is scarce. The few multilevel studies that exist have provided evidence for positive cascading effects on the individual (Chen et al., 2012). This study is the first to show that the positive effects of climate for inclusion for diverse groups (McKay, Avery, Liao, & Morris, 2011; Nishii, 2013) and the individual (Gonzalez & DeNisi, 2009) partly expand to dyads. We find that differences in disability status between the supervisor and subordinate (i.e., the supervisor has a disability while the subordinate does not) does not lead to lower-quality LMX in units with a positive climate for inclusion. Therefore, it appears that unit-level climate influences not only unit-level processes, but also processes within dyads and individual behavior. Consequently, our study underscores the importance of the work context for the formation of LMX relationships (Dulebohn et al., 2012) and diversity research in general (van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007). Incongruence in disability status relates to negative outcomes if group norms allow social categorization and sub-group formation, as well as stigmatization and stereotyping based on disability. However, if existing norms promote the commitment of resources to all group members regardless of disability status, and the support of group-member uniqueness and belongingness (Roberson, 2006; Shore et al., 2011), dissimilarity does not necessarily lead to negative outcomes.

Fourth and finally, status considerations may also play a role in the buffering effect of climate for inclusion. As noted by Chattopadhyay et al. (2010), DiTomaso, Post, Smith, Farris, and Cordero (2007), and Reagans (2005), status is an important aspect that explains interrelations between groups. These

processes are likely to be relevant for the prediction of asymmetric climate for inclusion effects in the case of dyads as well. Despite the potential for inclusive climates to prevent negative outcomes of group diversity, minority membership, and supervisor-subordinate incongruence, in this study, unit-level climate for inclusion only buffered supervisor-subordinate incongruence when the supervisor had a disability, but not vice versa. We believe that existing research has overlooked the important role of status in the effects of organizational climate. It seems reasonable that climate for inclusion provides a strong normative guideline for subordinates not to discriminate against their supervisor with disabilities, but not the other way around. Research has demonstrated the influence of social expectations and norms on employee behavior (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004; Liu, Mitchell, Lee, Holtom, & Hinkin, 2012). However, the status, influence, and power of supervisors may protect them against social sanctions that may arise in cases in which they violate a social norm, since subordinates may be hesitant to voice their opinions and approach their supervisor with negative feedback (Ashford, Blatt, & Walle, 2003; McClean, Burris, & Detert, 2013). Therefore, supervisors may not be as affected by positive peer pressure as subordinates are. Consequently, supervisors may not adjust their behavior to the same extent, resulting in less reduction of stereotyping and some remaining level of discrimination, with an associated negative effect for the LMX relationships formed with their dissimilar subordinates. Therefore, future research that further investigates the differential effects of unit-level climate for inclusion on the attitudes and behavior of subordinates versus supervisors is warranted. This is especially important since supervisors may also act as role models for their subordinates (Mayer, Aquino, Greenbaum, & Kuenzi, 2012), and thereby act as drivers of inclusive work climates (Kearney & Gebert, 2009; Nishii & Mayer, 2009). Taken together, we know little about differential effects of overall group norms for different individuals (e.g., in terms of hierarchal level but also personality, national culture, etc.). This study provides initial insight into this matter and puts forth the idea that individuals are differentially affected by organizational climates. Future research on organizational climate would be well served by further investigation that builds on these findings.

Limitations and Future Research

Even though this study provides significant contributions to the literature on relational demography, disability, LMX, and climate for inclusion, its findings should be interpreted within the context of its limitations. The data for this study were collected by a federal agency in Germany. This could limit the generalizability of the findings, as there are important differences in how countries define and pursue disability rights (Dwertmann, in press). In Germany, people with disabilities possess extensive employment rights (e.g., increased security regarding lay-offs, additional holidays). In particular, federal agencies have strong norms regarding hiring people with disabilities. This results in an above-average employment rate of people with disabilities in these organizations (9.5% compared to 6.5% in the public sector and 4.6% overall; BIH, 2013). Our partnering organization is especially focused on the employment of people with disabilities (e.g., barrier-free recruiting and promotion tools, such as capability-based job interviews that focus on strengths instead of potential deficiencies), which results in an above-average proportion of employees with disabilities in the organization (10.3%). In line with this high representation, we also expect comparably high inclusion of employees with disabilities within this organization. Thus, our empirical study is likely to represent a rather conservative model test. The fact that we still find negative effects of disability incongruence in such an environment suggests that even more pronounced effects may be found in organizations with cultures driven by competition and prestige (e.g., in finance or consulting). As an example, we might expect that stigma-by-association for subordinates without disabilities who are working for a supervisor with a disability might be much stronger in such environments. Future research should investigate these assumptions.

In this study, we asked the subordinates to indicate whether they differ from their supervisor in disability status. This presents a potential limitation in that the subordinate may not be aware of whether the supervisor has a disability. However, we believe that this is not of great concern in our study, given the rolemodeling function that supervisors with disabilities have in this organization. They are often portrayed in internal and external communications, such as employee magazines, recruiting brochures, or articles about the organization. Moreover, they often have an active role in diversity training and internal and external seminars. Yet, even if subordinates are unsure of their supervisors' actual disability status, they still make assumptions about it. The perception of disability dissimilarity (even if it is inconsistent with objective disability status data) is what ultimately

matters for the theoretical rationale presented here, as it results in stereotyping and is shown to be more influential for the LMX quality than actual dissimilarity (Liden et al., 1993; Turban & Jones, 1988). Taken together, we believe that, based on the open and inclusive environment in our partner organization, subordinates are likely to be aware of their supervisor's disability status and, thus, be more reliable judges. However, even in cases in which their assumption is wrong, the perception is what counts.

A related aspect concerns the potential role of disability type. As we know from prior research (Stone & Colella, 1996), different forms of disability result in varying levels of stereotypes. Whereas physical disabilities are associated with fewer negative expectations, mental disabilities result in stronger stereotypes (Schomerus et al., 2012). Furthermore, a fit in disability type between supervisor and employee (i.e., both have a physical, mental, or intellectual disability) could result in particularly high levels of LMX quality due to stronger feelings of similarity-attraction and in-group identification. Finally, more severe disabilities could lead to more negative outcomes. Therefore, a differentiation of the incongruence effects based on various types and severity of disability could lead to finer-grained results (e.g., potentially demonstrate more detrimental effects for people with mental vs. physical disabilities) and would hence deepen our knowledge of the exact nature of detrimental supervisor-subordinate dissimilarity effects of disability. We investigated these ideas in our dataset and found the expected effects for disability type. Employees with physical disabilities reported the best LMX relationships (M = 4.11), followed by employees with intellectual (M = 3.25) and mental or psychological disabilities (M = 3.17). However, due to the small sample sizes for employees with intellectual and mental disabilities, these results should be interpreted with caution. Unfortunately, these small sample sizes did not allow us to test whether it makes a difference if both supervisor and employee share the same disability type. In contrast to disability type, disability severity (ranging from 20-100%, as assessed by doctors) did not exhibit a clear result. In light of these findings, we advise scholars to further investigate such differential effects of disability type and severity in future studies.

Finally, we used subjective performance ratings for this study, which could be criticized for reliability and validity reasons. The first question that arises is whether study participants can reliably report their performance rating as received by their direct supervisor. The forced distribution of the performance ratings in our partnering organization ensured a certain variance of the ratings within units, and restricted the variability in the mean ratings between groups. Consistent with this notion, group membership did not explain a significant amount of variance in performance (F(53, 946) =1.08, n.s.) which provides confidence that employees reliably reported their rating. This is in line with findings by Schoorman and Mayer (2008) and Levy and Williams (1998), who showed that employees can accurately report their own performance rating if the item asks for the performance rating last received by the direct supervisor. In regard to validity, this study focuses on the opportunity for people from a marginalized group (disability) to be successful at their job. In our partner organization, promotions, additional benefits, etc., and therefore success, are based on the chosen performance measure. Consequently, this grade is best aligned with the purpose of our study. Thus, while this measure might not be the most suitable for employees' objective performance, it is the most accurate and, therefore, valid measure of the opportunity that people with disabilities in our sample have to be successful at their job. Nonetheless, as a robustness check, we also reran our model using two additional dependent variables. The results for both organizational commitment and turnover intentions yielded an identical pattern of relationships that differed only in magnitude.

Managerial Implications

Changing workforce demographics are a key issue for practitioners (Beechler & Woodward, 2009). Managers search for the best ways to prevent or reduce the negative effects of differences and increase the likelihood of positive outcomes (van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007). The current study assists managers in this endeavor. We identify LMX quality as an important mechanism through which supervisorsubordinate disability dissimilarity translates to reduced performance. Consequently, positive LMX relationships with all subordinates should be a major goal for supervisors (Nishii & Mayer, 2009). Direct ways to influence LMX quality include supervisor expectations of subordinate success, contingent reward behavior, and transformational leadership (Dulebohn et al., 2012). The creation of active training opportunities for these managerial behaviors (King, Dawson, Kravitz, & Gulick, 2012; Moss-Racusin et al., 2014) presents a promising avenue for fostering positive LMX relationships.

In addition, our study provides support for unitlevel climate for inclusion as a buffer of negative dissimilarity outcomes. Therefore, organizations should aim to foster employees' perceptions of a strong climate for inclusion. Unfortunately, little empirical research has thus far investigated the antecedents of climate for inclusion or diversity climate. Based on the few studies that exist, there are two possible avenues for organizations to consider. First, companies should critically examine their HR practices. Are training opportunities, reward-based pay, and promotion opportunities distributed equitably among all organization members, regardless of demographics? If not, companies should readjust these processes and introduce consistent and inclusive HR practices (Boehm, Kunze, & Bruch, 2014; Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). In particular, HR practices that allow for flexibility in terms of time and location can send a strong signal that special needs of employees with disabilities (e.g., for medical appointments) and other potentially marginalized groups, such as young parents and employees caring for relatives, are recognized and fully accepted. Furthermore, we argued that supervisors might perceive that they are less subject to the organizational climate norms than subordinates are, and that this mechanism explains the asymmetric effect of climate for inclusion on disability incongruence. Consequently, organizations may be well advised to increase manager accountability. Supervisors who have a long-term track record of advancing demographically diverse subordinates should be recognized. One way to do so is to introduce performance-based benefits for the successful development and promotion of minority members to higher positions. This should provide an incentive for supervisors to assess and promote the skills of all subordinates, form positive LMX relationships regardless of demographic differences, and promote a positive climate for inclusion throughout the organization.

Second, diversity-supportive leadership behavior through all managerial ranks is essential to create positive unit climates (Avery & McKay, 2010). CEOs and members of top management should adopt a proactive championing role in valuing diversity (Gilbert & Ivancevich, 2000), since their values and behaviors cascade to lower ranks of the organization (Boehm, Dwertmann, Bruch, & Shamir, 2015). In this regard, authentic leadership may be particularly well suited to communicating the importance of inclusion in the workplace through its emphasis on ethics, morals, and values (Boekhorst, 2015). In sum, the attitudes of leaders, and the diversity policies and procedures they enact, are thought to be important drivers of climate for inclusion and diversity climate.

CONCLUSION

Companies across the globe must contend with the changing nature of job market demographics. Supervisors and subordinates will be increasingly characterized by incongruence on one or more diversity dimensions. As we demonstrate in this paper, incongruence in disability is associated with poor relationship quality, which negatively affects performance. Moreover, this effect is more pronounced for supervisors with disabilities, which we reason is due to their higher status. However, our findings suggest that organizations and supervisors can mitigate this detrimental effect by fostering a positive climate for inclusion.

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Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for All Study Variables **TABLE A1**

Variable	1	7	3	4	ũ	9	2	8	6	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
1 Temporary employment 2 Hierarchy_1 3 Hierarchy_2	 0.29** -0.02	-0.33**	I																		
4 Hierarchy_3 5 Gender	-0.09^{**}	-0.04	-0.93**	- 000	I																
dissimilarity 6 Age dissimilarity		100	-0.01		0.04	I															
7 Unit size	0.06*	0.03	-0.05	0.05	-0.05	0.00	Ι														
8 Unit job type 1	-0.08**	-0.05	0.08**	-0.06*	0.05	0.04	-0.41 **	I													
9 Unit job type 2 10 Unit iob type 3	-0.02 0.06^{*}	-0.08^{**} 0.16^{**}	0.10^{**} -0.19^{**}	-0.07^{*} 0.14^{**}	-0.05	-0.03 -0.01	0.07**	-0.44** -0.24**	-0.59^{**}												
11 Unit job type 4	-0.01	-0.02	-0.01	0.02	-0.06*	-0.05	-0.13**	-0.05	-0.13**	-0.07**	I										
12 Unit job type 5	0.06*	-0.03	0.03	-0.02	0.06	0.04	-0.07*	-0.11 * *	-0.27 * *	-0.15 * *	-0.03	I									
13 Gender diversity	-0.01	0.00	-0.04	0.04	0.02	-0.05	0.23^{**}	0.14^{**}	-0.10^{**}	0.07*	-0.12**	-0.06*	I								
14 Age diversity	0.03	0.02	-0.01	0.00	-0.08^{**}	0.02	0.56^{**}	-0.23^{**}	0.06^{*}	0.18^{**}	-0.05	-0.06*	0.23^{**}	I							
15 Disability diversity	-0.01	-0.02	-0.02	0.03	-0.01	-0.02	-0.18**	0.14**	-0.23**	0.19**	0.05	-0.10^{**}	0.19^{**}	0.00	I						
16 Neither has disability	0.05	0.06	0.01	-0.03	-0.01	0.02	0.03	-0.07*	0.07*	-0.06	-0.01	0.06	-0.05	-0.02	-0.26^{**}	I					
17 Both have disahilitv	-0.04	-0.02	0.05	-0.04	-0.02	0.00	-0.01	0.07*	-0.07*	0.05	-0.02	-0.03	0.04	-0.01	0.16**	-0.27**	I				
18 Subordinate disability,	-0.04	-0.05	-0.01	0.02	0.02	-0.02	-0.06	0.06	-0.07*	0.04	0.03	-0.03	0.04	0.00	0.20**	-0.81^{**}	-0.05	I			
19 Supervisor disability, subordinate not	-0.01	-0.02	-0.03	0.04	0.00	-0.01	0.05	- 0.02	0.03	0.02	-0.03	-0.05	0.00	0.05	0.07*	-0.43**	-0.02	-0.07*	I		
20 Climate for inclusion	0.00	00.	-0.03	0.04	0.00	-0.03	-0.10^{**}	-0.41^{**}	0.04	.21**	-0.07*	.19**	-0.21**	-0.17**	-0.01	0.04	-0.03	-0.03	-0.01	Ι	
21 LMX	0.01	.02	-0.03	0.02	-0.06*	-0.06*	-0.02	-0.07*	0.00	0.04	-0.03	.05	-0.02	-0.03	-0.04	0.11**	- 0.01 -	- 0.08* -	-0.09**	0.17**	17**
Mean	0.06	0.01	0.87	0.12	0.49	0.79	48.12	0.15	0.52	0.24	0.02	0.07	0.88	06.0	0.43	0.82	0.02	0.12	0.04	4.04	4.34
SD	0.23	0.11	0.34	0.32	0.50	0.40	28.37	0.36	0.50	0.43	0.13	0.25	0.13	0.09	0.22	0.38	0.12	0.33	0.19	1.17	1.21
Note. Level 1	N = 12	53. Leve	12:N=5	54. Unit	job type.	, gendeı	, age, an	d disabi	ility dive	ersity, an	d climat	e for inc	lusion a	re Level	2 variał	les. Cor	relation	ns betw	een the	se varia	ables

represent unit-level correlations. Temporary employment (0 = no; 1 = yes), hierarchy (1 = apprentice; 2 = employee; 3 = supervisor), gender and age dissimilarity (0 = similar; 1 = dissimilar), unit job type (1 = benefits; 2 = placement & consulting; 3 = administration and special services; 4 = IT; 5 = service center), subordinate and supervisor disability (0 = no disability; 1 = disability) are dummy variables.

^{*} p < .05** p < .01