

GENDER ALLYSHIP IN ORGANIZATIONS

by

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## ABSTRACT

Allyship behaviors, such as the use of one's pronouns in emails or beginning introductions with pronoun sharing, are becoming more common practices in organizations. However, there is little consensus on the best way to implement these types of ally behaviors in organizations to effectively create inclusive workplaces. Additionally, it is possible that some of the ways people and organizations are implementing ally behaviors and policies are inadvertently creating less gender inclusive spaces. In the current work we examine how subtle changes in the implementation of gender inclusive ally behaviors impact how transgender, gender non-conforming, and cisgender people feel about how inclusive a given manager, co-worker, or work environment is. First, we conducted interviews and open-ended response surveys; we find evidence that many transgender and gender non-conforming people want the use of pronouns to become more common, but that it should always be optional to not force people to out themselves in spaces they do not feel safe to do so or in spaces they do not want their gender to become salient in. Building off this qualitative data, in two quantitative experiments we find additional evidence that people view optional disclosure policies are more inclusive compared to policies where they are highly encouraged to share, and this perception of inclusion is mediated by feelings of pressure to disclose one's pronouns at work. These findings provide evidence that subtle changes in how pronouns are asked for and implemented in organizations can lead to differences in how inclusive a manager and the work environment are viewed. The current work reinforces the idea that using pronouns does create more gender inclusion, as found in previous work, however, it is important to pay attention to the specific way in which people and organizations implement the use of pronouns and other ally behaviors, as the nuance does matter.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Claire Elizabeth Sandman earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychological Sciences and Cognitive Sciences from Rice University in 2019, graduating with honors. In the Fall of 2019 Claire began the MS/Ph.D program in the Organizational Behavior department of the ILR School at Cornell University. Her research focuses on allyship behavior and how organizations can create more inclusive workplaces. She is also interested in social influence, specifically how peoples' social identities intersect with strategies of influence to understand when and for whom certain strategies are effective.

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## Organizational allyship: Beyond asking employees to share pronouns

### Introduction

Over the past few years as organizations have worked to foster diversity, equity, and inclusion at work, the implementation of pronoun policies has become more common as a signal of allyship from the organization. Many organizations such as Goldman and Sachs, Columbia Sportswear, and major US Law firms are creating policies addressing how employees can or should share their pronouns at work (Chen, 2021; Sherman, 2020). Most companies are not outright mandating that employees share their pronouns, but organizations vary widely in specifically how these policies address the expectations and norms surrounding pronouns at work. For example, Columbia Sportswear has offered employees at retail stores the option of adding their pronouns to their name tags if they would like to do so, while other companies have been more direct, asking all employees to add their pronouns to their email signatures (Chen, 2021; Galanes, 2021; Sherman 2020). While these later companies are not outright mandating that employees share their pronouns, some employees have pointed out that “an employer’s direct request means: ‘Do it – or else!’” (Galanes, 2021) and other professionals have cited feeling social pressure to conform to such policies as they see other employees sharing their pronouns (Chen, 2021). Furthermore, transgender and gender non-conforming (TGNC) <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Transgender and gender nonconforming (TGNC) people are people who have a gender identity that is not fully aligned with their sex assigned at birth. ‘TGNC’ is intended to be as broadly inclusive as possible and is based on recommendations from the American Psychological Association (2015).

workers have had mixed feelings about the policies; many employees have reacted with gratitude to employers for making the sharing of pronouns more commonplace at work, saying these policies foster feelings of inclusion, while others are more apprehensive. For example, the CEO of Bradley & Parker, Wynne Nowland, said in an interview with the Wall Street Journal “...these symbolic gestures make me nervous. Are we putting pronouns in our email signatures but not really having inclusive practices where it counts?” and she went further to emphasize the importance of focusing on equitable hiring and promotion practices for transgender and nonbinary employees for efforts, like pronoun policies, to have any real impact (Chen, 2021). Others have gone further to suggest that mandatory pronouns sharing could also hurt some cisgender (cis)<sup>2</sup> individuals by increasing gender salience at work (Williams, 2021), though there is no empirical work to date showing this.

With the wide range of pronoun policies in organizations and the range of reactions to these policies, it remains unclear exactly what type of policies organizations should have to implement the use of pronouns; should organizations mandate that all employees share their pronouns? Should employers encourage it but leave the choice to employees? Should employers not say or do anything at all but allow employees to use their pronouns if they would like to? There is no empirical evidence to date to provide satisfying answers to these questions, and yet companies are implementing policies related to the use of pronouns without empirical support or a complete understanding of the impact these policies have on employees. Thus, the current work examines specifically *how* organizations should implement the use of pronouns to effectively create gender inclusive spaces and the impact of these policies on transgender and gender non-conforming people.

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<sup>2</sup> Cisgender describes a person whose gender identity is aligned with the sex they were assigned at birth; a person who is not TGNC (American Psychological Association, 2015).



## **Allyship in Organizations**

Allies are typically defined as people with non-minority identities who aim to end the oppression faced by minority group members through a variety of things such as education and advocacy (Ashburn-Nardo, 2018; Sabat et al., 2013; Salter & Migliaccio, 2019; Washington & Evans, 1991). Allyship has been broadly understood to take many forms; supportive behaviors like displaying stickers supporting certain minority groups (Evans, 2002) to advocacy behaviors like confronting prejudice (Czopp et al., 2006) or fighting for the rights of marginalized groups (Fingerhut, 2011; DeTurk, 2011; Washington & Evans, 1991) are all categorized as allyship in the current literature (Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Ji, 2007; Sabat et al., 2013; Sabat et al., 2014). One key piece of allyship across many domains is education; it is generally argued that allies must learn about the prejudice and discrimination faced by marginalized groups as well as their own privileges and then teach others for real change to be accomplished (DeTurk, 2011; Rostosky et al., 2015; Salter & Migliaccio, 2019). Within the allyship literature, a desired outcome is for people from marginalized groups to have high feelings of inclusion, typically conceptualized as a sense of belonging and comfort in expressing their authentic selves (Shore et al., 2011; Jansen et al., 2014; Warren et al., 2022).

Looking within the workplace, recent work has shown that employees acting as allies for their coworkers can help foster inclusive “micro-climates” in institutions (Warren et al., 2019; Warren et al., 2022). Further, evidence from the LGBTQ literature suggests that allies can create a culture of care within an organization, which, when coupled with organizational-supportive policies (i.e. nondiscrimination policies and disciplinary measures for discriminatory acts), have many positive outcomes for minorities within the organization (Griffith & Hebl, 2002; Salter & Migliaccio, 2019).

While the literature to date has focused largely on allyship as the actions of individual allies both in and out of the workplace, Salter and Migliaccio (2019) argue that organizations can also act as allies by supporting minority employees, developing and promoting allyship programs and education, and creating a "culture of allyship" at the organization. The goal of organizations engaging in allyship interventions is to both reduce the negative bias that employees may hold and increase feelings of inclusion and positive job experience for people with marginalized identities, ultimately leading to more job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Martinez et al., 2017; Warren et al., 2022). The current work examines one way that organizations are currently promoting allyship within their workplace; the implementation of policies about sharing one's pronouns to create more gender inclusive work environments.

### **TGNC identity disclosure at work**

A national survey of transgender people in the US found that nearly half of transgender people (49%) said that none of their supervisors knew that they were transgender, and 42% of respondents said that none of their coworkers knew they were transgender (James et al., 2016). Other surveys have found that most transgender employees have tried to hide their gender transitions or even delayed their transitions to avoid discrimination at work (Grant et al., 2011). Decisions to disclose one's identity at work involve a variety of factors including the presence of supportive coworkers, the existence of protective legislation, and the expectation of discriminatory backlash (Ragins & Cornell, 2001). Importantly though, both qualitative and quantitative research has found evidence that hiding one's gender identity at work is associated with lower job satisfaction, while being in a more supportive workplace and disclosing one's gender identity at work is associated with greater job satisfaction for TGNC individuals (Brewster et al., 2012; Budge et al., 2010).

TGNC people who disclose their gender identity at work often face discrimination and hostility. Many TGNC workers have reported being intentionally misgendered, being outed by coworkers without their consent, being denied access to restrooms, and even being physically threatened or emotionally abused (Brewster et al., 2014; Budge et al., 2010). The discrimination faced by TGNC people at work has been associated with increased stress, anxiety, and depression for TGNC workers (Budge et al., 2010). Further, 90% of TGNC respondents in a national sample reported being harassed or mistreated at work (Grant et al., 2011), while 27% of TGNC people in another national sample reported not being hired, being denied a promotion, or being fired during the past year because of their gender identity (James et al., 2016).

Despite the discrimination faced by TGNC individuals, disclosing one's gender identity at work is related to higher job satisfaction, less job anxiety, and more organizational commitment (Brewster et al., 2012; Brewster et al., 2014; Law et al., 2011). Related work examining sexual orientation has found that people who remain closeted at work end up using extensive cognitive resources to cover up their identity, leading to lower mental and physical health, and lower overall life satisfaction (Griffith & Hebl; 2002) while being out at work has been related to higher organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and support of management (Day & Schoenrade, 1997). There is also evidence that the extent to which a person has transitioned is related to greater feelings of organizational fit, lower perceptions of discrimination, and higher job satisfaction (Martinez et al., 2017).

Interviews with LGBT employees revealed that one of the things minority group members are looking for from allies at work is signals of inclusion and guarantees of physical and emotional safety at work (Brooks & Edwards, 2009; Salter & Miglaccio, 2019). Given this and the beneficial outcomes associated with employees being their authentic selves at work,

organizations should be motivated to create inclusive workplaces that are safe for employees to disclose their stigmatized identities (Griffith & Hebl, 2002; Law et al., 2011; Martinez et al. 2017). Some research has found that a key factor in coming out at work being a positive experience is the existence of legal protections and official organizational policies that ensure TGNC employees who come out and/or disclose their intentions to transition genders are not discriminated against (Brewster et al., 2014; Button, 2001; Tebbe et al., 2019). Other work has found that LGBT supportive policies in organizations are associated with employees being more likely to come out at work (Rostosky & Riggle, 2002) and can lead to a decrease in discrimination and an increase in LGBT employee's well-being (Lloren & Parini, 2017). As such, one thing organizations should focus on in parallel to rolling out policies about sharing pronouns is creating enforceable anti-discrimination policies and educational programs for employees. This would follow recent work by Onyeader and colleagues (2021), which argues that organizations must pair diversity initiatives with the implementation of accountability structures and trainings to educate employees.

### ***Sharing Pronouns is a signal of inclusivity***

Using the correct names and pronouns for people is a major way to help TGNC individuals feel welcome and is often cited as a good signal for TGNC people that they are in an inclusive and affirming space (Brown et al, 2020; Donald & Ehrenfeld, 2015). Using correct pronouns has also been linked to better mental health outcomes for transgender and gender non-conforming people (Olson et al., 2016) while misgendering has been linked to several negative outcomes (Yarbrough, 2019). Some work has suggested that organizations should encourage everyone to share their pronouns at school or work to support transgender and gender non-conforming employees and customers (Boyland et al., 2018; Johnson et al., 2021). Additionally,

creating salient cues of inclusion and safety plays a crucial role in reducing the fear related to disclosing stigmatized identities at work (Ragins et al., 2007) and recent work found that the presence of pronouns as part of employee biographies on company websites serves as an identity safety cue for LGBTQ+ people, and as a result, LGBTQ+ people were more likely to have positive attitudes about the organization (Johnson et al., 2021).

Given this work, it is understandable that organizations, as part of their diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, would implement policies about pronoun sharing and disclosure at work as a signal of inclusivity for TGNC employees and potential employees. However, there is no empirical evidence to date helping organizations decide specifically *how* pronoun sharing should be introduced and integrated into the workplace. Additionally, while there is reason to believe that making the sharing of pronouns by both cis and TGNC people at work could help foster more inclusive environments (Johnson et al., 2021), it remains unclear if the implementation of pronoun policies alone is sufficient to create truly inclusive environments and decrease the discrimination faced by TGNC employees at work. In fact, because a key component of allyship is education (Salter & Migliaccio, 2019) it is likely that the implementation of pronoun policies alone is insufficient in reaching the goal of gender inclusion if not implemented alongside educational programs and anti-discrimination policies (Brewster et al., 2014; Onyeader, 2021; Tebbe et al., 2019).

### **Compliance does not mean Inclusion**

Some have voiced concern over organizations implementing mandatory pronoun sharing policies, citing the pressure TGNC individuals may feel to either come out when they would prefer not to, or misgender themselves to avoid coming out at work (Williams, 2021). Many companies that are implementing pronoun policies have attempted to overcome this concern by

encouraging (but not requiring) employees to share their pronouns, or by asking (but not mandating) employees to share their pronouns (Chen, 2021; Galanes, 2021; Sherman 2020).

While good intentioned, organizations may be failing to recognize the influence they have over their employees and falling into the underestimation-of-compliance bias (Bohns, 2016). In other words, these ‘pronouns encouraged’ policies fail to acknowledge what social psychologists have long recognized; people often feel that they cannot say no to requests, and, especially when an authoritative figure is involved, are more likely than not to comply (Bohns, 2021; Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004; Milgram, 1974). For example, Sommers and Bohns (2019) found that 97.1% of participants in a lab study complied with a researcher’s intrusive request to hand over their unlocked phone so that the researcher could ‘look at some things’. Critically, experimenters in the study did not force participants to comply, they simply asked participants if they could see the participant’s phone, and this was enough to garner almost total compliance. Further, participants in their study reported that they did not feel like they had much of a choice in whether they complied to the request from the researcher (Sommers & Bohns, 2019).

Given this, it is possible that organizational requests or encouragement to share pronouns will increase how many people do disclose their pronouns simply because employees do not feel they have a choice but to disclose without leading to a more inclusive environment or better outcomes for TGNC people, which are some of goals of allyship (Brooks & Edwards, 2009; Warren et al., 2022). Policies like this may lead TGNC people to feel they were coerced or that they did not consent to disclosing their identity at work (Creary et al., 2015; Warren et al., 2022), which likely would not increase feelings of inclusion compared to policies that offer the choice to disclosure and allow people to consent to revealing their identity. Importantly, the top-down implementation of diversity policies is sometimes met with backlash from dominant group

members (Warren et al., 2022), meaning it is possible that cis employees will also have a negative reaction to feeling coerced into sharing their pronouns, even if there is not a cost to disclosing their pronouns (compared to TGNC people potentially facing discrimination for their gender identity).

### **Current Research**

Pronoun sharing policies are gaining momentum in organizations and being implemented in a variety of ways. Thus, the current research aims to understand how organizations should implement these ally policies to best foster feelings of inclusion among employees. Specifically, we will examine the difference between encouraged (“You are highly encouraged to share your pronouns”; “please share your pronouns”) and optional (“You can share your pronouns if you would like to”) pronoun policies on people’s feelings of inclusivity. Because the presence of pronouns acts as an identity safety cue (Johnson et al., 2021), we predict:

H1: An organization having any pronoun disclosure policy will be viewed as more inclusive than an organization having no explicit pronoun policy.

It is likely that more people will chose to disclose their pronouns in situations where it seems like the required or normed thing to do; people will likely generally comply with a company policy encouraging the sharing of one’s pronouns. However, as previously discussed, many TGNC employees are still not out at work, and would prefer to remain not out at work to avoid discrimination (Grant et al., 2011; James et al., 2016) and both cis and TGNC employees may have negative reactions to feeling coerced or pressured into disclosing their pronouns. Given this, we believe organizations with pronoun disclosure policies that are clearly optional will lead

employees to feel that those policies are more inclusive as compared to policies that strongly encourage the use of pronouns by employees, because employees will feel less pressure to disclose their pronouns when the policy is clearly optional. Thus, we predict:

H2: People are more likely to share their pronouns under an ‘encouraged disclosure’ policy compared to an ‘optional disclosure’ policy.

H3: ‘Optional disclosure’ policies will be seen as more inclusive compared to ‘encouraged disclosure’ policies.

H4: ‘Encouraged disclosure’ policies will lead people to feel more pressure to share their pronouns.

H5: Feelings of pressure will mediate the relationship between pronoun policy and inclusion, such that people will view ‘encouraged disclosure’ policies as less inclusive because of an increased feeling of pressure to disclose.

In all our studies we collect data from both TGNC and cis people. Given that the current work is focused on understanding how to create better ally policies in organizations, we believe that the opinions of people who do not support the transgender and gender non-conforming community (i.e. do not consider themselves allies) would not be helpful responses in answering our research questions, and as such these responses were excluded from our data analyses in all studies.

## **Study 1**

The goal of Study 1 was to begin to understand broadly how people are thinking about the idea of pronouns being implemented in organizations. Specifically, we wanted to understand



lay beliefs about how pronouns should (or should not) be implemented in the workplace from both TGNC people and cis people who consider themselves allies.

## **Method**

### ***Participants***

Participants were recruited using snow-ball sampling techniques and through posting on online platforms such as Reddit and Twitter, which are often considered appropriate sampling methods for hard-to-reach populations (Browne, 2005). After one week, 81 participants had taken the survey; 31 responses were excluded because they did not complete the survey (left the open-ended questions blank) and 4 cisgender participants were excluded from the data for rating themselves below the mid-point when asked “Do you consider yourself an **ally** to the transgender and gender non-binary community?” (Answered a 1 or 2 on a 5-point scale). Of the 46 participants used for analysis ( $M_{age} = 26.18$ ), 20 identified as cisgender and 26 identified as transgender or gender non-conforming.

### ***Procedure***

Participants were told that the researchers were interested in understanding 1) the experiences of transgender and gender non-conforming people in the workplace and their opinions on how cisgender people can act as better allies and 2) the perspective from cisgender individuals who consider themselves allies. Participants first answered a series of demographic questions. We then asked participants the open-ended questions: 1) “**Why** do you believe that the inclusion of pronouns in communication should or should not be common practice in organizations?” and 2) “**How** do you believe organizations should implement the use of pronouns in workplace communication?”

### ***Data Analysis***

Data was coded using an inductive thematic analysis recommended by Braun & Clarke (2006). As a first step the principal investigator and two research assistants (RAs) familiarized themselves with the data by reading through responses and making notes of initial thoughts, creating a list of codes as a team. Then, two undergraduate research assistants independently coded 10% of the responses using the initial codes. After finishing, the two RAs and the principal investigator talked through the discrepancies, worked through all questions, and finalized the codebook. Finally, the two RAs again independently coded all responses; Interrater reliability was high, with intraclass correlations of .77 and .98 for questions 1 and 2 respectively. After the RAs finished coding, the principal investigator reviewed the data, reconciling any discrepancies between the coders for each data point and organized the codes into broader themes.

## **Results**

*“Why do you believe that the inclusion of pronouns in communication should or should not be common practice in organizations?”*

Responses were coded for reasons why pronouns should be used and why they should not be used, and coding was inclusive, such that many responses had multiple codes. There are many responses that mention both reasons for and against the use of pronouns in organizations; overall, 87% of the respondents mentioned at least one reason why organizations *should not* make the use of pronouns common practice, while 56.5% of respondents mentioned at least one reason why organizations *should* make it common practice. 23.7% of employees specifically said that employees should be able to choose if they want to share, with some of these respondents going further to specify that companies should not implement widespread pronoun sharing policies but should allow employees to share if they would like to do so. As shown in Table 1, the largest

concern for both cis and TGNC respondents is that transgender or gender non-conforming people who are not out at work, or who are still deciding what their gender identity is, would feel pressured or forced to either come out, or misgender themselves if pronouns became a commonplace expectation in organizations. On the other hand, many respondents, both cis and TGNC people, recognized the importance of making the sharing of pronouns more commonplace to increase understanding of gender diversity and inclusion for transgender and gender non-conforming people (see Table 1 for examples).

*Table 1. Why Organizations should (or should not) implement pronoun use at work and the percentage of cis and TGNC respondents who gave a reason under that theme.*

Theme	Percentage of cis participants	Percentage of TGNC participants	Examples
<b>Companies should not</b>			
<i>Forced outing/choice</i>	15%	46.2%	<p>“...The only aspect that is potentially difficult is <b>if a trans person is not out</b> at their workplace or for anyone who uses they/them pronouns because those are not the binary norm, and someone might consider it ‘too controversial for work’, as my employer has done for other similar topics.” (<i>Participant 3, TGNC participant</i>)</p> <p>“Stating one’s pronouns in the workplace helps de-stigmatize trans people needing to assert their pronouns. Thus, it should be encouraged, but not required. It should not be required because trans people who are not out and/or would feel unsafe being out at work <b>would then be forced to either misgender themselves or out themselves.</b>” (<i>Participant 7, TGNC participant</i>)</p>
<i>Safety risks</i>	10%	23.1%	<p>“I believe it shouldn't be encouraged because of <b>the safety risks for trans people/risks</b> for being forcibly outed/risks for termination or harassment based on pronouns” (<i>Participant 11, TGNC participant</i>)</p> <p>“I believe that it will help remove the stigma that trans people using pronouns currently has, although I understand that many trans individuals are closeted at work and <b>would be in more danger if their gender was revealed.</b>” (<i>Participant 49, Cis participant</i>)</p>
<i>Singles people out</i>	10%	15.4%	<p>“Should be common practice, but may make trans people feel <b>put on the spot/pressured?</b>” (<i>Participant 13, TGNC participant</i>)</p> <p>“Forces people to out themselves, <b>singles out</b> nonbinary and non-passing individuals” (<i>Participant 14, TGNC participant</i>)</p>
<b>Companies should</b>			

<i>Increases understanding &amp; acceptance</i>	25%	26.9%	<p>“Including pronouns should be commonplace because it allows people to <b>understand how to refer to each other instead of relying on stereotypes and assumptions...</b>” (Participant 3, TGNC participant)</p> <p>“I think it is very useful in helping create a space where transgender individuals can share their pronouns. Having the process of sharing pronouns, both from cis and trans people, will show a solidarity. While not a workplace, my college requires students and staff to state pronouns during introductions. This was very useful for me, as to properly respect each person. <b>It helped in other ways as well, such as a friend’s mother, who didn’t quite understand ‘they/them’ pronouns, now feels more comfortable saying them correctly after individuals shared they use those pronouns.</b> My only concern is with people who are questioning, sometimes it is hard to say exactly what pronouns you want. As someone who uses both she/her and they/them, during times of questioning I felt a bit off put on what answer to give.” (Participant 5, TGNC participant)</p>
<i>Creates a more inclusive environment</i>	20%	19.2%	<p>“It allows people who may not be comfortable correcting others to have their pronouns known and normalizes asking/using everyone’s pronouns without making it trans-specific or singling anyone out. However, it can make closeted trans or questioning people uncomfortable to have to choose.” (Participant 45, TGNC participant)</p> <p>“It <b>encourages an inclusive workplace</b> and shows transgender people that they can be open.” (Participant 26, Cis participant)</p>
<i>Minimizes misgendering</i>	10%	11.5%	<p>“<b>Using correct language is part of respectful and polite behavior.</b> It decreases amount of stress of employee or customer, helps with their well-being, and thus leads to better work performance and customer impression. So, it helps not only employees but also a company itself. <b>It also helps to avoid embarrassing mistakes, which often happen even with cisgender people, especially if they have gender-neutral name.</b>” (Participant 46, TGNC participant)</p>

*“**How** do you believe organizations should implement the use of pronouns in workplace communication?”*

There were four themes that emerged from the responses to how organizations should implement pronouns at work and each response was coded for only one of these themes. Importantly, 80.5% of participants overall (70% of cis and 88.4% of TGNC respondents) expressed desire for organizations to implement pronouns in some way, as opposed to taking no action. Many participants commented on whether the implementation of pronouns should be

optional, encouraged, or required, with most participants calling for the use of pronouns to be optional; 45.7% of respondents said that organizations should make the use of pronouns optional, without encouragement or strong norms created by the organization, while 13% of respondents specifically said pronoun use should be encouraged by the organization, and only 10.9% of respondents felt that the use of pronouns should be required for all employees. Note that even the respondents who seemed to suggest pronouns be required used language such as “all employees should” without specifically saying the organization mandate it (see Table 2 for an example). 10.9% of respondents did not mention companies implementing pronouns policies directly, but instead commented on how companies need to focus on education and creating inclusive environments instead of, or in addition to, implementing pronoun policies. Some of the responses (15.2%) said that organizations should not take any action, while a small number (4.3%) did not give answers that were understandable or appropriate (see Table 2 for examples of the main themes and a break down by gender).

*Table 2. How organizations should implement the use of pronouns, and the percentage of cis and TGNC respondents under each theme.*

Theme	Percentage of Cis participants	Percentage of TGNC participants	Examples
Optional	40%	50%	<p>“Don't make it mandatory or even strongly encouraged because transgender &amp; non-binary people may not want to out themselves but also not want to misgender themselves. Start from the inside - if some people start doing it, especially bosses, then others may follow” (<i>Participant 22, Cis participant</i>)</p> <p>“Cis people could include their pronouns to normalize it but make it clear that it's not required and it's ok not to include it” (<i>Participant 10, TGNC participant</i>)</p>
Encouraged	15%	11.5%	<p>“I think that people who are comfortable doing so should be encouraged to sign emails and introduce themselves with their pronouns. However, it should not be a requirement.” (<i>Participant 7, TGNC participant</i>)</p>

			“Recommend it to staff, lead by example - when the commissioner included his pronouns, many people followed suit in my organization” ( <i>Participant 28, Cis participant</i> )
Required	5%	15.4%	“I think everyone should add them to their email signature and introduce themselves with their pronouns at meetings” ( <i>Participant 3, TGNC participant</i> )
Education / Focus on other policies	10%	11.5%	<p>“Employees shouldn’t be forced to use pronouns in emails and communications. For me, a trans person who isn’t out, that would mean misgendering myself in every email I send. I don’t think the blanket mandating of pronouns in workplace communication actually protects or helps trans people all that much. For me, who uses they/them, I would be opening myself up to a lot of discrimination <b>if a pronoun mandate wasn’t also coupled with an ironclad anti-discrimination policy.</b>” (<i>Participant 41, TGNC participant</i>)</p> <p>“If [pronouns are] implemented <b>without general change in policies it can be really problematic and cause discrimination.</b> It should be implemented in a complex welcoming environment. So, in the first-place company <b>must hold anti discriminatory seminars, change its standards of service, seek for feedback</b> regarding how it’s doing - by employees, customers and LGBT organization.” (<i>Participant 46, TGNC participant</i>)</p>

## Discussion

Study 1 shows that the implementation of pronouns in organizations is much more complex than organizations and researchers alike originally thought. The findings from Study 1 suggest that organizations should not mandate that employees share their pronouns, which is not surprising, as most organizations are not implementing mandates anyway. Crucially, though, respondents in our study suggest that even strongly encouraging the use of pronouns, or creating a strong norm of using one’s pronouns, could make some employees feel pressured to come out or misgender themselves at work, providing initial support for hypotheses 3 and 4. Further, some

respondents suggest that organizations should focus on creating stronger anti-discrimination policies, educating employees on gender inclusion, and fostering a truly inclusive environment, before asking employees to begin using their pronouns at work in order for the implementation of pronouns to have a real effect on fostering gender inclusion, echoing some of the lay opinions of people in recent news articles (Chen, 2021) and some of the research on effective allyship (Brewster et al., 2014; Onyeader, 2021; Salter & Migliaccio, 2019; Tebbe et al., 2019).

## **Study 2**

Study 1 provided unsurprising evidence that organizations should caution away from mandating that employees share their pronouns at work, but study 1 also provided evidence that organizations may want to be careful about the way they encourage or build norms around the use of pronouns. In study 2 we aimed to explore this nuance in how organizations implement the use of pronoun policies and how that affects peoples' reactions to the inclusivity of the policy. Based on the results of study 1, we expected a manager making it clear that the use of pronouns is optional to be seen as more inclusive compared to a manager asking people to "please share your pronouns" (directly encouraging) or even a manager sharing their own pronouns (indirectly encouraging) (H3).

### **Method**

Because both cis and TGNC respondents in Study 1 generally seemed to have similar responses to how organizations should implement the use of pronouns, we did not have a priori reasons to believe there would be differences between cis and TGNC participants, however we did want to confirm this in Study 2. Thus, Study 2 used a mixed design; there were two between

subject groups (cis people and TGNC people) and all participants were exposed to and interacted with all stimuli (within subjects).

### *Participants*

202 participants were recruited to participate via Prolific Academic. To get a large enough sample of transgender and gender non-conforming people, we used prescreening options on Prolific and aimed for half of our participants to be cisgender people and half to be people who identified as either transgender, non-binary, or gender non-conforming. Ten participants were excluded for either not disclosing their gender or choosing both cisgender and transgender, leaving 192 participants. In line with our theorizing and protocol from study 1, 17 cisgender participants were excluded from data analysis for rating themselves below the mid-point when asked “Do you consider yourself an **ally** to the transgender and gender non-binary community?” (Answered a 1 or 2 on a 5-point scale) leaving a total of 87 cisgender participants (60 women, 27 men) in the analysis. There were 88 TGNC participants (49 non-binary, 14 men, 4 women, 3 questioning/unsure, 3 genderqueer, 3 agender, and 12 some combination of these (for example, there were some participants who selected both genderqueer and gender non-binary)). Thus, there was a total of 175 participants included in the analysis ( $M_{age} = 25.13$ ,  $SD_{age} = 6.48$ ).

### *Procedure*

All participants read the following scenario:

Imagine that you are joining a new organization that says they value diversity, equity, and inclusion. The company has a policy encouraging pronoun use among employees. You will see 4 scenarios of different ways your new manager, Kate (she/her), could start the conversation at your first meeting. For each one please rate how inclusive you feel it is.



Then, participants saw each scenario in a randomized order and answered the questions about each one. Each scenario began with: “Imagine the manager starts the meeting this way” followed by the scenario in Table 3.

*Table 3. Conditions of Pronoun Disclosure in Study 2.*

Type of Disclosure	Scenario
Directly Encouraged Disclosure	<p>"Alright, since there are a few new people here, let's start with introductions.  <b>Please say your name, pronouns, and department.</b>            To begin, my name is Kate, my pronouns are she/her, and I manage the marketing department."</p>
Indirectly Encouraged Disclosure	<p>"Alright, since there are a few new people here, let's start with introductions.            To begin, <b>my name is Kate, my pronouns are she/her</b>, and I manage the marketing department."</p>
Optional Disclosure	<p>"Alright, since there are a few new people here, let's start with introductions.  <b>Please say your name, pronouns if you would like to, and department.</b>            To begin, my name is Kate, my pronouns are she/her, and I manage the marketing department."</p>
No Disclosure	<p>"Alright, since there are a few new people here, let's start with introductions.            To begin, my name is Kate, and I manage the marketing department."</p>

### *Measures*

**Inclusivity.** A 3-item scale was used for inclusion. For each of the scenarios, participants were asked “how inclusive do you feel the action of this leader is?”, “how inclusive do you feel the environment of this meeting is?”, and “how much do you feel this organization values gender inclusion?” (1= not at all, 5 = a great deal). The items were averaged together to get an overall measure of inclusivity ( $\alpha = .891$ ).

## Results

A One-way repeated measures ANOVA revealed a significant effect of disclosure type on inclusivity,  $F(3, 174) = 112.95, p < .001$ . See Appendix A for the full 2x4 mixed ANOVA results.

Paired samples T-Tests were conducted to compare how inclusive participants felt the different types of pronoun disclosure were. First, optional disclosure ( $M = 4.05, SD = .90$ ) of pronouns was seen as significantly more inclusive compared to directly encouraged disclosure ( $M = 3.69, SD = .96$ ) and indirectly encouraged disclosure ( $M = 3.62, SD = 1.02$ ),  $t(174) = 4.90, p < .001, d = .37$ ;  $t(174) = 5.88, p < .001, d = .45$ , respectively. Additionally, there was no difference in how inclusive participants rated directly and indirectly encouraged disclosure,  $t(174) = 1.03, p = .31, d = .08$ . Lastly, no disclosure ( $M = 2.38, SD = 1.14$ ) was seen as significantly less inclusive when compared to directly encouraged disclosure  $t(174) = 10.90, p < .001, d = .82$ , indirectly encouraged disclosure  $t(174) = 10.59, p < .001, d = .80$ , and optional disclosure  $t(174) = 14.99, p < .001, d = 1.13$ . We then conducted paired sample T-tests separately for cis and TGNC participants, both of which follow the same pattern as the collapsed findings (see Appendix B for details).

## Discussion

Study 2 shows that people found the optional disclosure condition to be the most inclusive way to introduce pronouns in a meeting, providing support for hypothesis 3. It is not too surprising that optional disclosure is seen as more inclusive than directly encouraged disclosure; while a manager stating “please state your pronouns” is technically still a request (rather than a requirement), it may come off as more of a directive than a request. Interestingly, study 2 shows that even encouraging the use of pronouns through the manager modeling

disclosure (indirectly encouraging disclosure), is seen as equally as (un)inclusive as when the manager directly encourages that employees state their pronouns. Study 2 provides evidence that a key in increasing the perceived inclusivity of a policy seems to be the manager making it clear that sharing one's pronouns is optional (the manager saying, "state your pronouns if you would like to" and then sharing her own), rather than encouraging that people share their pronouns, either directly or indirectly. Participants were very responsive to subtle differences in how the manager introduced the sharing of pronouns, suggesting that organizations should also pay careful attention to the specific ways they implement pronoun policies and train managers, as the nuance does matter. Critically, participants acknowledged that the use of pronouns in any form (optional, directly encouraged, indirectly encouraged) is more inclusive than not explicitly offering employees any opportunity to disclose their pronouns, providing support for hypothesis 1. These findings provide support for recent work suggesting that the use of pronouns in organizations acts as an identity safety cue (Johnson et al., 2021) and that organizations should be considering pronoun policies to increase perceptions of gender inclusion, while also showing that the nuance in the way pronoun policies are introduced matters for how inclusive people find the organization.

### **Study 3**

Study 3 aims to extend the findings of Studies 1 and 2 by replicating the effect of disclosure type on inclusivity and exploring how pronoun policies affect likelihood to disclose and feelings of pressure to disclose, one of the main concerns cited in Study 1.

Because Study 2 already provided substantial evidence that using pronouns in any way is more inclusive than organizations not using pronouns at all, in Study 3 we compare only two types of organizational policies (encouraged pronoun use and optional pronoun use).

## **Method**

Study 3 is a between-subjects experiment with two conditions: optional vs encouraged pronoun organizational policy. Study 3 was preregistered ([https://aspredicted.org/N49\\_9GP](https://aspredicted.org/N49_9GP)).

### ***Participants***

Based on a pilot study with 50 participants we determined we would need 506 participants to detect an effect on inclusivity with 80% power. Expecting some responses to be excluded, we oversampled and aimed for 600 participants; 601 participants were recruited from Prolific Academic. To get a large enough sample of transgender and gender non-binary people, we used prescreening options on Prolific and aimed to recruit half of our sample to be cisgender people and half to be people who identified as either transgender, non-binary, or gender non-conforming. In line with our preregistration, we excluded 27 participants who failed an attention check, 43 additional cisgender participants who rated themselves below the midpoint on allyship, and 5 more for not clearly identifying their gender. The analysis included 526 participants ( $M_{age} = 29.16$ ,  $SD_{age} = 9.75$ ). 241 participants identified as cisgender (173 women, 66 men, 2 questioning) and 285 participants identified as TGNC (81 non-binary, 44 men, 30 women, 15 gender fluid, 12 agender, 10 gender queer, 5 questioning, and 88 a combination of the above (for example, some participants selected both agender and non-binary)).

### ***Procedure***

Participants were told that we were interested in understanding what types of policies and norms people feel create a more gender inclusive work environment and consented to participate.

Participants were randomly assigned to either the encouraged or optional policy condition. All participants were told to imagine they started a new job at an organization that says they value diversity, equity, and inclusion. Then participants in the encouraged policy condition were told “The organization has a policy highly encouraging employees to use their pronouns on email signatures, on name tags, on zoom, and during introductions with others” while participants in the optional policy condition were told “The organization has a policy stating that employees can choose if they would like to use their pronouns on email signatures, on name tags, on zoom, and during introductions with others”. Then, participants were told that as they were joining their first team meeting on Zoom their manager reminded them either that they are highly encouraged to share their pronouns (encouraged policy condition), or they can share their pronouns if they would like to (optional policy condition). All participants were then asked to answer questions about how likely they were to share, how pressured they felt, and how inclusive it was, followed by demographic questions.

### ***Measures***

***Sharing.*** Participants were asked “how likely are you to share your pronouns in this meeting?” on a 5-point scale (1= *not at all likely to share*, 5= *extremely likely to share*).

***Pressure.*** Participants were asked “how pressured did you feel to share your pronouns?” on a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all pressured*, 5= *extremely pressured*).

***Inclusivity.*** Like in Study 2, a 3-item inclusivity scale was used. Participants were asked “how inclusive do you feel the action of this manager is?”, “how inclusive do you feel the environment of this meeting is?”, and “how much do you feel this organization values gender inclusion?” All items were asked on a 5-point scale (1= *not at all inclusive*, 5= *extremely inclusive*). The items were averaged together to get an overall measure of inclusivity ( $\alpha = .909$ ).

## **Results**

In line with our preregistration, below are the one-way ANOVAs for condition on each of the DVs. See Appendix C for a 2(gender) x 2(condition) analysis.

### ***Sharing***

As predicted, a one-way ANOVA revealed a significant difference in likelihood to share based on type of policy,  $F(1, 524) = 15.81, p < .001, \eta^2 = .03$ . Specifically, when participants were told they were highly encouraged to use their pronouns ( $M=4.22, SD = 1.20$ ) they were more likely to share their pronouns compared to people who were told they could share their pronouns if they would like to ( $M=3.76, SD = 1.45$ ). Results hold when looking at cis and TGNC participants separately (see Appendix D).

### ***Pressure***

A one-way ANOVA also showed a significant difference in how pressured people felt to share their pronouns based on type of policy,  $F(1, 524) = 48.48, p < .001, \eta^2 = .09$ . Participants felt significantly more pressured to disclose their pronouns in the encouraged policy condition ( $M=2.73, SD = 1.30$ ) compared to the optional policy condition ( $M=1.99, SD = 1.12$ ). The results hold when looking at cis and TGNC participants separately (see Appendix D).

### ***Inclusivity***

A one-way ANOVA revealed that people in the encouraged policy condition ( $M=4.02, SD = .90$ ) viewed the policy as significantly less inclusive compared to people in the optional condition ( $M=4.18, SD = .76$ ),  $F(1, 524) = 5.23, p = .023, \eta^2 = .01$ . The direction of this effect is consistent when looking at cis and TGNC participants individually, though there is not a significant difference for TGNC participants (see Appendix D).

### ***Mediation***

We then tested for mediation (see Table 4 for the regression coefficients)<sup>3</sup>. Using the bootstrapping method with 10,000 iterations (Hayes, 2017), we found that pressure ( $a = 0.74$ , 95% CI = [0.53, 0.95]) mediated the relationship between condition and inclusivity ( $ab = -0.12$ , 95% CI = [-0.22, -0.12]). Thus, when pronouns were highly encouraged, rather than optional, participants felt it was less inclusive, and this is explained by increased feelings of pressure to share one's pronouns.

*Table 4. Regression Coefficients for Models Predicting Inclusivity in Study 3*

	<i>b</i> [95% CI]	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i> [95% CI]	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	4.18 [4.08, 4.29]	79.86	.000	4.51 [4.36, 4.66]	58.6	.000
Optional vs Encouraged	-.17 [-.31, -.02]	-2.29	.02	-.04 [-0.19, 0.10]	-0.59	.56
Pressure				-.17 [-.22, -.12]	-5.71	.000

*Notes.*  $N = 525$ .

## Discussion

Study 3 provides evidence that, unsurprisingly, people are more likely to share their pronouns in a meeting when they are told it is strongly encouraged compared to when they are told they can share if they would like to, providing support for hypothesis 2. Importantly though, participants feel more pressured to share (hypothesis 4), but do not feel that it is a more inclusive workplace (hypothesis 3), when they are strongly encouraged compared to when it is optional. Further, the relationship between condition and inclusivity is explained by feelings of pressure (hypothesis 5); people assessing the encouraged pronouns policy felt the organization was less inclusive, and this is explained by an increase in feelings of pressure to share.

<sup>3</sup> This mediation was not preregistered; While writing up the front end of the paper, the authors realized this mediation would make theoretical sense. We wrote out our predictions as hypotheses in the introduction before analyzing the data.

This study provides further evidence that the nuance of how organizations implement the use of pronouns, even when both policies technically give employees the choice of whether to disclose their pronouns, matters for how pressured people feel to comply and how gender inclusive people feel the organization is.

### **General Discussion**

Through both qualitative and quantitative methods, we find evidence that nuances in the way pronoun sharing policies are presented to people can impact how pressured to disclose people feel and how inclusive people feel the organization is. As expected, the mere presence of pronouns is seen as more inclusive (as opposed to the absence of pronoun policy implementation). Importantly though, both directly and indirectly encouraging that people share their pronouns (compared to making it explicitly optional) increases feelings of pressure to share and decreases perceptions of inclusivity. Thus, organizations should pay attention to the way they introduce pronoun disclosure policies to ensure that these policies do not inadvertently create an additional burden or an unsafe environment for transgender and gender non-conforming people in the workplace.

### **Practical Implications**

Sharing pronouns at work is becoming more and more common and is recommended in organizations as a cue of gender allyship (Chen 2021; Johnson et al., 2021; Sherman, 2020). The current work provides further support that organizations having some sort of implemented pronoun policy is viewed as more inclusive compared to organizations not addressing the use of pronouns at work (studies 1 and 2). As such, organizations should consider creating policies about sharing pronouns at work. However, this recommendation comes with the crucial



stipulation that it should be clear sharing one's pronouns is optional to decrease feelings of pressure to disclose and increase feelings of inclusivity (studies 1 and 3).

Finally, we propose that in order to meet the organizational goal of inclusivity and effective allyship, as organizations begin to introduce the use of pronouns into the workplace, they should simultaneously implement educational and anti-discrimination policies that will create safe and inclusive environments for transgender and gender nonbinary employees (study 1; Brewster et al., 2014; Button, 2001; Onyeader et al., 2021; Salter & Migliaccio, 2019; Tebbe et al., 2019).

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

The current work examines how pronoun policies at the organizational level and the enforcement of these policies from a manager can affect perceptions of inclusivity, compliance in sharing pronouns, and feelings of pressure to share. These findings build on theories of compliance (Bohns, 2006; Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004), but social cues from fellow employees are also likely to play a role in whether an employee discloses their pronouns at work; It is possible that even in organizations where sharing one's pronouns is optional, people may feel pressured to disclose their own pronouns if they see all (or most) of their co-workers sharing their pronouns. Future work should explore how norm conformity (Asch 1956; Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004) influences employee's participation in diversity and inclusion policies within organizations such as sharing one's pronouns.

It is likely that the answer is not as simple as 'employees should always share their pronouns at work' or 'employees should never share their pronouns at work', but that the best action for people to take will depend on the context of each situation; for example, in cases where most people in a room are sharing their pronouns, perhaps the best way for a cisgender

person to act as an ally would be to *not* share their pronouns, so that TGNC people who are not comfortable sharing are not singled out as the only people not sharing. Future work should examine how individuals within an organization can best act as allies.

Finally, educating employees and enforcing anti-discrimination policies are crucial to the acceptance and safety of TGNC people at work. Future work should examine what kind of education and anti-discrimination policies pair best with the implementation of pronoun policies to ensure gender inclusion.

### **Conclusion**

The current work examined the different ways that organizations are currently implementing the sharing of pronouns at work into their organizations and the impact these policies have on inclusivity. The lay opinion captured in recent news opinion pieces seem to have empirical merit; even without outright mandates, an employer's request can feel like a "Do it – or else!" (Galanes, 2021). While these types of policies may lead to more people sharing their pronouns, these policies do not seem to lead to greater feelings of inclusivity, as compared to policies making sharing one's pronouns clearly optional. Given that the goal of organizations in implementing the sharing of pronouns is to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion in their organizations, the current work provides evidence that making sharing one's pronouns clearly optional while also focusing on education and anti-discrimination policies is the best option for organizations.

### Appendix A. Study 2 Mixed-ANOVA with Simple Main Effects

A 2x4 mixed ANOVA with gender (Cis vs TGNC) as the between-subjects factor and disclosure type as the within-subjects factor was run. The results revealed a main effect of disclosure type on inclusion,  $F(3, 171) = 130.84, p < .001$ , and no main effect of gender,  $F(1, 173) = .165, p = .685$ . There was also a significant gender x disclosure type interaction,  $F(3, 171) = 29.526, p < .001$ . To follow up, a simple main effects analysis was performed to compare inclusivity ratings by gender. A significant difference of inclusivity was found between cisgender and TGNC participants for directly encouraged disclosure ( $M_{cis} = 3.48, M_{TGNC} = 3.91, SD_{cis} = .96, SD_{TGNC} = .91$ ) such that TGNC participants rated directly encouraged disclosure as significantly more inclusive compared to cisgender participants,  $F(1, 173) = 9.26, p = .003, \eta^2 = .05$ . Similarly, TGNC participants rated indirectly encouraged disclosure ( $M_{cis} = 3.35, M_{TGNC} = 3.89, SD_{cis} = 1.05, SD_{TGNC} = .91$ ) as significantly more inclusive than did cisgender participants,  $F(1, 173) = 13.10, p < .001, \eta^2 = .07$ . Conversely, TGNC participants rated the no disclosure condition ( $M_{cis} = 2.87, M_{TGNC} = 1.89, SD_{cis} = 1.17, SD_{TGNC} = .89$ ) as significantly less inclusive compared to cisgender participants  $F(1, 173) = 38.35, p < .001, \eta^2 = .18$ . There was no significant difference between cisgender ( $M = 3.97, SD = .93$ ) and TGNC ( $M = 4.13, SD = .87$ ) participants in how inclusive they thought the optional disclosure was,  $F(1, 173) = 1.37, p = .24, \eta^2 = .008$ .

## Appendix B. Study 2 Paired Sample T-Tests split by Gender

**Cisgender participants.** Participants found the optional disclosure condition ( $M = 3.97$ ,  $SD = .93$ ) to be significantly more inclusive compared to the directly encouraged disclosure ( $M = 3.48$ ,  $SD = .96$ ) and indirectly encouraged disclosure ( $M = 3.49$ ,  $SD = 1.05$ ),  $t(86) = 5.13$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = .55$ ;  $t(86) = 6.00$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = .64$ , respectively. There was no difference in how inclusive participants felt the indirectly and directly encouraged disclosure was,  $t(86) = 1.16$ ,  $p = .25$ ,  $d = .13$ . No disclosure ( $M = 2.87$ ,  $SD = 1.17$ ) was again seen as significantly less inclusive compared to all other groups: directly encouraged disclosure  $t(86) = 3.63$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = .39$ , indirectly encouraged disclosure  $t(86) = 3.01$ ,  $p = .003$ ,  $d = .32$ , optional disclosure  $t(86) = 6.75$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = .72$ .

**TGNC participants.** Participants found the optional disclosure condition ( $M = 4.13$ ,  $SD = .87$ ) to be significantly more inclusive compared to directly encouraged disclosure ( $M = 3.91$ ,  $SD = .91$ ) and indirectly encouraged disclosure ( $M = 3.89$ ,  $SD = .91$ ),  $t(87) = 2.07$ ,  $p = .041$ ,  $d = .22$ ;  $t(87) = 2.43$ ,  $p = .017$ ,  $d = .26$ , respectively. There was no difference in how inclusive participants felt the indirectly and directly encouraged disclosure was,  $t(87) = .21$ ,  $p = .84$ ,  $d = .02$ . No disclosure ( $M = 1.89$ ,  $SD = .89$ ) was again seen as significantly less inclusive compared to all other groups: directly encouraged disclosure  $t(87) = 14.56$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = 1.55$ , indirectly encouraged disclosure  $t(87) = 15.48$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = 1.65$ , optional disclosure  $t(87) = 17.66$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = 1.89$ .

### Appendix C. Study 3: 2X2 ANOVA Results

**Sharing.** A 2 (gender: cis, TGNC) x 2 (condition: encouraged, optional) ANOVA revealed a significant main effect of condition on sharing,  $F(1, 522) = 20.13, p < .001$ , such that people in the encouraged condition ( $M = 4.22, SD = 1.20$ ) were more likely to share their pronouns than people in the optional condition ( $M = 3.76, SD = 1.45$ ). There was also a significant main effect of gender on sharing,  $F(1, 522) = 26.25, p < .001$ , such that TGNC participants ( $M = 4.25, SD = 1.14$ ) were more likely to share compared to Cis participants ( $M = 3.71, SD = 1.50$ ). There was a significant gender x condition interaction on sharing,  $F(1, 522) = 4.36, p = .037$ .

**Pressure.** A 2 (gender: cis, TGNC) x 2 (condition: encouraged, optional) ANOVA revealed a significant main effect of condition on pressure,  $F(1, 522) = 47.12, p < .001$ , such that people in the encouraged condition ( $M = 2.73, SD = 1.30$ ) felt more pressured compared to people in the optional condition ( $M = 1.99, SD = 1.12$ ). There was also a significant main effect of gender on pressure,  $F(1, 522) = 7.05, p = .008$ , such that cis participants ( $M = 2.54, SD = 2.22$ ) felt more pressured than TGNC participants ( $M = 2.22, SD = 1.24$ ). There was not significant gender x condition interaction on pressure,  $F(1, 522) = .12, p = .73$ .

**Inclusivity.** A 2 (gender: cis, TGNC) x 2 (condition: encouraged, optional) ANOVA revealed a significant main effect of condition on inclusivity,  $F(1, 522) = 6.25, p = .013$ , such that people in the encouraged condition ( $M = 4.02, SD = .90$ ) felt it was less inclusive compared to people in the optional condition ( $M = 4.18, SD = .76$ ). There was not a significant main effect of gender on inclusivity,  $F(1, 522) = 2.89, p = .09$ . There was not significant gender x condition interaction on inclusivity,  $F(1, 522) = 2.50, p = .11$ .

### Appendix D. Study 3: One-way ANOVA split by gender

**Cisgender participants.** A one-way ANOVA revealed that participants in the encouraged policy condition ( $M= 4.05$ ,  $SD = 1.32$ ) were significantly more likely to share their pronouns compared to people in the optional policy condition ( $M=3.30$ ,  $SD= 1.59$ ),  $F(1, 239) = 15.68$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .06$ . Additionally, participants in the encouraged condition ( $M=2.89$ ,  $SD=1.31$ ) felt significantly more pressured to share their pronouns compared to people in the optional policy condition ( $M=2.13$ ,  $SD=1.14$ ),  $F(1, 239)=22.98$ ,  $p <.001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .09$ . Participants in the encouraged condition ( $M=4.02$ ,  $SD=.93$ ) also felt that the policy was significantly less inclusive compared to the optional policy condition ( $M= 4.32$ ,  $SD=.71$ ),  $F(1, 239)= 7.60$ ,  $p=.006$ ,  $\eta^2 = .03$ .

**TGNC participants.** A one-way ANOVA revealed that participants in the encouraged policy condition ( $M= 4.39$ ,  $SD = 1.04$ ) were significantly more likely to share their pronouns compared to people in the optional policy condition ( $M=4.12$ ,  $SD= 1.23$ ),  $F(1, 283) = 4.07$ ,  $p=.045$ ,  $\eta^2 = .01$ . Additionally, participants in the encouraged condition ( $M=2.57$ ,  $SD=1.28$ ) felt significantly more pressured to share their pronouns compared to people in the optional policy condition ( $M=1.88$ ,  $SD=1.09$ ),  $F(1, 283)=24.09$ ,  $p <.001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .08$ . Participants in the encouraged condition ( $M=4.01$ ,  $SD=.87$ ) did not differ in how inclusive they felt the policy was compared to the optional policy condition ( $M= 4.08$ ,  $SD=.78$ ),  $F(1, 283)= .46$ ,  $p=.49$ ,  $\eta^2 = .002$ .

### Appendix E. Study 3: Mediation of pressure and inclusion on Sharing

Following our preregistration, we tested for mediation for TGNC participants. Using the bootstrapping method with 10,000 iterations (Hayes, 2017), we found that, as expected, inclusivity ( $a = -0.067$ , 95% CI = [0.-0.26, 0.13]) did not mediate the relationship between policy condition and sharing ( $ab = -.036$ , 95% CI = [-0.16, 0.07]). However, pressure ( $a = 0.693$ , 95% CI = [0.42, 0.97]) was also not a mediator of policy condition and sharing ( $ab = -0.175$ , 95% CI = [-0.29, -0.08]). Surprisingly, the effect of condition got stronger when pressure was added into the model.

#### *Regression Coefficients for Models Predicting Sharing in Study 3*

	<i>b</i> [95% CI]	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i> [95% CI]	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	4.12 [3.93, 4.31]	43.4	.00	2.38 [1.72, 3.04]	7.07	.000
		2	0			
Encouraged vs Optional	0.27 [0.01, 0.54]	2.02	.04	0.48 [0.25, 0.72]	4.02	.000
			5			
Pressure				-0.25 [-0.35, -0.15]	-5.06	.000
Inclusion				0.54 [0.40, 0.68]	7.58	.000

*Notes.*  $N = 285$ .

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