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PSYCHOMETRIC VALIDATION OF THE WORK GROUP INCLUSION SCALE IN INDIAN WORKPLACES

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Abstract
The present study evaluates the psychometric properties of the Work Group Inclusion Scale (WGIS) using data from employees across diverse sectors in India. Responses were collected through a structured, self-administered questionnaire from 324 employees. Reliability analysis, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, and assessments of convergent and discriminant validity were conducted using SPSS v27.0 and Mplus v8.0. Results indicate that the WGIS demonstrates strong reliability and validity in the Indian work context and exhibits a unidimensional structure, differing from its original two-factor design. This study contributes to the literature by validating the WGIS in India, where organisational cultures differ from Western contexts. The observed unidimensionality may reflect cultural nuances. Nomological validity was further supported through SEM with work engagement, confirming the scale's relevance in Indian workplaces.
Keywords: Inclusion, Workgroup inclusion, validation, psychometric validation

INTRODUCTION

Workplace inclusion experiences are integral to employee well-being (Versteegen & Adams, 2025) and a fulfilling work-life (Zimmerman et al., 2025). In recent times, the surge in workforce diversity (Norris & Inglehart, 2019) has intensified the need to include employees with heterogeneous backgrounds in teams and organisations. In light of this, organizations promote inclusive workplaces to translate diversity into meaningful outcomes (Jha et al., 2023; Ashikali et al., 2021). However, when do employees actually feel included? Research shows that employees feel included when they perceive that the organisation recognises and respects them and offers opportunities for meaningful participation, which, in turn, further fosters a sense of belonging, psychological safety, engagement, and collaboration (Veli Korkmaz et al., 2022). Workplace experiences of inclusion or exclusion are directly tied to satisfaction, anxiety, depression, and self-esteem of employees, all of which shape motivation and workplace behaviour (Mor Barak, 2011). Although inclusion is increasingly drawing managerial and academic attention, empirical research on inclusion remains at a formative stage, with ongoing debates around its conceptualisation and measurement (Mor Barak, 2011; Roberson, 2019). As a result, Harvard Business Review (2021) points out that while diversity is often tracked efficiently within organisations, there are only a few robust tools to systematically measure inclusion.

From the organisation's perspective, enhancing workgroup inclusion has been found to buffer efficiency by accommodating diverse ideas and skills, thereby helping firms innovate and perform (Mor Barak & Travis, 2009). An inclusive organizational climate, fostered by policies that value differences and minimize discrimination (Roberson, 2006), cultivates collaboration among employees, groups, and teams from diverse backgrounds, which may lead to synergistic outcomes that transcend individual efforts. Studies have demonstrated that inclusive workplaces help employees achieve greater job satisfaction, commitment, service quality, and boost productivity (Madera et al., 2023; García-Rodríguez et al., 2020; Mooney, 2020). Nevertheless, employees continue to experience barriers such as a biased culture, limited advancement opportunities, and weak human resources policies, which constrain their experiences of inclusion (Mor Barak, 2011; Roberson, 2019). In particular, employees with disabilities, for example, often face insecurity and exclusion because of stigma and organizational uncertainty in granting support (Meacham et al., 2017; Stone & Colella, 1996). These obstacles highlight that inclusion depends not only on formal policies but also on employees' lived experiences of their organization's commitment to fostering inclusive workplaces.

In this contexts, numerous governments(e.g., Canada, Denmark, France) and international forums operating globally (Council of Europe, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the United Nations Economic Commission) have embraced the idea of social cohesion (a concept inherently linked to inclusion), and

placed it within a broader developmental policy agenda (Ferroni et al., 2008; King et al., 2010; OECD, 2011). There have also been several consulting firms, including Gallup (2019) and McKinsey (2021), which advocate incorporating the measurement of inclusion via employees' perceptions and lived experiences, and illustrate that diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies are a key part of effective talent management and performance at the organizational level.

However, despite the global spotlight on the benefits of inclusion, the empirical research on workgroup inclusion in India remains limited (Kuknor & Bhattacharya, 2021) and has primarily focused on educational contexts rather than corporate environments (Nair & Vohra, 2015). Given that India has a highly heterogeneous workforce of over 122 major languages, an estimated 17% of the population identifying as religious minorities, and the rising presence of multinational corporations (MNCs), examining how employees experience inclusion becomes foremost. The present study aims to validate the workgroup inclusion scale (WGIS) among employees in the Indian work context.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Inclusion has long been defined as the simultaneous experience of belongingness and uniqueness within a group. This understanding draws on Brewer's (1991) Optimal Distinctiveness Theory (ODT), which argues that people constantly negotiate two basic and contrasting psychological needs: the need to belong and receive validation by being similar to others, and the need to retain a unique identity by being different (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Snyder & Fromkin, 1980; Deci & Ryan, 2008). Extending this theory, Shore et al. (2011) reported belongingness and uniqueness as the two primary dimensions of inclusion. Belongingness describes the motivation to form meaningful, enduring interpersonal connections within workgroups, typically satisfied by positive and stable interactions within a group (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), while uniqueness captures the preservation of individuality, self-concept, and distinct perspectives (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980). Conceptualized together, inclusion is not a trade-off but a two-way experience in which employees feel accepted as part of the group while simultaneously valued for their distinct contributions.

Several scales have been developed to measure inclusion, yet many early tools were either not theoretically grounded or fully validated (Avery et al., 2008; Downey et al., 2014). Mor Barak's (1998, 2005) MBIES has been widely applied, focusing on access to organizational processes, but its use across varying dimensions has produced mixed results. Jansen et al. (2011) introduced the Perceived Group Inclusion Scale to capture belongingness and authenticity, whereas Cottrill et al. (2014) measured inclusion as a single factor that expanded MBIE. Goswami and Goswami (2008) adopted MBIE in the Indian context, and Nishii (2013) proposed a three-dimensional measure of inclusion climate. More recently, Chung et al. (2020) advanced the Workgroup Inclusion Scale, capturing the joint experience of belongingness and uniqueness. Given that Shore et al.'s (2011) conceptualization of inclusion is widely recognized in the literature (Tang et al., 2015), the present study applies and validates Chung et al.'s (2020) scale in the Indian context to provide a reliable and relevant measure of workgroup inclusion. While this scale does not explicitly measure experiences of inclusion based on religion and caste, these characteristics are particularly salient in India's sociodemographic landscape. For example, prior studies have indicated that employees from religious minority groups perceive lower levels of inclusion and experience differential treatment relative to majority groups (Shekhar & Srivastava, 2024). These insights underscore the need for future studies to explore workplace inclusion through an indigenous lens.

Although the Constitution of India guarantees equality of opportunity in public employment, equal pay for equal work, and protection against discrimination to the marginalized communities, such as LGBTQ, women, and minorities, due to the weak enforcement of policies, marginalized groups still remain underrepresented (Woodard & Saini, 2006). Inclusion measures are relatively new, with a few developed or validated in non-Western contexts, limiting their applicability to ethnically diverse workforces (Mor Barak, 2015). Prior research on diversity and inclusion has focused mainly on gender and race in Anglo-Saxon settings. This reveals the need for contextually grounded studies to advance and refine measurement (Kuknor & Bhattacharya, 2021).

The WGIS employed in the current study is a 10-item scale developed by Chung et al. (2020) that incorporates belongingness and uniqueness. Belongingness reflects an individual's perception of relational value in the eyes of others. Hagerty and Patusky (1995) highlighted two prominent features: the experience of being valued, needed, or important, and the experience of congruence with others through shared or complementary characteristics. On the other hand, the uniqueness component emphasizes that employees' distinct perspectives are valued within groups (Shore et al., 2011). Related constructs to this dimension include voice (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998) and self-verification (Swann, 1987).

According to Chung et al. (2020), workgroup inclusion is employees' concurrent experience of belongingness and uniqueness. Prior research indicates that individuals strive to fulfil both needs simultaneously (Pickett et al., 2002) and that their overall well-being improves when these dual experiences are present (Randel et al., 2018).

Conceptualization

Belongingness

Belongingness refers to an individual's sense of connectedness and relatedness to a larger, superordinate group (Versteegen & Adams, 2025). It reflects the fundamental human need to form and maintain enduring interpersonal relationships (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). A lack of belonging can precipitate feelings of isolation and poorer

well-being (Pickett et al., 2002). In the work setting, Waller (2021) identified belonging as a fundamental aspect of employees' work life that influences motivation, engagement, and performance. Sense of belonging can be enhanced by cultivating psychologically safe team cultures and encouraging meaningful interpersonal connections.

Uniqueness

Uniqueness refers to employees' perceptions that they can express differences in opinions, characteristics, or viewpoints, and that these differences are valued and respected by their workgroup (Shore et al., 2011). It reflects the ability to retain a sense of self while being accepted by others. When uniqueness is recognized, employees experience greater psychological empowerment, which supports creativity, reduces turnover intentions, and improves performance (Randel et al., 2018). In workplace environments, uniqueness complements belonging by ensuring employees are accepted and valued for their differences.

Rationale of the Study

Given the fragmented conceptualizations of workgroup inclusion in past research (Versteegen & Adams, 2025) and the need to cross-validate measures across diverse cultural contexts (Mor Barak, 2006), the Indian context is particularly relevant. Being among the most populous countries, India reports close to 470.9 million people at risk of social exclusion (Parvin et al., 2025), with workplaces defined through intersecting identities of religion, caste, class, gender, and language. However, the current Indian measures of inclusion focus on domains such as tourism inclusion (Awan & Shamin, 2022), social inclusion at the societal level (Parvin et al., 2025), or financial inclusion (Murugesan et al., 2022), rather than workplace experiences. Responding to the call, this study aims to extend the understanding of workplace inclusion by validating Chung et al.'s (2020) WGIS in India, offering a reliable, contextually grounded tool for organizational research.

Researchers have emphasised the significance of examining inclusion across cultures (Mor Barak, 2016). Similarly, Sociometer Theory (Leary, 1999) suggests that the drive to belong and sustain meaningful social relationships is closely linked to self-esteem. Since the self-concept is culturally constructed, the expression of this need varies across societies. India, in particular, is considered a relatively tight culture with collectivistic values and high-power distance (Gelfand et al., 2011; Hofstede, 2001). These cultural attributes imply that employees may perceive inclusion differently from their counterparts in more individualistic and loose Western settings, making localized validation necessary. In addition, issues like groupism, implicit discrimination, and the neglect of inclusionary practices remain prevalent in Indian multicultural workplaces (Vohra et al., 2015). While blatant discrimination is unacceptable to society, subtle prejudice still occurs in day-to-day interactions (Jones et al., 2017). This line of thought underscores the importance of examining and cross-validating inclusion measures within specific cultural contexts.

The WGIS has demonstrated robust psychometric properties across several countries, including the United States (Chung et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2025), China (Adam et al., 2023; Agyeiwaah et al., 2024), and India (Jha et al., 2024). However, the Indian validation of the workgroup inclusion scale has been conducted only in the IT sector, limiting its cross-industry generalizability. With India's globally evolving economy (Goel & Singh, 2023; Jha, 2018) and workplaces naturally composed of employees from diverse linguistic, regional, and social backgrounds (Vohra et al., 2015), organizations increasingly face the challenge of managing diverse teams and creating inclusive environments. Globalization and government initiatives have further increased workplace heterogeneity and cross-cultural collaboration, making it critical to validate inclusion measures within India's manufacturing, IT, and banking industries. Validating a workgroup inclusion scale in this context would provide scholars with a reliable tool to assess employee sentiment on inclusion across various sectors. Management practitioners can use the scale to identify pockets of exclusion and gauge areas for improvement in existing DEI policies. Policymakers and DEI consultants, in turn, can draw on these insights to inform more inclusive and equitable DEI practices. This ensures that inclusion efforts are grounded in employees' actual experiences.

METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional survey design was adopted, and data were collected via non-probabilistic convenience sampling. The participants comprised employees from public and private enterprises operating in the IT, manufacturing, banking, and service sectors across different regions of India. These sectors were deliberately chosen because of their strategic role in India's economic development and their growing workforce diversity.

Data were gathered between February and November 2024 using a web-based questionnaire distributed via Google Forms. The survey link was shared with over 480 middle-level managers through email and LinkedIn. Eligibility criteria required that participants be Indian citizens and aged 50 years or below. In total, 353 responses were received. After screening for incomplete submissions and missing values, 324 valid responses were retained for analysis.

The sectors represented in the sample are central to India's growth trajectory. The IT and business process management industry, a key driver of outsourcing and digital services, continues to expand its contribution to national GDP. The manufacturing sector remains critical to employment generation, supported by government initiatives such as "Make in India." The banking and broader service sectors further underpin economic stability and growth, reflecting the study's diverse industries.

The study sample consisted of 324 employees from diverse sectors. Males accounted for 60.3% and females 39.4%, with 0.3% identifying outside the binary. Most participants were under 40, and nearly half held postgraduate degrees. They represented services (39.1%), IT (31.3%), manufacturing (21.8%), and banking (7.8%), with varied work experience. Linguistic diversity was observed across 11 first languages, with Marathi (48.9%) and Hindi (27.3%) being the predominant languages. Only 1.6% reported a physical disability. This heterogeneous sample provides a representative context for examining workplace inclusion.

Participants were instructed to respond to the items based on their experiences in their respective workgroups.

Employees' perceptions of workgroup inclusion were assessed using the WGIS developed by Chung et al. (2020). The scale was initially designed to capture employees' experiences of inclusion through two dimensions, belongingness and uniqueness. Belongingness measures the extent to which employees feel supported and respected within their teams, while uniqueness measures the recognition of their distinct perspectives and contributions.

The instrument consisted of 10 items; each rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). Higher scores indicate stronger perceptions of inclusion. Reliability analysis indicated strong internal consistency, with $\alpha = 0.90$ for belongingness, $\alpha = 0.88$ for uniqueness, and $\alpha = 0.94$ for the overall scale. Although the original structure is two-dimensional, validation in the present study revealed that, in the Indian work context, all items loaded onto a single factor, suggesting a unidimensional representation of workgroup inclusion.

To establish nomological validity, the study also employed the 9-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), which measures vigor, dedication, and absorption at work.

RESULTS

The adequacy of the dataset for factor analysis was first confirmed. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) value was 0.95, exceeding the recommended minimum of 0.60, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant, χ^2 (df = 45) = 2345.62, $p < .001$, indicating that the data were appropriate for factor analysis. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was then conducted on the 10 items of the WGIS, initially using principal component analysis (PCA) to represent two components. Although varimax rotation was specified, only a single factor was extracted, rendering rotation unnecessary. All 10 items demonstrated strong loadings, ranging from .74 to .86 (Table 1), well above the recommended threshold of .40. No cross-loadings were observed, and all items were retained for further analysis. The single factor accounted for 76.92% of the total variance.

Table 1 Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis

Item codes	**Items**	**Factor Loading**
INC_B1	I am treated as a valued member of my workgroup.	.788
INC_B2	I belong to my workgroup.	.862
INC_B3	I am connected to my work group.	.815
INC_B4	I believe that my work group is where I am meant to be.	.815
INC_B5	I believe that my work group is where I am meant to be.	.744
INC_U1	I can bring aspects of myself to this workgroup that others in the group don't have in common with me.	.793 .798
INC_U2	People in my work group listen to me even when my views are dissimilar.	.807
INC_U3	While at work, I am comfortable expressing opinions that diverge from my group.	.864
INC_U4	I can share a perspective on work issues that are different from those of my group members.	.848
INC_U5	When my group's perspective becomes too narrow, I am able to bring up a new point of view.	.785

In contrast to the original two-factor structure of the WGIS validated in the United States (Chung et al., 2020), these results suggest that workgroup inclusion is best represented as a unidimensional construct in the Indian context.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to assess whether the items adequately represented their intended construct. Following Hair et al. (2019), items with standardized loadings above 0.70 are considered reliable indicators. Using Mplus Version 8.0, factor loadings for all 10 items were estimated and are reported in Figure 1. All items demonstrated loadings greater than 0.70, supporting their scale retention.

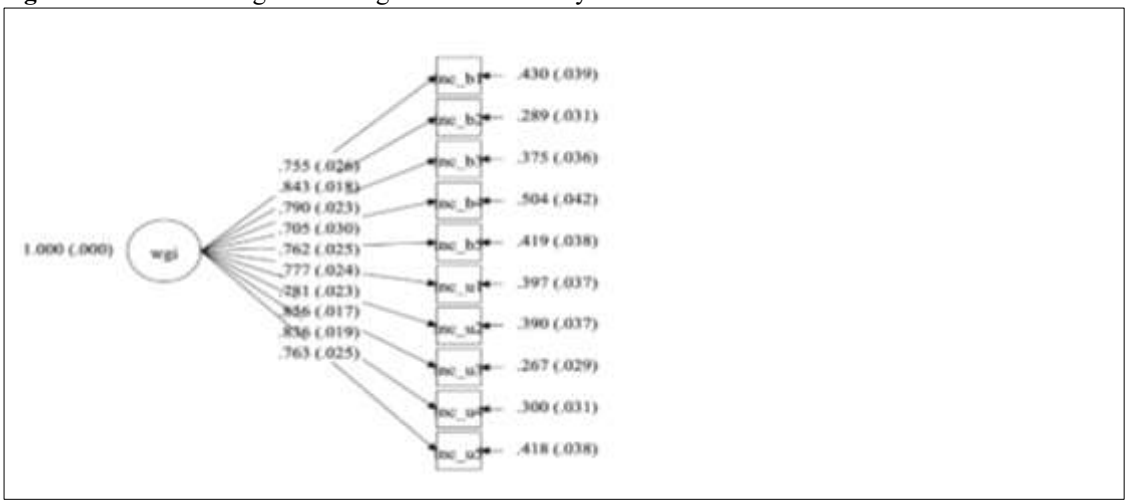
The one-factor model (Model I), in which all 10 items were specified to load on a single latent construct, demonstrated good model fit (χ^2 = 125.54; df = 35; CFI = 0.96; TLI = 0.95; SRMR = 0.03). These results provide strong evidence that the WGI scale can be reliably conceptualized as a unidimensional measure in the present context (Table 2).

Table 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Measurement Models	**χ^2 (df)**	**χ^2/(df)**	**CFI**	**TLI**	**SRMR**
Model I: One Factor Model of Workgroup Inclusion Scale	125.54(35)	3.58	.961	.950	0.030

Note: As the EFA supported a unidimensional structure of the WGI scale, a single-factor model was subsequently tested through CFA to validate this structure. χ^2= chi-square discrepancy; df =degrees of freedom; CFI= comparative fit index; TLI= Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA= Root Mean Error of Approximation
Source: Author's calculation with the use of Mplus

Figure 1: Factor loadings indicating unidimensionality of the scale



Reliability analysis was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the refined 10-item, single-factor WGIS (Hair et al., 2010). The scale demonstrated excellent reliability, with Cronbach's alpha of 0.94 (Table 3), indicating strong inter-item consistency. Composite reliability was computed from CFA factor loadings in Mplus, yielding a value of 0.98, further confirming the scale's robustness.

Convergent validity:

To establish convergent validity, this study relied on three commonly applied indicators: standardized factor loadings, composite reliability, and the average variance extracted (AVE) (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Evidence of convergent validity is indicated when factor loadings are statistically significant and composite reliability is high (Cable & DeRue, 2002). In this study, all standardized loadings exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.60, confirming that each item appropriately captured its intended construct (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Additionally, the AVE value (0.634) exceeded the minimum benchmark of 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), further supporting the scale's convergent validity.

In addition, the scale's discriminant validity was assessed using the AVE criterion (Table 3). Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggest that the AVE for each construct should exceed the squared correlations between constructs. The findings confirmed this condition, providing robust support for the discriminant validity of the RAW scale (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Kline et al., 2012).

Table 3: Reliability and Validity Analysis

Parameter	Acceptable value	WGI scale obtained values
Cronbach's alpha reliability	>.70	.94
Composite reliability[1]	>.70	.98

Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	>.50	.62

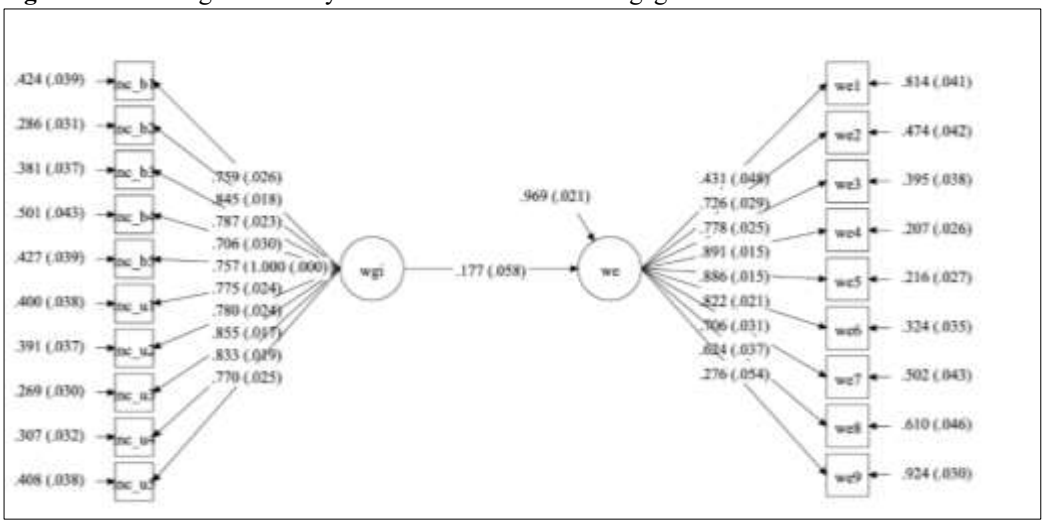
[1] Composite reliability (CR) was calculated in Excel using standardized factor loadings (λ) obtained from the CFA in Mplus, following the formula: $CR = (\Sigma\lambda)^2 / [(\Sigma\lambda)^2 + \Sigma(1 - \lambda^2)]$
Source: Author's calculation with the use of SPSS, Mplus, and Excel.

Nomological Validity

Further, nomological validity is the extent to which a construct demonstrates the expected relationships with other theoretically related constructs.

The present study assessed the nomological validity of the WGI scale by examining its relationship with work engagement as a consequent construct. A structural equation model was estimated in Mplus, and the results indicated satisfactory model fit (CFI = 0.94; TLI = 0.94; RMSEA = 0.06). As shown in Figure 2, WGI exhibited a significant positive association with work engagement ($\beta = 0.17$, $p < 0.05$). These findings are consistent with prior evidence (Borisov & Vinogradov, 2022; Razzak et al., 2022) linking inclusion with work engagement, thereby supporting the nomological validity of the WGIS.

Figure 2: Nomological validity of WGIS with the work engagement scale



DISCUSSION

Organizations today recognize that competitive advantage extends beyond technology and strategy to encompass the creation of inclusive environments where employees feel valued and respected (Bilimoria et al., 2008). Given this, the focus is on exploring how inclusion is experienced in the workplace and on developing and validating measures that capture it effectively.

The present study aimed to validate the psychometric properties of the WGIS using data from employees in the Indian manufacturing, IT, and service industries. Initially, the scale was developed within an individualistic framework, in which the construct was found to be bidimensional. Aligning with self-determination theory (SDT), employees in individualistic societies prioritize self-reliance, personal autonomy, and achievement (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Whereas, in collectivistic societies, like India, affiliation and connectedness form the core of social identity. Employees generally strive to avoid conflict, maintain harmony (Takahashi et al., 2002), and emphasize the cohesive aspects of social interactions rather than individual distinctions. Building on this premise, we contend that cultures may influence how individuals interpret workplace inclusion or exclusion experiences.

Interestingly, all ten scale items loaded significantly on a single factor, indicating that belongingness and uniqueness converge in a collectivist context like India, reflecting inclusion as a unified experience emphasizing relational interdependence. The EFA results for the Indian sample were satisfactory. However, demographic variables such as gender, religion, caste, or organizational role were not controlled in the current study, which may influence perceptions of inclusion. Future research should test the unidimensional structure across subgroups. Prior studies (e.g., Pearce & Randel, 2004; Jha et al., 2023; Boyle et al., 2024) support the unidimensionality of the inclusion construct.

While India's diversity has enriched business practices, it also poses challenges such as caste-based hierarchies, patriarchy, the rural–urban divide, and ongoing discrimination against minority communities (Jain, 2014). The Indian government has launched several initiatives to combat such barriers, for instance, the Right to Education Act (2009), the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016), and the Rural Employment Guarantee Act, all of which emphasize acceptance, representation, and inclusion. In such a setting, employees' sense of acceptance within their groups becomes especially significant (Ashikali & Groeneveld, 2015). Global organizations offer

similar lessons. Microsoft's employee resource groups (ERGs), such as Asians at Microsoft (AAM) and Women at Microsoft (WAM), provide support, networking, and advocacy for underrepresented groups.

This study established nomological validity by testing the relationship between the workgroup inclusion scale and work engagement, a construct that has been conceptually related in prior research (Borisov & Vinogradov, 2022; Razzak et al., 2022). Nomological validation thus demonstrates the scale's practicality in the given context and shows whether a construct behaves as expected within a network of related constructs (Kock et al., 2024).

The EFA, CFA, and validity results indicate that the structure of workgroup inclusion can vary across cultures. At the same time, the original scale (Chung et al., 2020) remained a reliable and valid tool to measure employees' experiences of workgroup inclusion in the Indian manufacturing, IT, and service sectors.

Validating the WGIS in the Indian context offers valuable insights for scholars and practitioners. Although the scale showed a unidimensional structure in the Indian work context, unlike its original two-factor design, it remains a valid and useful measure of workgroup inclusion. Instead, it reflects how cultural realities shape employees' perceptions of inclusion and highlights the need for context-sensitive measures. The validated scale provides practitioners with a reliable tool to diagnose inclusion levels, identify gaps, and design interventions that foster acceptance and fairness within teams.

Importantly, employee feedback remains the most powerful data source for tracking inclusion. Quick "pulse" surveys, for instance, enable leaders to check in with employees without causing survey fatigue, provided the right metrics and questions are identified (Harvard Business Review, 2021). The 10-item WGI scale can thus serve as a practical foundation for such metrics, helping HR leaders capture inclusion in a systematic yet employee-friendly way.

From a global perspective, the scale enables researchers and HR managers to compare how inclusion is experienced across Western and non-Western contexts, providing a common platform for cross-cultural learning. Inclusion may manifest differently in various contexts, such as the unidimensional nature of collectivist societies. Policymakers can avoid a one-size-fits-all approach and instead develop more tailored strategies to support diverse employees worldwide.

The present study focused on validating perceptions of workgroup inclusion without controlling for demographic variables such as gender, social category, or religious orientation. Future research could examine whether the scale performs similarly across demographic subgroups, such as caste, age, experience, organisational level, or sexual orientation. Second, as the factorial structure revealed a different pattern in the Global South context, future comparative studies on inclusion scales can help deepen understanding and guide the design of contextually relevant workplace policies. Third, this research relied on cross-sectional survey data; future studies may adopt qualitative approaches, such as interviews, to capture richer insights into employee experiences of inclusion. Fourth, this study was conducted and validated in the Indian context; therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to other nations. Since culture and values play a central role in shaping diversity and inclusion, future research could extend this work through cross-cultural and comparative studies.

CONCLUSION

Given each country's unique cultural traditions, validating measures for local contexts is vital. This study validates the workgroup inclusion scale as a reliable, unidimensional tool across Indian IT, manufacturing, and service sectors. The unidimensionality reflects collective perceptions of inclusion rather than uniform policies. Organizations should still tailor initiatives to demographic and contextual differences to address specific barriers that underrepresented employees face.

Declaration

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Ethics statement: The study protocol and participant information/informed consent materials were reviewed and approved by the Institute Human Ethics Committee (IHEC) of the Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, India (IITR/IIC/24/05), approval letter dated 29.02.2024.

Informed Consent: Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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