

## **How Maladjustment and Workplace Bullying Affect Newcomers' Turnover Intentions: Roles of Cognitive Diversity and Perceived Inclusive Practices**

### **Abstract**

**Purpose:** This study examined newcomers experiencing maladjustment due to cognitive diversity, specifically, how maladjustment affects their turnover intentions; the mediating role of reported workplace bullying; and the buffering effect of perceived inclusive practices in the hospitality sector.

**Design/methodology/approach:** We collected time-lagged data from 403 respondents and analyzed the data through hierarchical regression analyses using SPSS 25.0.

**Findings:** Role ambiguity, low self-efficacy, and social exclusion could each lead to newcomers' reported workplace bullying (NRB). Perceived inclusive practices buffered the impacts of role ambiguity and social exclusion. NRB negatively mediated the relationships between role ambiguity and NRB; and social exclusion and NRB.

**Practical implications:** Hospitality practitioners should specify work procedures to minimize role ambiguities and record service processes to correct mistakes; reward veterans who help newcomers improve self-efficacy; invite newcomers to develop inclusive practices; and review employee comments on third-party platforms to understand factors responsible for turnover intention.

**Originality/value:** This study contextualized cognitive diversity into newcomers' maladjustment-bullying-turnover model in China's hospitality industry. It highlighted the buffering effect of perceived inclusive practices in the relationships between maladjustment and reported bullying and turnover intentions among newcomers and confirmed the important role of self-efficacy in addressing adverse work events.

**Keywords** Newcomer, Maladjustment, Workplace bullying, Cognitive diversity, Perceived inclusive practices, Turnover intention, Hospitality industry

**Paper type:** Research paper

# **How Maladjustment and Workplace Bullying Affect Newcomers' Turnover Intentions: Roles of Cognitive Diversity and Perceived Inclusive Practices**

## **1. Introduction**

Hospitality organizations are experiencing persistent labor shortages and frequent employee turnovers (McCartney et al., 2022). Turnover suggests loss of skilled talents and additional hiring and training costs for replacement (Mohsin et al., 2022). Turnovers particularly happen to newcomers, employed from a few weeks up to 15 months, who may forsake careers when experiencing unpleasant experiences (Sin et al., 2022).

Employee turnover has been attributed not only to the fundamental nature of customer services (Mohsin et al., 2022) but also to the way employees perceive and respond to organizational practices and how they interact with colleagues in different hierarchical positions (Varga et al., 2021). For instance, organizational injustice (Hsu et al., 2019; Li et al., 2020) resulting from workplace bullying (Xiang et al., 2023) could lead to turnover intentions.

This study investigates workplace bullying, which often occurs to newcomers as enforcement of an organization's unwritten rules and punishment for underperformance (Porter et al., 2018). Workplace bullying refers to organizational members' repeated and persistent hostility and violence that deprive victims of their dignity and work (Alexander et al., 2012; Edwards & Blackwood, 2017). Workplace bullying can harm newcomers' wellbeing, trigger negative attitudes, and undermine job performance (Hsu et al., 2019).

Newcomers need to seek relevant information to adjust to their new roles through socialization, which can help them to learn the rules, expected attitudes and behaviors,

and required knowledge (Bauer et al., 2007); this process involves newcomers, veterans, and hospitality organizations. Socialization tactics can promote newcomers' adjustment, i.e., improved role clarity, self-efficacy, and social inclusion, and thereby improve their job performance and reduce turnover intentions (Bauer et al., 2007; Takeuchi et al., 2021; X. Zhou et al., 2021). The information required for newcomer adjustment is not always available in formal socialization trainings (Miller & Jablin, 1991), so newcomers need to seek the missing information from veterans. However, veterans may not willingly provide such information to newcomers due to diverse characteristics. For instance, surface-level diversities, such as gender, race, national origins, and language differences, can result in maladjustment and higher turnover rates (Kim et al., 2016; Shi, 2023).

So far, not many studies (Shen & Huang, 2012) have sought to understand the mechanisms that lead to domestic migrant workers' maladjustment in the hospitality sector, although the hospitality sectors in countries such as China rely heavily on migrant workers, who show high turnover rates that lead to high training costs. Unlike Western countries, China's smallest share of foreign-born citizens (0.07%) and limited language differences suggest that newcomers in China often bear deep-level diversity, such as generational gaps, provincial economic development differences, education, and socioeconomic status (David, 2020). Shen and Huang (2012) have introduced how the Chinese household registration system drives rural migrant workers to seek better social welfare and living conditions in economically developed areas.

The aforementioned differences may form newcomers' cognitive diversity, i.e., the idiosyncratic patterns of one's information processing, beliefs, context-specific knowledge, and localized values and beliefs (Shin et al., 2012) that lead to newcomer maladjustment in China's hospitality industry. Cognitive diversity can be determined

by one's education, life experience, and sociocultural values and beliefs (Chow, 2018) and may not easily change. A lack of attention to domestic migrant workers may prevent understanding the mechanisms underlying newcomers' reported workplace bullying and turnover intentions.

Socialization theory has been adopted to explain how new immigrants' difficulties in obtaining social inclusion by native colleagues in workplaces (Kim et al., 2016). Indeed, native employees may decide whether to help newcomers based on their similarities and differences, with cultural dissimilarity and cognitive differences leading to social exclusion and even conflicts in the workplace (Rupert et al., 2010). Moreover, native-born veterans may not realize newcomers' cognitive diversity, thus demonstrating prejudices and stereotypes that lead to newcomer maladjustment, which may provoke a conflict that further escalates to workplace bullying (Ayoko, 2007).

In addition to newcomer characteristics (i.e., cognitive diversity), hospitality organizations also play important roles in newcomer maladjustment and workplace bullying. Socialization studies have highlighted the importance of newcomer adjustment, but with limited insights on the specific tactics that mitigate workplace bullying due to maladjustment. In fact, reported bullying still occurs in hospitality organizations with inclusive mottoes. As newcomer turnover is affected by their perceptions and attitudes towards interactions with veterans, studying how employees perceive inclusive practices, i.e., a newcomers' perception of whether the organization can meet their needs for information, belongingness, and uniqueness (Vu et al., 2022), seems more important.

Given the unique context of China's hospitality sector, this study focuses on newcomers who are experiencing role ambiguity, low self-efficacy, and social exclusion (i.e.,

maladjustment), aiming to examine 1) how newcomer maladjustment is associated with reported workplace bullying; 2) how workplace bullying affects newcomers' turnover intentions, and 3) the moderating impact of perceived inclusive practices.

## **2. Theoretical background and hypothesis development**

### **2.1 Newcomer maladjustment and its theoretical underpinnings**

Previous studies have adopted social identity (Korte, 2007) and self-categorization theory to interpret newcomers' organizational socialization results (Korte, 2007). These theories stress that newcomers seek to become organizational insiders. In contrast, we argue that newcomers' adjustment depends on their understanding of the meaning of the organizational events that define their new roles. In other words, newcomers' interactions with veterans are primarily driven by the need to clarify their roles and reduce uncertainty (Zhou et al., 2022).

This study adopts the socialization theory, which explains newcomers' adjustment (Alexander et al., 2012; Yang, 2008), with a special focus on the cognitive processes that influence newcomers' adjustment (Feldman & Brett, 1983). Also, socialization theory can explain how newcomers blend into new organizations. Alexander et al. (2012) found verbal bullying as a part of socialization for newcomers to familiarize themselves with and adjust to the environment and improve job-related skills. However, they admitted that excessive bullying could lead to physical and mental harm. The study assumes that bullying can help newcomers achieve social integration, yet admitted that the severity and duration of bullying depend on newcomer fit and response (Josefowitz & Gadon, 1989). Therefore, this study specifies a situation where newcomers are cognitively 'unfit' with veterans and examines how such incongruence affects their adjustment and bullying experience.

Drawing on Feldman (1981), we define newcomer maladjustment as a newcomer's inability to address the demands of the new job role, lack of confidence in undertaking the tasks related to the role, and inability to fit in with the new workplace or feel acceptance by colleagues. Newcomer maladjustment is reflected in newcomers' 1) role ambiguity, i.e., a newcomer's inability to understand the job-related tasks and allocate time to each task (Rizzo et al., 1970); 2) low self-efficacy, i.e., a newcomer's lack of confidence in taking the assigned tasks (Miller & Jablin, 1991), and 3) social exclusion, a newcomer's feeling of being disliked and excluded by organizational insiders, including supervisors and peers (Fey, 1955). The rest part of this section presents the hypothesized relationships among each of these maladjustment components and workplace bullying, newcomers' turnover intentions, as well as perceived inclusive practices.

## 2.2 Maladjusted newcomers and reported workplace bullying

- Role ambiguity and reported workplace bullying

Newcomers may experience role ambiguity in several situations. Some unclearly defined role tasks can lead to misunderstandings (Kauppila, 2014). In hospitality organizations, customers often demand personalized services (Piccoli et al., 2017). These demands may contradict existing service standards and procedures and place newcomers in a dilemma between satisfying customers and following standards. Moreover, newcomers may not proactively seek information or feedback to address role ambiguity, fearing that doing so could indicate their poor capacity in the eyes of colleagues (Brown et al., 2001).

Conflicted task requirements, missing information, and lack of feedback-seeking lead to confusion, stress, and maladjustment in a new employer (Reknes et al., 2019).

Moreover, cognitive diversity and miscommunication could result in incompatible

expectations and negative emotions, which further predict workplace bullying (Reknes et al., 2014). Maladjusted newcomers may further violate the existing norms at work and perform poorly, thereby experiencing aggressive behaviors such as bullying from veterans (Neuman et al., 2011). As such, we predict the following:

H1: Role ambiguity is positively associated with reported workplace bullying among newcomers.

- Low self-efficacy and workplace bullying

Self-efficacy refers to a person's evaluation of whether he or she can achieve specific goals while maintaining psychological functioning (Bandura, 1978). It serves as an internal mechanism to cope with stressful situations (Yoon & Yoon, 2019). Employees with high self-efficacy may perceive themselves as capable of regulating psychological and emotional functions to address challenges at work (Chen & Chen, 2021). When failing to deliver services to meet customer expectations, newcomers may feel shame and attribute themselves to the failures, thereby experiencing lower self-efficacy (Wang et al., 2022).

Moreover, when making mistakes at work, newcomers may receive veterans' negative judgments, which harm self-efficacy (Bandura, 1978). Andreou and Metallidou (2004) associated low self-efficacy with bullying. In particular, newcomers with low self-efficacy cannot address negative experiences at work. The self-doubt and the negative evaluations from peers could collectively lead to workplace bullying (Huang, 2021). As such, the following can be predicted:

H2: Low self-efficacy is positively associated with reported workplace bullying among newcomers.

- Social exclusion and workplace bullying

Newcomers often try to seek veterans' emotional and functional support and positive

evaluations. However, social integration involves a complex process, with some newcomers receiving little support, possibly due to social exclusion (Alexander et al., 2012). Veterans may discriminate and distrust newcomers who share different identity characteristics (e.g., living habits) (L. Zhou et al., 2021), worrying that newcomers could bring undesirable changes and freeriding (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010).

Newcomers experiencing social exclusion may focus on the immediate present and fail to think broadly and meaningfully about their job roles (Twenge et al., 2003). As such, newcomers may not know how to prioritize overall tasks and catch deadlines (Twenge et al., 2003). In addition, socially excluded individuals may become passive and demotivated to deliver the expected performance (Y. Li et al., 2020; Renn et al., 2013). Underperforming newcomers may become victims of workplace bullying (Gardner et al., 2016; Hoel et al., 1999), so we hypothesize that:

H3: Social exclusion is positively associated with reported workplace bullying among newcomers.

### 2.3 Reported workplace bullying and newcomer turnover intentions

Turnover intention is a common result of workplace bullying (Xiang et al., 2023). In particular, negative experiences in early interactions with veterans can drive newcomers to quit (Josefowitz & Gadon, 1989). Newcomers in the hospitality sector have to quickly adjust and understand their roles to smoothly deliver services (X. Zhou et al., 2021) and may experience workplace bullying from veterans for failing to do so. Bullying further leads to newcomers' job dissatisfaction and causes burnout (Alexander et al., 2012), thereby increasing turnover intentions. Therefore, the following can be predicted:

H4: Reported workplace bullying is positively associated with newcomers'



turnover intentions.

We further the impact of workplace bullying in the maladjustment-turnover intention link through socialization theory. According to this theory, the quality of interactions between newcomers and veterans is important for newcomer adjustment (Allen et al., 2017). In other words, interpersonal factors (i.e., the roles of organizational veterans) can also influence newcomers' socialization process. Zhuo and Yuan (2021) have recognized how colleagues' opinions, evaluations, and attitudes could influence employees' evaluation of their abilities to meet the job requirements, as well as their job attitude and job satisfaction.

Moreover, newcomers' poor performance could further influence the attitudes and behaviors of veterans during the socialization process, resulting in workplace bullying. In other words, the association between newcomer maladjustment and organizational socialization results (i.e., turnover intentions) is connected to workplace bullying. We hypothesize that newcomers' maladjustment leads to workplace bullying, thereby generating negative interactive experiences and high levels of stress that collectively lead to turnover intentions. Hence, we hypothesize that:

H5: Reported workplace bullying positively mediates the relationship in H1.

H6: Reported workplace bullying positively mediates the relationship in H2.

H7: Reported workplace bullying positively mediates the relationship in H3.

#### 2.4 Perceived inclusive practices

Organizations increasingly adopt inclusive practices to reduce verbal and behavioral discrimination, improve the sense of belonging, and retain diverse talents (Shore et al., 2018). Manoharan and Singal (2017) suggested practices such as alternative access to job-related information (Nordsteien & Byström, 2018), assigning mentors with deep-level similarity to newcomers (Zheng et al., 2021), intervention in newcomer-colleague

conflicts (Nifadkar & Bauer, 2016), and fostering a caring climate (Thomas & Meglich, 2019). Several studies confirmed that inclusive practices can influence the relationships between employee-supervisor deep-level diversity and employee autonomy (Zheng et al., 2017), perceived discrimination and reactive aggression (Xiong et al., 2021), and diversity-caused depression systems and self-efficacy (Adamovic, Sojo, et al., 2022).

However, whether a human resource practice such as inclusion is effective depends on employee perceptions (Varga et al., 2021). Formal channels (e.g., organizational practices) only provide limited information, so when a newcomer witnesses a conflict between a colleague and a customer, he or she may first consult organizational veterans informally for critical knowledge and suggestions (Nasr et al., 2019). When experiencing maladjustment, newcomers may then seek compensatory information through formal channels, such as asking for official performance feedback and enquiring about standards for rewards and punishments.

More importantly, newcomers will evaluate the inclusive practices to determine which ones can actually help them overcome the barriers to obtaining information required for their new roles, regain self-efficacy (through an objective and just assessment system), and obtain fair treatment by veterans, thereby reducing the chances of being bullied. Once newcomers perceive that certain inclusive practices can represent employers' concerns about their wellbeing, they would then utilize them to reduce the impact of maladjustment on their reported workplace bullying. Hence, we hypothesize that:

H8: Perceived inclusive practices negatively moderate the relationship in H1.

H9: Perceived inclusive practices negatively moderate the relationship in H2.

H10: Perceived inclusive practices negatively moderate the relationship H3.

Figure 1 summarizes the above hypotheses into a conceptual framework.

## **Put Figure 1 About Here**

### **3. Methods**

#### 3.1 Participants and procedure

We contacted a large catering service company with 821 stores in China. We obtained approvals from the human resource managers of 135 stores. Those managers provided the contact details of 703 newly hired employees. The company's newcomer socialization programs included orientation and training, which often lasted between three to seven days.

After assuring anonymity and explaining voluntary participation, we managed to obtain consent from 595 respondents. We adopted the time lag collection method to examine the temporal precedence, with role ambiguity, low self-efficacy, and social exclusion measured at Time 1 (May 1 to May 7, 2022), the mediator (reported workplace bullying), and first-stage moderator (perceived inclusive practices) measured at Time 2 (June 1 to June 7, 2022), and the dependent variable (turnover intentions) measured at Time 3 (July 1 to July 7, 2022). Moreover, time separation is an important procedural remedy for common method bias (Podsakoff, 2003).

The first-round survey was sent to newcomers two weeks after they had joined the stores ( $N = 552/594$ ; response rate = 92.9%). The second-round survey was sent to the newcomers six weeks after they had joined the stores ( $N = 494/552$ ; response rate = 89.4%); these respondents had taken the first-round survey. The third-round survey was sent to the newcomer (who had taken the second-round survey) ten weeks after they had joined the store ( $N = 403/494$ ; response rate = 81.6%).

Data collection was supported by the company's human resource department, with

online survey links sent to newcomers' WeChat groups. We examined the appropriateness of sample size using G\*power 3.1.9.7. By using five predictors, we achieved a significant level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05 and an effect size ( $f^2$ ) of 0.15 (medium). Therefore, this study obtained a sample size of 403 at the statistical power of 0.95 for the linear multiple regression analysis of the study (Howell, 2012). Table 1 presents the demographics of the 403 respondents.

### **Put Table 1 About Here**

#### 3.2 Measures

The questionnaire included six constructs: role ambiguity, low self-efficacy, social exclusion, newcomers' reported workplace bullying, perceived inclusive practices, and turnover intention. The surveys were administered in Chinese. All the measures were adapted from existing measures validated in English by previous research. All items were measured on 5-Point-Likert-scales (1: strongly disagree-5: strongly agree).

- Role ambiguity

Role ambiguity (RA) was a 6-item scale adapted from (Rizzo et al., 1970). Sample items include 'I feel uncertain about how much freedom I have at work.' and 'I don't know exactly what is expected of me.' The coefficient alpha was 0.931.

- Low self-efficacy

Low self-efficacy (LSE) was a 4-item scale adapted from (Adamovic, Gahan, et al., 2022). The items include, 'I have little confidence that I can complete my tasks', 'I have little confidence that I can prioritize tasks to use my time effectively.' and 'I blame myself for the service failures.' The Cronbach alpha was 0.850.

- Social exclusion

Social exclusion (SE) was a three-item scale adapted from (Zavaleta et al., 2017). The items include 'I find it hard to get along well with people I come into contact with at work,' 'I consider myself distant to the people I regularly interact with,' 'People in my company don't really care much about me.' The Cronbach alpha was 0.835.

- Perceived inclusive practices

Perceived inclusive practices (PIP) was a seven-item scale adapted from (Sabharwal, 2014). The sample items include 'My company is committed to taking care of the interests of all employees,' 'My company has practices and programs in place to promote diversity in the workplace.' The Cronbach alpha was 0.917.

- Newcomer reported workplace bullying

Newcomers' reported workplace bullying (NRB) was a six-item scale adapted from (Einarsen et al., 2009). The items include 'Someone withheld the information that affected my performance,' 'Someone ordered me to do work below my level of competence,' 'My opinions about work were ignored,' and 'I was given tasks with unreasonable deadlines.' The Cronbach alpha of NRB was .925.

- Turnover intention

The turnover intention (TI) scale was adapted from (Michaels & Spector, 1982). We used three items for turnover intention, including 'Recently, I have been thinking about leaving my current job,' 'I want to give up this job,' and 'I am hunting for other jobs now.' (Cronbach alpha = 0.837).

- Control variables

Drawing on (David, 2020) regarding diversity in China, we selected age, sex, education-level, and perceived difference/similarity between hometown and host city, which may capture respondents' cognitive diversity.

### 3.3 Analytical procedures

We examined the convergent validity and discriminant validity of the six main variables through a confirmatory factor analysis. Specifically, we assessed the model fit by examining chi-square, Comparative Fit Index, Tucker-Lewis index, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation, and the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual. We used hierarchical regression for testing the hypotheses by SPSS 25.0. Bootstrapping was set to 5000 resamples for mediating effects testing. We controlled the demographic variables, and standardized independent variables and the moderator to prevent collinearity (Aiken et al., 1991). See Table 2 for the CFA analysis results.

**Put Table 2 About Here**

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Common Method Bias

We conducted a Harman's single factor test for the potential issues of common method bias. The six factors had eigenvalues greater than 1. Factor one explained less than 40% of the variance (30.68% of 72.35%) (Podsakoff, 2003). As such, common method variance was minimal for this study.

### 4.2 Validity and reliability

We conducted a CFA test using Mplus 8.0 to examine convergent validity and discriminant validity ( $\chi^2 = 455.293$ ,  $df = 362$ ,  $CFI = 0.987$ ,  $TLI = 0.986$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.025$ ,  $SRMR = 0.032$ ). According to Table 3, convergent validity was achieved since the composite reliability (CR) was above 0.80 and AVEs were all over 0.50. In other

words, the measurement model has a good convergent validity and reliability of the measurement model. According to Table 4, the square roots of factors' AVEs were higher than their correlation coefficients with other factors. Therefore, discriminant validity was achieved (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

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**Put Table 4 About Here**

#### 4.3 Hypothesis Testing

Table 4 suggests that education level has a significant effect on the main relationships. Moreover, respondents whose hometowns are different from the host cities experience a more significant effect than host city respondents on reported workplace bullying and turnover intention.

Role ambiguity (RA) positively influences reported workplace bullying (NRB) ( $\beta = 0.351, p < 0.05$ ). Low self-efficacy (LSE) negatively influences NRB ( $\beta = -0.134, p < 0.05$ ). Social exclusion (SE) positively affects NRB ( $\beta = 0.322, p < 0.05$ ). Moreover, NRB positively affects turnover intention ( $\beta = 0.306, p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, hypotheses 1-4 were supported.

Regarding the moderating effects (see Table 5) of perceived inclusive practices (PIP), RA\*PIP negatively affects NRB ( $\beta = -0.134, p < 0.05$ ), supporting hypothesis 5. LSE\*PIP has no significant effect on NRB ( $\beta = -0.022, p > 0.05$ ). SE\*PIP negatively affects NRB ( $\beta = -0.143, p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, hypotheses 5 and 7 were supported.

We plotted and probed the interaction values (RA\*PIP, SE\*PIP) in a simple slope test (Aiken et al., 1991). According to Figures 2 and Figure 3, a higher PIP could weaken the positive impact of RA on NRB, as well as the positive impact of SE on NRB. These further supported Hypothesis 5 and Hypothesis 7.

**Put Table 5 About Here**

**Put Figure 2 (Interaction between role ambiguity & perceived inclusive practices) About Here**

**Put Figure 3 (Interaction between social exclusion & perceived inclusive practices) About Here**

In Table 6, we used the bootstrapped method to test the mediations using SPSS PROCESS (model 4). The mediating effect of NRB between RA and TI was 0.087, with the bootstrapped 95% CI excluding zero (0.041, 0.138). The mediating effect of NRB between LSE and TI was 0.088, with the bootstrapped 95% CI excluding zero (0.044, 0.141). The mediating effect of NRB between SE and TI was 0.108, with the bootstrapped 95% CI excluding zero (0.052, 0.168). These results supported Hypotheses 8, 9, and 10.

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Drawing on previous suggestions (Hayes & Cai, 2007; Neumayer & Plümper, 2017), we conducted a robustness test using a different model measurement method by



removing control variables, which may affect the overall significance are removed. According to Table 7 and Table 8, robustness test results are the same as that of previous methods. Thus, this study survived the robustness check.

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## **5. Discussion**

### **5.1 Conclusions**

This study explored an understudied source of workplace bullying during the socialization process of newcomers in hospitality organizations: cognitive diversity-caused maladjustment. Specifically, we empirically proved that such maladjustment could lead to reported workplace bullying, thus concurring with previous scholars regarding the impact of role ambiguity (Reknes et al., 2014) and low self-efficacy (Huang, 2021) on workplace bullying. Moreover, we examined the underlying mechanism explaining how social exclusion leads to workplace bullying, confirming how newcomer diversity is associated with distrust, concerns of freeriding and unnecessary changes from veterans (Hershcovis & Barling, 2010), and how these issues are associated with newcomers' reported workplace bullying.

Our results about the impact of reported workplace bullying concur with previous observations (Alexander et al., 2012) that highlight the importance of interaction quality in employee turnovers. When experiencing bullying from veterans, maladjusted newcomers may experience stress, form negative attitudes towards work, and feel job dissatisfaction. In particular, workplace bullying worsens newcomers' perception of organizational injustice, thereby increasing turnover intentions (Lugosi, 2019; Xiang et

al., 2023b). These findings are important, given the detrimental effects of unpleasant experiences that lead to not only turnover but also career change, i.e., quitting the industry (Chen & Chen, 2021; Chen & Qi, 2022; Sin et al., 2022).

We also found the buffering effect of perceived inclusive practices. This finding concurs with (Varga et al., 2021) regarding employee perception of organizational support. However, we found no such moderating effect on low self-efficacy and reported workplace bullying was not supported. One possible explanation is that newcomers lack proficiency and confidence in undertaking daily tasks (Andreou & Metallidou, 2004), thus being unable to address negative social experiences at work. These issues cannot be improved by inclusive practices in a short period of time.

## 5.2 Theoretical implications

We make several theoretical implications. First, we contextualized cognitive diversity into newcomers' maladjustment-bullying-turnover model in China's hospitality industry. The model adds to the limited knowledge about hospitality newcomers' reported workplace bullying in the Chinese cultural context. In particular, it makes one of the first attempts to understand newcomers' deep-level diversity issues in China's hospitality sector; in this country, diversity comes from imbalanced welfare benefits (e.g., education opportunities) and different living habits in different provinces (Shen & Huang, 2012). We found that education and felt differences between hometowns and host cities are sources of cognitive diversity that affect reported workplace bullying and turnover intentions. This finding extends former studies (Patah et al., 2010; Y. Zhou et al., 2021) that underline surface-level diversity as an antecedent of bullying.

Second, we contributed to the inclusiveness studies (Manoharan & Singal, 2017; Shore et al., 2018) by linking perceived inclusive practices with newcomer adjustment and

workplace bullying in the hospitality industry. While Varga et al. (2021) consider employee perception as an indicator of employer motivation (e.g., employee wellbeing or cost reduction), we confirm the importance of perceived inclusiveness in buffering the impact of maladjustment on workplace bullying. This seems important for the hospitality industry that experiences losses due to newcomer turnover intention and career change.

Third, drawing on socialization theory, we extend the organizational socialization and workplace bullying studies (Korte, 2007; L. Zhou et al., 2021; X. Zhou et al., 2021) that primarily attribute insider/outsider status and membership to undesirable outcomes such as bullying. We highlight how newcomers' low self-efficacy due to cognitive diversity and job proficiency could lead to bullying. The unsupported buffering effect of perceived inclusiveness between low self-efficacy and bullying further suggests that newcomers' cognitive sense of control plays a critical role in addressing adverse events and experiences in hospitality organizations. In other words, simply introducing inclusive practices alone may not entirely facilitate newcomer adjustment and prevent workplace bullying.

### 5.3 Practical implications

We provide important implications to practices in the hospitality sector. First, hospitality practitioners should recognize how cognitive diversity works as a root cause of workplace bullying and newcomer turnover intentions, as domestic newcomers may also bear different values and habits that may prevent successful socialization. For instance, more detailed work procedures could be provided to minimize role obscurities, and service processes recorded to clarify responsibilities and correct mistakes. At the same time, practitioners could provide incentives for veterans to either suggest job-

specific training to develop newcomers' self-efficacy or help newcomers to improve their job performance.

Second, hospitality practitioners could develop an inclusive culture and enforce inclusive practices that newcomers perceive as valuable (Varga et al., 2021). In particular, newcomers could be invited to develop inclusive practices that they perceive as useful. This seems important as newcomers are more likely to integrate their cognitive and work habits as well as work-related difficulties into the practices.

Third, since low self-efficacy is an important predictor of workplace bullying, hospitality practitioners should consider extending the length and content of formal training to newcomers. This is important for hospitality organizations, which hire a large proportion of low-skilled migrants who lack formal education. Doing so could reduce ambiguity and uncertainty related to newcomers' roles and, more importantly, provide newcomers with more sense of control and autonomy at work, thereby improving self-efficacy.

Fourth, while several scholars (Hsu et al., 2019) suggest anonymous channels to report workplace bullying, newcomers may still have fears and misgivings that prevent them from reporting. As such, practitioners could review employees' comments on third-party platforms such as job-hunting websites and social media to understand employees' experiences and identify factors that lead to their dissatisfaction and turnover.

#### 5.4 Limitations and future research

Despite our efforts, the study still has a few limitations. First, we adopted a time-lagged method to collect data, yet we could not draw strong causal inferences. Future studies could consider experimental research designs for confirmation. Second, our sample is

restricted to the catering service sector, so the results may not entirely apply to other sectors (e.g., hotels) in the hospitality industry. Future studies can cover more extensive data to examine the differences in the contexts of different hospitality sectors. Third, having recognized the importance of leadership (Yu et al., 2020), we suggest that future studies include leadership behavior, organizational efforts, and employee adjustment to develop a fuller picture of newcomer adjustment, reported workplace bullying, and turnover intentions, thereby generating deeper insights into the newcomer maladjustment-turnover link.

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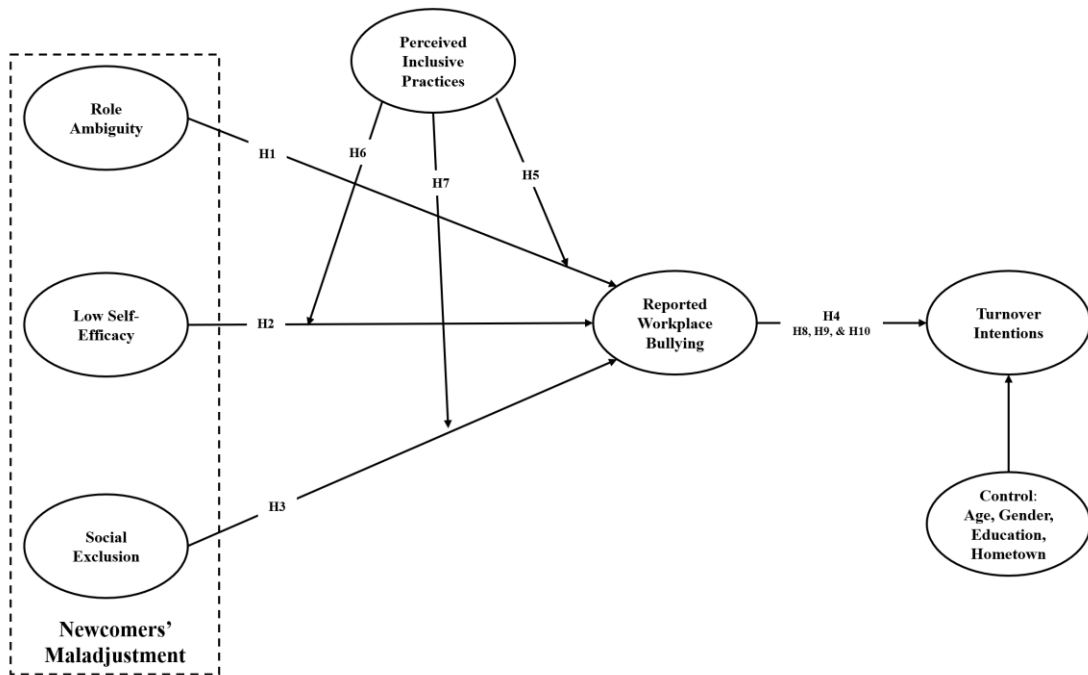


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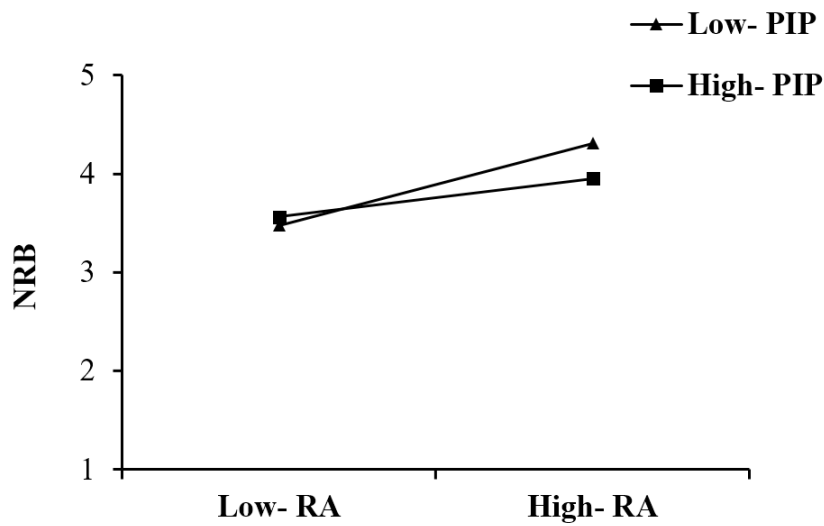
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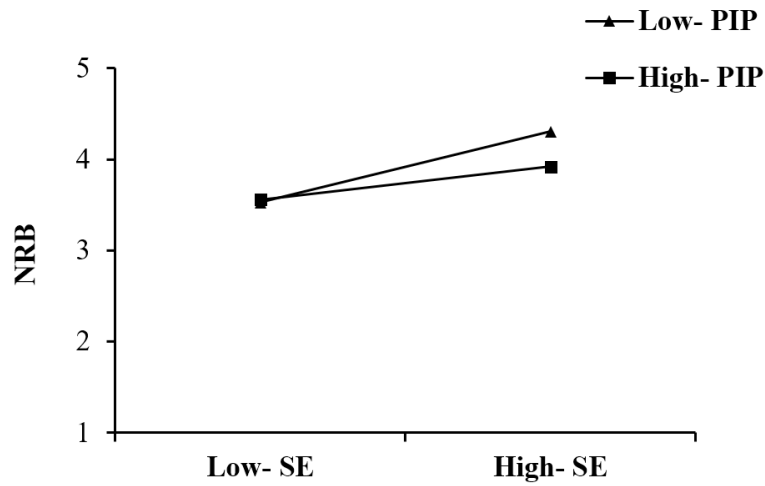
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**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework**



**Figure 2. Interaction between role ambiguity & perceived inclusive practices**



**Figure 3. Interaction between social exclusion & perceived inclusive practices**

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**Table 1. Demographics**

Demographics	Items	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	244	60.5%
	Female	159	39.5%
Age	20-25 years old	122	30.3%
	26-30 years old	134	33.3%
	31-35 years old	116	28.8%
	36 years old or above	31	7.7%
Education	High school or below	219	54.3%
	Junior college	156	38.7%
	Bachelor's degree or above	28	6.9%
Hometown	Similar to host city	159	39.5%
	Different from host city	244	60.5%

**Table 2. CFA analysis results**

CMIN	DF	CMIN/DF	RMSEA	CFI	TLI	SRMR
455.293	362	1.258	0.025	0.987	0.986	0.032

<3                      <0.05                      >0.9                      >0.9                      <0.05

**Table 3. Results of reliability and validity analysis**

Constructs	Items	Std. Factor loadings	CR	AVE	Cronbach'α
Role Ambiguity	RA1	0.791	0.931	0.694	0.931
	RA2	0.905			
	RA3	0.840			
	RA4	0.826			
	RA5	0.830			
	RA6	0.801			
Low Self-Efficacy	LSE1	0.786	0.851	0.588	0.850
	LSE2	0.761			
	LSE3	0.773			
	LSE4	0.747			
Social Exclusion	SI1	0.721	0.839	0.636	0.835
	SI2	0.850			
	SI3	0.816			
Newcomer Reported Bullying	NH1	0.803	0.927	0.679	0.925
	NH2	0.788			
	NH3	0.831			
	NH4	0.768			
	NH5	0.816			
	NH6	0.928			
Turnover Intention	TI1	0.853	0.840	0.638	0.837
	TI2	0.822			
	TI3	0.714			
Perceived Inclusive Practices	PIP1	0.830	0.918	0.615	0.917
	PIP2	0.787			
	PIP3	0.745			
	PIP4	0.816			
	PIP5	0.751			
	PIP6	0.761			
	PIP7	0.794			

**Table 4. Descriptive statistics, correlations, & discriminant validities**

	Mean	SD	Gender	Age	Education	Hometown	RA	LSE	SE	NRB	TI	PIP
Gender	1.39	0.49	-									
Age	2.14	0.94	-.028	-								
Education	1.53	0.62	.068	-.074	-							
Hometown	1.61	0.49	.039	-.048	-.093	-						
RA	3.45	1.06	.033	-.005	-.107*	.117*	0.833					
LSE	3.71	1.03	.017	-.059	-.151**	.062	.496**	0.767				
SE	3.60	0.86	.042	-.085	-.054	.127*	.501**	.453**	0.798			
NRB	3.84	0.88	.050	-.067	-.197**	.256**	.405**	.376**	.395**	0.824		
TI	3.70	0.91	-.003	-.022	-.195**	.213**	.372**	.356**	.359**	.359**	0.799	
PIP	3.58	0.93	-.095	.062	.006	-.068	-.086	.037	-.070	-.134**	-.074	0.784

Note:  $N=367$ . RA, role ambiguity; LSE, low self-efficacy; SE, social exclusion; NRB, newcomer reported workplace bullying; TI, turnover intention; PIP, perceived inclusive practices. AVE: average variance extracted. Square roots of AVEs are on the diagonal in parentheses. \*,  $p<0.05$ ; \*\*,  $p<0.01$

**Table 5. Results of main effects, and moderating effect**

	NRB			TI		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Gender=Female	.047	.026	.030	.027	.001	-.014
Age=20-25 years old	-.021	-.033	-.019	-.016	.034	.040
Age=31-35 years old	-.065	-.057	-.050	-.029	-.030	-.010
Age=36 years old or above	-.082	-.083	-.044	-.046	.031	.056
Education=Junior college	-.149**	-.132**	-.113*	-.132**	-.149**	-.103*
Education=Bachelor's degree or above	-.143**	-.107*	-.096*	-.128**	-.142**	-.098*
Hometown=Different from host city	.239***	.195***	.213***	.189***	.190***	.116*
RA		.351***				
LSE			.343***			
SE				.322***		
PIP		-.071	-.126**	-.098*		
RA*PIP		-.134**				
LSE*PIP			-.022			
SE*PIP				-.143**		
NRB						.306***
R Square	.106	.262	.232	.255	0.080	0.164
Adjusted R Square	.090	.243	.213	.236	0.064	0.147
F	6.705***	13.893***	11.863***	13.449***	4.907***	9.651***

Note: \*,  $p<0.05$ ; \*\*,  $p<0.01$ ; \*\*\*,  $p<0.001$  RA, role ambiguity; LSE, low self-efficacy; SE, social exclusion; NRB, newcomer reported bullying; TI, turnover intention; PIP, perceived inclusive policies

**Table 6. Results of mediation effects**

	Path	Effect	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Direct effect	RA-TI	0.235	0.042	0.151	0.318
	LSE-TI	0.229	0.043	0.144	0.314
	SE-TI	0.272	0.052	0.170	0.375
Indirect effect	RA-NRB-TI	0.087	0.025	0.041	0.138
	LSE-NRB-TI	0.088	0.025	0.044	0.141
	SE-NRB-TI	0.108	0.029	0.052	0.168

RA, role ambiguity; LSE, low self-efficacy; SE, social exclusion; NRB, newcomer reported bullying; TI, turnover intention.

**Table 7. Robustness test of direct effects and indirect effects**

Variable	TI	NRB	TI
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
RA	0.193**	0.213***	0.154**
LSE	0.178**	0.176**	0.145**
SE	0.181**	0.208***	0.143**
NRB			0.186***
R Square	0.200	0.234	0.227
Adjusted R Square	0.194	0.229	0.219
F	33.302***	40.737***	29.169***

Note: \*, p<0.05; \*\*, p<0.01; \*\*\*, p<0.001; RA, role ambiguity; LSE, low self-efficacy; SE, social exclusion; NRB, newcomer reported bullying; TI, turnover intention; PIP, perceived inclusive practices

**Table 8. Robustness test of moderating effects**

DV: NRB	B	se(HC3)	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.826	0.040	95.549	0.000	3.747	3.905
RA	0.322	0.041	7.924	0.000	0.242	0.401
PIP	-0.089	0.045	-1.951	0.052	-0.178	0.001
RA*PIP	-0.114	0.037	-3.093	0.002	-0.187	-0.042
constant	3.836	0.041	94.231	0.000	3.756	3.916
LSE	0.327	0.045	7.271	0.000	0.238	0.415
PIP	-0.143	0.049	-2.898	0.004	-0.240	-0.046
LSE*PIP	-0.016	0.048	-0.323	0.747	-0.111	0.080
constant	3.828	0.040	95.036	0.000	3.749	3.907
SE	0.367	0.062	5.890	0.000	0.244	0.489
PIP	-0.111	0.043	-2.603	0.010	-0.194	-0.027
SE*PIP	-0.134	0.052	-2.585	0.010	-0.236	-0.032

Note: RA, role ambiguity; LSE, low self-efficacy; SE, social exclusion; NRB, newcomer reported bullying; TI, turnover intention; PIP, perceived inclusive practices