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Abstract: In this paper, we address how different types of positive attitudes towards international diversity among team members can influence team outcomes. Our study explores whether openness to language diversity could contribute to the effect of openness to value diversity becoming more salient. Data was collected from 1085 team leaders of highly globalised academic research teams in the Nordic region. The results show a significant and positive

effect of openness to different cultural values on team outcomes. Furthermore, in teams rated more open to language diversity, the impact of openness to value diversity on team performance is enhanced. Effects of different types of diversity attitudes have been assessed in extant literature. No prior studies, however, have focused on the interaction between the different types of diversity attitudes. This is an important omission because one type of diversity attitudes could function as a boundary condition for other types of diversity attitudes.

Keywords: team leader; multicultural teams; team creativity; team performance; openness to language diversity; openness to value diversity.

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1 Introduction

Internationalisation of organisations has many effects, but one of the most notable is the increased use of work groups comprised of people who are of different national origin and so often hold different cultural values and speak different native languages (Tenzer et al., 2017). These groups are often labelled multicultural teams (Chen et al., 2012; Zander and Butler, 2010). The cultural diversity of such teams has been found to have positive as well as negative effects on the group's work outcomes in ways that such teams either under- or overperform in relation to more homogeneous teams (Milliken and Martins, 1996). This has led researchers to argue that to understand diversity one has also to understand the context in which it unfolds (Homan et al., 2008). Here, much attention has been paid to the attitude towards diversity that an individual or a group may hold. These attitudes are often conceptualised as diversity climate (Gonzalez and Denisi, 2009; Herdman and McMillan-Capehart, 2010; McKay et al., 2009), diversity beliefs (Hentschel et al., 2013; Homan et al., 2010; Van Knippenberg et al., 2007), diversity mind-set (Van Knippenberg et al., 2013) or, more loosely, an amicable and diversity friendly environment (Jehn and Bezrukova, 2010). While McKay and Avery (2015) argued that no overall agreement on concepts and measures has yet been reached, this field can generally be said to deal with the subjective attitudes and openness towards diversity held by individuals and groups in heterogeneous settings.

Favourable diversity attitudes may take many forms and can be related to surface-level diversity (McKay et al., 2008, 2007), deep-level diversity (Homan et al., 2008), information diversity (Hobman et al., 2004), and linguistic diversity (Lauring and Selmer, 2012). In this regard, Ely and Thomas (2001) concluded that different types of positive diversity attitudes in a team may affect teamwork outcomes differently. For example, in line with Van Knippenberg et al.'s (2004) Categorisation Elaboration Model, openness to information diversity may have a greater positive effect on information elaboration while openness to surface-level diversity would to a larger extent reduce negative social categorisation.

In this study, we focus on the interaction between attitudes towards two types of diversity that are particular to multicultural teams, namely culture (openness to value diversity) and language (openness to language diversity). As work outcomes we include creativity and performance, because they have been mentioned to be some of the most prominent constructive consequences of group diversity (Cox, 1994; Srikanth et al., 2016). Performance is an evaluative outcome that refers to the core duties of the job

(Fisher, 2003). National differences may be associated with lowered levels of collaboration (Vahtera et al., 2017), but inclusion of different perspectives may also improve performance (Van Knippenberg et al., 2004). This would be contingent on members' attitudes towards such differences, as we will argue. The second outcome, creativity, is often described as the production of novel and useful ideas by an individual or a group (Zhou and George, 2003). Task related debates have been found to increase creativity in diverse groups as different perspectives and types of knowledge resulting from group heterogeneity owing, for example, to differences in national origin, can be applied to problem solving (Kratzer et al., 2004; Stahl et al., 2010a).

2 Theory and hypotheses

2.1 *Diversity in international workgroups*

Diversity in work groups can be related to deep-level or unobservable characteristics such as skills and values or to surface-level or observable characteristics such as gender and race (Harrison et al., 1998). Individuals are more likely to differentiate themselves from others based on surface-level traits rather than deep-level characteristics (Jackson et al., 1991), and observable differences are more likely to be associated with negative dynamics such as prejudice (Milliken and Martins, 1996; Van de Ven et al., 2008). In this study, we focus on two different types of diversity, namely value diversity and language diversity. Value diversity is a deep-level attribute as values are linked to cultural upbringing but embedded in the cognitive and emotional characteristics of a person. As such, values are not readily detectable and take time to get to know (Tyran and Gibson, 2008). In contrast, language diversity has surface-level characteristics as variations (e.g., in accents, vocabulary and turn of phrase) are directly and immediately detectable in interaction (Paunova, 2017) while being linked to embedded cognitive and social structures that represent a deeper level of human behaviour (Klitmøller and Lauring, 2016; Volk et al., 2014).

To yield benefits associated with diversity, individuals must be effectively integrated into work units (Van Knippenberg and Schippers, 2007). This entails the removal of barriers that block employees from using their full range of skills (Roberson, 2006). Social categorisation theory attempt to understand these barriers (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). It predicts that dissimilar individuals are less likely to collaborate with one another compared to similar individuals, thereby accounting for the negative consequences of diversity on the creativity and performance of teams. In other words, heterogeneous teams may be hampered from performing to a high standard or delivering creative outcomes owing to the existence of team faultlines and subgroups (Lau and Murnighan, 1998, 2005) and/or the isolation of individuals (Hinds et al., 2014).

Positive and open diversity attitudes could eradicate such obstacles among individuals (Van Knippenberg et al., 2013). This effect, however, could differ between contexts. The contact hypothesis (Amir, 1969) predicts that frequency of interaction is linked to a positive view of dissimilar individuals. If individuals communicate more intensely, they will gradually become more tolerant of each other's values. Tolerance for different ways of speaking will thus increase the effect of other types of openness,

because group members are actually able to use each other for problem solving. In sum, the contact hypothesis would predict a positive effect of individuals' openness to language diversity on the level of communication in a team, thereby allowing persuasive arguments to be made (Myers, 1982).

2.2 Openness towards diversity

Openness to value diversity is tolerance for differences in opinions, worldviews, and cultural behaviours. Holding similar values usually leads team members to have more frequent and deeper communication; whereas value diversity has been linked to lower member satisfaction, lower frequency of interaction, poorer team climates, and decreased group functioning overall (Oetzel, 2002; Tyran and Gibson, 2008). Openness to peer group members' different values and perspectives has been found to overcome some of these problems (Oosterhof et al., 2009; Schweiger et al., 1989).

Openness to language diversity may be perceived as members allowing others to take part in the internal team dialogue regardless of language differences (e.g., variations in speech, accents and proficiency). Studies have shown that communicating in a common language other than one's mother tongue is demanding even if the proficiency level is high (Volk et al., 2014). Moreover, communication can be biased towards those individuals with whom one has a native linguistic affiliation (Harzing and Pudelko, 2013). Openness to language diversity may thus be critical to team functioning in international settings, because it enhances individuals' willingness to interact and reduces internal sub-group formation (Klitmøller and Luring, 2016; Luring and Selmer, 2012).

2.3 Openness to value diversity and workgroup outcomes

Values describe the importance of specific actions or attitudes with the aim of determining what activities, forms of life, or interaction that are viewed as superior in a specific context (Rokeach, 2008). Following Hobman et al. (2004), we define openness to value diversity as the extent to which team and organisational members are willing to interact with, understand and learn from others with different viewpoints. In multicultural teams, cultural differences will inevitably surface – whether they affect teams positively or negatively will depend on the extent to which teams are open to value differences (cf. Hobman et al., 2004). Facing cultural value differences with tolerance could reverse negative group processes and foster team performance.

In line with this, research has previously shown that openness to new ideas and the ability of teams to amalgamate them into practical decisions often result in superior team performance (Brueller and Carmeli, 2011). There are several reasons for this. First, teams open to value diversity are more likely to focus on the task at hand rather than on differences between members, resulting in improved performance (Umans, 2012). Second, team members' positive experiences with diversity and inclusion – e.g., that diversity is of value to organisational objectives – may lead to more open and accepting attitudes that could motivate minority group members to participate further in work activities (Homan et al., 2007). Owing to different voices being heard and accepted, the number of proposed solutions to the task increases with the result that the quality of decisions and therefore performance improves (cf. Amason and Schweiger, 1994). In sum, this leads us to propose:

Hypothesis 1(a): Team-level openness to value diversity is positively related to multicultural team performance.

Openness to value diversity will also matter for team creativity. While cultural differences in the team may increase conflict and decrease integration, thereby lowering team performance, creative team processes require some degree of divergence and deeper-level information processing (Stahl et al., 2010a). At the same time, creative team processes also require open mindedness and active participation from dissimilar individuals. Openness fosters individual creativity, particularly in culturally diverse settings (Leung and Chiu, 2008). Similarly, openness to value diversity may positively affect team-level creativity for several reasons. First, the development of open and tolerant attitudes towards other group members' conflicting perspectives could enhance the group's ability to resist pressures to conform to dominant positions and thereby allow the group to recognise new opportunities (Mitchell et al., 2009). Second, openness to team members' different values and perspectives could lead directly to the development of alternative solutions to problems (Oosterhof et al., 2009; Schweiger et al., 1989). Finally, having a common focus in multicultural teams has been argued to have a positive relationship with groups' creativity, given that commonalities reduce tensions born by heterogeneity, but enhance creativity associated with cultural differences in groups (Umans, 2012). Hence, we expect that openness to value diversity will result in the positive climate required for multicultural team creativity.

Hypothesis 1(b): Team-level openness to value diversity is positively related to multicultural team creativity.

2.4 The context of openness to language diversity

Openness to language diversity, the extent to which team and organisational members accept and promote linguistic differences and overcome linguistic barriers, is likely to be a critical factor in promoting a more positive organisational experience in multicultural environments (cf. Distefano and Maznevski, 2000). If the team is not open to differences in fluency, certain individuals' contributions may be undervalued and the benefits of bringing together a diverse set of competences may be undermined (Stahl et al., 2010a). This becomes a problem, because language use and social categorisation are often closely connected (Lauring, 2008) and may prompt adverse us versus them dynamics (Hinds et al., 2013). A climate of language exclusivity, that is, one which is not open to language differences, may seriously impede the functioning of multicultural teams by decreasing collaboration across language barriers (cf. Tenzer et al., 2013). This in turn will distort multicultural teams' internal environment, and thus decrease creativity and impede team performance (Stahl et al., 2010b).

In teams open to language differences, members have the opportunity to engage in meaningful interactions within the group. Value differences therefore become more strongly related to team functioning (Harrison et al., 1998, 2002; Van der Vegt and Janssen, 2003). Initially, individuals will interact less and hold fewer positive attitudes towards those they perceive to be different to themselves based on observable characteristics. However, over time, exposure to and communication with different others will increase the level of acceptance of surface differences (Harrison et al., 1998), and repeated contact will lead to surface-level differences becoming less important and deep-

level attitudes (e.g., to the task) more important for performance (Harrison et al., 2002). The more open-minded individuals are about teammate differences, the more the quality of interaction within the team will improve (Longerbeam, 2010). In short, a linguistically varied but accepting context may foster faster integration of deeper, underlying worldviews and further strengthen the positive effects of openness to value diversity, with respect both to performance and to creativity.

In relation to performance: Openness to value diversity is likely to lead to better social integration once shared and commonly understood ways of communication emerge in teams open to language diversity (Henderson, 2010; Tenzer et al., 2013). Hence, openness to language diversity can facilitate the communication process, which tends to be associated with good multicultural team performance, both directly and indirectly by impacting other processes such as conflict resolution and cohesiveness (Lauring et al., 2017; Stahl et al., 2010a). With regard to creativity: Openness to language diversity will enable individuals to communicate with a wider range of group members, and thus allow them to more fully reap the information-richness rewards of diversity, particularly in teams also open to value differences (Distefano and Maznevski, 2000; Ely and Thomas, 2001).

Having an open mind to linguistic as well as value-related differences will stimulate creativity, because this will allow for an increasing degree of trust in teams and so facilitate an open exchange of ideas among colleagues (Zhou and George, 2003). In short, openness to language diversity could initiate a series of positive group dynamics that collectively exhibit a positive interaction effect with openness to value diversity on team performance and team creativity. Accordingly, we predict:

Hypothesis 2(a/b): Team-level openness to language diversity moderates the relationship between openness to value diversity and multicultural team a) performance and b) creativity such that this relationship becomes stronger at high levels of openness to language diversity.

3 Method

3.1 Context

The research context of our study is the Nordic region, and our data collection was primarily carried out in a set of four small, open economies (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden) with a shared history that extends over a millennium in time. Despite each separate country being largely homogenous in terms of ethnicity, religion and culture, skilled immigrants have historically contributed to the development of the region (cf. Lauring et al., 2018).

In Sweden for example, immigrants have since the Middle Ages contributed to the country's economic development. German Coin Punchers and Iron Masters, Hanseatic Traders, Blacksmiths from Wallonia, and British engineers are among the many groups of skilled immigrants that have helped build the country.

In the Nordic region, the late 1800s was characterised by major emigration, while the post-WWII period has seen net immigration. In the mid-1940s Sweden received a sizeable number of refugees from the other Nordic countries – both Denmark and Norway had been occupied by Germany – and especially from war-torn Finland which

had been occupied by both Germany and Russian forces as well as the Baltic States. Later, skilled labour from Italy, Finland, Turkey, Poland and former Yugoslavia also contributed to the success of the booming post-WWII Swedish export industries. Although the early immigrant flows consisted largely of economic migrants attracted by labour shortage, refugees from war zones in Europe also came in the 1980s, followed by more recent refugee flows from countries in Africa and the Middle East (Romani et al., 2017). Gradually more liberal immigration laws have contributed to changing demographics in the Nordic region (Bacouel-Jentjens and Castro-Christiansen, 2016). Sweden's population of 10 million people is now comprised of about 23% first and second-generation immigrants (Statistics Sweden, 2017). This is a higher proportion than in the rest of the region, but similar trends are evident also in the other Nordic countries. Currently the corresponding figures for Norway and Denmark are approximately 16% of 5.3 million (Statistics Norway, 2017¹) and 13% of 5.7 million (Statistics Denmark, 2017²) respectively, while a lower percentage of Finland's 5.5 million includes first and second-generation immigrants.

The social policy of the Nordic countries has been carefully aimed at integration (Westin, 2003). The children of new arrivals are thus encouraged to become bilingual, as the school system offers local language teaching and, wherever feasible, mother tongue instruction in addition to English and other languages. In terms of official languages in the region Finland is a bilingual country (Finnish and Swedish), while the other four countries in the region each host their own language. Between the Nordic countries a set of minority languages such as Finnish, German, Yiddish, Meänkieli, Romani Chib and Russian have long been recognised as such.³ The Sámi languages, spoken among the Sámi people living in northern Finland, Norway and Sweden are also to a certain extent legally protected in all three countries. In terms of multiculturalism, the Nordic countries in different constellations score high in areas of policies for indigenous peoples (Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden), policies for national minorities (Finland) and policies for immigrant minorities (Sweden and Finland) (Saukkonen, 2013). With liberal immigration and refugee policies the demographics of the historically homogenous countries in the region are slowly changing.

Notwithstanding differences across the Nordic countries, the shared history and a social welfare model that builds on perceived public responsibility through an active state and a large public sector within a market economy (Kautto, 2010), together with common interests in environmental and social issues contribute to the Nordic region as a distinct research context.

3.2 Data and sample

We collected data from leaders of multicultural and highly globalised academic research teams such as those based in research labs. Our decision was motivated by the fact that universities are some of the most multicultural workplaces. This development is generally driven by the emergence of an international academic labour market, demands of international publication, and research collaboration (Jonasson et al., 2017; Stoermer et al., 2020).

The target population in this investigation was academic team leaders such as heads of labs and other smaller subunits within natural science departments. These individuals were identified using university webpages. We sent questionnaires to 2171 leaders of multicultural academic research teams from these departments. The natural science area was selected, because academics in this area are highly interdependent when working in teams (i.e., labs), and often work in larger collaborative networks. Almost all articles in the natural sciences are jointly published (a visible expression of scientific collaboration), compared with two thirds in the social sciences and only about 10% in the humanities. As in the social sciences and humanities, however, language and geographical proximity influence collaboration in the natural sciences (Larivière et al., 2006).

To access the role of positive diversity attitudes in these multicultural academic environments, an online survey software was used collect the data. Eventually, after three reminders, 1085 usable responses were received from academic team leaders working in 29 different universities in the Nordic countries (Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland). We used the Nordic countries primarily because of the quality of university webpages that allowed us to gather information. These small, open, globally trading economies (with limited home-markets), emphasise open media, foreign language learning and travel together with inclusive social welfare and language policies (cf. Jonasson et al., 2018). Among these team leaders 57 nationalities were represented. Male team leaders formed 76% of the total sample. On average, academic team leaders were 51.13 years old and had been employed by their current university for 11.75 years. Most respondents were located in Denmark, followed by Sweden, then Finland and Norway. On average, foreign nationals within the team comprised 40.97%, and women made up 40.42% of the team (see also Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1 Background of the sample: team leader characteristics

<i>Background variables</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Per cent</i>
<i>Gender:</i>		
Male	824	75.9
Female	261	24.1
<i>Nationality:</i>		
Sweden	310	28.6
Finland	305	28.1
Denmark	161	14.8
Norway	43	4.0
Other EU	126	11.6
Non-EU	140	12.9
<i>Mother tongue:</i>		
Swedish	331	30.5
Finnish	277	25.5
Danish	161	14.8
English	60	5.5
Other	256	23.7

Note: $N = 1085$.

Table 2 Team leader and team characteristics

Average team size	11.23
Average team leader age	51.04
Average team leader tenure	11.75
Teams with only one gender present	12 %

3.3 Instrument

The study constructs were all assessed with tested psychometric instruments on a seven-point scale (strongly agree – strongly disagree). The questionnaire included items intended to measure the two independent variables (openness to value diversity and openness to language diversity) and the two dependent variables (team performance and team creativity). Openness to value diversity was measured with a three-item instrument adapted from Hobman et al. (2004). A sample item is: “In my team, members make an extra effort to listen to people who hold different work values and/or motivations” ($\alpha = .68$). Openness to language diversity was measured with a four-item instrument by Lauring and Selmer (2012). A sample item is: “Team members enjoy doing jobs with people despite of languages barriers” ($\alpha = .64$). Team performance was measured with five items developed by Black and Porter (1991). These include evaluation of the teams’ general performance level, ability to get along with others, punctual task completion, level of performance quality and achievement of organisational objectives ($\alpha = .84$). We used (Tierney et al., 1999) scale for team creativity. It consists of six items that probe if the team demonstrates originality in its work, takes risk in producing new ideas, finds new uses for existing methods and solves problems that cause other people difficulties ($\alpha = .86$).

For our two openness to diversity variables (both measured with a smaller number of items), the internal reliability measured by Cronbach’s alpha was slightly below 0.7. It has been argued that Cronbach’s alpha should be 0.70 or higher with 0.60 as the lowest acceptable threshold (Nunnally, 1978). Hence, the reliability of our openness to diversity scales are in the lower end of what is acceptable. Notably, it has been put forth that the use of Cronbach’s alpha may not be an appropriate measure of reliability (Lance et al., 2006), while others argue that Cronbach alpha can be used and that above 0.6 has been argued to be appropriate for exploratory research such as our study (Nunnally, 1978). However, as our results are not the strongest the conclusions of this article should be taken with some caution and additional research would need to further verify our results.

In order to assess the construct validity of our study, we performed a confirmatory factor analysis (see Table 3). The standard goodness-of-fit decision criteria reported the following estimates for our full measurement model, indicating an excellent fit with the data: SRMR=0.040, RMSEA=0.047; 90% CI: 0.042–0.052; p (RMSEA0.05) = 0.835; CFI=0.955; TLI=0.947 (cf. Hu and Bentler, 1999). This represented a significant improvement over the fit of the unrestricted model, where all dimensions were tested as if they constituted a single factor: SRMR=0.104, RMSEA=0.125; 90% CI: 0.121–0.130; p (RMSEA0.05) = 0.000; CFI=0.669; TLI=0.625.

Table 3 Confirmatory factor analysis results

<i>Model</i>	χ^2 (<i>df</i>)	<i>RMSEA</i>	<i>SRMR</i>	<i>AIC</i>	<i>BIC</i>	<i>CFI</i>	<i>TLI</i>
Full measurement (4 factors)	439.26*** (129)	0.047	0.040	44950.881	45250.242	0.955	0.947
Model A (3 factors)	611.29*** (132)	0.058	0.046	45116.918	45401.310	0.931	0.920
Model B (3 factors)	1321.30*** (132)	0.091	0.065	45826.930	46111.322	0.829	0.801
Model C (3 factors)	1130.08*** (132)	0.083	0.084	45635.706	45920.098	0.856	0.833
Model D (3 factors)	1135.16*** (132)	0.084	0.084	45640.782	45925.174	0.855	0.832
Model E (3 factors)	1157.92*** (132)	0.085	0.082	45663.545	45947.937	0.852	0.829
Model F (3 factors)	1114.84*** (132)	0.083	0.080	45620.469	45904.861	0.858	0.836
Model G (2 factors)	1617.68** (134)	0.101	0.092	46119.307	46393.721	0.786	0.756
Model H (2 factors)	1591.38*** (134)	0.100	0.092	46093.003	46367.417	0.790	0.760
Model I (1 factor)	2433.27*** (135)	0.125	0.104	46932.895	47202.319	0.669	0.625

Notes: 1 *** $p < 0.01$.

- 2 Based on a total of 1085 observations. Model A: Openness to value diversity and Openness to language diversity combined into 1 factor. Model B: Employee performance and employee creativity combined into 1 factor. Model C: Openness to language diversity and employee performance combined into 1 factor. Model D: Openness to language diversity and employee creativity combined into 1 factor. Model E: Openness to value diversity and employee performance combined into 1 factor. Model F: Openness to value diversity and employee creativity combined into 1 factor. Model G: Openness to value diversity, openness to language diversity and employee performance combined into 1 factor. Model H: Openness to value diversity, openness to language diversity and employee creativity combined into 1 factor. Model I: Openness to value diversity, openness to language diversity, employee performance and employee creativity combined into 1 factor.

Team size, number of nationalities and number of languages spoken on a daily basis in the team were applied as team level control variables. All were measured by direct questions such as “Apart from you how many academic staff members are currently employed in your team?” and “How many languages are spoken on a daily basis in your team?” The gender and age of the team leader respondents were also used as control variables.

Interclass correlation coefficients for creativity and performance were below 0.01 when nesting team leaders in either nationalities or research institutions. This means that the hierarchical structure of the data is largely unrelated to the two outcome variables. Thus, multilevel analysis was neither necessary nor possible. Therefore, we opted for multiple regression analysis which is centred around the estimation of a linear function that best fits the data (Du et al., 2004). In addition to its simplicity and intuitiveness, this approach is accredited with being the most efficient way to derive the estimates denoting the effects of predictor variables on dependent variables as long as there are not any severe violations of the standard Gauss-Markov assumptions (Wooldridge, 2015).

3.4 Results

Sample means, standard deviations and zero-order Pearson correlations were computed for all variables of the study. The significant relationships between the proposed control variables and the two dependent variables (see Table 4) support the use of these variables as controls in the regression analyses.

The hypotheses were tested with multiple linear regression. Table 5 reports the results (i.e., Models 1 and 2 test hypotheses 1a and 1b, respectively, and Models 3 and 4 test hypotheses 2(a) and 2(b), respectively). In each regression model, control variables were entered in Step 1. As expected, this resulted in significant association with the criterion variables. There was a positive association between team size and creativity ($\beta = 0.12$, $p < .01$; Model 2), number of nationalities and performance ($\beta = 0.06$, $p < .10$; Model 1) and number of nationalities and creativity ($\beta = .11$, $p < .01$; Model 2 and Model 4). The effect of gender diversity on team performance was also positive, although less clearly pronounced and comparatively minor ($\beta = .002$, $p < .10$; Models 1 and 3). In Step 2, the main independent variable, openness to value diversity, was entered. This produced significant relationships with both outcome variables. There was a positive association between openness to value diversity and performance ($\beta = .14$, $p < .01$; Model 1) as well as a positive relationship between openness to value diversity and creativity ($\beta = .16$, $p < .01$; Model 2), in support of hypotheses 1(a) and 1(b). In Step 3, the interaction terms were entered. Openness to value diversity x openness to language diversity was positively and significantly associated with performance ($\beta = .13$, $p < .05$), but not creativity ($\beta = .05$ *n.s.*). Thus, only hypothesis 2(a) is supported.

Table 4 Means, standard deviations and correlations among the variables

No	Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Age	1.49	.50	1									
2	Gender	.24	.43	-.125**	1								
3	Team size	1.49	.50	.085**	-.114**	1							
4	Number of languages	1.30	.46	-.008	-.019	.229**	1						
5	Number of nationalities	1.35	.48	.007	-.076*	.484**	.345**	1					
6	Percentage of women	40.42	26.48	-.007	.336**	-.042	-.011	-.040	1				
7	Openness to value diversity	4.08	.61	.037	.035	.077*	.069*	.074*	.043	1			
8	Openness to language diversity	4.86	.58	-.027	.065*	.051	.083**	.042	.073*	.359**	1		
9	Performance	5.53	.73	.002	-.005	.062*	.050	.085**	.064*	.123**	.136**	1	
10	Creativity	3.64	.53	-.027	-.077*	.199**	.128**	.195**	-.056	.200**	.155**	.539**	1

Notes: N=1085; *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$; * $p < 0.10$.

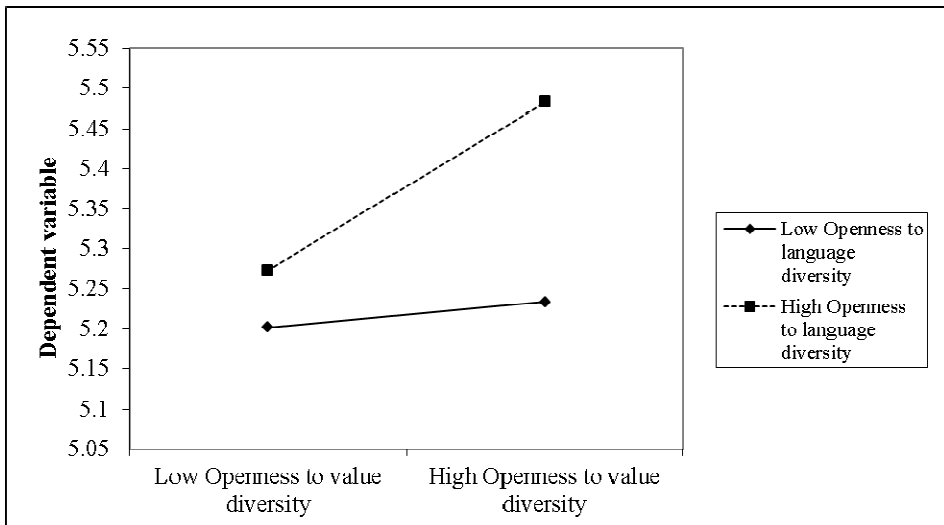
Table 5 Results of linear regression analysis

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	Performance			Creativity			Performance			Creativity		
	Std. B	Std. Error		Std. B	Std. Error		Std. B	Std. Error		Std. B	Std. Error	
Constant ^a	4.723***	.115		2.690***	.124		6.720***	1.017		3.322***	.718	
Age	-.011	.044		-.055*	.031		-.010	.044		-.053*	.031	
Gender	-.044	.055		-.069*	.039		-.052	.055		-.074*	.039	
Team size	.030	.051		.129***	.036		.032	.051		.128***	.036	
Number of languages	.027	.051		.060*	.036		.011	.051		.051	.036	
Number of nationalities	.094*	.055		.112***	.039		.087	.055		.110***	.038	
Percentage of women	.002**	.001		-.001	.001		.002*	.001		-.001	.001	
R ²	0.013			0.056			0.013			0.056		
F for R ²	2.399**			11.670***			2.399**			11.670***		
Openness to value diversity	.135***	.036		.161***	.025		-.513**	.251		-.097	.177	
Openness to language diversity							-.376*	.209		-.106	.148	
Δ R ²	0.013			0.034			0.013			0.034		
F for Δ R ²	14.048***			40.203***			14.048***			40.203***		
Openness to value diversity							.126**	.052		.048	.036	
* Openness to language diversity												
Δ R ²							0.014			0.009		
F for Δ R ²							7.790***			5.222***		
Overall R ²	0.026			0.090			0.040			0.099		
Overall F for R ²	16.447***			51.873***			24.237***			57.095***		

Note: N=1085; a. Unstandardised coefficient; *** $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$; * $p < 0.10$.

To explore the character of the moderating relationship detected, the significant interaction effect on performance was plotted in Figure 1. Performance was higher in teams more open to value diversity, irrespective of openness to language diversity. Performance was also higher in teams more open to language diversity, irrespective of openness to value diversity. As Figure 1 shows, openness to language diversity moderated the effect of openness to value diversity. Simple slope analysis confirms that, at a high level of openness to language diversity, openness to value diversity had a stronger positive association with performance (at +1SD: $\beta = 0.17$, $p < 0.10$; at +2SD: $\beta = 0.25$, $p < 0.05$) than at a lower level of openness to language diversity (at -1SD: $\beta = 0.03$ *n.s.*; at -2SD: $\beta = -0.05$ *n.s.*).

Figure 1 The moderating effect of openness to language diversity on the relationship between openness to value diversity and team performance



4 Discussion

Several lines of research have shown interest in subjective attitudes to diversity under different labels such as diversity climate (McKay et al., 2009), diversity beliefs (Homan et al., 2010), or diversity mind-set (Van Knippenberg et al., 2013). While no conceptual agreement has yet been reached, there is good evidence that being open to dissimilar others increases work outcomes in heterogeneous teams. Only a few studies, however, have focused specifically on openness towards different types of diversity (Hobman et al., 2004; Luring and Selmer, 2012). In this research, we assessed the potential for different types of openness to diversity to influence each other. We found that, where team members were open to dissimilarities in language, being open to different values had a stronger effect on team performance. While positive effects have been found for both openness to value diversity (Hobman et al., 2004; Luring and Selmer, 2013) and linguistic diversity (Luring and Klitmøller, 2017; Luring and Nygaard, 2020; Luring

and Selmer, 2012), no studies have yet shown that the interaction of these two types of diversity can predict team performance.

Although we found a direct effect of openness to value diversity on both performance and creativity, we did not find a significant moderation effect for openness to language diversity on creativity. It is not entirely clear why openness to language diversity should make the effect of openness to value diversity on performance stronger while not having a similar effect on creativity. However, one may speculate that the divergent processes associated with creativity do not require team openness to value diversity to be matched by similar openness to language diversity. Unlike team performance, which in large part depends on cohesion and overall convergence within the team, creativity may be fostered by moderate and healthy levels of conflict that emerge in teams that are open to language diversity or value diversity but not necessarily both (Chen, 2006; Nemeth et al., 2004). Of course, this proposition requires explicit testing. Despite the lack of support for one out of our four hypotheses, our argument that a team climate open to diversity is beneficial for team performance and creativity is corroborated by our empirical study, but suggests further research on team climate generally and openness to diversity specifically.

The current study focused on the interaction between openness to a deep-level type of diversity (values) and openness to language diversity with surface-level characteristics. This was done, because a combination of social categorisation theory (Turner et al., 1983) and the contact hypothesis (Amir, 1969) provided sound reasoning for a positive interaction effect. Future research should further assess the interaction effects between other combinations of openness to deep and surface-level diversity.

In terms of our focus on the Nordic region, we surmise that the small, open, globally trading economies (with limited home-markets) in combination with inclusive social welfare and language policies have contributed to an openness towards cultural value and language differences. Additionally, with the realisation of the limitations of languages spoken almost exclusively in the Nordic countries, emphasis has been placed on foreign-language and mother-tongue-learning routines at school, easy access to English and other languages through media, and a tradition of travel, which have also contributed to an openness towards language plurality. These suggested explanations need a careful research design to be tested in further studies. Future research could increase our understanding of what specifically at a societal level contributes to the development of positive attitudes towards language and value diversity in general, and in the work place in particular especially those operating in the international arena. We therefore encourage further research in this area, as it has the potential to contribute to policy making at the society level as well as at the firm and team level. This to us is a question imperative to our globalised world of increased and more diverse migration flows.

In addition, in future studies it might be worthwhile to explore further the moderating role of contextual factors in the academic environment such as the duration of collaborative research projects, number and types of interactions during project work, disciplines involved and inter-disciplinarity. Another potential avenue for further research could be to focus on language skills within the teams. For example, the role of language skills of the team leader in the common language or other languages could be assessed. This could be done using a quantitative approach such as the one we use in this article. However, qualitative research using interviews and observation in relation to how research teams interact during daily work task could also answer important questions. Finally, the comparison of our results from the academic sector with research from other

types of teams such as multicultural teams in private businesses could be instrumental for understanding the generality of this issue.

4.1 Limitations

In this section we address the shortcomings of the article. One potential limitation is that the data for the research variables were obtained from the same sources. This means that Common Method Variance (CMV) cannot be ruled out (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Several procedures were applied to reduce the risk of CMV. We made explicit statements on the nature of the research project and respondent anonymity (Nancarrow et al., 2001). We also placed the dependent variables after the independent variables and used reverse-scored item (Lindell and Whitney, 2001). Most importantly, however, it has been argued that CMV cannot result in moderation effects (Siemsen et al., 2010). Hence, all in all in this study we do not assess common method variance as a substantial problem.

Second, the investigation is based on a sample of academic team leaders in northern European universities. Although academics may well be representative of members of globalised and multicultural teams, participants in our study were all employed in the university sector and generalisation to other types of organisations and other sectors may not be possible.

Third, although it has been argued that researchers in the Nordic countries are used to operate in English and have a good proficiency in this language we do not know this with certainty. Hence, there could be proficiency problems in the common language among academics with substantial consequences for individual researchers (Pudelko and Tenzer, 2019). It would, however, be difficult to ask the team leader to estimate the general level of language proficiency in a team. This is because an average level of language skills could result from a range of different combinations of skills levels among specific team members that would lead to substantially different situations. Still, language problems could be speculated to be highly important for openness to diversity. Individuals who would be comfortable speaking in the common language could potentially find it easier to tolerate code switching to other language as they would be less concerned about linguistic ostracism (Dotan-Eliaz et al., 2009) and experience less language anxiety (Neeley et al., 2012). On the other hand, those who feel linguistically disadvantaged could feel a higher degree of language related resentment and therefore might be less open to language and other types of dissimilarities (Tenzer and Pudelko, 2015). This could have consequences for our findings but would need to be explored further in coming research.

Last, but not least, information regarding the team came from the team leader. Hence, the subjective orientation and potential social desirability of the team leader could have biased the results. While it may be argued that a team leader has a relatively good overview of the team, future studies could use aggregated team member ratings to test the reliability of our findings. Another way to get an objective measure could be to assess the academic output of the teams. This, however, can be difficult to operationalise. To acquire a valid measure of productivity, one needs to be able to distinguish the totality of input and output factors and the relations between them. The outputs measured also need to be explicated as a top tier journal article may not be comparable to a book chapter (cf. Jonsen et al., 2013). In conclusion, the use of team leader ratings of team performance, while subjective and potentially prone to measurement bias, may still represent a good proxy for actual team performance compared to other options. Finally,

the cross-sectional research design implies that causality cannot be determined. For better investigative control, a longitudinal design could have been applied but that might have introduced other methodological problems such as low response rates (cf. Menard, 1991).

4.2 Implications

Below we discuss the impact that our research could have for theory building and for guiding managerial practice. The main theoretical contribution of this research is the finding that different types of openness to diversity enhance each other's effectiveness in the pursuit of teamwork outcomes. This study has focused on how openness to language diversity can increase the effect of openness to value diversity in multicultural academic teams. While openness to diversity in the form of climate, attitude or beliefs has been included in important theoretical models of team functioning, none of these models has yet considered how one type of openness to diversity can serve as a context for another to flourish. Our study suggests that it may well be worthwhile refining current diversity models to differentiate among types of openness to diversity as well as their interrelations. We chose this focus, because language as a vehicle of communication may be central to the facilitation of virtuous circles of increased interaction and acceptance. However, future studies should explore how other types of openness to diversity may converge and test this assumption in different settings to assess the generalisability of our findings.

From a practical perspective, this study illustrates the value of effective diversity management to increase creativity and performance in multicultural teams. In particular, we show that openness to language diversity can be the gateway to increasing the effectiveness of other positive diversity attitudes as these to a large extent operate through language. Although our study was carried out in an academic setting, it could have implications for other types of organisations as well, particularly in knowledge-intensive sectors. Managers may work to improve their units' openness to value and language diversity by interventions at the individual level as well as the collective level. At the individual level, diversity awareness training can be introduced to enhance the acceptance of other's different level of proficiency in the common spoken language. In addition, it may be beneficial if the team leader makes sure to involve all nationalities and linguistic groups in the dialogue so that creativity and innovative gains can be obtained (cf. Alter, 2018; Luring and Jonasson, 2018). This could be done during regular meetings or by use of frequent online communication. This sends the signal that one should not be embarrassed to communicate despite weaker linguistic skills or a strong accent when speaking the common language. With regard to value diversity, increasing individuals' diversity awareness has a documented positive impact so that knowledge of minority cultures increases and prejudice decreases (Kulik and Roberson, 2008). This could be done by the university organising seminars and workshops about the consequences and possibilities related to value related diversity and of including individuals with different cultural origins in project work. Emphasising openness to value diversity as an important element of the organisational code of ethics to ensure that people behave in ways consistent with portrayed values may improve the functioning of diverse groups prevalent in our globalised world.

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Notes

- 1 <https://www.ssb.no/en/>
- 2 <http://www.dst.dk/en/TilSalg/Forskningssservice#>
- 3 <http://norden.se/om-norden/den-nordiska-sprakforstaelsen/>