

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Neuronormativity as ignorant design in human resource management: The case of an unsupportive national context

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## Abstract

Neurodiversity refers to differences in how people's brains work. Reportedly, human resource functions lag behind scientific developments in offering inclusive design for neurodivergent individuals. Drawing on the sociology of ignorance, we examine mechanisms and forms of ignorant design based on a qualitative study with 20 HR professionals in a country with an unsupportive context for neurodivergence. We expand the literature on an ignorant design by identifying three mechanisms and seven forms of ignorance that shape neuronormative HR policies and practices, revealing that HR practices often marginalise neurodivergent individuals by not recognising their contributions, enforcing neurotypical standards, and maintaining a superficial approach to inclusion. Our findings underscore the need for substantial changes in HR policies and practices, such as involving neurodivergent individuals in policy design, providing comprehensive neurodiversity training for HR professionals, and adopting evidence-based and inclusive HR strategies. Further, a supportive national context is invaluable for neuroinclusion.

**Abbreviations:** HR, Human Resources; HRM, Human Resource Management; ADHD, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder; OECD, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; DSM-5, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition.

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**KEYWORDS**

HR professionals, neurodiversity, neuroinclusion, neuronormativity, sociology of ignorance, Turkey

**Practitioner notes****What is currently known**

- When transforming organisational design, HR professionals need to recognise, capture, and accommodate the unique needs of neurodivergent individuals.
- Existing literature primarily focuses on progressive contexts where supportive political and legal mechanisms protect neurodivergence.
- There is a lack of understanding of neuroinclusive HR design in unsupportive and toxic contexts where social and legal recognition is absent.
- Organisational discourses in unsupportive contexts fail to promote inclusive practices for neurodivergent individuals.

**What this paper adds?**

- Examines mechanisms and forms of ignorance that shape HR policies on neurodivergence in a context where there is scant legal and cultural support for the workplace inclusion of neurodivergent individuals.
- Identifies three mechanisms of ignorant design that perpetuate the exclusion of neurodivergent individuals: The dehumanisation of neurodivergence, the misrecognition of neurodivergent contributions, and the illusion of neuroinclusion.
- Outlines seven forms of ignorance that influence neuronormative HR policies and practices, including ableness as denial of neurodivergence, dismissal of neurodivergence, stigmatisation of neurodivergence, the culture of concealing neurodivergence, confirmation bias against neurodivergence, claims of empathy and mercy for neurodivergence, and lack of reflectiveness about neuroinclusion.
- Utilises the sociology of ignorance to frame and analyse the intentional and systemic overlooking of neurodivergence within HR practices.

**The implications for practitioners**

- Breaking the cycle of ignorant design requires multifaceted interventions for HR professionals: At the micro-individual level, professional awareness and development on neurodiversity and the needs of neurodivergent individuals are necessary.
- HR professional bodies and learned organisations in an unsupportive context should offer targeted educational programs and resources to enhance awareness of neurodiversity at the meso level.
- At the macro level, progressive laws that recognise neurodivergence as a protected category of diversity and inclusion at work are urgently needed.
- Without such forceful regulation, HR professionals must rely on voluntary initiatives, which reportedly fail in Turkey. Multifaceted and multilevel interventions are essential for a neuroinclusive HR design.

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

Neurodiversity frames neurological differences as a facet of human diversity (Singer, 1999). Neurodiversity denotes a spectrum of neurocognitive variations, which conventionally include conditions such as autism, ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder), dyslexia, and others classified as neurological or developmental disorders (Sumner & Brown, 2015). It is now widely recognised that social populations and workforces are neurodiverse. Neurodiversity is not a disease or condition needing a cure. However, some neurodivergent conditions are disabilities and protected characteristics in the workplace. Neurodiversity represents a natural and valuable form of human diversity (Baron-Cohen, 2017; Ortega, 2009). Thus, efforts should focus on transforming environments to enable neurodivergent individuals to thrive, not attempting to fix neurodivergent individuals (Doyle, 2020). However, the normative structure of institutions of work and employment reportedly remains exclusive internationally, failing to recognise and value the contribution of neurodivergent individuals (Hennekam et al., 2023).

Despite increasing awareness of neurodiversity, many organisations maintain outdated and inflexible paradigms in their HR practices, tacitly endorsing a culture of neuronormativity. Neuronormativity encompasses the belief that one standard of neurocognitive functioning inherently outperforms others in effectiveness. This inclination leads to the neglect or misinterpretation of signs of neurodivergence, such as autistic traits (Benson, 2023). HRM practices and policies tend to marginalise individuals manifesting neurodiverse qualities (Bal et al., 2022). Within organisational settings, neuronormativity shapes practices and policies, thereby exacerbating the marginalisation of neurodivergent individuals (Radulski, 2022). The marginalisation of neurodivergent individuals creates deep-seated, systematic discrimination.

We mobilise the sociology of ignorance (McGoey, 2012a) to show that ignorance of neurodivergence is a source of normative power and domination that shapes social policy, organisational design and work processes (Rayner, 2012). Such ignorance includes and extends beyond unawareness; it embodies a conscious rejection or diminution of information that contradicts established norms. This unconscious or intentional disregard fosters a constrained view of normal or optimal cognitive functioning within the workforce. Drawing on the sociology of ignorance (McGoey, 2012a, 2012b) and the literature on ignorance in organisations (Roberts, 2013, 2022), we illustrate how historical ignorance of neurodivergence in an unsupportive context has caused HR policy that ignores and devalues neurodivergent individual's contributions, based on flawed assumptions of neuronormativity. Entrenched biases rooted in neuronormativity maintain a cycle of ignorance, where systems only recognise and reward cognitive abilities that conform to neuronormative expectations. Concurrently, these systems depreciate or impose sanctions on cognitive expressions that deviate from these norms, reinforcing a limited conceptualisation of competence and success that privileges neurotypical standards at work (Jurgens, 2020). For example, workplaces may require all workers to join social activities that do not contribute to their work performance. Such neuronormative impositions disadvantage individuals with neurodivergent conditions and poor regulation of moods and emotions (Hennekam et al., 2023).

An OECD study (2020) identified indifference, that is, HR leaders ignoring diversity, as the main barrier to inclusive HR design in organisations. The impact of such acts of ignorance is felt more strongly in countries with 'toxic triangles of diversity' that lack supportive laws and advanced diversity and inclusion discourses and practices (Küskü et al., 2021, p. 553). In response to this study, we formulated our research question: What are the forms and mechanisms of ignorance that shape HR policies and practices that prevent neuroinclusion in organisations in a country with an unsupportive diversity context, that is, Turkey? To explore how ignorance shapes HR policy and practice, we present the results of a qualitative study with 20 HR professionals from Turkey. Most neurodiversity studies draw data from countries with supportive contexts (Hennekam & Follmer, 2024).

We extend the theory of management of neurodiversity by focussing on an unsupportive context where management may not rely on legal or cultural normative pressure for neuroinclusion. The study reveals how relying on voluntary measures alone remains inadequate for securing neuroinclusion and identifies three mechanisms and seven forms of ignorance that shape neuronormative HRM policies and practices. The three mechanisms of

ignorance of neurodiversity are the dehumanisation of neurodivergence, misrecognition of neurodivergence, and illuio of neuroinclusion. These three mechanisms take seven different forms of ignorance impacting neuro-normativity in HR policies and practices: Ableness as denial of neurodivergence, dismissal of neurodivergence, stigmatisation of neurodivergence, culture of concealing neurodivergence, confirmation bias against neurodivergence, claims of empathy and mercy for neurodivergence, and lack of reflectiveness about neuroinclusion.

We explain that addressing ignorant design in HR in an unsupportive context requires multifaceted interventions, such as increased awareness of neurodivergence, targeted educational programs by HR bodies, and progressive laws recognising neurodivergence. We suggest HR interventions that transcend ignorant design for neuroinclusive approaches with the active involvement of neurodivergent individuals in unsupportive contexts.

## 2 | NORMATIVITY AS IGNORANCE

The sociology of ignorance provides a lens through which to discern the unconscious and intentional employment of non-knowledge to reinforce and legitimise the prevailing social order within workplaces (McGoey, 2012a). The literature on ignorance in organisations draws on the sociology of ignorance (Bakken & Wiik, 2018; Israilidis et al., 2013) and scrutinises how a lack of awareness fortifies existing social hierarchies and power structures within organisations. Ignorance could also manifest within the boundaries of science (Firestein, 2012). The scientific orthodoxy (established views) has the power to neglect and reject the scientific heterodoxy (marginalised yet legitimate view) through overt and implicit mechanisms of ignorance (Bourdieu, 1972/1977; Greenhalgh et al., 2021). By reinforcing established norms and ideals, organisations might inadvertently or deliberately foster an exclusionary ethos that sidelines atypical individuals, impeding the incorporation of diverse abilities and perspectives and bolstering the institutional status quo, potentially at the expense of innovation and social fairness. Such organisational manifestations of ignorance, intertwined with the fabric of normativity, function as gatekeepers for mainstream ideologies, often at the cost of marginalising alternative knowledge systems and worldviews (McGoey, 2012b; Özbilgin, Erbil, Demirbağ, et al., 2024). Ignorance is not only a system of not knowing but a mechanism of ignoring, through which the dominant groups may uphold and retain their privileged access to power. Thus, we explore ignorance as an unearned systemic privilege.

Ignorance is relevant to critical studies of inequality, as through overt and implicit mechanisms of ignorance of inequalities and ignoring the plight of the oppressed, the powerful and dominant groups in society may retain the status quo (Roberts, 2013). Organisations are settings where dominant groups mobilise ignorance to challenge, dismiss and resist demands for equality, diversity, inclusion and social justice (Özbilgin, Erbil, Demirbağ, et al., 2024). Thus, organisations often strategically utilise or passively maintain ignorance within their structures to avoid disrupting established power dynamics, making it a crucial factor in sustaining inequalities and inhibiting progressive change (Jalonen, 2024). Similarly, individuals and organisations may keep others ignorant to improve their stakes in the organisational domain (Alvesson et al., 2022). From such a critical perspective, normative ideologies within organisational settings serve as prime illustrations of organisational ignorance. Normative ideologies exemplify forms of ignorance within organisational settings (Gedikli, 2020; Hennekam & Dumazert, 2023; Özbilgin et al., 2023b, 2024b). This cultivated ignorance maintains a constrained view of the ideal worker (Acker, 1990). It upholds a work culture that reflects a homogenised and exclusionary concept of normality. Such a work culture marginalises those outside the predefined normative parameters, maintaining and perpetuating a limited and exclusionary concept of organisational normality.

In business and management, ignorance is an individual and organisational-level construct (e.g., Allen, 2000). For example, Israilidis et al. (2013) examine how multinational enterprises manage ignorance at multiple levels. Roberts (2013, 2022) proposes management of ignorance as managing the unknown, framing ignorance as a strategic resource within organisations. Bakken and Wiik (2017) emphasise the implications of ignorance for organisational decision-making and design. They propose that ignorance management fosters organisational

creativity, flexibility and responsiveness. In weaving together the fabric of normativity and ignorance, organisations unconsciously construct a milieu that privileges conventional cognitive models. Such environments, while outwardly neutral, perpetuate a cycle of exclusionary practices, dismissing the full potential of neurodiverse individuals. This institutionalised disregard stems not from a lack of empirical evidence regarding the capabilities of neurodivergent individuals but from a sidelining of this knowledge. It epitomises a form of non-scientific neglect that, though estranged from the empirical pursuit of knowledge, undermines workplace inclusion. Within this intersection of ignorance and neuronormativity lies an underexplored avenue for enriching the organisational fabric through neuroinclusion. In unsupportive contexts lacking protective legislation and inclusive discourses, organisations are inclined to adopt normativity to foster a culture of ignorance (Küskü et al., 2021). The absence of regulatory frameworks that recognise and support the neurodivergent individuals' potential sustains the dynamic interplay of ignorance and the bias of neuronormativity (Lollini, 2018).

### 3 | NEURONORMATIVITY LEADING TO IGNORANT DESIGN IN HRM

HRM often fails to recognise the full spectrum of human cognitive capabilities, even in supportive contexts (Volpone et al., 2022). Although design is an established discipline, it frequently exhibits ignorance towards individuals from atypical backgrounds, such as LGBT+, black, or disabled (Park & Humphry, 2019). Such ignorant design is apparent, as HRM practices are typically set up without accounting for neurodiversity, creating obstacles for the entry and career progression of neurodivergent individuals. For example, Orsini (2022) shows that autistic individuals experience epistemic injustice through well-intended yet ignorant ways of knowing that shape public and organisational policy.

Inclusive HR policy is more than just about inclusive design. HR professionals must also tackle ignorance (not knowing and ignoring) that informs the current design of policies and practices (Harvey, 2002). Given that a majority of the talent pool includes underrepresented individuals such as women, minority ethnic, LGBTQ+ individuals, individuals with disabilities and neurodivergent individuals (Krzeminska et al., 2019; Özbilgin & Erbil, 2023), diversity and inclusion function within HR has a significant role in combatting ignorance to future craft inclusive design. HRM practices that do not account for neurodiversity fail to promote an inclusive workplace and neglect the unique insights and skills of neurodivergent individuals, which are critical to harnessing the full range of talent in organisations (Hennekam & Follmer, 2024).

Current HRM frameworks in supportive and unsupportive contexts require a significant overhaul. A shift from ignorant design to inclusive practices is imperative in unsupportive contexts. The pervasive standard of neuronormativity within organisations is often a covert product of ignorant design, which shapes a work culture tailored to a neurotypical profile (Volpone et al., 2022). HRM processes such as recruitment, training, and performance evaluations tend to perpetuate this bias, systematically failing to recognise the contributions of neurodivergent individuals, even in supportive contexts (Krzeminska et al., 2019). For instance, Koch et al. (2022) found that workplace mistreatment, ranging from overt discrimination to subtle microaggressions, marginalising neurodivergent individuals. Therefore, it is essential to critically examine and redesign HRM practices to combat ignorance and foster inclusion (Khan et al., 2023).

HRM practices that selectively overlook the neurocognitive diversity spectrum fortify inflexible hierarchies and patterns of workplace socialisation (Hennekam et al., 2023) and perpetuate standards favouring the neurotypical majority (Davies et al., 2023). These practices preserve a uniform organisational culture, neglecting the challenges that neurodivergent individuals encounter. Ignorant HRM practices marginalise and stigmatise neurodivergent individuals by insisting on adherence to neuronormative job designs (Patton, 2019). When neurodivergent individuals fall short of neurotypical expectations, they are often inappropriately held responsible, diverting accountability from the organisation (Radulski, 2022). In the UK context, the Statutory Sick Pay Act in 1994 shifted the responsibility for managing absences due to sickness from the state to organisations, particularly line managers

(Taylor et al., 2010). Shifting responsibility from organisations to individuals is an evolved stage of responsibility. It entrenches the ignorant HRM design as individuals are poorly equipped to challenge institutional design (Vincent et al., 2024). In unsupportive contexts, the absence of institutional commitment to inclusion leads organisations to unquestioningly opt for ignorant design in their HRM practices (Küskü et al., 2022).

A critical examination of the pervasive ignorant design highlights how neuronormative standards in HRM recruitment strategies systematically put neurodivergent individuals at a disadvantage internationally (Davies et al., 2023). Recruitment procedures embody biases that favour neurotypical cognitive abilities, as seen in job descriptions that highlight quick decision-making or social fluency. Interview processes often reward these traits, and assessment tests are usually customised to align with neuronormativity (Whelpley & May 2023). Such processes filter out neurodivergent applicants who may otherwise excel in areas like complex problem-solving or advanced pattern recognition. The resulting workforce composition often mirrors a restricted neuronormative ideal and lacks the expansive cognitive diversity that neurodivergent individuals are ready to offer. When these recruitment practices merge with employee development strategies rooted in neuronormative benchmarks, the exclusion of neurodivergent individuals becomes more pronounced. Such congruence between recruitment and development strategies, steeped in neuronormative benchmarks, magnifies the exclusion of neurodivergent individuals (Hutson & Hutson, 2023). Neurodivergent individuals also encounter barriers to advancement, stemming from training programs and progression criteria that overlook their distinctive cognitive abilities and learning styles, thereby perpetuating a cycle of marginalisation within the organisational fabric (Bouckley, 2022).

#### 4 | AN UNSUPPORTIVE CONTEXT: IGNORANCE OF NEURODIVERGENCE IN TURKEY

The normatively unsupportive context in Turkey presents an interesting site for exploring neuronormativity (Ünal, 2018). Research on Turkey reveals a context that does not support diverse needs, especially in addressing human rights issues. The country is grappling with significant challenges in managing diversity, often neglecting these concerns in favour of other ideological directions (Küskü et al., 2021). Concerning neurodiversity, comprehensive global studies (e.g., UN Global Compact Network Türkiye, 2020) have found Turkey to be an unsupportive context for neurodiversity. There are no official reports detailing the number of individuals within the neurodiversity spectrum in Turkey. However, the population of individuals with autism alone points to a significant presence of neurodivergent individuals in the country. As of 2021, there are nearly 1.5 million individuals with autism in Turkey (Euronews, 2021). In addition, the prevalence of adult ADHD in Turkey is currently unknown, with the prevalence rates of ADHD in children estimated to be between 8.1% and 13.3% (Aslan Genç et al., 2021).

Neuronormativity in Turkey is endemic (Kaya & Yıldız, 2023). While physical disabilities take precedence over affective and cognitive disabilities in accommodating disabilities at work, there is a shortage of employment opportunities for neurodivergent individuals (Ari, 2021). The neuronormative bias worsens from the lack of visibility of neurodivergent individuals and the inclination within HRM practices to perceive neurotypicality as an essential criterion in job execution (Özbilgin, Erbil, & Odabaşı, 2023). Even the nominal quota system for individuals with disabilities led companies in Turkey to recruit individuals with disabilities but keep them on the payroll without offering actual work (Palalar Alkan et al., 2024). Furthermore, neurodivergent individuals fall outside the framework of disability quotas in Turkey.

The dominant belief system in Turkey, Islam, also serves neuronormativity. Turkey is the most secular country, with a relatively liberal social and economic life compared to countries with a Muslim majority. However, over the past 20 years, government policies have increasingly leaned towards conservatism, amplifying the influence of religious values and reinforcing normativity (Özbilgin, Erbil, Baykut, & Kamasak, 2023). Islamic beliefs encourage individuals to adopt a fatalistic approach, normalising social, health, or economic differences as part of their destiny. Islamic beliefs foster a tendency to accept disadvantages arising from differences, including those neurodivergent individuals face. As a result, neurodivergent individuals often accept social challenges stemming from their

differences through a fatalistic understanding, failing to demand accommodation (Özer et al., 2023). The government's conservative policies have made educational settings more normative, limiting their capacity to promote diversity and inclusion (Baykut et al., 2022). The social, cultural and religious context further hinders recognition and accommodation of neurodivergence, making neuroinclusion more challenging. We posit that the stated unsupportive contextual dynamics entrench ignorance and offer an ideal context to study the most rampant state of ignorance within HR policies.

## 5 | METHODS

Drawing on a qualitative online study, we have selected HR professionals in Turkish organisations as our sample, as this sample has insight into the inclusion and exclusion of neurodiversity in organisations and what informs the emergence of HR design in an unsupportive context. To engage participants, we contacted networks comprising HR professionals in Turkey. Most HR professional networks and learned organisations have LinkedIn sites. We posted the call on these networks. We have also used the university's alum association, where one of our co-authors works, to broaden the sample. We contacted HR professionals across a broad spectrum of sectors of work. We tried to limit self-selection bias by making informed personal invitations to known HR professionals and with open calls through multiple HR professional networks in Turkey.

The selection criteria for participants was having an HR role with five years of experience in this capacity in a Turkish organisation. Our sample consisted of HR professionals in at least senior roles, with 16 in senior roles and four in higher senior executive HR roles. Our sample presents a difficult-to-reach group because of the unsupportive context of diversity, which intensifies the restrictive impact of neuronormativity on neurodivergent individuals. We let the participants know we are exploring HR roles and responses to neurodiversity. We shared the study's aims, ethical considerations, and the ethical committee that participants can contact if they have concerns. In the adversarial context of neurodiversity and neuroinclusion, securing participation in the study took much work. Because the study required participants to write their experiences in constant prose, the time commitment to complete the study also discouraged broader participation. The response rate for individual emails we sent to 30 HR professionals was 20%. Fourteen participants joined from open calls. The study generated responses from 20 HR professionals. Most of our participants came from organisations with 100–500 employees, reflecting the typical company size of our sample. Five participants were from organisations with more than 500 employees and two with less than 100 employees. This distribution depicts a range of HR practices across organisational sizes in Turkey.

We selected a qualitative approach as it facilitates context-sensitive examination of less studied phenomena (Jansen, 2010), vital for unravelling neuronormative organisational settings. According to Murphy et al. (2017), the qualitative approach provides valuable insights into under-researched areas in HRM. It enables researchers to explore new or poorly understood topics, thus contributing to current HR practices. Utilising a qualitative approach is particularly important in the Turkish context, where HR policies and practices on neurodiversity widely retain an ignorant stance. Furthermore, there is a growing call in the academic community for qualitative research into structural challenges to neuroinclusive design (Szulc, 2023).

We designed an online study with open-ended questions based on this methodological orientation. As the study sought to flesh out how ignorance informs the emergence of HR policies and practices, many HR professionals would wish to refrain from participating in person. An online design allowed us to analyse qualitative responses from the first participant. We developed an online study tool because it is challenging to reach HR professionals about themes outside organisational priorities, such as neurodiversity. This qualitative online study method is widely used in neurodiversity research (e.g., Hannekam et al., 2023). Using an online study tool with open-ended questions helped us reach HR professionals who are personally and professionally interested in this topic without imposing heavy demands on their time (Wilkerson et al., 2014). We derived the open-ended questions in the online survey by considering previous research (Özbilgin, Erbil, & Odabaşı, 2023; Özbilgin, Erbil, Baykut, &



Kamasak, 2023), consistently highlighting the prevalence of resistance against diversity and inclusion initiatives. Open-ended questions generated long narratives of the extent to which HR professionals considered, framed, defined and mobilised neurodiversity and neuroinclusion in their policies and practices.

Our study comprises three main sections (see Supporting Information S1: Appendix 1 for details). The first section investigates HRM policies and practices regarding recognising and including neurodivergent individuals. Additionally, we examine the experiences of HR professionals with neurodivergent individuals at the workplace. The second section explores HRM's endeavours and understandings about equality, diversity, and inclusion. We designed the study's third section to gather demographic information on our participants. In the introduction to the online research, we clearly articulated the study's aims and scope. We conveyed to our participants the sensitivity of the data collection tool regarding privacy and guaranteed that we would not share any information that could potentially disclose their identities. To this end, we anonymised the collected data, assigned pseudonyms to each participant, and excluded any details that might reveal their identities. We adopted a secure data management system by keeping data safe and anonymised.

The study had 20 participants, ages between 29 and 50. Of these, 13 self-identify as female and seven as male. Participants hail from 15 distinct industries, including three from the education sector, two in legal, two in healthcare, two in hospitality, and two in retail, with others from various sectors. Most possess a bachelor's or master's degree, while only one holds a PhD (Table 1 presents detailed participant demographics).

We downloaded the study responses to prepare data for analysis. Following Braun and Clarke's (2021) reflexive thematic analysis technique, we adopted an abductive approach, with each author reading the data simultaneously and forming codes. We concluded the codes, themes and subthemes by reaching dialogical intersubjectivity (Gillespie & Cornish, 2010). Collaborative efforts facilitated compiling a consensual coding list with individual applications and subsequent comparisons. The resultant joint decisions permitted iterative refinements to coding. The abductive approach helped us reveal surprising mechanisms and forms (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2011) of ignorance that the HRM literature has not previously engaged that the HRM literature has not previously engaged with by moving between data and literature. This study identified three surprising mechanisms that frame how ignorant design manifests. Employing an abductive approach allowed for an interactive analysis, interweaving our coding with the prevailing literature. The abductive research approach allows us to relate possible explanatory theories to clarify our observations not fully explained by existing frameworks (Meyer & Lunnay, 2013; Özbilgin & Erbil, 2019). We checked conceptual (Walsh et al., 2015) and theoretical (Murphy et al., 2017) saturation. With conceptual saturation, we stopped data collection when participants started giving similar responses, which were adequate for us to analyse. We relied on the abduction process for theoretical saturation, moving between data and literature to establish robust enough theoretical expansion to mechanisms and forms of ignorance. Our study focussed on how ignorance shapes HR policy and revealed three mechanisms and seven forms of ignorance that shape HR policy and practice on neurodiversity in Turkey (Table 2 details the data structure of our study).

## 6 | FINDINGS

To explore how ignorance shapes HR design in line with neuronormativity, we examined the responses of HR professionals and their accounts of why they ignore neurodivergence and the inclusion of neurodivergent individuals in the design of HR policies and practices. We elucidated three mechanisms of ignorance that influence the formulation of HR policies and practices of neurodiversity within settings adhering to neuronormative paradigms. In Supporting Information S1: Appendices 2(ABC), we provide selective quotes and data structure for the findings.



TABLE 1 Demographics of participating HR professionals.

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Industry	Degree	Tenure in current job (years)	Economically active (years)	Ableness
P1. Ayda	Female	29	Education	Master's degree	5	5	Abled
P2. Banu	Female	39	Human resource	Bachelor's degree	8	16	Physically disabled
P3. Ceyda	Female	42	Software	Master's degree	2	15	Abled
P4. Dolunay	Female	37	Education	PhD	5	14	Abled
P4. Emre	Male	40	Hospitality	Master's degree	1	17	Abled
P5. Funda	Female	38	Building trade	Bachelor's degree	4	14	Abled
P6. Galip	Male	44	Legal	Master's degree	12	19	Abled
P7. Hulusi	Male	40	Legal	Master's degree	1,5	15	Abled
P8. Jale	Female	45	Retail	Bachelor's degree	7	20	Abled
P9. Karanfil	Female	37	Finance	Master's degree	5	15	Abled
P10. Lale	Female	27	Automotive	Bachelor's degree	1	9	Abled
P11. Melisa	Female	30	Stationery	Bachelor's degree	4	5	Abled
P12. Nedim	Male	41	Logistics	Bachelor's degree	9	17	Abled
P13. Orhan	Male	32	Consulting	Bachelor's degree	1	5	Abled
P14. Perihan	Female	39	Auditing	Master's degree	6	14	Abled
P15. Rezzan	Female	38	Health	Bachelor's degree	6	14	Abled
P16. Samet	Male	37	Military	Bachelor's degree	15	15	Abled
P17. Tanem	Female	39	Education	Bachelor's degree	10	16	Abled
P18. Utku	Male	50	Tourism	Bachelor's degree	12	27	Abled
P19. Vildan	Female	29	Transport	Bachelor's degree	1	5	Abled
P20. Zeynep	Female	32	Aviation	Master's degree	3	7	Abled

TABLE 2 Data structure: Codes, subthemes, themes.

Codes (neuronormative HR design)	Subthemes (forms of ignorance)	Themes (mechanisms of ignorance)
'Capability', 'ability', 'being complete', 'functionality'	Ableness as denial of neurodiversity	Dehumanisation of neurodivergence
'Segregation', 'isolation', 'confinement', 'disparity'	Dismissal of neurodivergence	
'Exclusion', 'prejudice', 'othering'	Stigmatisation of neurodivergence	
'Silencing', 'hiding identity', 'shadowing'	Culture of concealing neurodivergence	Misrecognition of neurodivergence
'Generalisation', 'biassed experiences', 'projection'	Confirmation bias against neurodivergence	
'Equality rhetoric', 'performativity', 'merit', 'social responsibility', 'superficiality'	Claims of empathy and mercy for neurodivergence	Illusio of neuroinclusion
'Pragmatism', 'internationalism', 'procedural adherence', 'formality and legalism'	Lack of reflectiveness about neuroinclusion	

6.1 | Mechanism 1: Dehumanisation of neurodivergence

Dehumanisation is a mechanism which frames individuals as subhumans in the form of machines or animals (Haslam, 2006). Dehumanisation in the context of neuronormative HR design happens when neurodivergent individuals experience neuronormativity in Turkey. We identified three forms through which dehumanisation manifests as a mechanism of ignorance: Ableness as denial of neurodiversity, dismissal of neurodivergence, and stigmatisation of neurodivergence.

6.1.1 | Ableness as denial of neurodiversity

Ableness represents an ideological framework that critically highlights the constraints inherent in societal constructs of ability (Morriss, 1988/2022). Ableness upholds traditional disability perceptions, in contrast to advocating for a spectrum-based understanding of ability shaped by societal norms. It extends beyond medical definitions of physical or cognitive capabilities to encompass their social valuation, scrutinising the predominance of neuronormativity. In HRM, adopting ableness without a critical and inclusive approach may lead to neuronormative practices, inadvertently marginalising neurodivergent individuals (Hughes, 2019). This misalignment with the ideology of ableness may cause HRM practices to favour neurotypical traits, reinforcing societal power structures that exclude or devalue neurodiverse perspectives, potentially transforming HRM into a structure that strategically excludes neurodivergent individuals. Such an ignorant design of HRM practices may result in a homogenised workforce failing to recognise the benefits of embracing neurological diversity. Zeynep, an HRM professional in the aviation industry, revealed how HRM adheres to ignorant neuronormativity, providing itself with a comfort zone within the ideology of ableness, even without attempting to design inclusive jobs. Zeynep's remarks uncovered a denial within HRM to challenge neuronormative biases and a reluctance to integrate neurodivergent individuals fully. This ignorant neuronormativity limits the potential for inclusive practices and highlights a broader issue within HRM regarding the acknowledgement and value of neurodiverse abilities.

Diversity is increasingly gaining attention, and the inclusion of disabled individuals in the workplace is part of this trend. In fact, I also engaged with these issues during my studies. However, in practice, it's

not always possible to be inclusive. For example, in our industry [aviation industry], most roles require high performance. They all rely on mental effort and demand concentration. Our roles and tasks are designed with specific skill sets in mind, and deviating from these requirements for the sake of inclusivity could jeopardise our operational efficiency. Therefore, I believe we are, as HRM, somewhat distant from the idea of incorporating individuals with neurological differences. (Zeynep, female, 32-year-old, aviation, abled)

Another participant, Ceyda, an HR professional in the software industry, reflected the perspective predominantly shared by our participants regarding disability and neurodivergent individuals. In HRM practices, there is a tendency to perceive disability within the framework of ableness ideology, viewing ability as synonymous with being whole or complete. In this setting, neurodivergent individuals are frequently perceived as having deficits (Özbilgin, Erbil, & Odabaşı, 2023). This perception is consistent with the ableness ideology, where individuals are appraised against a normative ability benchmark, thus promoting a constrained and exclusionary definition. Such a viewpoint in HRM not only marginalises neurodivergent individuals by depicting them as deficit-laden but also neglects to acknowledge the extensive spectrum of human capabilities and the intrinsic worth of neurodiverse perspectives. Furthermore, the ideology of ableness, by characterising neurodivergent individuals as deficit-bearing and denying their full participation, leads to an ignorant design in HRM practices, fostering a cycle of exclusion and underappreciation in the workplace.

### 6.1.2 | Dismissal of neurodivergence

Choosing to hire neurodivergent individuals only after evaluating potential accommodations or support reveals a notable lack of commitment to neurodiversity in the workplace. This approach may exacerbate the neuronormative environment that restricts employment suitability to neurotypical standards and overlooks neurodivergent qualifications (Bal et al., 2022). Reducing identity to neurodivergence neglects individual complexity and uniqueness, confining people to labels centred on perceived deficits. In HRM, dismissing neurodivergence instead of discussing structural transformations to harness the potential of neurodivergent individuals manifests neuronormativity within organisational design. Such dismissal systematically impedes the economic participation of individuals based on distinguishing characteristics and emerges as a form of ignorance that dehumanises neurodivergent individuals. The statement by Hulusi, who is responsible for recruitment in an international law office, exemplified how the ignorance mechanism operates quietly.

We had an interview with an individual who disclosed that they have ADHD. We had to respond negatively to their application as we believed that this disorder would disadvantage them in managing stress in the workplace compared to their colleagues and would adversely affect their work quality. Apart from this, I have not had an interview with an individual possessing other differences mentioned in the question. (Hulusi, male, 40-year-old, law, abled)

Narrowing the neurodiversity spectrum to a single prototype stems from the neuronormative experiences of managers or HR professionals. One of the participants, Dolunay, an HR executive with a background in the retail sector and experience in education, noted that individual experiences may lead to overlooking the differences of neurodivergent individuals. Influenced by interactions with a neurodivergent relative, Dolunay advocated a one-size-fits-all approach to neurodiversity in the workplace. Such a perspective, nourished by a neuronormative view that neglects the diversities of neurodivergent individuals, has limiting and exclusionary effects.

### 6.1.3 | Stigmatisation of neurodivergence

Stigmatisation imposes negative stereotypes and labels on individuals or groups, a prevalent issue across various contexts (Goffman, 1963/2009). Stigmatisation, deeply rooted in neuronormative biases, often characterises neurodivergent individuals as inadequate, unqualified, or prone to mistakes (Radulski, 2022). The quotation from our participant Funda demonstrated that discriminatory attitudes of colleagues and managers significantly contribute to the stigmatisation of neurodivergent individuals, even in the face of HRM efforts to counteract these biases. However, when ignorantly designed, HRM practices often deflect their accountability for such discrimination towards external sources instead of introspectively addressing these issues within their structures. This evasion of responsibility in HRM underscores a critical gap in embracing and valuing diversity.

As HR, we've had experiences with these [neurodivergent] individuals. We've conducted job interviews and have also employed some among them. [...] However, when things don't go smoothly in the departments where we've employed them, any issues are often associated with the individuals' neurological disabilities by managers or colleagues. Yet, similar issues that are brought up by managers can also be observed in individuals without disabilities. But generally, when there are problems, the disabilities of those individuals tend to be brought to the forefront. From an HR perspective, we encourage the relevant departments to approach the situation more calmly and to give the matter thoughtful consideration. (Funda, female, 48-year-old, building trade, abled)

When neurodivergent individuals encounter challenges or their behaviours deviate from neuronormative expectations, these instances may disproportionately overshadow their skills and contributions. Such occurrences cultivate toxicity and reveal a significant lack of understanding and accommodation for neurodivergence (Benson, 2023). An incident observed by our participant, Rezzan, an HR professional in the healthcare sector, shed light on the stigmatisation faced by neurodivergent individuals in workplaces. The incident involved a neurodivergent individual suffering a seizure, demonstrating how such events may potentially fortify prejudiced perspectives, thereby further entrenching the already ignorant design of HRM practices.

## 6.2 | Mechanism 2: Misrecognition of neurodivergence

Bourdieu (1997/2020) characterises misrecognition as a societal dynamic in which a network of relations reduces the symbolic significance of a group, thus confining its power and influence to the margins. Within the context of neuronormativity, misrecognition operates as a mechanism that undervalues the symbolic contributions of neurodivergent individuals, consequently diminishing their influence and standing. In the unsupportive context of Turkey, this process of neuronormativity involves a subtle yet significant undervaluing of the contributions and inherent worth of neurodivergent individuals within the societal collective. We identified two distinct forms in which misrecognition emerges as a mechanism of ignorance: a culture of concealing neurodivergence and confirmation bias against neurodivergence.

### 6.2.1 | Culture of concealing neurodivergence

Within organisational settings, a predominant perspective primarily classifies neurological differences through a medical approach. Such a limited medical perspective, disregarding the unique challenges and difficulties faced by neurodivergent individuals, leads to the misrecognition of their potential (LeFevre-Levy et al., 2023). The ignorant design of HRM often leans towards adhering to predefined medical norms and expectations, thereby perpetuating a

culture of concealing neurodiversity within the professional realm. Karanfil, an HR manager in a company operating in the finance industry, provided insights into how the culture of concealing manifests itself as an ignorance mechanism of neurodivergence. Karanfil highlighted HRM's tendency to favour a medical approach, indicating an inclination to ignore the entire spectrum of neurodiversity rather than fully recognising it.

When cultural norms adversely label atypicality, this often exacerbates the reluctance to disclose a neurodivergent identity. Such a fear of stigma, in turn, poses a significant barrier for HRM in recognising their neurodivergent candidates who may choose not to disclose their identities. Our participant Orhan implied that candidates may have reservations about how businesses in Turkey handle neurodiversity due to their past experiences of discrimination or negative perceptions within unsupportive contexts:

It's not always possible for us to realise unless the job candidate tells us about their neurological differences. [...] No candidate has mentioned anything about their neurological condition so far. I think candidates may have doubts about how businesses in Turkey approach this issue [neurodiversity]. This is because most probably, in Turkey, there are strong biases against the inclusion of disabled and neurodivergent individuals in the workforce and social life. They might be afraid of not getting the job or being viewed negatively by HRM. I also understand their concerns. (Orhan, male, 32-year-old, consulting, abled)

## 6.2.2 | Confirmation bias against neurodivergence

Confirmation bias against neurodivergence closely relates to neuronormativity, which posits the superiority of a neurotypical configuration (Simmons et al., 2021). In organisational settings, confirmation bias manifests as one of the malign effects of ignorantly designed HRM practices, which can lead to unfair hiring practices, inappropriate decision-making processes, and exclusion. The failure to recognise and value the diverse perspectives and skills of neurodivergent individuals reinforces misconceptions and deprives organisations of the benefits of their unique contributions. Our participant, Zeynep, stated another instance of the confirmation bias encountered by neurodivergent individuals. Zeynep's experience illustrated that individual objections from HRM professionals, which lack a transformative intent towards the ignorant design of HRM, must be revised to ensure the inclusion of neurodivergent individuals.

In assessing a candidate's fit for a role, particularly considering their neurodivergence, it is crucial to possess a nuanced comprehension of the interplay between workplace conditions and their distinct characteristics. Distinguishing between safeguarding an individual's well-being and unintentionally reinforcing preconceived notions about the capabilities of neurodivergent individuals is a delicate yet essential task. Confirmation bias, especially in an unsupportive context, may impede neuroinclusion, functioning as a mechanism of ignorance. One participant, Lale, demonstrated confirmation bias when interpreting neurodivergent individual characteristics or behaviours that endorse existing preconceptions, bypassing an objective evaluation of their capabilities and the potential for workplace adjustments to facilitate their integration.

I interviewed a neurodivergent candidate, and because their condition led to episodes, we were unable to move forward positively in the hiring process. I believed that the workers' health conditions would not be positively affected due to the intense pressure and stress experienced in the manufacturing section of our company. (Lale, female, 27-year-old, automotive, abled)

### 6.3 | Mechanism 3: Illusio of neuroinclusion

Illusio is a Bourdieusian term (Bourdieu, 1972/1977), which refers to the unhealthy rules of a game that become invisible and naturalised for the players due to the allure of the game. In the case of neurodiversity, neuro-normativity acts as an ignorant mechanism, presenting an illusio of inclusion of neurodivergent individuals when neuronormativity renders their inclusion conditional and risky. The game, which is labour market integration and access in this case, has the illusio of inclusion in two distinct ways. HR practitioners referred to empathy and mercy afforded to neurodivergent individuals who are othered and marginalised. There was no critical awareness that acts of mercy devalue and render neurodivergent individuals second-class participants in the labour market. The second form of illusio manifested as unreflectiveness. Illusio is only sustained when the players of a game are drawn to the allure of the game, losing healthy and critical oversight of the game. Unreflectiveness as a form of ignorance helped sustain the illusio of inclusion.

#### 6.3.1 | Claims of empathy and mercy for neurodivergence

Neuronormativity engenders a complex dynamic between empathy and inclusion towards neurodivergent individuals in organisational settings. Often, organisations portray empathy and mercy as a benevolent and understanding approach. However, when neuronormative organisations emphasise neurodivergent individuals without critically examining their practices and biases, they propagate a system that superficially recognises neurodiversity. The quote from Vildan, one of our participants, is significant in illustrating how HRM ignored its responsibilities through narratives of empathy and mercy. Such ignorance fosters an illusio of inclusion while upholding conditional and potentially harmful frameworks for neurodivergent individuals.

We have a colleague with dyslexia, but we were not aware of their dyslexia at the time of hiring. They did not declare their condition, and we did not specifically inquire about their neurological status. They are continuing with their job. They occasionally express having problems related to their work. We, including the management, approach the situation with understanding and accommodate them. (Vildan, female, 29-year-old, transporting, abled)

Ceyda, another participant, explained that social responsibility often echoes the sentiments of empathy and mercy, potentially acting as a cover for only tokenistic inclusion. The professed dedication to diversity and inclusion, usually framed as social responsibility, may need to be more genuinely engaging with the substantive challenges encountered by neurodivergent individuals and other marginalised groups (Palalar Alkan et al., 2022). Such a superficial method risks maintaining provisional structures that merely give lip service to diversity, failing to implement the significant reforms needed for neuroinclusion within the workplace.

The discourse of performativity emerges as one of the forms of ignorance that play a role in the illusion of neurodivergent inclusion. Performativity pertains to actions or expressions carried out mainly for their symbolic significance or to adhere to societal norms rather than authentically reflecting an individual's true convictions or intentions. Prioritising individual experience and past achievements over other characteristics, though ostensibly equitable, may obscure underlying systemic biases and a lack of true inclusivity, especially concerning neurodivergent individuals. Performativity, emphasising a merit-based framework and committing to the equal evaluation of all individuals, becomes a legitimate tool for dominant groups to maintain their unearned privileged positions (Spoelstra & Svensson, 2015). Its neglect of the systematic discrimination individuals face creates an illusio of inclusion. Rezzan, one of our participants with 14 years of experience in HRM, identified that in her company, the lack of supportive HRM mechanisms for neurodiversity likely amplifies the negative impacts of performativity on neurodiversity. Without specific policies to address and support the needs of neurodivergent individuals,

organisations may risk reinforcing a system that only nominally adheres to the principles of neurodiversity. While performativity creates an illusion of inclusion, thereby reinforcing a neuronormative ignorance within the organisation, it fails to address the specific needs and considerations of neurodivergent individuals adequately.

### 6.3.2 | Lack of reflectiveness about neuroinclusion

Internationalisation or becoming part of a multinational corporate structure may influence organisations' development of diversity strategies, particularly in unsupportive contexts (Özbilgin, 2019). These organisations devise inclusive practices to gain legitimacy or meet their international presence's demands. Such developments also impact the creation of neuroinclusion policies aimed at incorporating neurodivergent individuals. However, the implementation of diversity policies, even when considering pragmatic interests, often lacks the depth required to transform the ignorant designs of organisations and break down neuronormative prejudices. The superficial application of these diversity policies, often lacking critical reflection on whom they should serve, leads to an illusion of inclusion. In neuronormative organisational settings, the effectiveness of diversity policies in organisational change is further compromised. Perihan has dedicated the last six years of her career to the Turkish division of a multinational company, which lacks neuroinclusive policies. Perihan's statement implies that diversity policies tend to lose their effectiveness in including neurodivergent individuals when they are merely implemented as formalities.

We don't have a specific HRM policy related to neurodiversity. As a multinational company, we are also committed to the diversity promises made by our headquarters. We conduct all our processes without discrimination based on gender, age, or sexual orientation. Our [diversity management] approach extends to our treatment of neurodivergent individuals. In our recruitment processes, we are committed to ensuring equal opportunities for them [neurodivergent individuals] even though they are not prominently featured as our potential employees. (Perihan, female, 39-year-old, auditing, abled)

Legal compliance in HRM may sometimes overshadow the need for inclusion strategies, particularly concerning neurodivergence. Compliance-driven approaches also lead to a lack of reflective thinking about inclusion's broader implications and benefits. By focussing primarily on meeting legal obligations, organisations may miss opportunities to develop more comprehensive strategies that integrate neurodivergent individuals into their workforce. Particularly in unsupportive macro contexts and neuronormative organisational settings, the influence of legal regulations on organisations could be more substantial. Our participant, Galip, an HR executive in a law office, revealed how HRM policies and practices focussed on legal obligations transform into a mechanism of ignorance towards neurodivergence. Galip's emphasis on fulfilling legal duties and providing genuine employment while avoiding superficial recruitment demonstrates his organisation's commitment to compliance. However, it also revealed that the organisation maintains a reactive rather than proactive stance on neurodiversity.

## 7 | DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Our findings extend the understanding of ignorance of neurodivergence, zooming in on HRM design as a field of study in an unsupportive national context. Although the HRM literature addresses the various challenges neurodivergent individuals face in multiple dimensions, our study examines which mechanisms and forms of ignorance shape the neuronormativity of HR policies on neurodivergence in an unsupportive context. Studying an unsupportive context helps us understand how ignorance informs a neuronormative HR design that unjustly privileges neurotypicality. The OECD study (2020) highlighted indifference and the resultant ignorant design as the most



significant barrier to inclusion in organisations. Thus, identifying mechanisms of how ignorance shapes HR policy has much currency for international research and practice tackling neuronormativity in HR design.

Theorising ignorance in organisations (Roberts, 2013, 2022) as a lens offers the possibility of understanding how normative beliefs shape ignorant design in organisations (Özbilgin, 2024). In this case, we frame neuronormativity as the source and inspiration of ignorant design in HRM policies and practices in an unsupportive context. The study shows how ignoring neurodiversity and the unique needs of neurodivergent individuals in HR design leads to flawed and warped HR policies and practices that undermine, marginalise and devalue the contribution of neurodivergent individuals. A critical exploration of ignorant design exposes relations of domination and power in organisations, revealing how HR professionals may be instrumental in combatting ignorance in unsupportive settings.

One of the fundamental calls for HR professionals to overcome ignorance is to develop evidence-based policies and practices (Briner, 2000; Cavanagh et al., 2024). We acknowledge that evidence-based HR policy and practice also have biases that need to be checked and addressed for neuroinclusion. Our study responds to this call for bias-proofed, evidence-based HR policies and practices. It examines the emergence of ignorant design as a significant challenge for evidence-based HRM to foster neuroinclusion at work. By doing so, we identify HR practitioners as future partners in designing neuroinclusive organisations. We also extend the neurodiversity and neuronormativity theory, explaining how ignorance structures contemporary organisations' neuronormative practices and policies in a supportive context. Our extension also reconfigures HR professionals' responsabilisation (Vincent et al., 2024) for designing neuroinclusive organisations, which requires them to combat embedded forms and mechanisms of ignorance in unsupportive settings.

Neuronormativity is endemic in most organisations because recognising neurodiversity is a relatively recent and often unregulated aspect of diversity (Volpone et al., 2022). Even aspects of neurodiversity regulated through supportive legislation need more accommodation, even in countries with protective legislation (Doyle, 2020). This paper examined how HR professionals consider neurodiversity in a country with an unsupportive context. In particular, we explain how ignorance informs HR policy and practices through three mechanisms. We also identified seven forms of ignorance which correspond to these mechanisms. We extend the theory of neuroinclusion in organisations by exploring the fundamental barriers to neuroinclusion, that is, mechanisms of ignorance and ignoring.

Our three-pronged mechanisms of ignorance extend the theory of ignorance in organisations, identifying distinct mechanisms and illustrating their operationalisation: The dehumanisation of neurodivergence, the misrecognition of neurodivergent contributions, and the illuso of neuroinclusion. Dehumanisation (Haslam, 2006) as a mechanism of ignorance refers to treating neurodivergent individuals like animals or machinery, undermining their human potential in HR design. Misrecognition (Bourdieu, 1997/2000) refers to the devaluation of the knowledge resources of neurodivergent individuals in the HR design. Illusio (Bourdieu, 1972/1977) explains how dehumanisation and misrecognition are accepted and normalised in HR design. We propose possible corresponding HR interventions to overcome each mechanism of ignorant HR design based on neuronormativity. We suggest tackling dehumanisation by building an evidence base for neuroinclusive design. HR professionals may seek technology-based support and engage in awareness-raising for evidence-based design. Dealing with the misrecognition of neurodiversity, HR practitioners may benefit from active engagement and partnership with neurodiversity charities and neurodivergent employees. To shatter the illusion of inclusion, HR practitioners may question the systems, structures and cultures to make them more accommodating and inclusive for neurodivergent individuals.

The study revealed seven forms of ignorance that sustain neuronormative HR design. Two forms, ableness as denial and dismissal of neurodivergence, are apriori from the ignorance literature (Rayner, 2012), and the rest of the forms emerged from our analyses. The ex-post emergent forms of ignorance that sustain ignorant HR design are the stigmatisation of neurodivergence, the culture of concealing neurodivergence, confirmation bias against neurodivergence, claims of empathy and mercy for neurodivergence, and lack of reflectiveness about neuroinclusion.

## 7.1 | Transcending ignorant design through HR interventions in an unsupportive context

The persistent issue of ignorant design in HR necessitates the implementation of multifaceted interventions by HR professionals. At the micro level, it is essential to increase professional awareness of neurodiversity and the needs of neurodivergent individuals (Koch et al., 2022). While there is abundant literature on neurodiversity from an employee standpoint, there is still a need to study neurodiversity in leadership within management and organisational research. Roberson et al. (2021) provide a conceptual framework illustrating how cognitive traits associated with neurodiversity can influence task-oriented leadership behaviours and their impact on leaders and followers. At the meso level, HR professional bodies and educational organisations in Turkey should provide targeted educational programs and resources to enhance awareness of neurodiversity. It is also crucial to shift towards a model that places responsibility for neurodiversity inclusion on various stakeholders, including organisational leaders, HR professionals, managers, and employees. Progressive laws that recognise neurodivergence as a protected diversity and inclusion category at work are urgently needed. With such regulation, HR professionals do not rely on voluntary initiatives, which reportedly fail in Turkey. Therefore, multifaceted and multilevel interventions are necessary to break the cycle of ignorant design in HR policies and practices. HR professionals must balance the possibilities of backlash with leadership support for neuroinclusion interventions. In adversarial contexts of diversity and inclusion, HR interventions must adopt subtle and culturally tailored approaches driven by strong leadership support and allyship.

Through targeted HR interventions, organisations may transcend each mechanism of ignorance. First, to transcend the mechanism of dehumanisation of neurodivergence, organisations may interface with universities, training organisations, neurodiversity charities and consultants to benefit from interdisciplinary research and evidence-based neurodiversity training (Austin & Pisano, 2017). To better include neurodivergent individuals in the workforce, replacing traditional recruitment and selection methods with valid evaluation and psychometric tools designed specifically for the neuroatypical population is essential (Khan et al., 2023; Wegmeyer & Speer, 2023). These specialised tools can help identify and utilise the unique strengths of neurodivergent individuals, thus creating a more inclusive and diverse workplace. Further, organisations may use technology-enabled support to understand neurodivergence (LeFevre-Levy et al., 2023). Finally, a potent way to tackle dehumanisation is to develop policies and practices against bullying, harassment and mistreatment of neurodivergent individuals (Robertson, 2010).

To address the mechanism of misrecognition of neurodiversity in organisations, HR professionals may first encourage active listening and neuroinclusive communication (Thorpe et al., 2024). Raising awareness for neuroinclusion could also be a powerful HR intervention (Doyle, 2020). Third, HR professionals may develop intersectional solidarity between neurodiversity and other diversity and inclusion categories (Özbilgin, Erbil, & Odabaşı, 2023). Finally, we suggest challenging neuronormativity through organisational change and the development of activities (Özbilgin, 2024).

To transcend the third mechanism of ignorance, HR professionals may serve to shatter and transform the illusion of neuroinclusion by first introducing human resource interventions that seek to accommodate and facilitate temporal, cultural, spatial, social and job-related flexibility to ensure neuroinclusion (Hennekam et al., 2023). Induced and supported by flexibility arrangements, changes to the normative structures of HR policies and practices can improve neuroinclusion. Second, organisations may offer co-design of neurodiversity and neuroinclusive approaches (Simmons et al., 2021). Co-design brings neurodivergent individuals to shape the next HR policies and practices with neuroinclusion in mind. Co-design is more than just a participatory exercise; it is necessary to tackle the rampant ignorance towards neurodiversity in HR policies and practices. Organisations can lose the superficial nature of inclusion and reach out to neurodivergent individuals when planning or executing such policies. Such a strategy not only ensures that neurodivergent individuals show voice behaviour but also that they are accommodated in the organisation's workflows, thereby ensuring neuroinclusion in workplaces. Third, organisations may

offer co-ownership of neuroinclusive approaches and interventions (Özbilgin, 2024). In practical terms co-ownership transcends co-design and does not sever the ties of neurodivergent individuals who co-designed HR policies but retains and sustains their relationship with HR in the long term as owners of a particular inclusive design. To achieve this, HR professionals may build allyship, empowerment, and champions for neuroinclusion. Finally, they may promote neurodivergent employee voice for neuroinclusion (Sumner & Brown, 2015). HR professionals should proactively engage with neurodivergent employees and advocacy groups to develop inclusive policies and practices and bring workplace flexibility to accommodate the reasonable requests of neurodivergent individuals. This proactive engagement ensures that the perspectives of neurodivergent individuals are considered in decision-making processes, improving their sense of belonging and diminishing the stigma associated with neurodivergence.

Our study has some limitations. This study focussed on an unsupportive and taboo context of neurodiversity where ignorance shapes HR policies and practices and where participants would find it challenging to expose entrenched practices. This focus limits the generalisability of our findings to supportive contexts, where participants may rely on evidence to form their neuroinclusion policies and practices. Therefore, we recommend future research to explore conditions under which ignorance and evidence-based approaches shape HR policies and practices in supportive contexts.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare that there exists no competing financial interest or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

## DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

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## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information can be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.

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