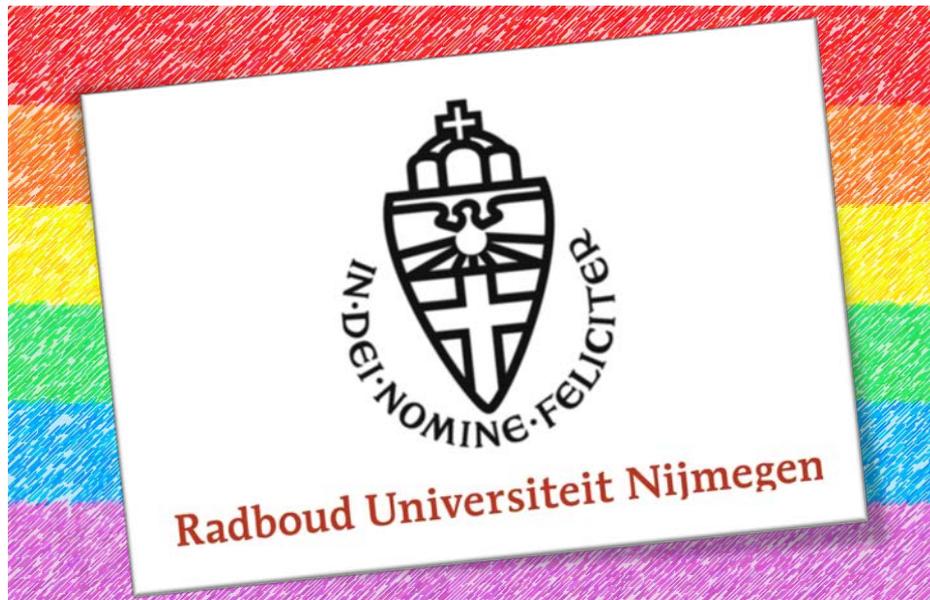


Formal in-company networks: a rainbow colored perspective



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"We should indeed keep calm in the face of difference, and live our lives in a state of inclusion and wonder at the diversity of humanity."--George Takei

The past half year I, as a researcher, learned a lot. Not only did I get to know amazing people who inspired me to see things from a different angle, but I also learned that being LGBT can be a challenge in some situations whilst being completely accepted in others. Life is all about embracing everyone's differences and starting to include them not only in your personal life but also in the professional lives of employees this is an important aspect.

Besides the personal growth I experienced I also learned a lot from delving in the literature and gained experience from further investigating formal in-company networks and LGBTs within these networks.

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Enjoy the read.

Louet Vergoossen

Abstract

This study explores how regular members of a Dutch formal in-company LGBT network view the goals and activities of the formal in-company LGBT network along with their individual goals and activities related to the formal in-company LGBT network. Two theoretical perspectives were used to examine the goals and activities of and related to the formal in-company LGBT network namely, (1) community, visibility, voice and (2) tempered radicalism.

To examine the views of formal in-company LGBT network members, a case-study was conducted in a professional consultancy organization. Where in order to collect data 14 interviews with regular in-company LGBT network members were conducted alongside, a document analysis and participant observations.

The results of this study showed that the concepts of community and visibility were detectable amongst the individual amongst the goals and activities of the organization and the individual goals and activities of the regular in-company LGBT network members. The results also indicated that the concept of visibility needs to be broadened. The concept of voice was not detectable amongst the regular in-company LGBT network members. The results indicated that the concept of tempered radicalism was not detectable the regular in-company network members.

This study contributed to the literature by providing insights and expanding the already existing literature into the Dutch context, the views of regular in-company LGBT network members and the applicability of community, visibility, voice and tempered radicalism.

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1. Introduction

The past years, the importance of diversity within organizations is stressed in both research and practice (Buijs, Hekma, & Duyvendak, 2011; Day & Greene 2008; Kirton & Greene, 2016; Kuyper, 2013). However, the workforce has not changed much in terms of opinions about for instance sexual orientation (Bell, Özbilgin, Beauregard, & Sürgevil, 2011; Kuyper 2016). This is remarkable, as an increasing number of the workforce is outed, in organizations and society in general, as a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) (Bell et al., 2011; Keuzenkamp & Kuyper, 2013; Kuyper, 2016). This is confirmed by different studies that show that LGBT employees increasingly incorporate their private identity (e.g. sexual orientation) within their identity that is visible at work (Bilodeau & Renn, 2005; Kuyper, 2016).

Being able to express one's sexual orientation at work (being out) can have several advantages for the LGBT employees as well as the organizations they work in. When LGBT employees are out, they show higher levels of commitment to the organization as well as higher degrees of job satisfaction (Bell et al., 2011; Day & Schoenrade, 1997). Additionally, LGBT employees are more productive when they are able to be as open as they prefer at work (Kirton & Greene, 2016). In order to ensure that LGBT employees can be open and experience a positive work environment and attitudes, the organization needs to ensure that diversity management is executed properly. To provide a proper execution of diversity management, organizations need to create adequate policies that include LGBTs in the workforce (Kirton & Greene, 2016).

However, there is still a lot to improve on diversity management and inclusive policies as research shows that LGBT employees still face difficulties in organizations (e.g. Kuyper, 2016) such as, discrimination or harassment while being outed at work (Kuyper, 2016). In turn, these difficulties may lead to a decreased well-being and other issues such as burnouts and absenteeism (Kuyper, 2013, 2016). In order to contribute to the diversity management in organizations and to change the difficult situation of LGBT employees in organizations, formal in-company LGBT networks have been created (Welbourne, Rolf, & Schlachter, 2015). These formal in-company LGBT networks are often aimed at helping the LGBT employees and enhance the visibility of LGBT employees in the organization; aimed at allowing the professionals to use their full potential (Colgan, 2011).

Research that has been conducted with regard to both the LGBT employees in general and the formal in-company LGBT networks in particular employs the concepts community, visibility and voice to investigate and analyze the goals and related activities of formal in-company LGBT networks (e.g. Bell et al., 2011; Colgan, 2011; Colgan & McKearney, 2012). It has been argued that formal in-company LGBT networks desire to: 1) bring employees who share a similar feature or interest together (community), 2) show that there are LGBT employees in the organization (visibility), and 3) to have a say in making the organization more inclusive and diverse with regard to LGBT employees (voice).

Most studies that focus on community, visibility and voice as an analytical framework primarily investigate the perceptions of the formal in-company network at large and the perspectives of the network leaders (e.g. Colgan, 2011). However, as has been shown in studies on other formal in-company employee networks such as women's networks (e.g. Singh, Vinnicombe, & Kumra, 2006), the goals and activities that are considered important by the regular members individually might differ from the goals and activities of the formal in-company network and its network leaders. For example, studies on women's formal in-company networks has shown that network leaders are more focused on the business objectives of the formal in-company women's network as a whole such as improving the retention of women in the organization, while regular in-company network members are more focused personal objectives such as enhancing their own network (Singh et al., 2006). As a consequence, it is not clear if the concepts of community, visibility and voice are applicable to the goals and activities as experienced by the regular in-company LGBT network members.

Moreover, different studies argue that network leaders want to foster change within the organization through networks. The willingness to foster change within the network leaders' organizations can be perceived as 'radicalism' (Kirton, Green, & Dean, 2007). Possibly, the regular in-company LGBT network members are less radical and more tempered in comparison to the in-company LGBT network leader. This reasoning is supported by studies that indicate that LGBT employees value positive social change, but are also bound by the norms that are valued by the organization (Bell et al., 2011; Meyerson, 2003). This can be referred to as 'tempered radicalism' (Meyerson, 2003), which might also apply to the regular in-company LGBT network members.

Most participants in research on formal in-company LGBT networks thus far were men. The current study does not specifically focus on investigating gay men, but on investigating regular in-company LGBT network members, which can provide insights from

other LGBT network members than men as well. Next to the fact that little research focuses on regular in-company LGBT network members, it can be observed that formal in-company networks have almost only been researched in either the USA or the UK (e.g. Githens & Aragon, 2009; Raeburn, 2004; Wright, 2006). To extend the literature on formal in-company LGBT networks this study will investigate the views of regular members of a formal in-company LGBT network, in the Dutch context. The Dutch societal context is often known for its tolerance towards LGBTs including laws to protect the LGBTs (Buijs et al., 2011). In contrast, the UK and US context are not recognized for their tolerant behavior towards LGBTs and are often challenged to improve the legislation in favor of the LGBTs (Kirton & Greene, 2016). Thus, research conducted in the Dutch context might broaden the empirical basis of the theory on formal in-company LGBT networks.

In conclusion, this study will gain insight in how regular members (whether lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender) of a Dutch formal in-company LGBT network view the goals and activities of the formal in-company LGBT network as well as their individual goals and activities related to the formal in-company LGBT network. The outcomes of this study will contribute to the theory about formal in-company LGBT networks by enhancing our understanding of how the formal in-company LGBT network is experienced by members other than network leaders and in a context that is different from the USA and the UK. More specifically, this study contributes to the literature on formal in-company LGBT networks by investigating the applicability of the concepts of community, visibility, voice and tempered radicalism to regular in-company LGBT network members in a Dutch context. Thus, this study aims to enhance the understanding of formal in-company LGBT networks in general, which in turn can ensure that organizations optimize their support for the formal in-company LGBT network. In order to achieve this goal the following research question is formulated:

How do regular in-company LGBT network members in a Dutch organization view the formal in-company LGBT network goals and activities along with their individual goals and activities in relation to the formal in-company LGBT network?

In order to answer this research question a case-study approach is chosen to gather data about the phenomenon to be studied. The case organization is situated in the Netherlands, involved with Diversity and Inclusion (as shown on their corporate website) and wanting to address possible problems that different employees might experience. More information about the case organization will be provided in Chapter 3 of this study.

1.2 Contributions

This study contributes to the literature about formal in-company LGBT networks as it will provide insights regarding the goals and activities of the regular LGBT formal in-company network members. These insights are possibly different from the formal in-company network leaders and therefore can contribute to a more extensive view on formal in-company LGBT networks. Besides, this study does not specifically focus on investigating gay men, which can provide a wider view from other in-company LGBT network members as well.

Also, in this study a different context will be taken into consideration, specifically, a Dutch organization is studied. Literature regarding LGBT employees, and specifically formal in-company LGBT networks, outside of the USA is scarce as most research is focused on this context. Investigating a formal in-company LGBT network in a Dutch context can provide new insights as the case in which the formal in-company LGBT network is situated might influence the perspectives of the members.

Last, this study contributes to the literature on formal in-company LGBT networks as it investigates the applicability of the concepts of community, visibility, voice and tempered radicalism to regular in-company LGBT network members in a Dutch context and, thus, explores whether more empirical evidence can be found for the relevance of these concepts in practice or whether the existing body of literature needs to be adapted or extended.

Next to the theoretical relevance, this study also has practical relevance for the case organization and other organizations that could benefit from the insights obtained in this study, as these organizations can adapt their diversity policy and their networks according to the insights that are gained. Also, other formal in-company LGBT networks can gain insights about what activities and goals are considered important to regular members and can possibly decide to adjust their networks accordingly.

1.3 Study outline

The outline of this study is as follows. In Chapter 2, a definition of formal in-company LGBT networks will be provided and the theoretical concepts which include community, visibility, voice and tempered radicalism will be discussed. Specifically, the relation of community, visibility and voice to the goals and activities of formal in-company LGBT networks and other formal in-company employee networks will be further explained. In Chapter 3, the methodology of this study will be described which includes the research strategy, research design, data-collection, data sources, measurement instrument, data-analysis, research ethics

and quality of the research. In Chapter 4, the results of this study will be discussed, which consists of a comprehensive description of the results of the document analysis as well as an elaborate description of the analysis of the interview transcripts and observational memo's. Finally, in Chapter 5 the conclusion and discussion will be presented as well as recommendations for future research and practical implications.

2. Theoretical Framework

Most research regarding formal in-company LGBT networks seeks to identify differences between union-based LGBT networks and formal in-company LGBT networks (Colgan & McKearney, 2012; Githens & Aragon, 2009). These studies suggest that employees have overlapping interests in both the union based LGBT networks and the formal in-company LGBT networks. For this reason, and due to practical limits, this study will solely focus on the formal in-company LGBT networks and will not take into account union-based LGBT networks.

According to Githens and Aragon (2009) formal in-company LGBT networks can be defined as: "Structured, formally sanctioned groups that organize formal programs and encourage discussion about diversity for benefit of the organization" (p.126). However, this definition does not take into consideration the network character of formal in-company LGBT networks. A more general description of formal in-company employee networks is provided by Scully (2009) who argues that formal in-company employee networks in general start with providing support; that is creating a place where universal stories amongst employees can be shared and interpretations can be transferred from the individual to a more collective level. The insights of Scully (2009) will be combined with the insights of Githens and Aragon (2009) to provide a more extensive definition of formal in-company LGBT networks that is suited for this study, which is: formally sanctioned groups that organize formal programs, where support is provided, universal stories can be shared and that encourages discussion about diversity for the benefit of both the LGBT members and the organization (Githens & Aragon, 2009; Scully, 2009).

2.1 Theoretical perspective (1): Community, visibility and voice

Literature regarding LGBT employees in organizations and literature that is focused on formal in-company LGBT networks suggests that the concepts of community, visibility and voice are leading concepts to explore formal in-company LGBT networks (Colgan, 2011; Colgan & McKearney, 2012). The concepts of community, visibility and voice are primarily

used in the literature to understand the activities of formal in-company LGBT networks as identified by the network leaders (e.g. Colgan, 2011; Colgan & McKearney, 2012). The current study explores the applicability of these concepts to the goals of the formal in-company LGBT network and the goals and activities that are mentioned by regular in-company LGBT network members. The goals and activities that can be distinguished in the literature are described first and afterwards a categorization of goals and activities in relation to community, visibility and voice will be provided. The concepts of community, visibility and voice will be discussed in more detail.

First, according to McMillan and Chavis (1986) community can be defined as: “a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together” (p.9). In addition, community can be referred to as, a place where employees feel supported and are able to share their stories (Scully, 2009).

Second, obtaining visibility for LGBT employees in general can be distinguished and is defined by Manalansan (1997) as: “public avowal of one's identity” (p.498). Visibility can also be referred to as being out for the public, which in the case of LGBT employees is the organization and its members. Both positive and negative aspects can be linked to the visibility of LGBT employees (Bell et al., 2011). An example of a positive aspect linked to the visibility of LGBT employees is the increased commitment from the LGBT employees to the organization whereas an example of a negative aspect is that LGBT employees might experience harassment related to their LGBT identity (Bell et al., 2011).

Third, obtaining voice according to Hirschman (1970) can be defined as: “any attempt at all to change, rather than to escape from, an objectionable state of affairs, whether through individual or collective petition to the management directly in charge, through appeal to a higher authority with the intention of forcing a change in management, or through various types of actions and protests, including those that are meant to mobilize public opinion” (p.30).

Literature suggests that community, visibility and voice are not solely theoretically appropriate concepts, but are practically relevant as well. The concepts are considered to be important aspects of formal in-company LGBT networks and important to LGBT employees in general. For example, by obtaining community, visibility and voice, a more inclusive work environment can be created in which LGBT employees can be themselves (Colgan &

McKearney, 2012; Kirton & Greene, 2016). In addition to that, Bell et al. (2011) argue that voice needs to be provided to LGBT employees in organization, both on social and moral grounds, because it can lead to a more equal treatment of LGBT employees, which in turn might lead to a more inclusive work environment (Bell et al., 2011).

However, as discussed earlier on, research until now has mainly collected data from formal in-company LGBT network leaders, who might have goals and activities in mind that are more related to the concepts of community, visibility and voice in comparison to the goals and activities as experienced by the regular in-company LGBT network members (Savenije, 2015). Therefore, in this study, to explore their applicability to the goals and activities experienced by regular members of a formal in-company LGBT network, the concepts of community, visibility and voice are used to identify the goals and activities that regular in-company LGBT network members of the formal in-company LGBT networks assign to the formal in-company LGBT network as well as their individual LGBT network related goals and activities.

In summary, community, visibility and voice are used in this study to identify the goals and activities that regular members individually consider important to the formal in-company LGBT network as well as individually as regular members of the formal in-company LGBT network. In order to provide insights about how regular members view the formal in-company LGBT network and to establish what goals and activities these individuals have for participating in the formal in-company LGBT network.

Below, the goals and activities that can be distinguished in the literature are first described and are then categorized using the concepts of community, visibility and voice. This categorization will be used as a preliminary guideline to the collection and analysis of the data for this study.

2.2 Goals of the formal in-company LGBT network

The study of Raeburn (2004) identified several goals that can be linked to formal in-company LGBT networks. The goals that are mentioned in this study will be further discussed in relation to community, visibility and voice. First, enabling LGBT employees to meet one another and to exercise networking behavior can be distinguished (Raeburn, 2004). This goal can be linked to the aspect of community because, both the opportunity to share stories and to meet one another are connected to the concept of community as well as the opportunity to exercise networking behavior. Second, the formal in-company LGBT networks are suggested

to teach other employees about topics related to sexual orientation and gender identity (Raeburn, 2004). This goal can be related to the visibility of LGBT employees. By educating other employees, their sexual orientation and/or gender identities become visible to the other employees. The LGBT employees become visible as they speak about their sexual orientation or gender identity and therefore identify themselves as LGBT employees towards colleagues. Third, another goal that can be ascribed to the formal in-company LGBT networks is obtaining acknowledgement from the organization (Raeburn, 2004). Fourth, the last goal that can be ascribed to formal in-company LGBT networks is ensuring that the organization designs new policies aimed at including the LGBT members in the organization (Raeburn, 2004). The third and fourth goal can both be related to the concept of voice. When the concept of voice is taken into account it is considered important that the organization enables LGBT employees to express their opinion about important affairs within the organization, such as policies concerning LGBT employees (Bell et al., 2011). To achieve this, the formal in-company LGBT network first needs to be acknowledged (Githens & Aragon, 2009). Thus, both the third and the fourth goal are related to the concept of voice in organizations.

Literature about the goals that can be assigned to formal in-company LGBT networks is scarce. Therefore, goals that are assigned to formal in-company women's networks are taken into consideration in this study. Research that has been conducted with regard to the goals of regular in-company women's network members might provide insights that are also useful for the regular in-company LGBT network members, as formal in-company women's networks were also designed to bring employees together to improve their members' position in their organizations (e.g. Bierema 2005; Cross & Armstrong, 2008; Singh et al., 2006). As this research focuses on regular in-company LGBT network members the views of studies that are involved with regular women network members will now be further discussed.

Specifically, the research of Deyton (2012) aims at investigating the goals of women's networks as seen by regular members. The goals that were assigned to women's networks were as follows: networking, develop women professionally, retain/promote women, address issues about for instance work-life balance, build strategic relationships (i.e. building relationships between the network and HR or the diversity department¹), help women plan careers, facilitate and assist women, advocate for women in the organization, recognize talent

¹ Explanation of this concept was not provided by Deyton (2012). However, Singh et al. (2006) and McCarthy (2004) suggested that both the HR and diversity department can help the women's network strategically to voice the opinions of the network to the upper management of the organization.

and leadership potential and create visibility with upper management (Deyton, 2012). These concepts will now be phrased in terms of LGBT employees and conceptualized in community, visibility and voice.

Networking, creating visibility with upper management and advocating for LGBTs in the organization were already present within the LGBT literature and are already assigned to the concepts of community, visibility and voice, based on the goals provided by Raeburn (2004). Develop LGBT employees professionally, help LGBT employees plan careers, facilitate and assist LGBT employees can be related to the community function of the formal in-company LGBT networks. All the before mentioned concepts can be related to the community function as they involve offering support to the LGBT employees as well as providing opportunities for regular in-company LGBT network members to share their stories.

The goals of retention/promotion and recognize talent and leadership potential can be linked to the visibility goals of the formal in-company LGBT network. When regular in-company LGBT network members are recognized as talents, the visibility of this specific type of employees can also be enhanced. When LGBT network members are observed as talents possibly more employees of that have the same identity might be viewed as talented (Kirton & Greene, 2016). Thus, the visibility of the LGBT employees is enhanced. In addition to that, retention/promotion can also be seen as an important visibility aspect. When LGBTs are promoted this might highlight the fact that these employees in fact are eligible for promotion and can get opportunities in organizations, which in turn has a positive effect on the visibility of LGBT employees throughout the organization.

Lastly, addressing issues about, for instance, the work-life balance and building strategic relationships can be related to the concept of voice within the organization. When LGBT employees can address issues that are of their concern to the management, policies that might be important to them can possibly be adapted in order to ensure that adequate measures are taken to potentially solve the issues and benefit the LGBT employees in the organization. Also, when strategic relationships are built this might have an impact on the voice of the formal in-company LGBT network. For instance, when the formal in-company LGBT network is capable of building good relationships throughout the organization with, for instance, the HR department or the diversity department, the formal in-company network can possibly ensure that their opinions are voiced to these departments and actions are taken into consideration (McCarthy, 2004; Singh et al., 2006).

2.3 Individual goals of the regular in-company LGBT network members

Despite the fact that the goals of the formal in-company LGBT networks have been researched (e.g. Githens & Aragon, 2009; Raeburn, 2004), the individual goals of regular in-company LGBT network members are not taken into account in these studies (Savenije, 2015). Different researchers discuss the individual goals of women and ethnic minority groups for joining formal in-company network (Bourdil & Géraudel, 2016; Friedman & Craig, 2004). These individual network goals will now be further discussed in relation to community, visibility and voice.

First, Friedman and Craig (2004) argue that employees who do want to join in-company networks often do so because they want to gain social support from that network. Another intention for members is to be part of a community that specifically consists of comparable others (Friedman & Craig, 2004). In addition, Bourdil and Géraudel (2016) argue that obtaining information can also provide an intention for employees to join a formal in-company LGBT network. These aforementioned aspects are all linked to the community function of the formal in-company LGBT networks, because being part of a social group and obtaining support are considered important. Obtaining information can be linked to the community aspect as LGBT employees might receive relevant information from other LGBT employees through sharing stories with one another. For instance, they could obtain information, from other LGBT employees, about how the organization deals with LGBT employees and in this way obtain insights that differ from their own, or find common issues.

In relation to visibility, gaining access to mentors can be distinguished. Mentoring is related to visibility because it enhances the opportunity of employees to be recognized by upper management or important decision-makers within the organization (Baranik, Roling, & Eby, 2010; Noe, 1988). In addition, career advancement is also mentioned as an intention in relation to formal in-company employee networks. Individual members the formal in-company LGBT network might want to obtain visibility through the formal in-company LGBT network in order to ensure that they are noticed by upper management and decision-makers and thus ensure that they are eligible for promotions and career advancements (Singh, Kumra, & Vinnicombe, 2002).

Friedman and Craig (2004) also indicate that conquering the dissatisfaction about their current working environment might be another reason for employees to join a formal in-company employee network. When the employees can express their dissatisfied feelings

regarding their current working environment the opportunity to exercise voice is enabled. This is also supported by Bell et al. (2011) who indicate that the opportunity for LGBT employees to address issues about their current working environment can be perceived as voice. Additionally, it can be argued that LGBT employees in union networks may want to participate within networks to ensure that their partners might also obtain benefits from the organization. Unions could possibly provide ways to do so (Creed & Scully 2001; Friedman & Craig, 2004). This might also be the case in formal in-company LGBT networks and is related to the aspect of voice within the organization.

Table 1, provided later on in this Chapter, presents an overview of the network goals and individual goals discussed in the literature. This overview will be used in this study in order to determine what goals are linked to the formal in-company LGBT network to be studied and will be used to determine what individual goals can be distinguished amongst regular in-company LGBT network members. Additional goals may emerge from the empirical data and will be taken into account to complement the overview in a later stage.

2.4 Activities of the formal in-company LGBT network

Literature that focuses on formal in-company LGBT networking activities already makes a distinction between the concepts of community, visibility and voice (Colgan & McKearney, 2012; Savenije 2015). Specifically, Colgan and McKearney (2012) describe several activities that can be distinguished per concept. The activities that are described in relation community, visibility and voice will now be further discussed.

First, a community oriented activity that can be identified is, enabling the LGBT employees to exercise their network behavior for instance through networking drinks (Colgan & McKearney, 2012). Another type of activity that can be identified encompasses providing information about the formal in-company LGBT network to its members, this can be accomplished by making use of, for instance, the companies' intranet or sending out newsletters via email (Colgan & McKearney, 2012). A different activity that is mentioned with regard to community is keeping all the LGBT network members updated about activities regarding the formal in-company LGBT network.

Second, with regard to visibility several activities can be distinguished, as well. An activity that can be distinguished is providing advice on training and development and offering mentoring programs (Colgan & McKearney, 2012). In this way, the managers of the organization become aware of the LGBT employees' needs concerning training and

development. Additionally, mentoring can enhance the visibility of LGBT employees to decision makers and possibly upper management within the organization as is indicated by former studies (Baranik et al., 2010; Noe, 1988). Also, the visibility of the formal in-company LGBT network can be enhanced by ensuring that the members of the formal in-company LGBT network participate in events that are aimed at the so-called 'pink employees' such as visiting a gay monument (Savenije, 2015). Additionally, formal in-company LGBT networks are often involved in giving talks at both internal as well as external events in order to improve the visibility in and outside of the organization (Colgan & McKearney, 2012).

Third, in relation to voice activities Colgan and McKearney (2012) identify two activities that contribute to the voice possibilities of LGBT employees in the organization. The first activity involves changing the policies of the organization in relation to inclusion of LGBT employees. Another activity that can be distinguished in relation to voice is the access and distribution of LGBT employees to equality or diversity committees.

2.5 Individual activities of the regular in-company LGBT network members

Although the general activities of the formal in-company LGBT networks have been researched (e.g. Colgan & McKearney, 2012), less attention is devoted to what regular in-company LGBT network members consider to be important activities for themselves. Literature about formal in-company women's networks is used in order to determine what individual regular women members might find important activities in contrast to what the organization or the formal in-company LGBT network consider to be important. The literature that focused on women's in-company networks does not discuss individual activities that the women themselves engage in. However, the study of Deyton (2012) does discuss several activities that women individually find important with regard to formal in-company employee networks. These activities will be taken into consideration and will now be further discussed in relation to community, visibility and voice. Several activities can be distinguished namely, sharing best practices amongst other women, mentoring, coaching, participating in social events and exposure to senior management (Deyton, 2012). These activities are discussed in this research as they most closely resemble the activities that women would like to engage in themselves (Deyton, 2012). Therefore, this might also provide interesting insights for the individual activities of the regular in-company LGBT network members.

Sharing best practices amongst LGBT employees and participating in social events can be linked to community. When the employees engage in sharing best practices with one

another they might help other employees with the experiences that are gained, this can be seen as one of the aspects of community, namely helping other LGBTs. In addition, mentoring as well as coaching activities can be linked to the concept of visibility (Baranik et al., 2010; Noe, 1988). Lastly, it can be argued that exposure to senior management can deliver visibility for the LGBT employee as is suggested by Deyton (2012). When looking at the findings of Deyton (2012) on the regular members of formal in-company women’s networks, the concept of voice does not seem to be applicable to the activities. This issue will be further discussed in the next section.

Table 1, which can be found below, provides an overview of the network activities and individual activities discussed in the literature. This overview will be used in this study to determine what activities are linked to the formal in-company LGBT network to be studied and will be used to determine what individual activities can be detected amongst regular in-company LGBT network members. Additional activities may emerge from the empirical data and will be taken into account to complement the overview in a later stage.

<i>Concepts</i>	<i>Goals</i>		<i>Activities</i>	
	<i>Network</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Network</i>	<i>Individual</i>
<i>Community</i>	Enabling LGBT employees to meet one another	Gain social support from the network	Enabling LGBT employees to exercise their network behavior (e.g. organizing drinks)	Sharing best practices amongst other LGBT employees
	Enabling LGBT employees to exercise networking behavior	Being part of a community of comparable others	Providing information about the formal in-company LGBT network	Participating in social events
	Develop LGBT employees professionally	Obtaining information	Keeping the members updated about all upcoming activities	
	Help LGBT employees plan careers			
	Facilitate and assist LGBT employees			
<i>Visibility</i>	Educate other employees about sexual orientation and gender identity	Gaining access to mentors	Addressing the network in general meetings	Mentoring
		Career advancement	Participating in external activities	Coaching
	Being recognized as leadership potential		Advise on training and development	

	Retention/promotion		Mentoring activities
<i>Voice</i>	Obtaining acknowledgement from the organization	Conquering dissatisfaction in current work environment	Participating in talks (internally and externally)
	Ensuring that the organization designs policies aimed at inclusion of LGBT employees	Obtaining additional benefits for partners	Changing the policies of the organization in relation to inclusion of LGBT employees
	Address issues about for instance work-life balance		Obtaining access to equality or diversity committees
	Building strategic relationships		

Table 1: Overview of goals and activities in relation to community, visibility and voice (Baranik et al., 2010; Bell et al., 2011; Bourdil & Géraudel, 2016; Colgan & McKearney, 2012; Creed & Scully, 2001; Deyton, 2012; Friedman & Craig, 2004; Kirton & Greene, 2016; Noe, 1988; Raeburn, 2004; Singh et al., 2002)

2.6 Theoretical perspective (2): Tempered radicalism

Next to the concepts of community, visibility and voice this study will use tempered radicalism as a theoretical perspective to investigate the experiences of the regular in-company LGBT network members. Tempered radicalism is studied as research indicates that LGBT network leaders tend to value organizational change (e.g. Colgan & McKearney, 2012; Wright et al. 2006). Highly promoting and focusing on strategies for organizational change often is viewed as a radical approach (Kirton & Greene, 2016; Kirton et al., 2007). Possibly, the regular members of the formal in-company LGBT network are more tempered in comparison to network leaders. This argument is supported by researchers who indicate that LGBT employees generally value positive social change, but are also bound by the norms that are valued by the organization (Bell et al., 2011; Meyerson, 2003). Thus, they may be considered tempered radicals. The concept of tempered radicals will now be further explained.

According to Meyerson and Scully (1995) tempered radicals can be defined as: “individuals who identify with and are committed to their organizations, and are also committed to a cause, community, or ideology that is fundamentally different from and

possibly at odds with the dominant culture of their organization” (p.1). In addition to that Kirton et al. (2007) identify tempered radicals as: “people who work and seek advancement within mainstream organizations and professions, but also want to change them” (p.1981). Tempered radicals are individuals who have situational identities as they come to work with different values, beliefs and responsibilities which are based on a variety of identities and connections that are salient in different circumstances (Demo 1992; Gecas, 1982; Meyerson & Scully, 1995). In addition to that, Meyerson and Scully (1995) suggest that tempered radicals can be considered an unique case as the values and beliefs that are important according to the organization are assumed to be different from the personal, extra-organizational and political identity. Important in this regard is the fact that the tempered radicals do want to change the organizations they work in, but they are, at the same time, bounded by the norms of the organization (Kirton et al., 2007), due to their commitment to the organization.

A definition of commitment that is often mentioned in the literature is as follows: “commitment is defined as 'the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization'” (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982, p.28). This definition is chosen as an analytical concept in this study, as it closely resembles the type of commitment that is described in the research of Meyerson and Scully (1995). Mowday et al. (1982) argue that organizational commitment involves three components, namely, the acceptance of the organizational goals and values, the exercise of additional effort to the benefit of the organization, and an eagerness to stay with the employer. They suggest that these components should be taken into account with regard to organizational commitment.

Tempered radicals constantly need to balance their organizational commitment and their personal identities (Kirton et al., 2007). Balancing these identities can provide a lot of difficulties for tempered radicals within organizations (Kirton et al., 2007; Meyerson, 2003). For instance, employees who want to make changes within the organization might feel that they are not a committed member of the organization (Meyerson, 2003). In contrast, if tempered radical employees remain silent or even invisible and do not use their voice, this can also create difficulties as they might feel that they are not staying close to their personal identity (Meyerson, 2003).

LGBT employees may be viewed as tempered radicals in organizations (Bell et al., 2011). This is related to the fact that LGBT employees might face issues with expressing their sexuality at work and therefore exercise a dual agenda. LGBT employees can be viewed as tempered radicals, as they may have radical plans for positive organizational change, but their

radicalism may be constrained by their organizational commitment. Tempered radicals want to balance out both perspectives and might sometimes struggle to do so (Kirton et al., 2007; Meyerson & Tompkins, 2007). However, their tempered radicalism might also create possibilities through which employees can create avenues to express their voice (Bell et al., 2011; Meyerson 2003). The organizational commitment that is expressed by the tempered radicals might ensure that these objectives do not collide with the objectives that are valued by the organization.

In this study, tempered radicalism is used to explore in what ways regular in-company LGBT network members deal with the possibly conflicting elements of wanting to change their organization and being committed to it. As network leaders may tend to value organizational change more than regular in-company LGBT network members, their way of balancing their orientation to change and their organizational commitment may differ from regular in-company LGBT network members (Bell et al., 2011; Kirton et al., 2007; Meyerson, 2003).

2.7 Concluding remarks

This study will use the concepts of community, visibility and voice to conceptualize both the formal in-company network's goals and activities alongside the individual goals and activities. An overview of formal in-company network goals and activities as well as the individual goals and activities in terms of community, visibility and voice is presented in Table 1. Table 1 will be used to verify what goals and activities are identified by the regular in-company LGBT network members in this study in order to explore the applicability of these concepts to the goals and activities that regular members find important.

A focus on the concepts of voice suggests that LGBT related organizational change is central to the goals and activities related to formal in-company LGBT networks. Besides wanting organizational change employees often are committed members of the organization. Therefore, in this study, the tempered radical perspective is used in addition to community, visibility and voice to explore the organizational commitment element and the balancing of change and commitment of the regular in-company LGBT network members.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research strategy

This study used an interpretivist qualitative approach in order to answer the research question: ‘How do regular in-company LGBT network members in a Dutch organization view the formal in-company network goals and activities along with their individual goals and activities in relation to the formal in-company network?’ An interpretivist point of view was taken in this study as this approach allows the researcher to develop an understanding of how regular in-company network members experience the goals and activities of the network as well as their network related individual goals and activities.

At the core of this study, regular member’s own perceptions regarding formal in-company networks are examined. To gain insight into these perceptions, a degree of dialogue needed to be established. The interpretivist view takes human interpretation as a beginning to develop knowledge about the social world (Duberley, Johnson, & Cassell, 2012). The interpretivist view values the fact that the meanings that are assigned to specific phenomena are well-understood (Duberley et al., 2012). Specifically, in this study it was important that the researcher adequately understood the views of the interviewees. The interpretivist view allows the researcher to make sense of the meanings that the interviewees assign to the subjects of the study (e.g. network goals and activities). While the interviewees provided an explanation of what the network’s and individual goals and activities of the formal in-company LGBT network meant to them, the researcher had to ensure that the meanings which were assigned to the phenomena were interpreted adequately.

Besides, the researcher was aware to stay as open-minded as possible in this study in order to influence the interpretations of the interviewees as little as possible. At the same time, however, the researcher needed to be aware of the fact that she was influenced by her own traditions and perspectives (Duberley et al., 2012). In order to be aware of these traditions and perspectives, the researcher tried to be as neutral as possible and tried to distance herself from the research objects by writing her own thoughts in a research diary. The own interpretations and traditions of the researcher will further be reflected upon by the researcher in Chapter 5.

Additionally, a qualitative approach was chosen because, in this study, a thorough description and interpretation of the network and individual goals and activities of the formal in-company LGBT network needed to be provided in order to get an extensive insight into this phenomenon. It is important in this study that the views of the regular LGBT members of

the formal LGBT in-company network were captured in the right manner. Due to the sensitivity of the topic of sexual identities in organizations, it was considered to be important that the views of the interviewees regarding the formal in-company LGBT network and their possible tempered radical identity were captured in the right way. A qualitative approach ensured that the interviewees had control in how they wanted to describe the phenomenon and what experiences they wanted to stress (Boeije, 2010). Also, literature about formal in-company LGBT networks is scarce and a qualitative research can ensure that rich-data is gathered, so that the literature about the formal in-company LGBT-networks can be adequately extended on the basis of rich empirical material, which is an important reason to choose a qualitative design (Bleijenbergh, 2015).

More specifically, this study used a qualitative case-study approach to answer the research question. A case-study approach was needed as it allows for the in-depth investigation of a phenomenon in its real-life context (Yin, 2014). In this study, it was important to investigate a formal in-company LGBT network in the Dutch context, in order to provide new insights to the current scarce literature about formal in-company LGBT networks. Thus, the understanding of formal in-company LGBT networks in general can be enhanced.

Additionally, it was important that the information in this study was gathered from an organization that had actually established a formal in-company LGBT network, which in this study is the case organization that was investigated. Since this study specifically aimed at investigating the regular members of a formal LGBT in-company network, several selection criteria were applied in order to assure that a suitable organization was selected. The procedures that were applied are now further discussed. First, several websites were visited in order to investigate what organizations currently have established a formal in-company LGBT network. The websites from Charter Diversity²(2017) and Workplace Pride³ (2017) as well as company websites provided an overview of companies that currently have a formal in-company LGBT network. Second, an overview of the organizations was created and contact

² Charter diversity stimulates diversity and inclusion in organizations throughout the Netherlands. According to their website they are involved with the following: “The Charter Diversity is a voluntary commitment to stimulating diversity in organization on one or more dimensions. Specifically this is about measures that are created by the organization itself, linked to business economical goals.”

³ Workplace pride is an organization involved with LGBT inclusion at the workplace. According to their website they are specifically involved with the following: “Workplace Pride is a not for profit foundation dedicated to improving the lives of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgenders and Intersex (LGBTI) people in workplaces all over the world. We strive for a world of inclusive workplaces where LGBTI people can truly be themselves, are valued and, through their contribution, help to lead the way for others” (Workplace Pride, 2017).

information was added. The case-organization that was investigated in this study was present in the pre-created overview and was contacted by phone. After some consultation, the organization expressed the wish that the research would result in advice concerning LGBT network activities that could be organized in the future, which was in accordance with the research question of this research. Thereafter the organization decided to participate in this study.

3.2 Case organization

This study was performed in ConsultancyGo⁴, a professional consultancy organization located in the Netherlands. For this particular study, the companies' subsidiary location located in Amsterdam was chosen. Because anonymity was requested by the organization, the name ConsultancyGo used in this study as a substitute.

The organization has over 5.500 employees that work in different offices throughout the Netherlands. The employees are divided across several business units and function levels. The function levels of the employees differ per business unit within the organization according to the ConsultancyGo intranet site. For example, for one business unit the employees the lowest function is junior consultant and the highest function is partner. Several business unit of the organization can be distinguished such as a business unit that is focused on external clients and a business unit that is focused on internal clients. The business unit that is focused on the organization itself and the internal clients includes an HR department which consist of recruiters and other HR personnel.

According to the corporate recruitment website of ConsultancyGo, the organization is highly involved in diversity and inclusion. The diversity and inclusion department formed four strategic pillars that are considered important with regard to achieving a diverse and inclusive workforce within the organization. The employees that are responsible for the diversity and inclusion department perform these activities along with their HR responsibilities (personal communication, HR manager, September 2017). On the ConsultancyGo intranet site it is suggested that the organization wants the employees to be themselves. In order to accomplish this, the organization has created three formal in-company employee networks. One for women employees, one for employees with a cultural background that differs from the general Dutch cultural background and one for LGBT employees, including their straight allies. The involvement of the diversity and inclusion

⁴ ConsultancyGo is a pseudonym for the organization that was investigated.

department differs per network. For instance, within the women's network diversity and inclusion has helped to set up a leadership program that keeps track of women who are promoted in the organization and offers support to senior employees when promoted (personal communication, HR manager, September 2017). In contrast, in the formal in-company LGBT network the diversity and inclusion department appears to be less active as they only engage in regular meetings with the network leaders (personal communication, HR manager, September 2017).

The formal in-company LGBT network of ConsultancyGo, named Pink Marble⁵, that was studied, currently exists one year. Pink Marble has a board that consists of about 5 members who are involved with organizing activities, attracting new members and providing information to the members of the formal in-company LGBT network. Two of the board members are actively involved with initiating new activities and are considered the network leaders. The formal in-company LGBT network has organized several activities such as, network drinks and an in-house day for LGBT students. Currently, Pink Marble has around 70 members, who are distributed across different job levels and business units in CosultancyGo. Some of the Pink Marble's members are the so-called straight allies, which are heterosexual employees that are involved with and support Pink Marble. In addition, the network leader suggested that no formal definition is used to determine membership to the formal in-company LGBT network (personal communication, networkleader, august 2017).

3.3 Method of data-collection

A case-study design, used in this study, allows for several data-collection methods to be used namely, interviews, document analysis and participant observations (Bleijenbergh, 2015; Buchanan, 2012). Precisely, this study used documents, interviews and participant observations in order to gather as much data and information as possible about the goals and activities of the formal in-company LGBT network as well as the individual goals and activities that can be distinguished by the regular in-company network members. It is important to mention that the interviews were the main data collection method in this study, documents and participant observations were used in this study as additions to the interviews.

Interviews that were conducted in this study followed an open-ended semi-structured approach. An open-ended approach allowed the interviewees to formulate an answer to the questions themselves, instead of choosing from prefixed categories (Bleijenbergh, 2015). In

⁵ Pink Marble is a pseudonym for the formal in-company LGBT network that was investigated.

this study it is important that the thoughts of the interviewees are captured in the right manner, therefore open-ended interviews offer an adequate method to do so. A semi-structured approach was chosen as it allows the researcher to address pre-established topics (Bleijenbergh 2015), for instance the goals and activities of Pink Marble. In this way, the researcher can ensure that the interview is directed in the way she wants it to be and that relevant questions are asked on the basis of relevant scientific literature at hand (Bleijenbergh, 2015). The interviews concerned the goals and activities and the organizational commitment which is an important aspect of the tempered radicals.

In this study, it was considered important that the same procedure was applied to every interview, in order to ensure that the data from the interviews would be comparable in order to detect possible patterns during the data analysis. Specifically, this encompasses that the interview questions were formulated beforehand and were asked in a specific order. This resulted in the following set-up of the interview (see Appendix A). In the beginning of the interview, general questions were asked about for instance, the name and function of the interviewees. Additionally, questions about the commitment to the organization were asked in order to collect data on the concept of tempered radicalism. Thereafter, questions were asked about the LGBT-identity and the formal in-company LGBT network. Specifically, the researcher has chosen to first address the questions regarding the individual goals and afterwards the question regarding the goals of the formal in-company LGBT network. This approach was applied, because in this way the interviewees were not guided by goals mentioned in relation to the formal in-company LGBT network when answering questions about their individual, network related, goals and activities.

During the interviews the researcher herself had the opportunity to change the structure of the interview if necessary, or to ask additional questions that were not formulated in Appendix A. The researcher was provided the opportunity to ask additional questions in order to ensure that more in-depth insights about the topics of the interview were gathered from the interviewees.

The interviews were either conducted in Dutch or English. As some interviewees were unable to answer the interview questions in Dutch, they were offered the opportunity to conduct the interviews in English. Both the Dutch and English interview guide, used in this study, can be found in Appendix A.

In addition to the interviews, documents regarding the LGBT in-company network were gathered. The documents were gathered by the companies' intranet or were provided by the formal in-company LGBT network leader who has access to different documents involving the formal in-company LGBT network. The documents that were collected, were used in order to provide a context of both the organization that was studied and the formal in-company LGBT network that was studied, to create a more comprehensive understanding of ConsultancyGo and Pink Marble.

The last data-collection method used in this study is participant observations. According to Brannan and Oultram (2012) participant observations are a specific approach to obtain information which is about the direct contact that has taken place between the researcher herself and the research objects. During the observations the researcher was an active participant in the research environment and the participants were aware of her role as a researcher. After the participant observations took place the researcher immediately logged the obtained information during the observations in her research diary as observational memos. The participant observations, in this study, were used to form a broader understanding of the activities of Pink Marble that took place during the time the researcher was present in the organization. Also, participant observations took place during the interviews that were conducted. The researcher logged information about the interviewees into her research diary immediately after the interviews were conducted.

3.4 Data Sources

Concerning the interviews, 14 interviews were conducted in ConsultancyGo. Saunders (2012) argues that saturation in a heterogeneous population is reached when the population consists of 12 to 30 interviewees. In this study, 14 interviewees were selected to take part in the interview process in order to make meaningful statements about the goals and activities of Pink Marble along with their individual goals and activities. Since this study focused on the regular in-company LGBT network members, it was important that the interviewees who are selected in this study considered themselves to be regular in-company LGBT network members and a member of the LGBT community. Thus, the selection criteria for the interviewees were applied on all the regular in-company LGBT network members that were interviewed. In order to ensure that only LGBT network members were interviewed the researcher consulted the network leader on the sexuality of the interviewees. Thereafter, the researcher contacted these employees and interviewed them. For this study, the researcher

interviewed 13 gay men of which the majority was a (senior) consultant, three gay men were a (senior) manager. Also, one lesbian woman was interviewed, who was a (senior) consultant.

In addition to the 14 interviews, that provided the main data used in this study, four complementary interviews with 2 network leaders, a straight ally and an employee who wanted to join the network were conducted to obtain a broader understanding of the formal in-company network and to include different other perspectives of the formal in-company LGBT network, as well.

Documents that were selected are documents that contain information about the formal in-company LGBT network. More specifically, information about the goals and activities of the formal in-company LGBT network were collected. The documents were selected based on their relevance to this study. Documents included in this study are: general documents about the organization's diversity and inclusion department and documents about the goals of the formal in-company LGBT network, Pink Marble.

Observations made by the researcher, were also used within this study. The participant observations that were made in these concerned social situations that were relevant to the study. Specifically, this entailed different activities that were organized by the formal in-company LGBT network or in collaboration with the formal in-company LBGT network, such as drinks that involved the network and drinks in collaboration with other networks within the organization or with other formal in-company LGBT networks outside the organization. Also, observations were made during interviews about the tone of the interview or the willingness of the interviewee to share information.

3.5 Procedure of data-analysis

After the interviews were conducted the interviews were transcribed verbatim. During the interviews and after the interviews observational memo's regarding the interview in question were created. These memos were reflections made by the researcher during the interview process concerning for example, the behaviors of the interviewee during the interview process. The memo's that were created were taken into account alongside the transcription of the interviews in the process of data-analysis, which means that the memos and transcripts of the interview were analyzed simultaneously. Thereafter, the transcripts of the interviews were coded, which involved a specific process that was undertaken. First, codes were created that closely resemble the words of the interviewees. Because some interviews were conducted in Dutch, adding English codes to fragments helped the researcher to make sense of the

fragments and to find similarities between the codes which also contributed to the analysis process. Thereafter, codes were created in order to categorize the fragments of the interviews into goals and activities of Pink Marble, individual goals and activities, change (in regard to the LGBT identity) and organizational commitment. Additionally, codes were attached to the fragments that resembled the theory more closely, namely community, visibility, voice and tempered radicalism.

When the analysis was completed, fragments were reviewed that seemed to be relevant to the study, but did not fit the pre-established goals and activities. If, after being carefully reviewed, these fragments were considered relevant, codes were created that fitted the reviewed fragments.

3.6 Ethical concerns and role of the researcher

Important in qualitative research are research ethics, which entail that a researcher needs to be trustworthy and needs to have a moral accuracy when performing a research (Boeije, 2010). As this study focuses on investigating a sensitive topic and might include LGBT employees who might have difficulties with expressing their sexual orientation at work, it was even more important that the research ethics were taken into consideration in this study.

The researcher informed the interviewees about what participating in this study actually entailed. Specifically, this involved clarifying the subject of the study and explaining how the interview data was anonymously used in this study. Due to the sensitive topic that was studied it was important that confidentiality in this study was guaranteed. The interviewees needed to feel free and protected when expressing their thoughts on the formal in-company LGBT network and their organizational commitment. The researcher therefore, stressed that the information about the interviewees was anonymized. In this study, the names of the interviewees were not mentioned in the results or in the transcripts of the interviews. Also, personal information that was provided by the interviewees was either replaced with an X or a black layer to ensure that the data cannot be read. Thus, the confidentiality of the interviewees was ensured. If the interviewees wanted to receive the transcripts to check them, the researcher provided them with the opportunity to do so.

Besides the confidentiality, the researcher needed to be aware of the sensitivity of the research topic namely, anything related to the formal in-company LGBT network. It could, for example, be the case that the LGBT employees had difficulties with discussing their sexuality. Therefore, the researcher ensured that this topic was cautiously addressed.

Thus, the researcher ensured that the interviewees felt comfortable talking about the formal in-company LGBT network and their commitment to the organization. Also, the researcher had to take care that the interviewees did not feel offended or coerced by the researcher.

Lastly, the researcher needed to be aware of her role within the organization where the interviews were conducted. In this research this was important because the researcher was employed as an intern within the organization. Several interviewees were already acquainted with the researcher, which could mean that they might have been more at ease when sharing the experiences with the researcher. However, it could also mean that they did not experience confidentiality from the researcher. The researcher needed to be aware of all these facets during the research process.

3.7 Quality of the research

In scientific research, more positivist stances still are preferred in journals and amongst scholars. These positivist stances are often applied to quantitative research and are transferred to qualitative research. Quantitative standards that thus can be distinguished are: validity (both internal and external), reliability, generalizability and objectivity (Vennix, 2011). However, some researchers argue that standards that are more applicable to qualitative research need to be used (Symon & Cassell, 2012). Qualitative standards that can be identified include: credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability (Symon & Cassell, 2012). These qualitative quality standards were applied to this study specifically because of the interpretative nature of this study.

First, credibility refers to trying to establish a best fit between interpretation and reality. Specifically, the researcher wants to show that the realities which are constructed by the interviewees of the study are adequately reflected in the reconstructions which she attributes to them. In order to ensure that the credibility of this study is enhanced the researcher made use of member checking and peer debriefing. Member checking involves checking whether data that is provided in the research is registered in the right manner (Symon & Cassell, 2012). In this study, the researcher provided the interviewees with an opportunity to check the answers they provided by offering to send them a transcript of the interview. Another credibility component that is mentioned is peer debriefing which involves discussing the research practice e.g. the process of data analysis with fellow researchers or

colleagues (Symon & Cassell, 2012). In this study, this involved talking to fellow researchers and ensure that correct interpretations were assigned to the data.

Second, the dependability refers to showing how the methodological choices and changes that have been made within the research have been made visible for evaluation (Symon & Cassell, 2012). The dependability of this study was honored by ensuring that the researcher extensively reported on the data collection methods, data sources chosen and kept a research diary and made several methodological memos during the data-analysis process. A research diary is an overview that is kept by the researcher herself in order to reflect on the methodological choices made. This overview was used to determine what methodological changes needed to be discussed in the research report (see chapter 5). Furthermore, this study used a semi-structured interview design which ensured that the dependability of this study is enhanced (Symon & Cassell, 2012). The use of semi-structured interviews as a method of data-collection ensured that all the interviewees received the same questions, which therefore enhanced the dependability of this study.

Third, transferability entails that the researcher provides a detailed description of the case that is studied within the specific research. This will allow the reader of the research to decide on what contexts the case is applicable (Symon & Cassell, 2012). In this study, the researcher provided a thorough description of the case in order to ensure that other researchers can transfer the insights to other studies or cases accordingly. Thus, the transferability of this study was enhanced.

Fourth, confirmability refers to showing where the data that is used in this study comes from and how this specific data can be transformed into findings of the research (Symon & Cassell, 2012). In this study, the confirmability was enhanced by providing an elaborate overview about where the gathered data stems from. In Chapter 4 of this study more detailed information will be provided about the documents studied, interviewees questioned and social situations observed. Furthermore, in the analysis that will be presented in the next chapter, the interpretation of the data by the researcher will be illustrated and sustained using quotes from the empirical material that was gathered. While the confirmability standards might provide difficulties due to the confidential nature of this study, as it might be difficult to include personal details about the respondent from the interview, anonymized information was used that shows what anonymized sources can be linked to specific quotes.

A further discussion regarding the quality standards will be provided in Chapter 5 of this study.

4. Results

In this chapter first the context in which the formal in-company LGBT network is situated in will be provided. This includes an overview of the goals and activities of the formal in-company LGBT network as revealed by relevant documents and the additional interviews with network leaders. Next, an overview of the formal in-company LGBT network goals as well as the individual goals, according to the regular members, is provided. These will be analyzed from the theoretical perspective of community, visibility and voice. Thereafter, the activities of the formal in-company LGBT network as well as the individual activities, as reported by the regular in-company LGBT network members will be discussed in the same way. Then, Table 1 which was presented in Chapter 2 will be adapted and complemented with goals and activities which were specifically mentioned in relation to the network that was studied. Lastly, the results involving the tempered radicalism will be further discussed.

4.1 Context of the formal in-company LGBT network and work environment

In order to get an understanding of the formal in-company LGBT network of ConsultancyGo and the context in which the formal in-company LGBT network is situated both a context of the formal in-company LGBT network and the work environment it operates in is provided. This information is based on the interviews, documents and observational memos.

The formal in-company LGBT network has been founded approximately one year ago by several LGBT employees in the organization in collaboration with a partner - a highly positioned individual in the organization - who is still actively involved with the formal in-company LGBT network. The analysis of the documents showed that the main goal of the formal in-company LGBT network is: *“to create an environment where people can be ‘their authentic selves’ and can be who they truly are, without feeling pressure to hide or to excuse themselves”* (My ConsultancyGo, 2017). Further analysis of the documents revealed several activities that are undertaken by the formal in-company LGBT network, namely, organizing network drinks, handing out bracelets during the Gay Pride, organizing workshops around LGBT topics such as being bisexual or unconscious bias, organizing in-house days focused at LGBT students and lastly becoming a member of the Workplace Pride. An additional analysis performed on the interviews of the network leaders revealed several additions to this list such as: a drink organized in collaboration with the other formal in-company LGBT networks in

the organization, a drink that is organized in collaboration with other companies and their formal in-company LGBT networks (network leader 1, gay man; network leader 2, gay man).

Several events, listed above, organized by the LGBT network, were also visited by the researcher. During these, the researcher observed that most of the participants were gay men (Research diary, 2017). The dominance of gay men in the formal in-company LGBT network was also reflected in the interviewees who participated in this study. In total, 14 regular in-company LGBT network members were interviewed of whom 13 employees were men and gay and only one interviewee was a woman and lesbian. Both bisexuals and transgenders were not represented as interviewees in this study. Several reasons for the low response rate of lesbian women as well as the absence of bisexuals were indicated by some interviewees. The majority of the interviewees suggested that simply more men than women were currently working in the organization at large.

Another reason, provided by the interviewees, was that LGBT women are less active within the gay community in general. This was also indicated by employee 8 (gay man) who argued that: *“I think you will see that, anyway. I think it is like that in the gay scene in any event. Also, when going out but also in bars and associations. Also, at (mentions another formal in-company LGBT network), we experienced the same thing that more men were inclined to join”*. Not only the LGBT women were a minority in the formal in-company LGBT network, it also appeared that there were only a few or even no bisexuals who are active within the network. This was also mentioned by Employee 8 who argued the following: *“But I think that people who are bi mostly want to be associated with their heterosexual side and don’t want to have a mark stamp that says you’re associated with that. Not from other people but also not from the gay community”*. The abovementioned quotations might indicate that there are less LGBT women present within the organization, it could also be the case that some employees still feel uncomfortable with expressing certain sexualities in the workplace such as bisexuality. The situation of LGBT women and sometimes bisexuals was briefly addressed during interviews. However, during the interviews, no similar remarks were made about the lack of transgender employees within the formal in-company LGBT network.

Besides the lack of variety in the LGBT categories there also appeared to be a lack of variety in how the LGBT network was spread across the different offices in the Netherlands. The majority of regular in-company LGBT network members appeared to be situated within

the 'Randstad'⁶. This is shown in the location that is chosen for the activities, as most of the activities either take place in Amsterdam or Rotterdam. Also, all the interviewees were stationed in the Randstad.

Generally, the general climate within ConsultancyGo towards LGBTs was perceived as positive, and a lot of employees who were interviewed expressed that they have the feeling that they can be open about who they are within the organization. The regular in-company LGBT network members also expressed the feeling that they could be open about who they are and are accepted as they are. However, these experiences are not shared amongst all employees. Some employees argued that they themselves at some point in their careers have experienced issues regarding their LGBT identity within the organization. This was apparent, for instance, when employees brought in their commissions or revenues: *“If you are talking about networking, then there are also just homosexual that eh where I get the connections from and I notice that people react disdainful to that. When my revenue is also money and that is exactly the same money as someone else’s. It is seen as, eh he just takes it from his gay network, yeah, just a gay partner”*(Employee 2, gay man). Another interviewee confirmed this negative reaction towards making use of their gay network as a career opportunity. He stated the following:

Employee 9 (gay man): (...) But gays have a lot of ‘friends’ of whom they always know who can help you. I think that business wise it is a very decent network that is not appreciated yet in a lot of organizations. (...)

Interviewer: And why do you think that is?

Employee 9 (gay man): Because it is less cool, of course. It is cooler to say that you got an opportunity from a friend of the fraternity. Everyone mentions that though. Instead of saying you had a drink with them in the SoHo⁷, I guess that is different.

The prior quotations indicate that within the organization the contacts that are obtained via gay networks are not perceived in the same manner as contacts which are obtained via networks that are appropriate according heteronormative standards.

In addition to that, employee 2 (gay man) also made some remarks about jokes that are made by more senior employees within the organization. About this he stated the following:

⁶ Randstad can best be defined as the very urbanized western region of the Netherlands

⁷ SoHo is a gay bar that is situated in Amsterdam.

Yes, I was, I am occasionally made fun of eh at certain parties and the more informal settings and often when they've been drinking. Eh, well, about associations with femininity. Yes, fine, I can laugh about that and defend myself against that type of jokes. But I find it wrong when those jokes come from partners.

Interviewer: Yeah, I get that

Employee 2 (gay man): (...) Those [referring to partners in the organization: LV] are not my friends, and they always are very business-like. But if there is a possibility to make a joke, it is always that type of a joke.

The aforementioned quotation indicate that there might be some disagreement about the appropriateness of making certain remarks or 'jokes' during several social events in the organization. Some (heterosexual) employees might make comments that, in the eyes of other (LGBT) employees, are not appropriate.

Apart from these remarks, employees often suggested that they did not experience difficulties with regard to being out in the organization or experienced positive attitudes towards being out. For example, one employee suggested the following: *"While this [this refers to being out: LV] is more the case in Amsterdam, here no one bats an eye. Eh, I have told I to one person, I do not remember whom. I think it was a secretary. I thought that if I would tell it [it refers to being gay: LV] to a secretary that soon everybody would know it. But strangely enough that was not the case. As no one bats an eye and that is really chill"* (Employee 11, gay man). This quotation indicates that in the employees' opinion there was a relaxed ambiance in the organization about being out.

4.2 Goals of the formal in-company LGBT network according to the regular in-company LGBT network members

Generally, the interviewees reported that one of the goals of the formal in-company LGBT network is to provide a place in which the regular in-company LGBT network members can be themselves. Which is also shown in the following statement: *"I think it's a support system and it's a way to... Eh, well it's more of eh I think all the networks are a support system in the first place. Because it kind of, the main aspect of all LGBT networks is to create a safe space for the people, right? To kind of make sure that everyone can work eh. Without being judged for who they are. Just being their authentic selves"* (Employee 1, gay man). The aforementioned quotation is in accordance with the network goals as officially stated in the documents and is community-related.

Another community component that was often mentioned by the interviewees is networking. When one employee was questioned about his thoughts of the goal of the formal in-company LGBT network he answered the following: *“Well, I think it is about networking, but honestly I don’t know that for sure”* (Employee 7, gay man). Additionally, another goal of the formal in-company LGBT network according to the interviewees is to ensure that the employees are enabled to meet one another: *“Yes, I just think that the goal is to unite each other. Just to bring the people together and serve them what they want.”* (Employee 9, gay man). Another employee stated the following: *“Eh well. In any case to be a community and to ensure that people eh can be themselves in their work. That’s what I think it is and that you facilitate a periodical meeting or that they can talk about it or that they can be there for other people in the network if they have any issues”* (Employee 12, gay man). Which is related to providing a community where LGBTs are facilitated and provided with a space where they can truly be who they are.

Another formal in-company LGBT network goal that was mentioned by some interviewees is the following: *“Second goal of Pink Marble would be to strengthen the network by bringing more straight allies into the network so eh we kind of promote inclusivity at a greater scale. I would not probably use the word strengthen the network because I think the main purpose of the straight allies is to kind of promote more inclusivity”* (Employee 1, gay man). Including allies was seen as an important asset to the formal in-company LGBT network that was studied. Another network member elaborated a bit more on why it is an important goal for the formal in-company LGBT network to engage allies in the network: *“Well to concretely state that it is accepted within the culture. So, if “important people” within ConsultancyGo who are not, or who are just heterosexual. If they find it okay or if they state that they accept it. Well, then it shows an even stronger message than when Pink Marble only does it alone. (...) The heterosexuals are a part of the network, too, in that sense. But it is a stronger message if they themselves say it”* (Employee 12, gay man). The aforementioned quotations show that the interviewees considered it important to engage straight allies in the formal in-company LGBT network. Engaging the straight allies in the formal in-company network makes the formal in-company LGBT network and its members known to them and thus enhances the visibility of the formal in-company LGBT network and its members internally.

Even though it was not mentioned by any of the regular in-company LGBT network members as a goal, the following goal needs to be taken into consideration as well: *“One of*

the pillars [of the formal in-company LGBT network: LV] that we have established in financial year 2016/2017 eh was attracting new talent [LGBT talent: LV]. Well, especially external talent.” (Network leader 1, gay man). This quotation shows that to the formal in-company LGBT network it is important to attract new LGBT talent that is currently not employed within the organization. To achieve this goal Pink Marble organized an activity which will be explained more in detail later on in this Chapter.

Voice did not appear to be seen as one of the important functions or goals that the formal in-company LGBT network has. During the interviews the employees did not express a need for more voice within the organization or that more voice was necessary for themselves. Even the employees that do not originally come from the Netherlands, who might have faced a difficult situation in their home country, showed that voice is not considered to be an important aspect of the LGBT network in the Netherlands. This is illustrated in the following quotation: *“But I honestly think it really has to do with because we are in the Netherlands and because almost sexuality in the Netherlands is so accepted. Like, it’s so accepted, so normal that maybe the other gay employees don’t feel the need to have a separate group for them. Because they don’t feel the need of fighting for rights or recognition because they already are recognized and they already have their rights” (Employee 4, gay man).*

Even though the community function was suggested to be important in this formal in-company LGBT network, a critical remark has to be placed by the community function of the formal in-company LGBT network that almost every interviewee finds important. Not all the participants say it explicitly but some quotes suggest that the regular in-company gay network members are more focused on their own gay identity instead of focusing on the LGBT identity. For example, one interviewee said the following: *“But there will undoubtedly be people who say that, oh we have gays within ConsultancyGo, that I did not know” (Employee 13, gay man).* This quotation shows what a majority of the interviewees also did in their interviews: they only talked about gay issues and gay networks instead of focusing on the LGBT community as a whole. Therefore, it can be questioned if the community function is as broad as is suggested in the formal in-company LGBT network. Another employee stated the following: *“Eh, let me start with LGBT, I don’t feel connected to that group. I do feel connected with the gays. So, that you are dragged into the broader group I see as a sort of necessary evil, if you know what I mean. That’s the way it is. But I would rather see that the network was only for the gays. And why, you wonder?” (...)* *“Eh, well because I don’t think*

that there is an overlap, for example, between lesbians or eh transvestites or whatever. We all have our own characteristics and issues, I don't think you can mix up all of them. Of course, we all have a different sexuality, so that is our common factor. But next to that there are so many differences, that I think you cannot huddle them all. I also never thought about LGBT, that abbreviation is even a little unfamiliar to me to be honest. Yes” (Employee 10, gay man).

The aforementioned quotation shows that even though the community function is often detected in the goals of the formal in-company LGBT network it can be questioned if all employees experience community in the same manner. For instance, for some employees this might be focused more on employees that have the same sexual orientation instead of all the LGBT employees.

4.3 Individual goals of the regular in-company LGBT network members

The first goal that is mentioned by a majority of interviewees is the fact that they often feel the need to join the network because they want to get to know other LGBTs within the organization. As one employee described: *I want to get to know other eh. LGBT employees” (Employee 4, gay man).* Other interviewees also stated that a reason for joining the network is being up-dated on the things that are happening within the formal in-company LGBT network. The employees like to be informed about everything that is happening within the formal in-company LGBT network, as one employee put it: *“Well because I wanted to be kept up-to-date about what is happening and the activities that are organized” (Employee 7, gay man).*

Having a place where the employees can be themselves is also a reason which is mentioned for joining the formal in-company LGBT network. A regular in-company LGBT network member mentioned the following about the goals that other regular in-company LGBT network members take into account when joining the network: *“Eh, I am not someone who worried a lot about my sexuality. But I know people who experienced issues with that. I know of a colleague in here that he or she did not dare to express him or herself for years and, therefore, I find it important that these initiatives are here. That we also offer a safe space for new people who come here, and if it's not for me, then for other people” (Employee 11, gay man).*

Another goal or reason that was mentioned by several senior leveled interviewees is the fact that they want to help other employees by providing advice to them. One senior employee who was interviewed suggested the following: *“And because of that reason I*

became a member. Because I think that if people are bothered with that and I can give them advice or help them” (Employee 13, Gay man). Providing advice can be related to the concept of community as this advice is aimed at helping other LGBTs in the formal in-company LGBT network and therefore contributing to the community.

Surprisingly, a couple of interviewees mentioned obtaining a romantic relationship as a reason for employees to join the formal in-company LGBT network. These employees suggested that for other LGBT colleagues obtaining a romantic relationship might be one of the reasons for joining the formal in-company LGBT network. One employee suggested the following: *“Eh. Yeah I can imagine that someone, for example, not me, but you have connections at Pink Marble to obtain a relationship, for example” (Employee 5, gay man).* This reason for joining the network might be related to the community function of a formal in-company LGBT network. When the regular in-company LGBT network members join the community in order to find a potential life partner they do so because they expect the network to exist of comparable others.

Additionally, the interviewees mentioned that they want to gain social support when joining the formal in-company LGBT network or that they want to have a place where they can share their experiences or issues with colleagues who can also identify with the LGBT category. Some regular in-company LGBT network members argued that these issues could be both about their personal lives as well as about their professional lives. For instance, employee 5 (gay man) mentioned the following: *“Eh, just drinking or networking. When you want to make it in ConsultancyGo it is also important that you know a lot of people. And I find it interesting to also meet other people outside of the professional regular network who are active within ConsultancyGo. It is always good if I have a professional or unprofessional problem that I can reach out to others, or they can reach out to me. So that we can help one another”.* This quotation also indicates that it is important to know a lot of people in the organization. Knowing a lot of people in the organization might have an impact on the visibility of the regular in-company LGBT network member. Which is also explained by another interviewee who argued that: *“At this moment I have a relatively low job position in the organization, but I know that at two job positions higher I want to sell projects. Eh, then it is convenient to know people from ABN AMRO for example. So it can also have... It can most certainly have a commercial contribution” (Employee 3, lesbian).* This quotation shows that regular in-company LGBT network members need to know a lot of people inside and outside of the organization in order to attract clients. In turn, this might have an impact on the

visibility as it could make these regular in-company LGBT network members visible to their superiors and thus impacts the promotional opportunities of the employees in question.

Finally, one interviewee mentioned that a goal for to take part in the formal in-company LGBT network is to show to other LGBTs that it is possible to be promoted in the organization if you are a LGBT employee. About this the employee stated the following: *Then, I thought if other people experience issues with that and we can be there for those employees by showing that it is possible to have a career because employee 12 is a senior manager. Then I think that is fine, then I would like to be associated with that” (Employee 12, gay man).* By making other LGBTs aware that is in fact possible to have a career in the organization this not only impacts the visibility of the LGBT employee him/herself but also has an impact on the visibility of LGBTs internally throughout the whole organization that is studied.

4.4 Goals of the formal in-company LGBT network and individual goals according to the regular in-company LGBT network members in relation to community visibility and voice

All the aforementioned findings match the findings of Colgan and McKearney (2012) in relation to the community and visibility aspects of formal in-company LGBT networks. Both community and visibility are detectable within the goals of the formal in-company LGBT network as formulated by the regular members. Generally, the results showed that community related goals such as obtaining and providing support are considered important goals for both the formal in-company LGBT network and the regular in-company LGBT network members.

Overall, the formal in-company LGBT network appeared to be more engaged in slightly different visibility related goals than the regular in-company LGBT network members. The network engaged in visibility related goals such as including straight allies into the formal in-company LGBT network. By achieving these goals the formal in-company LGBT network might enhance its visibility internally. Another goal of the formal in-company LGBT network in relation to visibility is the targeted recruitment of the LGBT employees externally. Individual visibility related goals that were detected amongst the regular in-company LGBT network members include: enlarging the visibility of the regular in-company LGBT network members themselves to ‘make it in the organization’ and with potential clients, and showing to other LGBTs in the organization that LGBTs can have a career in ConsultancyGo.

However, the concept of voice was not detectable in both the formal in-company LGBT network goals and individual goals of the regular in-company LGBT network members. This is surprising as the results of former studies (e.g. Bell et al., 2011) show that achieving voice is often considered to be an important goal for LGBT employees in organizations. Nonetheless, voice was not viewed as one of the goals of the formal in-company LGBT network amongst the regular in-company LGBT network members that were studied.

4.5 Activities of the formal in-company LGBT network according to the regular in-company LGBT network members

4.5.1. Current Activities according to the regular in-company LGBT network members.

The activities of the formal in-company LGBT network were mostly aimed at providing an opportunity for the employees to meet other LGBTs within the organization in an informal manner. An opportunity to meet employees and to provide support to the employees was provided by network drinks organized by the formal in-company LGBT network. The purpose of these types of activities is twofold. On the one hand these type of activities are about establishing a community. One network member explained it as: *“Nah, I think for creating a community and meeting one another. A community does not exist if you never see each other. So, also enjoying each other’s company and getting to know one another. You also provide people with a possibility to connect to the network. It is a company with a high turnover so every month new people start. And because they organize activities they offer them a chance to join the network”* (employee 8, gay man). On the other hand the employees that join the drinks are also often educated as often the drinks are organized alongside interesting reads or presentations. *“The activity involved a combination of a drink and a presentation about a research about bisexuality in organizations. After the talk had taken place, the employees who were present discussed issues involving bisexuality which was also unknown to some LGBTs who were present”* (research diary, 2017). Educating the regular in-company LGBT network members and their straight allies might provide more insights to LGBT problems that are not known which creates more awareness for these problems and thus might enhance the visibility of the employees internally.

Also, the mailings are often mentioned as an activity, specifically as a means by which the members of the network are informed. These mailings can possibly ensure that the regular in-company LGBT network members are provided with information about Pink Marble in general and informed about all the activities that will take place. Generally, the interviewees

made positive remarks about receiving the emails or newsletters from the network. However, some interviewees expressed their dissatisfaction with the communication and emails specifically. One interviewee stated the following about the emails: *“Yeah really boring and long stories that no one understands. Those mails are way too complicated, it is also semi-serious”* (Employee 2, gay man). This quotation indicates that there might be some room for improvement regarding the content of the emails that were distributed by the formal in-company LGBT network. In turn, improving the communication can ensure that the community within the formal in-company LGBT network is even more enhanced.

Earlier on in Chapter 4 it was mentioned that one of the goals of Pink Marble is to attract new LGBT talent to the organization. To ensure that LGBT talent is attracted to the organization the formal in-company LGBT network organizes an in-house day which is specifically aimed at LGBT students. Even though some regular members mention it as an activity of the formal in-company LGBT network, they did not mention it as comprehensively as network leader 1, who described it as follows: *So, how can we attract new people? Then I thought well I just want to show what type of cool assignments we as ConsultancyGo have. But then, with another path, what if we only let LGBT employees be present and invite only LGBT students and allies and friends and whatever”* (Networkleader 1, gay man). In addition, Employee 1 (gay man) stated the following: *“Then I think that the PYC⁸ [the event aimed at LGBT students, LV] is an eye-opener for them that tells them it is okay that you are who you are and still be respected for who you are. And I think that is the reason the PYC event is actually a success because I think last year a lot of students did apply for recruitment after the event. Eh and eh I think that is a big success, actually”*. The abovementioned quotations show that in the minds of the network leader and the regular in-company LGBT network member it is considered important to show to employees outside of the organization that being and LGBT is valued in ConsultancyGo.

Additionally, several employees mentioned the fact that the formal in-company LGBT network organizes activities which are focused at collaborating with formal in-company LGBT networks of other organizations. For instance, the formal in-company LGBT network organized a drink with several other networks. About this drink the network leader 2 (gay man) mentions the following: *“Eh, but in the end I think the intention why we put this together is to show ourselves [referring to Pink Marble: LV] ”*. This activity of the formal in-

⁸ PYC (paint your career) is a pseudonym for the name of the in-house day that is organized by Pink Marble.

company LGBT network primarily served the visibility function as it provided an opportunity to show itself to other formal in-company LGBT networks and its members.

Finally, within this organization specifically it has been shown that a lot of attention is focused on the customers or the potential customers of the organization: *I also think that there is a possibility to get more opportunities out of it [it refers to having a network, LV]. And with that I mean that if you show it as ConsultancyGo it also creates opportunities at other organization. Not only commercially but also in the relationship, you just know it”* (Employee 12, gay man). Remarkably, the commercial aspect of the formal in-company LGBT network was also signaled by the straight ally who, in line with the aforementioned statement, argued that having a formal in-company LGBT network can provide a lot of opportunities at customers. The opportunities that stem from activities of the formal in-company LGBT network do not only benefit the network itself, but also impact the organization as a whole.

Community and visibility are detectable in the activities that are organized by the formal in-company LGBT network. An important visibility-related activity is that the formal in-company LGBT network can benefit the organization by attracting customers. However, the concept of voice as is described by Hirschman (1970) cannot be detected in the data provided by the regular members of the formal in-company LGBT network in this organization.

4.5.2. Possible future activities according to the regular in-company LGBT network members

Besides the current activities that were mentioned by the regular members of the formal in-company LGBT network, also some future activities were mentioned. Activities such as drinks were often mentioned as a possible activity, which is elaborated on by employee 12 who stated: *“But eh no, well activities maybe more drinks. So that you better maintain the community and maintain the community more frequently. I think, it is organized two times now. (...) So that it happens more frequently maybe, that sounds fun, I don’t know”* (Employee 12, gay man).

Another activity that was mentioned by a large number of the interviewees is having a boat or float on the Gay Pride. According to the employees organizing such an event can have benefits for both the employees of the organization and the organization itself. As one employee put it: *“A boat at the Gay Pride, that I would be interested in. (...) In the Netherlands we are very far and I think it is really important that people feel safe within an organization and I notice that it adds value if a large international organization or a well-*

known person... For instance, Louis van Gaal was on such a boat. That they say we are totally okay with that and we have an inclusive policy. That really has an impact and does something with the perception of people, so that's why I think that it would be good if something like that was organized" (Employee 8, gay man). Having a boat at the Gay Pride might enhance the visibility for the LGBT employees not only in the organization itself, but it can also 'have an impact' on the society by showing that an organization like ConsultancyGo is open towards LGBT employees. So, the activity contributes to the visibility of the LGBT employees within the organization and external visibility of the organization.

4.6 Activities of the regular in-company LGBT network members

Only a few regular in-company LGBT network members mentioned the fact that they as a senior manager would be willing to engage in coaching or mentoring activities if this was necessary. As one employee put it: "Well , if people find it difficult to deal with it [being LGBT, LV] or think that it is a barrier for their career. Eh, than I think I can at least give them advice on how to deal with that" (Employee, 13, Gay man).

Another interviewee mentioned that he wrote a blog for the ConsultancyGo website. He stated the following: "I was closeted and now, when I wrote the Pink Marble article... And even then I did not put it on my Facebook. Because my Facebook had all my straight friends and eh what has somehow it came on the LinkedIn and everyone started sharing it from within the company all the directors X, X. So, everyone read it, actually, because they started sharing my name employee 1, employee 1 everywhere and when your name comes on LinkedIn it just comes up in the newsfeed in their friends as well. So they started reading it and they started noticing that people actually gave a good response. All the friends who I might thought that might be narrow-minded or might not be very gay like LGBT friendly, they kind of reached out to me. Oh, I read the article on LinkedIn, it is really nice that you opened out. It is good and it's nice that you align with the community within your team within your company that promotes such things and that kind of set a law that I did not really have to fear being who I am"(Employee 1, gay man). Writing this article or blog impacted both the employee and the organization. It enhanced the visibility of the employee amongst his friends and coworkers, the visibility of LGBT employees to the organization and it possibly impacted the perception of the LGBT friendliness of the organization.

Another activity which was focused on enhancing the visibility was described in an observational memo. Specifically, the researcher observed the following: "During the breakfast meeting of department X, Pink Marble was introduced to all the employees that

were present. This might have increased the awareness of Pink Marble as network leader 2 first asked who was familiar with the existence of Pink Marble and only a couple of people raised their hands” (Observational memo, research diary). This activity ensured that the visibility of the formal in-company LGBT network was enhanced amongst the employees of the organization. Yet another activity that was mentioned by one of the interviewees, is that he shares clips about activities organized by the formal in-company LGBT network: “And eh, oh yeah I liked that video, so I asked X immediately can you sent the link to me and I have shared that in the group of our department. And I like that because it becomes a topic of conversation” (Employee 14, gay man). By showing the video to the department the regular in-company network member works in, he ensured that more employees within the organization are aware of the activities that are organized by the formal in-company LGBT network, this might have enhanced the visibility of the formal in-company LGBT network amongst both LGBT and straight employees.

Another regular in-company LGBT network member who engaged in individual activities regarding the formal in-company LGBT is the gay partner within the organization. The researcher mentioned the following in her research diary about the gay partner: “The gay partner has an important role within the organization as he increases the visibility of the LGBT network by functioning as a role model for the formal in-company LGBT network as he shows that it is possible to be gay in the upper management of ConsultancyGo. Also, he is not afraid to speak up in several promotional clips that are shown to the whole organization” (Observational memo researcher, 2017). The presence of the gay partner in the organization might ensure that the visibility of LGBTs is enhanced amongst all employees within the organization.

The concept of voice is not detectable in the activities that were undertaken by the individual regular members of the formal in-company LGBT network. However, one employee mentioned the following: *I would like to think or collaborate on shaping a real policy and improving that and make it more diverse. That is more content-based than based on the network. Eh, that is much more social environment where you can talk with people and have the opportunity to meet people. I would rather do something on that area, then I would like to collaborate on a diversity policy of ConsultancyGo and how that is further developed and executed. That, I would find interesting, but I do not have any knowledge of that, but it sounds interesting to me”* (Employee 7, gay man). This shows that he might be willing to participate an initiative which is aimed at discussing the policy of the organization. However,

the employee also stated that he does not know whether it is possible to organize such an activity and he did not elaborate on what his policy should look like, either. Also, this employee did not currently engage in this type of activity. However, in the abovementioned quotation he discussed that he would like to be involved in this type of activity in the future.

4.7 Activities of the formal in-company LGBT network and individual activities of the regular in-company LGBT network members in relation to community, visibility and voice

Conclusively, the concepts of community and visibility are clearly detectable in what the regular members reported on the activities of the formal in-company LGBT network as well as the activities that were initiated by regular members themselves. For example, Pink Marble was involved with community related activities such as organizing drinks and updating the members about upcoming activities. The regular in-company network members themselves often engaged in community related activities such as participating in the social events or helping other LGBT employees within the organization.

Besides, the data provided in this study also reveal that regular in-company LGBT network members valued visibility both individual and network visibility internally and externally. For instance, one regular in-company LGBT network member revealed his identity by writing a blog for Pink Marble which was then shared externally as well. This had an impact on the visibility of the regular in-company LGBT network member to his department and to his private friends, who, at that time were not aware of his LGBT identity. Also, the formal in-company LGBT network engaged in activities to enlarge its visibility internally and externally, such as participating in drinks with other formal in-company LGBT networks externally. By participating in these drinks other formal in-company LGBT networks can actually acknowledge that Pink Marble exists, which enlarges the visibility of the formal in-company LGBT network itself. Additionally, the formal in-company LGBT network engaged in several activities such as the PYC event that was organized by the formal in-company LGBT network to attract new potential applicants. In turn, LGBT employees can see that ConsultancyGo actually support the activities that are organized by the formal in-company LGBT network and can possibly impact how the organization is perceived by other organizations and potential applicants.

Next to the concepts of community and visibility, the concept of voice is not detectable in the current activities reported by the regular in-company LGBT network members. One employee mentioned that he would like to participate in developing LGBT

related policies in the organization as a possible future activity. However, this employee did not discuss the details of this policymaking and discussed it in general.

Table 2 provides an overview of the goals and activities as been shown in the literature and the goals and activities that are accepted or added to the table on the basis of the data that are provided in this interviews.

<i>Concepts</i>	<i>Goals</i>		<i>Activities</i>	
	<i>Network</i>	<i>Individual</i>	<i>Network</i>	<i>Individual</i>
<i>Community</i>	Enabling LGBT employees to meet one another	Obtain social support from a group	Provide an opportunity to network	<i>Sharing best practices amongst other LGBT employees</i>
	Enabling LGBT employees to exercise networking behavior	Being part of a community of comparable others	Providing information about the formal in-company LGBT network	Participating in social events
	Develop LGBT employees professionally	Obtaining information	Keeping the members updated about all upcoming activities	<i>Providing support to other LGBT employees that need help</i>
	<i>Help LGBT employees plan careers</i>	<i>Providing support to other LGBT employees</i>		
	<i>Facilitate and assist LGBT employees</i>	<i>Meeting a new potential life partner</i> <i>Giving advice to other LGBT employees</i>		
<i>Visibility</i>	Educate other employees about sexual orientation and gender identity (internal)	Gaining access to mentors Career advancement	Addressing the formal in-company LGBT network in general meetings (internal) Participating in external activities (external)	Mentoring Coaching
	<i>Recruitment targeted at LGBT students (internal and external)</i>	<i>Obtaining visibility for their own career potential (internal)</i>	Advise on training and development Mentoring activities Participating in talks (internally and externally)	<i>Participating in activities internally (e.g. talks or sharing videos)_</i> <i>Network with clients to attract new opportunities (external)</i> <i>Writing blogs (internal and external)</i>
		<i>Showing that it is possible to have a successful career as an LGBT employee (internal)</i>		

Retention/promotion

Having a partner/upper manger that supports the network and is openly gay (internal)

Targeted recruitment at LGBT students (both internal and external)

Participating in network drinks with the LGBT networks of other organizations (external)

Engaging in activities with third parties in order to attract clients (external)

Organize activities with other LGBT networks (external)

Including straight allies in the formal in-company LGBT network (internal)

Having a boat at the Gay Pride (both internal and external)

Voice

Obtaining acknowledgement from the organization

Conquering dissatisfaction in current work environment

Changing the policies of the organization in relation to inclusion of LGBT employees

Changing the diversity policy of the organization

Ensuring that the organization designs policies aimed at inclusion of LGBT employees

Obtaining additional benefits for partners

Obtaining access to equality or diversity committees

Address issues about for instance work life balance

Building strategic relationships

Table 2: Overview of goals and activities in relation to community, visibility and voice (Baranik et al., 2010; Bell et al., 2011; Bourdil & Géraudel, 2016; Colgan & McKearney, 2012; Creed & Scully, 2001; Deyton, 2012; Friedman & Craig, 2004; Kirton & Greene, 2016; Noe, 1988; Raeburn, 2004; Singh et al., 2002), adapted on the basis of the current study.

Legenda: **BOLD** = present in both literature and case organization
~~**STRIPED**~~ = cannot be recognized within the case organization
italics = added to the literature

Table 2 shows that findings concerning community, are in accordance with the literature on goals and activities such as obtaining support from the social group or networking. Some activities that first were only detected amongst formal in-company networks are also detectable amongst the individual activities and goals of the regular in-company network members. An example is providing support to LGBT employees that need help. Visibility, however, needs to be greatly expanded according to the data from the current study. In order to include activities and goals such as networking for client opportunities or having a boat at the gay pride, the concept of visibility needs to be expanded. Striking is the fact that, on the basis of the data that was provided, no additions of goals and activities can be made to the concept of voice in Table 2.

4.8 Tempered Radicalism

This study has not detected the presence of tempered radicalism amongst the regular in-company network members who were interviewed. The interviewees were explicitly questioned about whether they would change anything within the organization if they, as an LGBT employee, were in charge. Often the interviewees mentioned that they did not think it was necessary to make changes in the organization with regard to LGBTs, as within the Netherlands there is already an LGBT-friendly culture. In relation to that, one employee mentioned the following: *Look, once again. I don't think there should be a more aggressive policy than you know what. It is not the whole fighting-for-your-rights like idea. That is not necessary, you know, to organize protest or something like that. So, I think that it damages more than it fixes (Employee 12, gay man)*. Only changes were mentioned that are related to the activities organized by the network, such as having a boat or float present at the Gay Pride.

One interviewee, as mentioned before, discussed a type of change that takes into regard an activity that he himself would like to participate in, namely, an activity that is focused on organizational policies. In turn, participating in this activity could ensure that the policies of the organization could possibly be altered. Besides that, some interviewees mentioned unpleasant culture-related experiences that happened in the ConsultancyGo. These

experiences might suggest that they want to change the culture of the organization. However, as they did not express these change attitudes explicitly, it can be questioned if these negative experiences provided enough evidence that the employees would actually want to change the organization in this regard.

As was expected, the network leaders showed stronger attitudes towards change. For instance, network leader 1 suggested that there should be more LGBTs as partners in the organization in which the formal in-company LGBT network is situated. Specifically, the network leader stated the following: *“Well, so if I had a say, then I would make sure that in all the management levels LGBTs are present, because if we take a look at the partner level you have, I don’t know, 250 partners. One LGBT is very little, it is rather low”* (Network leader 1, gay man)

Besides wanting change, being a committed member of the organization is considered an important element of being a tempered radical (Meyerson & Scully, 1995). Several types of commitment were mentioned by the interviewees. A lot of interviewees mentioned colleagues and the content of their work as important elements of their commitment to the organization. For instance, employee 3 (lesbian, woman) mentioned the following: *“Eh, yes I think that is often also the question what commits me to the organization. That are the projects, the challenges and those things ensure that I like it here. Also, colleagues help with that. We have a nice team, quite a large team, we do a lot of fun stuff together so that also helps like I said it before in a weird way, it differs from a regular job”*. This quotation shows several elements of commitment that were often mentioned by the employees. Not only the colleagues were often mentioned, also the content of the work or projects was often mentioned as why employees felt committed to the organization.

Also, the acceptance of goals and values that the organization has was mentioned by several employees. For instance, employee 1 (gay man) mentioned the following: *“But the best part of ConsultancyGo is that they make you innovate. They let you put on the green hat [means being innovative, LV], so I am slowly trying to think like in a different way. How can I integrate this work that I’m doing and that work that I am doing. How can I mix that into one combined work and make it beneficial for both these fields.”* Innovation and making an impact are mentioned by several employees as being important values for the organization and sometimes themselves. However, these are not always seen as important values to the employees and the organization, as one employee put it: *The big goal is making money. I don’t feel attracted to that. It does not interest me. (...) I feel more attracted to giving*

something to society. So, that's why I am not entirely sure if ConsultancyGo will appeal to me in the future. (Employee 11, gay man). This employee also reckoned that he did not agree with the goals the organization has and he even was thinking about leaving the organization.

Remarkable is the fact that almost all the interviewees state that they do not know for sure if they are planning to stay with the organization. Such as employee 9 (gay man) who argues that: *"Eh I always keep my eyes open but I expect to work here for several years"*. Other employees who were interviewed had specific plans for leaving the organization. However, due to confidentiality reasons these quotes cannot be used here. The employees in question were planning to leave the organization in the short term. It appeared that within ConsultancyGo an eagerness to stay with the employer is not a sure thing. This was also stressed by employee 6 (gay man) who mentioned the following: *"Eh, I cannot look into the future. So, I could not say that with certainty. For now I'm at the right spot. But I also don't exclude that at some point I will come across something that also appeals to me"* The vagueness about staying with the organization might also be explained by the high turnover rates that consultancy companies often have. Concerning that matter employee 3 stated the following: *"That is distinctive for consulting, where there always is a high turnover rate"* (Employee 3, lesbian)

Performing additional tasks on behalf of the organization was also often mentioned as a type of commitment to the organization. In ConsultancyGo it appeared that there were some employees who did in fact engage in performing additional tasks such as employee 5 (gay man) who argued that: *Eh, I am as a service leader, I write the newsletter [of the service line, LV]. Eh within, eh as service leader I am responsible for all social media on Linked, Facebook and Twitter. I am mostly involved with editorials. Next to that, I, often have contact with ConsultancyGo in Norway, because a customer is situated there. There, I am very involved in the community. So, that's where I'm mostly active with"*. The additional tasks that were often undertaken by the employees often involved performing additional tasks within their service lines. A reason that employees might want to perform additional tasks might be that they are judged by their superior, or as one employee put it: *"So, you could work more on profiling yourself or you eminence, how they call it here. On the one hand I get that, but on the other hand I would rather do that on the basis of actually performing things. Instead of constantly sharing things in the group and mentioning how awesome I am with a session here and a session there. But there are people who do that"* (Employee 8, gay man).

Even though the network leaders also expressed some hesitations about staying with the organization they appeared to be more committed to the organization. They both performed a lot of additional tasks in my ConsultancyGo. For instance network leader 2 (gay man) stated the following: *“I am involved with Pink Marble of course, the alumni network and I perform my regular tasks.”* Which shows that the network leader is not only involved with performing additional tasks within his service line, but also performed several tasks outside his service line. Also, both the network leaders expressed more attitudes towards change within the organization as is shown in the quotation of network leader 1 in the previous section. This could imply that in comparison to the regular members, the network leaders in fact did need to balance out the organizational commitment and their willingness to change the organization.

In conclusion, balancing out both the change and commitment element was only slightly detectable with regular members of Pink Marble. Some regular in-company LGBT network members did show signs of commitment such as performing additional task on behalf of the organization. However, the change element of tempered radicalism was not clearly detectable enough with regular in-company LGBT network members within the organization. A description of the possible rationale for less tempered radicalism will be provided in Chapter 5 of this study.

5. Conclusion and discussion

5.1 Conclusion

This study tried to gain insight in how the regular members of a Dutch formal in-company LGBT network view the goals and activities of both the formal in-company LGBT network and themselves. In order to gain these insights, the following research question was formulated: *How do regular in-company LGBT network members in a Dutch organization view the formal in-company LGBT network goals and activities along with their individual goals and activities in relation to the formal in-company LGBT network?*

To answer this research question and study the case organization ConsultancyGo and its formal in-company LGBT network Pink Marble in-depth, it was necessary to take into account the perspectives of the regular in-company LGBT network members of the formal in-company LGBT network. These perspectives were obtained by conducting qualitative open-ended interviews. In order to get an elaborate overview of the goals and activities of the formal in-company LGBT network additional interviews, documents and observational

memos were also analyzed. On the basis of the literature on formal in-company LGBT networks, community, visibility and voice were used as leading concepts in the data-analysis process to categorize the reported goals and activities of the formal in-company LGBT network as well as the reported goals and activities of the regular in-company LGBT network members. The researcher tried to be open to other concepts that might emerge from the data as well.

Besides community, visibility and voice, tempered radicalism was used as a theoretical lens in this study. Tempered radicalism was used as a lens to establish whether regular in-company LGBT network members within the organization experienced difficulties when wanting to change the organization while experiencing commitment to the organization, at the same time. It was mainly used within the analysis to see if both the change component and the commitment component could be distinguished amongst the regular in-company LGBT network members within the organization, and, if so, how they dealt with balancing these components.

On the basis of the data analysis as reported in Chapter 4 the research question is answered as follows: the regular members of the formal in-company LGBT network recognized the officially stated goal of the formal in-company LGBT network, that is providing a place (community) where LGBT employees can be their authentic selves. In addition to this goal the regular in-company LGBT network members mentioned other goals such as sharing experiences with fellow LGBTs, providing support, giving advice and having opportunities to network. The individual network related goals that were mentioned include obtaining social support from a group, being part of a community of comparable others, obtaining information, providing support to other LGBTs (community) and getting to know other LGBTs to 'make it' in the organization (internal visibility). The regular in-company LGBT network members also recognized several activities of the formal in-company LGBT network, such as providing opportunities to network, writing and sending newsletters that keep them updated about the formal in-company LGBT network and activities (community), targeted recruitment at LGBT students, organizing activities with LGBT networks from other organizations (external visibility). Besides, the LGBT employees also engaged in several activities themselves for instance, giving support to other LGBTs (community), writing blogs in favor of the network (internal and external visibility) and networking with clients to attract new opportunities (external visibility).

5.2 Theoretical Relevance

This study has been motivated by the goal to contribute to the literature on formal in-company LGBT networks by investigating whether and how the concepts of community, visibility voice and tempered radicalism are applicable to regular in-company LGBT network members in a Dutch context. This way, the current study aimed to broaden the literature on the basis of a study of an under researched group namely, the regular members of a formal in-company LGBT network rather than the leaders of formal in-company LGBT networks, and an under researched context, namely the Dutch context rather than the US or UK context.

It is often assumed that the Dutch societal and organizational context is tolerant and often friendly towards LGBT members (Buijs et al., 2011). The analysis of the data provided showed that most interviewees were indeed positive about the Dutch societal climate as well as the climate towards LGBTs within the Dutch organization that was studied. However, some employees reported that they still faced issues regarding discriminatory behavior in their work environment. Several employees addressed these issues which included LGBT employees that had to deal with disdainful remarks about professional contacts and projects gained from their gay network. Next to that, they also had to deal with jokes about them as an LGBT that were made by senior (heterosexual) employees in the organization. These issues which were faced by the LGBT employees within the organization studied correspond to the findings of the study of Kuyper (2013, 2016) that also concern the Dutch context. More research could be conducted in organizations that are also situated in the Dutch context to see whether and when LGBT employees in these organizations also face these issues.

Generally, the findings of this study show that the concepts of community and visibility are detectable in the views and expressions of the regular members in ConstulancyGo. Both concepts are useful for investigating the goals and activities as experienced by the regular in-company LGBT network members as well as the individual goals and activities that are experienced by the regular in-company LGBT network members. This study confirms the concepts of community as defined in the literature such as, sharing experiences, receiving and providing help to LGBT employees.

However, the concept of community, as described in the literature, does not include obtaining romantic relationships as was mentioned by several interviewees in this study. Therefore, the concept of community as is detected in the reports by the regular members of the formal in-company LGBT network may need to be expanded. Including obtaining

romantic relationships as a component of community in formal in-company LGBT networks may play an important role. According to the literature, the LGBTs often find it important that a partner in life is successful (e.g. Felmlee, Orzechowich & Fortes, 2010). When meeting a fellow LGBT employee via the formal in-company LGBT network it might be easier for the LGBT employees to contact them and to determine whether the LGBT colleague is successful. Future research could focus on this topic and investigate whether in different organizational contexts this is also a reason for LGBT employees to join the formal in-company LGBT network.

Additionally, the concept of visibility would also need to be broadened. In the literature and in this study the concept of visibility was viewed as: “the public avowal of one’s identity” (Manalansan, 1997, p.198). However, the results of this study show that this understanding of visibility needs to be expanded. The views of the regular in-company LGBT network members that were interviewed in this study revealed that visibility did not only imply the visibility of the employees individually, but also concerned the visibility of the network, and the organization at large. Thus, three levels of visibility can be distinguished based on the data provided in this research. Namely, visibility at individual level, network level and organizational level. Furthermore, two dimensions of visibility were detected namely, internal visibility and external visibility. For instance, internal visibility at the individual level includes being visible to superiors for promotion purposes. Internal visibility at network level involves having a gay person at the partner level of the organization, including straight allies in the formal in-company LGBT network and educating LGBT employees on different topics. External visibility at individual level includes making the LGBT identity known to people outside of the organization. Related to that, the formal in-company LGBT network also wants to show that it values LGBTs by organizing activities with other networks. External visibility at organizational level would include having a boat at the gay pride, obtaining business opportunities and recruitment activities targeted at LGBT students. Future research could investigate whether the different levels and aspects of visibility can also be detected in other formal in-company LGBT networks and their organizations. This research can possibly be conducted in different societal contexts or in different organizational contexts in order to extend the literature on this topic.

The concept of voice was not detectable amongst the regular in-company LGBT network members who were the subjects of this study. Several reasons can be the cause for the undetectability of voice within the organization that is studied. For example, it could be

the case that in Dutch organizations less voice is considered necessary due to the assumed general positive climate towards the LGBTs. Several studies show that, generally, the Dutch have positive attitudes towards LGBTs (Witkamp, Van der Woude, & Klaver, 2016). Future research could investigate whether the concept of voice is detectable amongst other regular in-company LGBT network members who work for organizations situated in the Dutch context.

All in all, the concepts of community and visibility are useful concepts to investigate the goals and activities related to formal in-company LGBT networks in organizations. Nevertheless, on the basis of this study, other researchers need to evaluate whether these concepts need to be broadened. The concept of voice might be useful to investigate in other contexts than the Dutch context because previous studies shows that in other contexts the concept of voice is useable, the Dutch context might be the exception to the rule. This might be due to the presumed tolerant societal context (Buijs et al., 2011).

Moreover, the concept of tempered radicalism as described by Meyerson and Scully (1995) has not been detected within the organization that was studied. Balancing both the change and the commitment element of tempered radicalism is something which was not perceivable with the employees who were studied. The employees lacked both the willingness to change things according to their LGBT identity within the organization and commitment to the organization. The lack of need to change was illustrated by the interviewees in that they did not express a need for voice. Rather, they mostly focused on including activities that were related to visibility aspects, such as having a boat at the Gay Pride. The lack of commitment was shown, as employees often suggested that they were not inclined to stay with the organization.

The lack of tempered radicalism by regular members of the formal in-company LGBT network might be explained in the following way. First, it might be the case that within the Dutch context less change oriented behavior is desired because of the presumed positive societal climate (e.g. Buijs et al., 2011). Second, it might be the case that within consultancy organizations the commitment to the organization is generally low (e.g. Liu, Chiu & Fellows, 2007). Literature suggests that employees who are less committed to the organization, or experience less certainty when it comes to staying within the organization, are less inclined to change the organization (e.g. Vakola & Nikolaou, 2005; Iverson, 1996; Guest, 1987). This might be the case in ConsutlancyGo and could explain why the willingness to change is not prominently recognized in this study. When the members of the network are not strongly committed to the organization it could possibly entail that they also do not want to express

attitudes towards change, as described above. Future research should investigate these assumptions in more detail in similar and other contexts.

In addition, in this study the concept of tempered radicalism appeared to be more applicable to the network leaders who were interviewed, instead of the regular in-company LGBT network members. The network leaders showed more signs of both commitment and voice, whereas these concepts were not clearly detectable amongst regular in-company LGBT network members. Therefore, future research could investigate whether tempered radicalism is indeed more applicable to the network leader within formal in-company LGBT networks instead of the regular in-company network members.

This study used the definition of organizational commitment by Mowday et al. (1982, p.28), that is: “the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization”. Even though this definition is widely used in the literature and has proven to be useful in this study, it was not comprehensive enough. In hindsight the researcher should have chosen a more appropriate definition of organizational commitment that also included elements such as colleagues and content of the work or projects. Other studies that have been conducted more recently could have provided a more comprehensive understanding of organizational commitment that was more useful for this study (e.g. Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002).

Altogether, the concept of tempered radicalism needs to be studied more in-depth. Further research is necessary that explores the conditions which are necessary for tempered radicalism to be detected in organizations. For instance, it might depend upon the type of employee, type of organization, the context in which the organization is situated. These insights might result into conditions that need to be taken into consideration when investigating the concept of tempered radicalism.

5.3 Methodological Implications

In this study several quality standards were applied, that involved credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability. All the aforementioned quality standards were evaluated in relation to this study.

The credibility of this study, which encompasses showing that the realities which are constructed by the interviewees of the study are adequately reflected in the reconstructions of them by the researcher was taken into consideration (Symon & Cassell, 2012). In this study, this entailed that the researcher tried to guarantee this by first asking the respondents whether

they wanted to check the transcripts of their interviews and make changes to them. Only a couple of interviewees decided that they did want to check the interview and these employees did not want to make any changes. The data analysis was checked by several fellow researchers in order to determine whether the data, provided by the interviewees, was interpreted correctly by the researcher. Some researchers provided alternative options which were carefully reviewed by the researcher and logged into the research diary.

The dependability which can be explained as making the methodological choices and changes made within this study visible for evaluation (Symon & Cassell, 2012). Methodological choices and changes that were made in this study will now be further discussed. The semi-structured design, used in this study, provided some difficulties sometimes. During the interviews it became apparent that several interviewees avoided giving the answers to some questions directly. For instance, when employees were questioned about the necessity to change components for LGBTs in the organization, the respondents did not mention changes that could be made. Later on in the interview, when answering other questions or elaborating on other aspects, the employees mentioned unpleasant experiences that can possibly be related to desired changes that they did not come up with during the questions about necessary changes in the organization in relation to their LGBT identity. Therefore, the researcher also reacted to the answers provided by the interviewees, instead of solely asking the list of questions.

The transferability of this study is explained as providing a detailed description of the case organization, which will allow the reader to decide to what contexts the results can be transferred (Symon & Cassell, 2012). The transferability of this study was affected by the confidential nature of this study as it was impossible to provide a detailed description of ConsultancyGo without revealing confidential information about the organization. However, in consultation with ConsultancyGo the researcher tried to include as much information as possible about the case organization in the description.

Besides, the transferability of the findings that are provided in this case-study implies that the results of this study can be analytically generalized. Analytical generalization involves: corroborating, modifying, rejecting and/or advancing theoretical concepts that are the theoretical basis of the study (Yin, 2014). In this study of regular members of a formal in-company LGBT network in a Dutch context, the insights that were gained suggest a broadening and refinement of the theoretical concepts of community, visibility and voice as well as tempered radicalism.

Furthermore, the confirmability of this research refers to showing where the data on which the findings are based stems from (Symon & Cassell, 2012). In this study, the researcher ensured that within the boundaries set by confidentiality all the data which was used in this study was provided with the correct data source attached to it. In this way, it is clear where the data used in this study stems from.

Also, ethical concerns need to be evaluated. In this study, the researcher tried to be aware of her position within the organization. The researcher was involved as an intern within the organization which means that she was connected with the organization as an employee as well as being present as a researcher. This involvement within the organization can possibly have influenced the results of this study. Too much involvement within the organization could have influenced the neutrality of the researcher (Symon & Cassell, 2012). For example, the researcher might be influenced by her own experiences in the organization, which can be different from the experiences of the regular in-company LGBT network members that were interviewed. In order to ensure that the researcher remained as neutral as possible, the researcher only used data obtained by interviews, documents or memo's from participant observations rather than any unchecked presumptions as illustrated below.

Lastly, the researcher was influenced by her own traditions and assumptions during the research process. For instance, the researcher was aware during the interview that she already had established the LGBT identity of an interviewee before the interviewee mentioned it himself. This was an assumption which was based on LGBT stereotypes. During the interview process, the researcher contemplated on whether to ask the interviewee about his sexuality. The researcher decided to ask him anyway in order to determine for sure whether the respondent belonged to the LGBT category the researcher had in mind. In this way, it was not solely based on the researchers' assumptions. Future researchers should always be aware of the assumptions they themselves make and try to find proof that rejects or accepts them.

5.4 Practical implications

This study aimed at helping organizations to enhance the understanding of formal in-company LGBT networks, so that organizations can optimize their support for their formal in-company LGBT network.

5.4.1. Implications for ConsultancyGo and Pink Marble

In this section recommendations that can be applied to ConsultancyGo and Pink Marble are discussed. First, in this study, it is suggested that employees still experience difficulties involving their LGBT identity within the organization. Specifically, they may still face discrimination related to their LGBT identity. However, as this was not the topic of this research, more investigation is needed into this discriminatory behavior. Therefore, it is recommended that ConsultancyGo in collaboration with Pink Marble executes a research involving discriminatory behavior towards all LGBTs in the organization. Pink Marble's involvement in this research is of uttermost important as they can guarantee discretion. Precisely, Pink Marble can assist ConsultancyGo by, for example, creating and distributing a questionnaire involving discriminatory behavior within ConsultancyGo and can also help ConsultancyGo to reach out to the LGBT employees within the organization that need to receive such a questionnaire.

Second, the interviews showed that LGBT employees in ConsultancyGo sometimes experience difficulties with being outed in front of clients. Pink Marble should help LGBT employees with dealing with these difficulties. One way to help LGBT employees is by providing them strategies on how to deal with these difficulties. For instance, by organizing an interactive workshop that elaborates on strategies that can be taken into consideration. If these strategies do not work, ConsultancyGo can decide to take further action for instance by enlightening clients on their unacceptable behaviors.

Third, HR and the diversity inclusion department should devote more attention to the formal in-company LGBT network. Traditionally, the role of HR or the diversity and inclusion department is considered to be important in formal in-company employee networks (Kirton & Greene, 2016). However, in ConsultancyGo HR and diversity and inclusion appear to be little involved with the Pink Marble. Even though they engage in regular meetings with all the formal in-company employee networks together, the diversity and inclusion department appears to be more involved with for instance the Women's network in the organization. The HR and diversity and inclusion department could for instance help Pink Marble and LGBTs in general with obtaining visibility or with implementing leadership programs. ConsultancyGo could help Pink Marble by supporting these initiatives and by supporting more collaboration between HR, diversity and inclusion and Pink Marble, which is highly recommended.

Fourth, more visibility for the formal in-company LGBT network needs to be created by making the employees aware of the fact that there is a formal in-company LGBT network in the organization. Therefore the formal in-company LGBT network should invest in making itself more visible within the entire organization. This could be achieved by promoting the network more frequently or organizing activities that make the network more visible. For instance, having a boat during the gay pride, which was mentioned as a possible future activity by the regular in-company network members, can be an important activity that the formal in-company network organizes with the support of the organization. Also, the organization could ensure that the community function of the network is improved by supporting the network to organize drinks more frequently and to update the community more frequently about, for instance, upcoming events.

Fifth, this study showed that only a limited amount of LGBT women, bisexuals and transgenders are a member of Pink Marble. The formal in-company LGBT network could try to include more women, bisexuals and transgenders in their network or the organization could start an investigation into reasons why few women, bisexuals and transgenders are a member of the formal in-company LGBT network. Another possibility is that the organization and its formal in-company LGBT network decide to take action, which could include assigning role models for lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LBT) employees, to possibly improve the visibility of the formal in-company LGBT network amongst LBT employees. For the gay men it is clear who is a role model within the network. However LBT employees do not have such a role-model. Therefore, ConsultancyGo should invest in investigating who would be good role models for the LBTs within the organization. In this way, more LBT employees might want to join the formal in-company LGBT network. Also, more information or education on transgenders could be provided by Pink Marble in order to ensure that this topic is also addressed and that the transgenders feel welcome to the formal in-company LGBT network.

Last, based on the locations in which the interviewees were situated, it can be concluded that most regular in-company LGBT network member are situated either the Amsterdam or Rotterdam offices. Therefore the range of the network might be limited to these offices. The formal in-company LGBT network should actively reach out to other offices as well in order to ensure that LGBT employees in these offices are also reached. For instance, the employees who are currently involved in the network could use their personal networks to reach out to other LGBTs in other offices. If the employees in the other regions are reached as well the formal in-company LGBT network can check whether there are

differences in the goals and preferred activities of the regular in-company LGBT network members across different offices within the Netherlands.

5.4.2 Implications for other organizations and other formal in-company LGBT networks

In this section recommendations are made for both other organizations and other formal in-company LGBT networks than ConsultancyGo and Pink Marble.

Organizations in general need to investigate the position of LGBTs in their organization. Specifically, this involves a research regarding the culture in the organization. Organizations might not be aware of the (un)friendly environment that is created for the LGBT employees in their organization. Therefore, an investigation into this phenomenon might provide insights into whether further actions need to be taken. It is important that organizations that have a formal in-company LGBT network collaborate with this network in order to ensure that the LGBT employees are addressed in a proper manner.

Other Dutch organizations that want to create a formal in-company LGBT network or that already have a formal in-company LGBT network can benefit from the results of this study. Organizations could investigate whether the goals and activities of Pink Marble are applicable to their (future) formal in-company networks. Specifically, other formal in-company LGBT networks should look into organizing activities that are aimed at visibility, as this is considered to be an important topic. By ensuring that the visibility of the network and LGBTs is enhanced, more employees throughout the organization might want to support the network. One activity could be involving straight allies in the network. This can possibly have several advantages for formal in-company LGBT networks that want to get support for the formal in-company LGBT network from within the organization. When the straight allies also keep in mind that there are LGBT employees within the organization that might need help, they might be able to help the LGBT employees in achieving their personal and network goals which ideally would result in a more inclusive workforce. This is in accordance with the suggestion by Workplace Pride (2017), that straight allies should play an important role in formal in-company LGBT networks. Organizations should support these initiatives by helping the formal in-company LGBT networks to reach out to the straight allies in the organization.

In the end, organizations need to embrace diversity and include all employees in the organization, because all the employees together create the organization, just as all individual colors together make the rainbow.

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Appendix A: Interview guide – English

English

Blok 0: Introduction of the interview/research

My name is Louet Vergoossen and at this moment I am studying Strategic Human Resource Management at the Radboud University in Nijmegen. Currently, I am investigating LGBT networks for my Masters' Thesis. I specifically focus on regular members of the network. Therefore this interview will be deducted. The interview data will be used for analysis purposes. I want to stress that your personal information will be anonymized. Before we start I would like to ask you for permission to record this interview. In this way, I am able to transcribe it.

Blok 1: Personal Questions + questions about the organizational commitment

Could you shortly introduce yourself to me?

What is your current function at ConsultancyGo?

- What does this entail?

How long have you been working for ConsultancyGo?

How do you experience working for ConsultancyGo?

- Ask for clarifications (Why? Can you give examples?)

What commits you to ConsultancyGo?

(Ask for clarifications: about the elements that are mentioned. For instance: goals/values, culture, colleagues, contents of the work, working conditions.)

Specific questions about organizational commitment (Do not necessarily ask these questions, only if necessary)

How do you feel related to the goals and values of ConsultancyGo?

- (Ask for clarifications: What are these values and goals? Can you give examples of your commitment to them? Why do you think this?)

Do you intend to continue working for ConsultancyGo?

- (Ask for clarifications: Why yes/why not?)

Does it happen that you perform additional tasks on top of your job?

- (Ask for clarifications: What tasks? How often? And Why?)

How do you as an LGBT employee feel connected to the organization?

With what LGBT category do you identify most?

What would ConsultancyGo look like if you as an LGBT employee were in charge?

Now, I would like to ask you some questions about the LGBT network (Pink Marble)

Blok 2: questions about the LGBT network

Introductory questions LGBT network

What do you think of the fact that there is a LGBT network in this organization?

What is your opinion about the LGBT network?

- (Ask for clarifications: Why do you think so? How is that shown, examples?)

How do you think the LGBT network is functioning?

What is your own involvement with the LGBT network?

Individual goals of the LGBT employees

What goals do you personally have for participating in the LGBT network?

- Why do you think these goals are important?
- Can you come up with other goals that are important to you?
- Can you come up with other goals that might be important to the LGBT employees?

Goals of the LGBT network

What would you say are the goals of the companies' LGBT network?

- What do you think of these goals (ask clarifying questions: Why do you think that? How is that shown? What could be improved according to you? Why?)
- Would you think these goals are appropriate for the LGBT network? Why (not)?

Individual Activities of the LGBT employees

What activities do you personally engage in regarding the LGBT network?

- Ask additional information: Why do you engage in these activities? What do they entail?
- What activities would you like to perform yourself? (Ask for clarifications: Why? What's in it for you? What activities would you rather not want to perform? Why?)
- Can you come up with other activities that might be important to LGBT employees?

Activities of the network

What activities are organized by the network? Ask for clarifications: why do think that? How is that shown? What could be improved according to you?)

- Why do you think that the network organizes such activities?
- What is your participation in these activities?
- Why do you participate in these activities?
- What activities would you like to see recurring?

Closing questions

- Do you have any additions?
- Do you have any questions or remarks?
- If anything comes up later, please feel free to contact me at: 06-XXXXXXXX or via Ivergoossen@ConsultancyGo.nl.
- (Additionally: Do you know anyone who is a female LGBT employee that is a member of Pink Marble?/ IF yes: Could you give me her contact information? If no:

why do you think so little LGBT women are acquainted with Pink Marble? Should Pink Marble have more female LGBT members? Why?)

Blok 4: Concluding Remarks

I would like to thank you for participating in this interview and I would like to announce some closing questions and remarks.

Would you like to be informed about the further developments of this study?

- The interviews will be transcribed and I can send you the transcription in order for you to check it if you wish. Would you like to receive the interview in order to check it? Afterwards, the results will be processed and a report will be created regarding the results. The final report can be sent to you, if you would like to receive it – if necessary write down the email address.

Thank you for participating in this study. Have a nice day!

Dutch

Blok 0: Introductie van het interview/onderzoek

Mijn naam is Louet Vergoossen en ik studeer op dit moment Strategic Human Resource Management aan de Radboud Universiteit van Nijmegen. Voor mijn thesis doe ik onderzoek naar LGBT netwerken waarbij ik me specifiek focus op de reguliere leden van het netwerk. Vandaar dat ik u graag interview. Het interview zal geanalyseerd worden en uiteindelijk verwerkt worden in een resultatenhoofdstuk. Alle gegevens die worden verkregen uit dit interview zullen worden geanonimiseerd. Voordat we beginnen wil ik uw toestemming vragen voor het opnemen van dit interview, zodat ik in de gelegenheid ben om het interview uit te typen.

Blok 1: Persoonlijke vragen + vragen over organizational commitment

Zou u zichzelf kort aan mij willen voorstellen?

Wat is uw huidige functie bij ConsultancyGo?

- Wat houdt deze functie in?

Hoe lang werkt u al voor ConsultancyGo?

Hoe vindt u het om voor ConsultancyGo te werken?

- (Toelichting vragen: Waarom? Kunt u voorbeelden geven?)

Wat is het dat u aan ConsultancyGo bindt?

- (Toelichting vragen over de elementen die genoemd worden. Zoals doelen/waarden, cultuur, collega's inhoud van het werk, arbeidsvoorwaarden.)

Specifieke vragen over *organizational commitment*: (niet per definitie opgenomen in het interview, alleen wanneer nodig te stellen).

Hoe voelt u zich verbonden met de doelen en waarden van ConsultancyGo?

- (Toelichting vragen over waarom? Wat zijn deze waarden en doelen? Kunt u voorbeelden geven van uw betrokkenheid omtrent de doelen?)

Bent u van plan om voor deze organisatie te blijven werken?

- (Toelichting vragen over waarom wel/waarom niet?)

Komt het voor dat u extra taken moet uitvoeren die niet tot uw werkzaamheden behoren?

- (Toelichting vragen over welke taken? Hoe vaak en waarom wel/niet?)

Hoe voelt u zich als LGBT werknemer verboden met de organisatie?

- (Toelichting vragen: waarom als LGBT werknemer, waar blijkt dat uit.)

Met welke categorie van LGBT identificeert u zich het meest?

Hoe zou ConsultancyGo eruit zien als u, als een LGBT werknemer, het voor het zeggen had?

Graag zou ik u nu een aantal vragen willen stellen over het LGBT netwerk van ConsultancyGo.

Blok 2: vragen over het LGBT netwerk

Inleidende vragen netwerk:

Wat vindt u ervan dat er in deze organisatie een LGBT netwerk bestaat?

Wat is uw mening over het LGBT netwerk?

- Waarom vindt u dat? Waar komt dat uit naar voren, voorbeelden?

Hoe vindt u dat het LGBT netwerk functioneert?

Wat is je eigen betrokkenheid omtrent het LGBT netwerk?

Persoonlijke doelen van de LGBT werknemers:

Welke doelen heeft u persoonlijk om deel te nemen aan het LGBT netwerk?

- Waarom is dit volgens u belangrijk?
- Kunt u nog andere doelen noemen die voor u belangrijk zijn?
- Kunt u nog andere doelen bedenken die voor andere LGBT werknemers belangrijk zijn?

Doelen van het netwerk:

Welke doelen stelt het LGBT netwerk zich voor zover u weet?

- Wat vindt u van deze doelen? (toelichting vragen: waarom vindt u dat, waar blijkt dat uit: wat zou er volgens u beter kunnen? Waarom?)
- Denkt u dat deze doelen geschikt zijn voor het netwerk? (Waarom wel/niet?)

Persoonlijke activiteiten

Welke activiteiten onderneemt u zelf met betrekking tot het LGBT netwerk?

- Toelichting vragen: (waarom onderneemt u deze activiteiten? What do they entail?)
- Welke activiteiten zou u graag zelf nog uit willen voeren? (toelichting vragen waarom? Wat levert dit op?).
- Welke activiteiten zou u liever niet uitvoeren? (Waarom?)
- Kunt u andere activiteiten bedenken die wellicht belangrijk zijn voor LGBT werknemers?

Activiteiten van het netwerk:

Welke activiteiten worden georganiseerd door het LGBT netwerk?

- Wat vindt u van deze activiteiten? (Toelichting vragen: waarom vindt u dat, waar blijkt dat uit: wat zou er volgens u beter kunnen? Waarom?)
- Waarom denkt u dat het LGBT netwerk activiteiten organiseert?
- Waarom neem je deel aan deze activiteiten/waarom niet?
- Welke activiteiten zou u graag terugzien?

Blok 3: Afsluitende vragen

- Heeft u nog aanvullingen?
- Heeft u nog vragen of opmerkingen?
- Als u na afloop van dit interview nog iets invalt, dan kunt u mij contacteren via: 06-XXXXXXXX of via lvergoossen@ConsultancyGo.nl.
- (Aanvullend: Kent u een vrouwelijke LGBT werknemer die lid is van Pink Marble? Zo ja, zou u mij dan met haar in contact kunnen brengen?/Zo niet: waarom denk je dat er zo weinig vrouwelijke LGBT werknemers bekend zijn met Pink Marble? Zou Pink Marble meer vrouwelijke LGBT leden moeten hebben? Waarom?)

Afsluiting van het interview

Graag wil ik u bedanken voor uw deelname aan het interview en wil ik nog een aantal afsluitende vragen en opmerkingen melden.

Wilt u geïnformeerd worden over het verdere verloop van het onderzoek?

- De interviews zullen worden uitgetypt en kunnen ter inzage naar u toe gestuurd worden. Wilt u dat ik uw uitgetypte interview naar u toestuur om het te controleren? Kunt u mij in dat geval uw e-mailadres geven, zodat ik in staat ben het interview naar u toe te sturen? Daarna zullen de resultaten worden verwerkt en zal er een rapportage gemaakt worden van deze resultaten. Waarna het onderzoek naar u toe gestuurd kan worden. Als u dat wilt – zo nodig alsnog emailadres noteren.

Bedankt voor uw deelname aan dit onderzoek. Ik wens u nog een prettige dag.