

The Transformation of Diversity in Punk Rock Bands: Effects of Diversity (In)visibility and Task-relatedness on Band Outcomes

Karen A. Jehn
Leiden University

Lindred L. Greer
University of Amsterdam

Donald E. Conlon
Michigan State University

Motivation

- No consistent direct effects of diversity on team performance (Mannix & Neale, 2005; Stewart, 2006; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998)
- Need for a more complex model of diversity which incorporates a fuller range of diversity characteristics (Mannix & Neale, 2005)





Definitions

- *Team Diversity*: Differences in any characteristic which make a difference to team members (Williams & O'Reilly, 1998; Mannix & Neale, 2005)

- *Band Outcomes*:
 - *Creativity*: The production of ideas, products, or procedures that are original and potentially useful to the group (Amabile, 1988) and involves gathering information from multiple sources and recognizing unusual connections between elements of a situation (Oldham & Cummings, 1996)
 - *Popular success (Commercial Performance)*: Number of albums in top 1001 albums of all time
 - *Productivity*: Number of albums made

Punk Rock Bands

- Similar to string quartets, as studied in classic work by Murnighan & Conlon (1991)
 - Perform reciprocally interdependent tasks
 - Share a common goal of producing coordinated sound
 - Characterized as self-managing, autonomous work teams with no formal leader
- Different from string quartets:
 - More demographically diverse
 - Different performance outcomes (creativity + commercial performance)
 - Write their own music, rather than playing classics
 - Unique creative aspect of punk rock bands!

Theoretical Background

- Effects of diversity on team performance and creativity:
 - *Value-in-diversity perspective (information processing perspective)*: diversity brings with it different perspectives and ways of thinking that may allow for more creative solutions
 - *Negative perspective (similarity-attraction and social categorization perspective)*: diversity facilitates similarity-attraction (Byrne, 1971) and social categorization processes (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) which can lead to biases, discrimination, and conflict between different demographic groups

Theoretical Background

- Type of diversity (visible or invisible) may determine whether diversity is good or bad (Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; Pelled, 1996)
- Covariance of other forms of diversity along with a certain form of diversity may affect whether diversity is good or bad (Lau & Murnighan, 1998)
- Time may also be an important determinant of the effects of diversity (Harrison et al., 1998, 2002)

Introducing Lifestyle Diversity

Surface Level (*Visible*) Diversity

Social Category

- gender
- race
- age,
- etc.

Deep Level (*Invisible*) Diversity

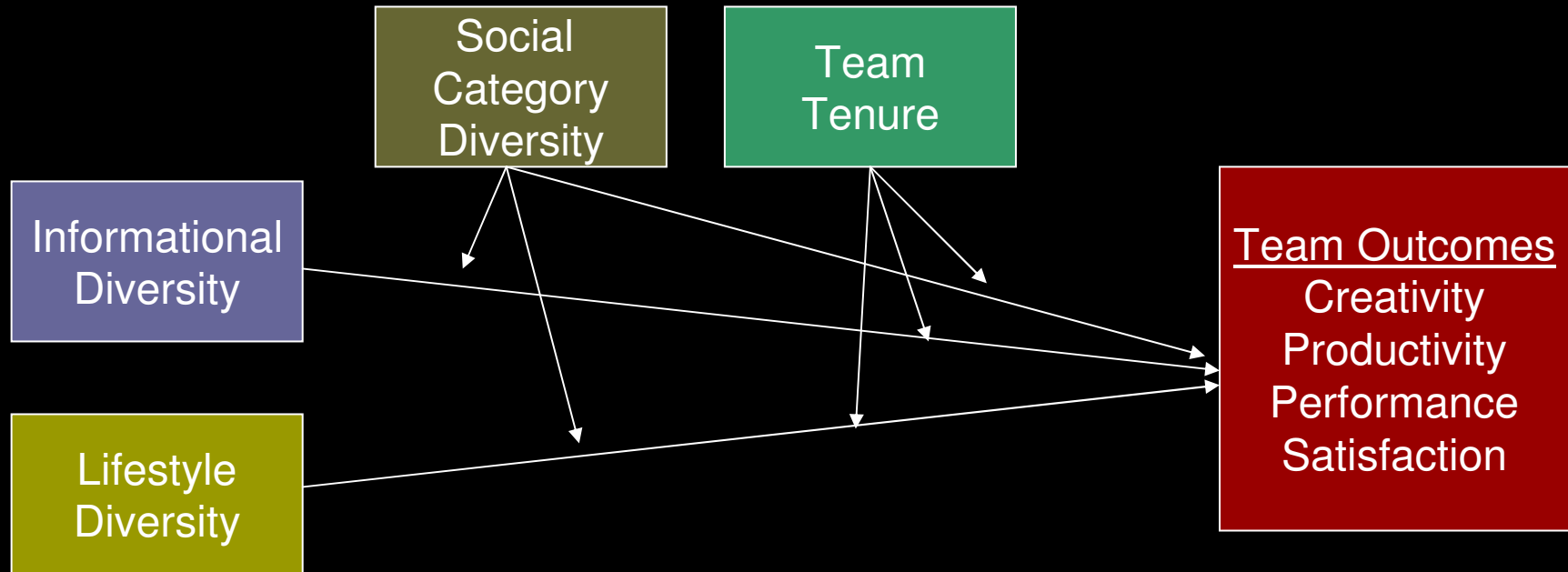
Functional

- education
- function
- work background
- etc.

Lifestyle

- marital status
- children
- addictions
- religion, etc.

Theoretical Model



Method

- Archival data study of the 84 punk and new wave rock bands represented in *The History of Rock and Roll* (Kocandrle, 1988)
- Final sample included 60 bands for which we had complete demographic and outcome data
 - Need to examine other venues of organizing that might provide insights missed in traditional organizational studies and examine real, diverse people (Bell & Berry, 2007; Heath & Sitkin, 2001; Weick, 1999)
 - Allows us to examine especially understudied diversity characteristics, such as sexual orientation or substance abuse, which are off-limits in organizations due to protected class law, but may have great influence on workgroups (Jackson, Joshi, & Erhardt, 2003)

Method – Data Collection

- Five student assistants (two assistants working per each band) obtained demographic and outcome data from sources such as:
 - Old issues of *Rolling Stone*, *Billboard* and other music-related magazines and books
 - Visiting fan websites and chatrooms devoted to particular bands
 - Reading other media sites that covered music of this genre (e.g., websites for MTV and VH1)
 - Viewing television documentaries that highlighted particular bands in our sample (e.g., VH1's "Behind the Music")

- Coding information:
 - Each 'fact' (such as the substance abuse of a particular member) had to be verified by both coders from at least two independent sources

Method – Measures (1/2)

- Demographic characteristics:
 - Social Category: gender and age
 - Informational: band role (writes lyrics and music) and educational level
 - Lifestyle: Substance abuse, sexual orientation, marital status

- Example coding:
 - Substance abuse:
0=None 2=ALCOHOL 3=CIGARETTES 4=POT
5=COCAINE/HEROI/ET AL. 6=OTHER

- **Band tenure**: number of years the band is together

Method – Measures (2/2)

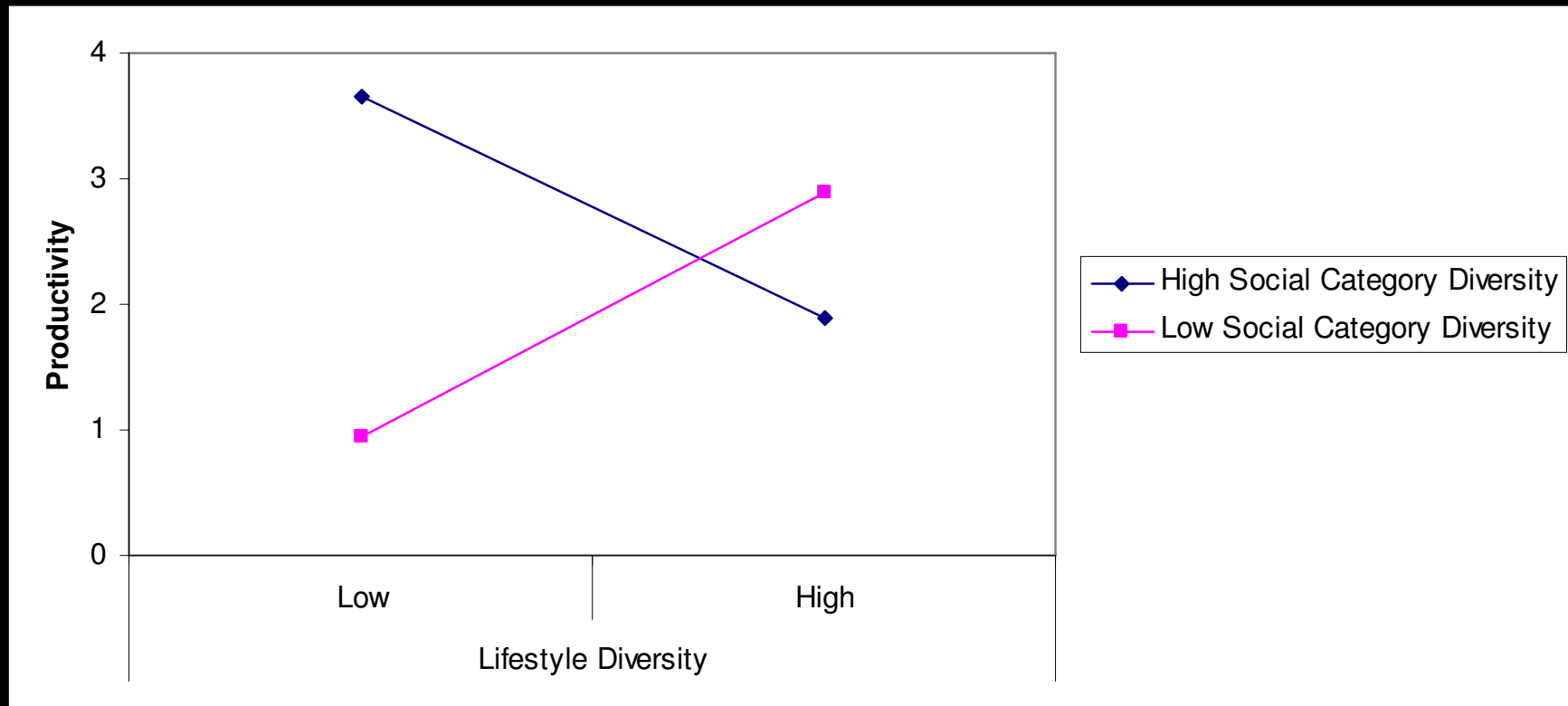
Band outcomes:

- **Productivity**: Total number of albums produced
- **Performance**: The number of albums listed in *1001 Top Albums* (Dimery, 2005)
- **Creativity**: Critical reviews of the albums
 - Qualitative reviews in Trouser Press transformed into a numerical score,
 - Each album review was photocopied and anonymized; then two coders with specific expertise in music of this era read each review and rate it using the 1-5 scale used by Rolling Stone, similar to the procedure used by Murnighan and Conlon (1991)

Results

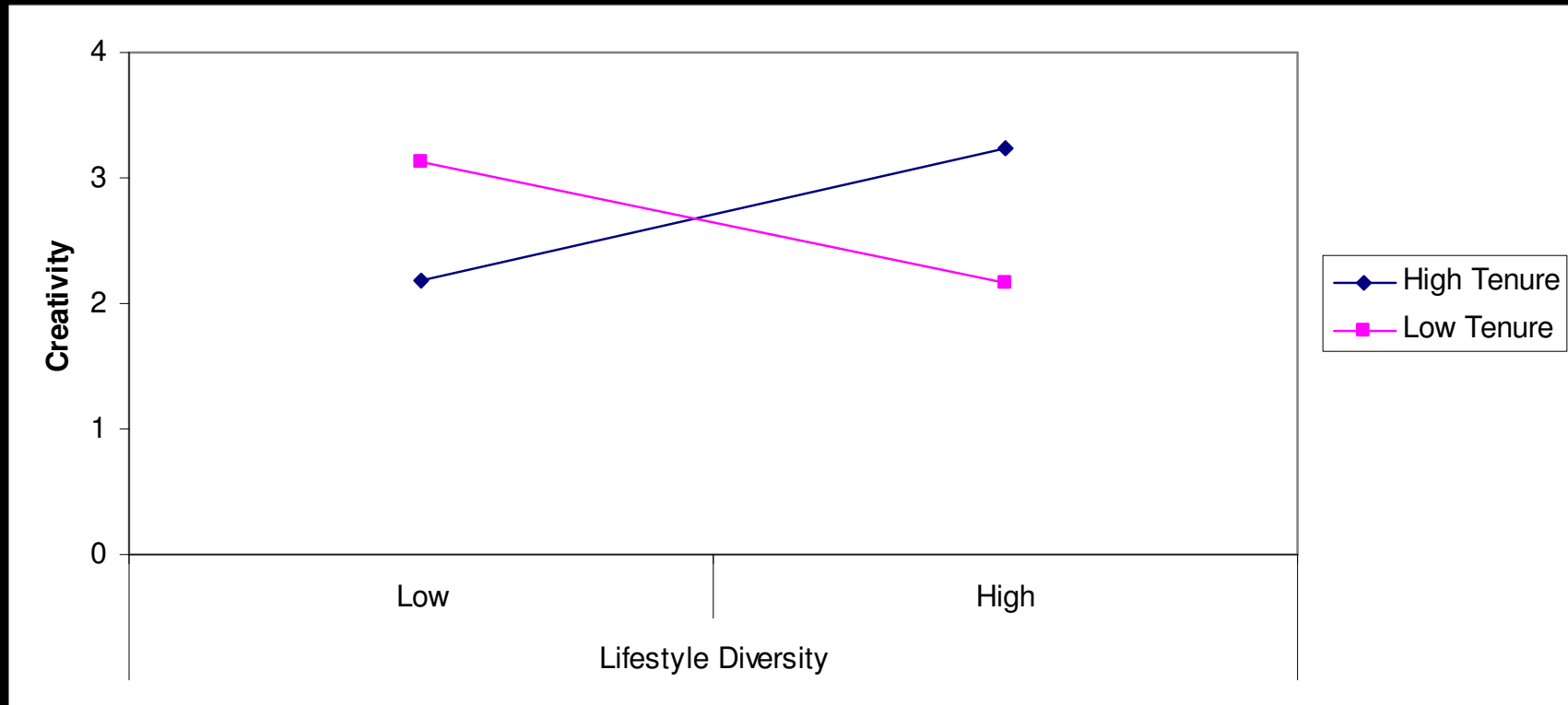
- Informational and lifestyle diversity (marginally) positive for creativity and performance
- Significant interactions with tenure and social category diversity:
 - Both less positive for creativity, performance, and productivity when social category diversity is also present in the band
 - Both more positive when time is taken into account – the longer the teams had been together, the better informational and lifestyle diversity were

Results



*Same pattern for creativity and performance; Also for interaction with Informational and social category on all three outcomes.

Results



*Same pattern for productivity and performance; Also for interaction with Informational and tenure on all three outcomes.

Discussion and Conclusions

- Lifestyle diversity new and interesting form of diversity to examine in teams
- Interacting effects of different types of diversity may help explain contradictory findings on effects of diversity
- Time facilitates the effective usage of diversity
- Future research needed on more traditional samples
- Currently analyzing data at album level of analysis

- Thank you for your attention!

- Questions?

- Contact Information:

Lindred Greer

L.L.Greer@uva.nl