

"Inclusive Leadership for Sustainable Development: An Integrative Literature Review"

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ABSTRACT:

Abstract: In today's diverse and dynamic workplaces, inclusive leadership has emerged as a crucial strategy for fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion. This paper presents an integrative literature review where 81 relevant papers are reviewed using the PRISMA Framework for comprehensive literature analysis. The review aims to consolidate and critically evaluate existing research on inclusive leadership, exploring its key characteristics and theories, as well as its impact on organizational culture, employee engagement, talent management, and decision-making processes. Additionally, a bibliometric analysis is performed to identify current research trends in the field. The paper highlights the alignment of inclusive leadership with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically SDG-5 (Gender Equality) and SDG-10 (Reduced Inequalities), underscoring its potential for contributing to sustainable development efforts. The paper also suggests a conceptual framework based on key aggregate dimensions derived from the literature, offering guidance for further research and prospective opportunities in the domain of inclusive leadership.

Keywords: Inclusive Leadership, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Employee Engagement, Sustainable Development Goals, Gender Equality, Reduced Inequalities.

INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly evolving and diverse professional landscape, the concept of inclusive leadership has emerged as a pivotal and transformative approach to driving organizational success and fostering harmonious work environments. Inclusive leadership transcends traditional leadership models by prioritizing diversity, equity, and the active inclusion of all team members, irrespective of their differences.

Inclusive leadership is not a mere managerial strategy; it embodies a fundamental shift in the way leadership is perceived and practiced. It recognizes the inherent value of each team member's unique background, experiences, and perspectives, thereby creating an atmosphere of respect, fairness, and collaboration. The contemporary workplace, characterized by its multiculturalism and multidimensionality, demands leaders who can harness the power of diversity to ignite innovation, enhance employee engagement, and foster a strong sense of belonging.

This paper embarks on an integrative literature review journey, driven by the aspiration to comprehensively synthesize and critically assess the breadth of research dedicated to inclusive leadership. Drawing from a rich tapestry of academic sources, our review seeks to unravel the multifaceted nature of inclusive leadership. Through this holistic exploration, we aim to unearth the core tenets, theoretical underpinnings, and far-reaching impacts of inclusive leadership on various aspects of organizational dynamics.

As we navigate through the terrain of inclusive leadership literature, we aim to distill collective insights from a diverse array of studies. By systematically analyzing and synthesizing existing research, we aspire to uncover the common threads that weave the fabric of inclusive leadership practices. This review serves as a roadmap, guiding readers through the nuanced insights and perspectives that scholars have contributed to the discourse of inclusive leadership.

Inclusive leadership transcends the confines of a leadership style; it encapsulates a profound philosophy that champions equality, openness, and collaboration. As this integrative literature review unfolds, we aim to enrich the understanding of inclusive leadership's transformative potential within contemporary workplaces. By consolidating and critically evaluating the existing body of knowledge, it is aimed to shed light on the vital role inclusive leadership (IL) plays in shaping a sustainable, innovative, and socially conscious organizational landscape. This review particularly addresses three overarching inquiries:

1. What are the core attributes and theoretical underpinnings that define inclusive leadership?
2. How does inclusive leadership reverberate throughout organizational dynamics, impacting various dimensions of workplace functioning?
3. How does the practice of inclusive leadership align with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, with a specific focus on advancing Gender Equality (SDG 5) and Reducing Inequalities (SDG 10)?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The existing body of research on inclusive leadership and its impact on diverse work groups has been significantly enriched through various studies conducted in recent years. Brimhall et al. (2023) have explored the interplay of leadership qualities like self-worth, inclusion, and trust in nurturing psychological safety, thereby influencing medical error reporting positively. Their findings emphasize that inclusive leadership, by promoting trust and psychological safety, contributes to increased reporting of medical errors and improved learning from mistakes. Yousaf et al. (2022) delved into the multilevel consequences of inclusive leadership on healthcare professionals' workgroups, elucidating its positive effects on the quality of care. This impact is mediated by perceived workgroup inclusion, with a psychological safety climate serving as a significant intermediary. Addressing conceptual ambiguities surrounding inclusive leadership, Korkmaz et al. (2022) established a comprehensive multilevel model encompassing dimensions like fostering employee uniqueness, strengthening team belongingness, demonstrating appreciation, and supporting organizational endeavors. Their work further explored the interconnectedness of inclusive leadership with various organizational outcomes, contributing to a clearer nomological network. Thabet et al. (2023) focused specifically on green-inclusive leadership (GIL) and its role in shaping pro-environmental behaviors within the hospitality industry.

Investigating inclusive leadership's effect on helping behaviors, Qasim et al. (2022) highlighted its role in fostering employees' willingness to assist colleagues. This influence was mediated by psychological safety (PS) and psychological engagement (PE), underscoring the multifaceted impact of inclusive leadership. Investigating the impact of inclusive leadership in demanding situations, Li and Peng (2022) showcased its potential to mitigate emotional exhaustion among front-line hospitality workers amidst the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Their study underscored that inclusive leadership played a crucial role in alleviating emotional exhaustion within this context. Ethical climate and psychological safety played crucial roles as mediators in this relationship.

In the context of project management, Khan et al. (2022) uncovered the reinforcing effect of inclusive leadership on the relationship between employee mindfulness and innovative work behavior, ultimately leading to project success. Khattak et al. (2022) extended this understanding to pro-social rule-breaking among hospitality employees, highlighting the mediation of psychological safety and leadership identification. Li and Tang (2022) provided insights into the intricate dynamics of inclusive leadership, team psychological safety, and innovative performance. Their multilevel analysis unveiled the positive influence of individual and team perceptions of inclusive leadership on individual and team innovative performance, respectively. The implications of managers' inclusive leadership were explored by Morinaga et al. (2023), who investigated its impact on knowledge-sharing behavior among employees. They discovered that inclusive leadership stimulates knowledge donation and collection behaviors, with the diversity in the biological sex of employees modulating these effects. Li et al. (2022) delved into the realm of emotional labor strategies among frontline medical staff, revealing inclusive leadership's (IL) potential in promoting deep acting and reducing surface acting, mediated by work regulatory focus. Cao et al. (2023) directed their focus towards the wider organizational setting by investigating the mediating influence of an inclusive climate at the departmental level, alongside the moderating impact of the organizational structure. This exploration centered on the interplay between CEOs' and department managers' inclusive leadership (IL) and its connection to employees' well-being. In a related context, Zhao et al. (2022) contributed to the discourse by delving deeper into the subject. Specifically, their study probed the effects of ambidextrous human resource practices on the innovation performance of employees. Here, psychological safety served as a mediator, with inclusive leadership moderating the intricate interplay between the two.

In the context of diversity and inclusion, Alang et al. (2022) illuminated the positive impact of inclusive leadership on Indigenous voice and workplace inclusion perception in Vietnam's public agencies. Fu et al. (2022) extended this understanding to employee creativity within a healthcare framework, showcasing the mediating roles of (PS) psychological safety and polychronicity. As organizations navigate change, Katsaros (2022) presented a nuanced model highlighting workplace belongingness and meaning-making as intermediaries between inclusive leadership and employee change participation. This model, enriched by the moderation of meaning-making, sheds light on the complex relationship dynamics. A common thread across these studies is the positive correlation between (IL) inclusive leadership and various employee outcomes, including innovative behavior, (PS) psychological safety, emotional well-being, and organizational performance. Furthermore, the intricate mechanisms through which inclusive leadership exerts its influence, such as mediating factors and moderating variables, have been unveiled. Inclusive leadership plays a pivotal role in promoting a range of positive outcomes within diverse work groups, including enhanced employee engagement, creativity, well-being, and organizational success. As organizations strive for inclusivity and excellence, the insights from these studies offer valuable guidance and underscore the significance of inclusive leadership in shaping a brighter future for diverse work environments.

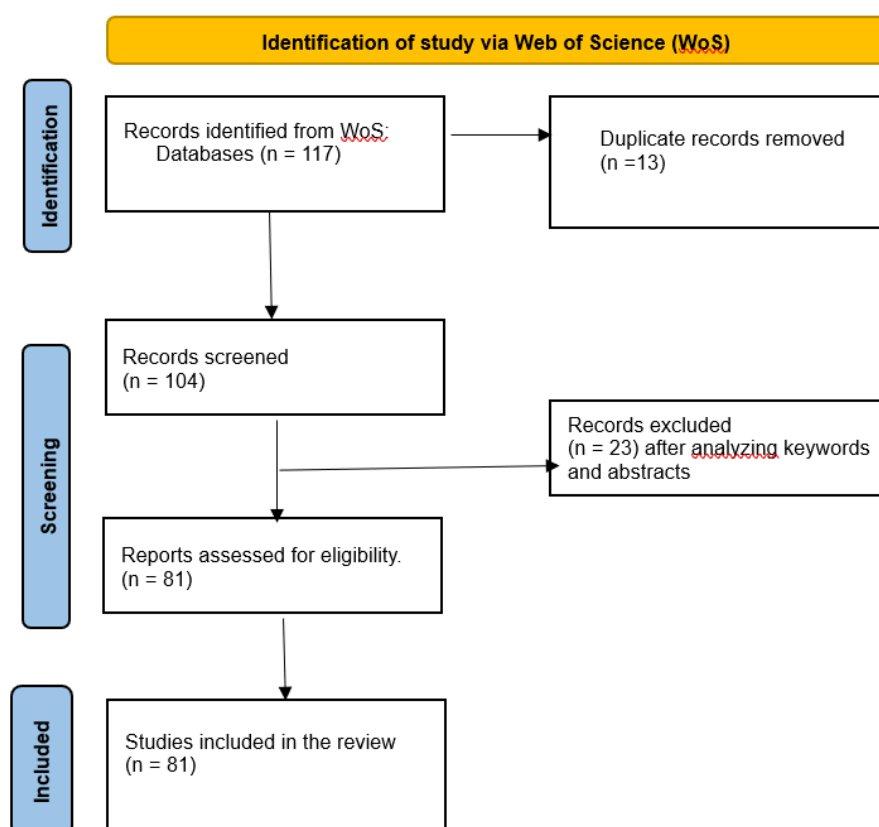
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section delineates the methodological framework employed in this study, characterized by the following sequential steps:

1. Database Selection: The primary database selected for this research is Web of Science.
2. Keyword Definition and Search Criteria: Clear and specific keywords, along with search criteria, were established for the initial search. The keywords used include "inclusive leadership," "inclusivity," and "inclusive leader."
3. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria Analysis: A rigorous analysis was conducted to determine the suitability of papers based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria.
4. Categorization of Selected Papers: The chosen papers were systematically categorized based on various pertinent parameters.
5. Anticipating Future Research Avenues: The study concludes by discussing potential directions for future research exploration.

The study employed a comprehensive literature analysis encompassing academic journals, articles, review articles, conference proceedings, and books spanning the period from 2010 to 2023. The search yielded a total of 117 records, focusing on papers indexed by Web of Science (WoS), written in English, and directly related to the specified query. After this initial selection, a meticulous manual review was conducted, with attention to abstracts and keywords. This meticulous process led to the exclusion of duplicate articles, ultimately resulting in a refined sample of 81 papers for in-depth analysis. The systematic study flow adhered to the PRISMA ("Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses") guidelines, providing a structured representation of the study's progression, as depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Identification of study via Web of Science (WoS) based on the PRISMA guidelines



FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

Leading Authors in Inclusive Leadership Research: Prolific Contributors and Their Contributions

Among the top 10 authors in inclusive leadership research, Javed B leads with 7 records, while Brimhall KC and Khan AK follow closely with 4 records each. Ahmed F, Fang YC, Luu TT, Wang DX, Ye QY, and Zhao FQ each have 3 records, and Barak MEM rounds off the list with 2 records. These prolific authors have collectively

contributed valuable insights into various facets of inclusive leadership, spanning psychological safety, innovation, employee well-being, behavior, organizational outcomes, diversity, and specific contextual applications. Their work enriches our understanding of how inclusive leadership fosters a culture of inclusivity, trust, and collaboration within organizations.

Table 1: Top 10 Authors with Record Count. (Source: WoS)

Sno.	Authors	Record Count
1	Javed B	7
2	Brimhall KC	4
3	Khan AK	4
4	Ahmed F	3
5	Fang YC	3
6	Luu TT	3
7	Wang DX	3
8	Ye QY	3
9	Zhao FQ	3
10	Barak MEM	2

Geographical Distribution of Inclusive Leadership Research: Top Countries/Regions and Their Contribution (%)

The distribution of research on inclusive leadership across various countries and regions reveals a diverse and global perspective. The majority of contributions come from Peoples R China, constituting 40.74% of the total records, followed by the USA at 20.99%, and Pakistan at 16.05%. Other significant contributors include Australia (9.88%), England (7.41%), and U Arab Emirates (7.41%). The research landscape also spans regions such as the Netherlands, New Zealand, Israel, Malaysia, South Africa, and South Korea, each contributing around 3.70% of the total records. This broad geographical representation underscores the widespread interest and engagement in studying the implications of inclusive leadership in diverse organizational and cultural contexts. Additionally, various countries contribute 1.23% each, reflecting a truly global exploration of inclusive leadership's impact.

Table 2: Geographical Distribution. (Source: WoS)

Countries/Regions	Record Count	% of 81
PEOPLES R CHINA	33	40.741
USA	17	20.988
PAKISTAN	13	16.049
AUSTRALIA	8	9.877
ENGLAND	6	7.407
U ARAB EMIRATES	6	7.407
NETHERLANDS	4	4.938
NEW ZEALAND	4	4.938
ISRAEL	3	3.704
MALAYSIA	3	3.704
SOUTH AFRICA	3	3.704
SOUTH KOREA	3	3.704
CHILE	2	2.469
AFGHANISTAN	1	1.235
BELGIUM	1	1.235
CANADA	1	1.235
GREECE	1	1.235
IRAQ	1	1.235
IRELAND	1	1.235
ITALY	1	1.235
JAPAN	1	1.235

PALESTINE	1	1.235
POLAND	1	1.235
QATAR	1	1.235
RUSSIA	1	1.235
SAUDI ARABIA	1	1.235
SPAIN	1	1.235
SWEDEN	1	1.235
TAIWAN	1	1.235
TRINIDAD TOBAGO	1	1.235
TURKEY	1	1.235
VIETNAM	1	1.235

Distribution of Inclusive Leadership (IL) Research by Publication Years

The distribution of IL research across various publication years provides valuable insights into the temporal trends and focus within this domain. The data reveals that a significant proportion of research has been published in recent years, indicating a growing interest and emphasis on inclusive leadership. The year 2021 stands out with the highest record count of 19, constituting approximately 23.46% of the total 81 records, followed closely by 2022 with 18 records (22.22%). This concentration of research in the past few years underscores the contemporary relevance and evolving significance of inclusive leadership in organizational studies. Additionally, the years 2020 (20.99%) and 2019 (13.58%) also contribute significantly to the body of literature, reflecting sustained attention to this topic. Research output in earlier years, such as 2018, 2017, 2016, and 2015, is notable but gradually tapers, indicating an emerging interest in recent times. Notably, individual records in the years 2010, 2012, and 2023 each constitute 1.24% of the total, underlining a consistent engagement with inclusive leadership research across different periods. This distribution reaffirms the contemporary and dynamic nature of inclusive leadership as a subject of study, as well as its increasing prominence in the field of organizational research.

Table 3: Publication Years. (Source: WoS)

Publication Years	Record Count	% of 81
2021	19	23.457
2022	18	22.222
2020	17	20.988
2019	11	13.58
2018	6	7.407
2017	3	3.704
2015	2	2.469
2016	2	2.469
2010	1	1.235
2012	1	1.235
2023	1	1.235

Navigating Leadership Theories and Their Synergies with Inclusive Leadership in Modern Workspaces

A comprehensive overview of various leadership theories and their intersections with inclusive leadership (IL) in the contemporary workplace. Each theory is accompanied by its associated mediating or moderating roles within the IL context, shedding light on the multifaceted impact of inclusive leadership on organizational dynamics.

1. "Affective Events Theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996)": The constructive emotional state of the employees acts as an intermediary between Inclusive Leadership (IL) and the process of learning from mistakes. Additionally, the interaction between IL and vitality is fortified by an individual's locus of control (Qurrahtulain et al., 2020).
2. "Asymmetric Theory (Tsui et al., 1992)": In context of the leader-directed supportive behavior, the influence of IL is moderated by the psychological diversity climate, with more pronounced effects seen among racioethnic minorities and women (Randel et al., 2016).
3. "Causal Attribution Theory (Weiner, 1988)": The connection between IL and change-focused Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is mediated through behavioral integrity (Younas et al., 2021).

4. "Cognitive Evaluation Theory (DeCharms, 1968)": IL exhibits a positive correlation with psychological-empowerment (PE) (Javed et al., 2018).
5. "Componential Theory of Creativity (Amabile, 1983)": IL stimulates environmentally conscious innovative ideas, thereby fostering "green" creativity (Bhutto et al., 2020).
6. "Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989)": Disability-inclusive leadership is associated with reduced work-family conflict, mediated by thriving at work and the innovative organizational atmosphere, thereby influencing the connection between taking-charge behavior and IL (Zeng et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2020).
7. "Cost-benefit Analysis Theory (Dr'eze & Stern, 1987)": A positive influence of IL on learning from errors is evidenced (Ye et al., 2019).
8. "Goal Setting Theory (Locke & Latham, 1990)": The relationship between team voice and IL is strengthened by performance pressure (Ye et al., 2019).
9. "Social Information Processing Theory (Joseph Walther, 1992)": Psychological safety functions as an intermediary between IL and the demonstration of taking-charge behavior (Zeng et al., 2020).
10. "Intrinsic Motivation Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000)": IL's impact on employee creativity is channeled through intrinsic motivation (Siyal et al., 2021).
11. "Role Identity Theory (Burke, 1991)": The association of IL with psychological safety and the need for competence is mediated by thriving at work, influencing the link between IL and taking-charge behavior (Qiuyun et al., 2019).
12. "Self-efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1986)": IL positively affects creative self-efficacy (Javed et al., 2020).
13. "Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964)": The connection between IL and affective organizational commitment is mediated by employee readiness for change (Choi et al., 2015, 2021).
14. "Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979)": Organizational identification serves as a mediator between IL and job embeddedness, with the relationship being influenced by power distance (Elsaied et al., 2020; Guo et al., 2020).
15. "Social Information Processing Theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978)": The mediating role of psychological safety (PS) is apparent in the link between IL and prosocial rule-breaking behavior (Wang & Shi, 2020).
16. "Social Role Theory (Eagly, 1987)": Gender moderates the connection between Inclusive Leadership and employees' positive mood (Ye et al., 2018).
17. "Organizational Support Theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986)": IL positively influences employee's innovative behavior (Qi et al., 2019).
18. "Open Innovation Theory (Chesbrough, 2003)": IL's impact on business model innovation is channeled through boundary-spanning exploration (Fang et al., 2021).
19. "Optimal Distinctiveness Theory (Brewer, 1991)": Inclusive leadership attenuates the connection between team fault lines and work engagement (Du et al., 2021).
20. "Job Demands Resource Theory": A negative relationship is established between IL and psychological distress (Zhao et al., 2020).
21. "Leader-Member Exchange Theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995)": IL's effect on discrimination is mediated through person-job fit (Adams et al., 2020; Choi et al., 2017).
22. "Theory of Similarity Attraction (Byrne, 1971)": IL positively influences team identity (Mitchell et al., 2015).
23. "Theory of Shattered Assumptions (Janoff-Bulman, 1992)": Psychological safety acts as a mediator in the relationship between IL and psychological distress (Ahmed et al., 2021).

Holistic Framework for Cultivating Inclusivity and Enhancing Employee Engagement through Inclusive Leadership

The following outline presents a holistic framework for implementing inclusive leadership principles within an organizational context. It is organized into distinct categories, each focusing on key aspects of cultivating inclusivity and driving employee engagement.

Nurturing Individuality: This classification underscores techniques aimed at empowering individual employees. Inclusive leaders prioritize understanding employee emotions, expectations, and interests. They provide guidance and maintain open communication channels (Ye, Wang, & Li, 2019; Wang et al., 2019; Choi et al., 2017 citing Hollander, 2009). A cornerstone of this approach is emotional support, ensuring employee well-being remains a central focus (Fang et al., 2021). Embracing diversity, inclusive leaders recognize unique differences and promote active participation, valuing each team member's input (Bradley, 2020; Randel et al., 2018; Derven, 2016; Meeuwissen et al., 2021).

Fostering Team Belongingness: This section highlights the significance of cultivating a sense of belonging within teams. Inclusive leaders champion equity through impartial judgment, fair rewards, and representation (Rayner, 2009; Kelan, 2020; Fang et al., 2019 citing Liu et al.; Siyal et al., 2021; Saxena et al., 2019). Establishing

relationships is crucial, as leaders endeavor to create an environment where team members feel valued and interconnected (Sugiyama et al., 2016; Randel et al., 2018; Gotsis & Grimani, 2017 citing Gallegos, 2014; Xiaotao et al., 2018; Minehart et al., 2020). Collaborative decision-making underscores practices that encourage consensus-building, mutual respect, and collaboration (Gotsis & Grimani, 2016a, 2016b; Amin et al., 2018; Gotsis & Grimani, 2016a, 2016b citing Ferdman, 2014; Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006; Meeuwissen et al., 2021; Ahmed et al., 2020).

Expressing Recognition: Inclusive leaders attach significant importance to acknowledging and appreciating employee endeavors. This encompasses recognizing accomplishments, affirming contributions, and commemorating achievements (Javed et al., 2019 citing Hollander, 2009; Wang & Shi, 2020 citing Ryan, 2006; Qi et al., 2019).

Championing Organizational Initiatives: The final category accentuates the role of inclusive leaders in propelling organizational advancement. A receptiveness to change and alignment with organizational objectives are pivotal (Mansoor et al., 2021; Choi et al., 2017; Gotsis & Grimani, 2017 citing Ferdman, 2014). Inclusive leaders communicate the alignment of inclusion with the organization's mission and vision, fostering an environment where diverse viewpoints contribute to decision-making (Derven, 2016; Gotsis & Grimani, 2016a, 2016b citing Ferdman, 2014; Norman et al., 2018; Luu, 2021; Gotsis & Grimani, 2016a, 2016b).

By adopting these distinct categories, organizations can establish a comprehensive roadmap for effective inclusive leadership. Employing these methods enables the creation of a workplace culture that celebrates diversity, upholds employee well-being, improves team dynamics, and converges with overarching organizational aims. These practices are underpinned by pertinent research studies affirming the affirmative impact of inclusive leadership on organizational triumph.

Impact of Inclusive Leadership on Organizational Dynamics and Performance

Inclusive Leadership and Organizational Culture:

The correlation between inclusive leadership (IL) and the formation of an all-encompassing organizational culture has garnered considerable attention from researchers. Studies have indicated that the implementation of inclusive leadership practices profoundly impacts the creation of an organizational culture that prioritizes diversity, inclusion, and a sense of belonging. Inclusive leaders assume a central role in molding this culture by exemplifying conduct that nurtures feelings of psychological security (PS) and inclusion among all staff members. Through their initiatives, they cultivate an atmosphere where individuals from varying backgrounds experience respect, attentiveness, and recognition. For instance, studies by Brimhall et al. (2023) and Lee and Dahinten (2021) highlight how inclusive leadership enhances trust and psychological safety, leading to increased reporting of medical errors, improved learning from mistakes, and positive voice behaviors among nurses. This contributes to the cultivation of an inclusive culture where employees feel empowered to share their perspectives, leading to better collaboration and a sense of cohesion.

Inclusive Leadership (IL) and Employee Engagement (EE):

The connection between IL and heightened EE has garnered significant attention. Inclusive leaders play a crucial role in empowering their team members through practices that encourage open communication and the appreciation of diverse viewpoints. These leaders create an environment where employees' unique strengths are recognized, and their contributions are valued. Research by Yousaf et al. (2022) reveals that inclusive leadership positively influences the quality of care through perceived workgroup inclusion and psychological safety, leading to enhanced engagement among healthcare professionals. Similarly, the study by Khan et al. (2022) illustrates how inclusive leadership strengthens the relationship between employee mindfulness and innovative work behavior, resulting in improved project success. These findings underscore how inclusive leadership drives higher levels of employee engagement by fostering a sense of ownership, involvement, and meaningful participation.

The Role of Inclusive Leadership (IL) in Talent Management:

The impact of IL practices on talent management processes is noteworthy. Inclusive leaders contribute to talent recruitment, retention, and development by creating an environment where diversity is embraced and valued. This practice enhances an organization's ability to attract and retain a diverse pool of talent. As highlighted by Alang et al. (2022), inclusive leadership promotes workplace diversity, and belongingness, and values unique attributes, resulting in an inclusive workplace that appeals to individuals from different backgrounds. Moreover, inclusive leadership bolsters talent development efforts by providing equal opportunities for growth and advancement. Luu (2019) emphasizes that disability-inclusive leadership positively affects job satisfaction and affective team commitment among employees with disabilities, thereby contributing to talent retention and development.

Inclusive Leadership and Decision-Making:

The influence of inclusive leadership on decision-making processes is a critical aspect of organizational dynamics. Inclusive leaders demonstrate a commitment to considering diverse perspectives and encouraging participation from all team members. This approach enhances the quality of decisions by fostering comprehensive discussions and innovative solutions. The research by Zheng et al. (2018) reveals an inverted U-shaped relationship between

IL and subordinates' task performance, suggesting that optimal levels of inclusive leadership lead to better decision outcomes. Similarly, Choi, Tran, and Kang (2017) emphasize how IL positively relates to well-being and innovative behavior, both of which contribute to informed and effective decision-making processes.

Inclusive Leadership Development and Training:

The efficacy of inclusive leadership development programs and training initiatives is a topic of increasing interest. These programs aim to enhance leadership skills and promote inclusive behaviors among organizational leaders. Existing literature underscores the effectiveness of such programs in equipping leaders with the tools to recognize unconscious biases, communicate inclusively, and create equitable work environments. Ashikali, Groeneveld, and Kuipers (2021) highlight the significance of IL in moderating the relationship between team ethnic-cultural diversity and an inclusive climate, showcasing the potential of development initiatives in shaping leaders' inclusive behaviors. These programs contribute to improved organizational dynamics, employee satisfaction, and collaboration, as demonstrated by Hirak et al. (2012), where leader inclusiveness positively influences psychological safety, thereby impacting learning from failures and unit performance.

Inclusive Leadership and Organizational Performance:

The connection between inclusive leadership and the overall performance of an organization constitutes a critical research domain. Inclusive leaders play a pivotal role in elevating organizational performance through the effective utilization of their team members' diverse skills and viewpoints. Research conducted by Fang et al. (2019) underscores the constructive correlation between inclusive leadership and innovative conduct among emerging-generation employees, leading to enhanced organizational achievements. Furthermore, inclusive leaders create a work environment that encourages collaboration, open communication, and creativity. The study by Fang et al. (2021) underscores how IL motivates employee engagement in boundary-spanning activities, thereby driving business model innovation.

Key Themes and Findings of Inclusive Leadership Research

The Table 4 brings together a collection of important studies that explore the relationship between inclusive leadership and various outcomes in organizations. Inclusive leadership is a style where leaders create an environment of trust, belonging, and psychological safety, and it has been studied for its impact on employee behavior, well-being, innovation, and overall organizational success.

One key aspect highlighted in table 4 is how inclusive leadership fosters psychological safety. This means that when leaders promote inclusivity, employees feel safe to speak up, report errors, and learn from their mistakes. For example, nurse managers who exhibit inclusive leadership encourage nurses to voice their opinions and report errors without fear, as shown by Lee and Dahinten (2021).

Innovation is another area strongly influenced by inclusive leadership. Leaders who embrace inclusivity can inspire employees to engage in creative and boundary-pushing activities. Fang et al. (2021) found that such leadership encourages employees to explore new ideas, leading to innovative changes in how businesses operate. Employee well-being is also positively impacted by inclusive leadership. When leaders prioritize inclusivity, it can reduce stress and create a supportive environment. Ahmed et al. (2021) discovered that inclusive leadership was linked to lower levels of distress among healthcare workers during challenging times.

Moreover, inclusive leadership is closely connected to promoting diversity and inclusion. Alang et al. (2022) showed that inclusive leadership helps value the unique contributions of different employees, especially those from indigenous backgrounds. In disaster preparedness, as highlighted by Ronoh (2017), inclusive leadership ensures that everyone, including children with disabilities, is involved in creating safe and accessible plans.

All these studies combined underscore the significance of inclusive leadership in organizations. It encourages open communication, boosts innovation, enhances employee well-being, and fosters a culture of diversity and collaboration. Inclusive leadership ultimately helps organizations thrive by creating an atmosphere where everyone feels valued and can contribute their best.

Table 4: Key Themes and Findings of Inclusive Leadership Research

Theme	Study	Key Findings
Inclusive Leadership and Psychological Safety	Brimhall et al. (2023)	Inclusive leadership enhances trust and psychological safety, leading to increased reporting of medical errors and improved learning from mistakes.
	Lee and Dahinten (2021)	Nurse managers' inclusive leadership positively affects nurses' voice behaviors and error reporting through psychological safety.
	Hassan and Jiang (2021)	Inclusive leadership behavior motivates workgroups to engage in learning, mediated by workgroup psychological safety.

	Gartrell et al. (2016)	Inclusive leadership relates to employee helping behaviors toward leaders and work groups, with stronger effects for women and racial-ethnic minorities.
Inclusive Leadership and Innovation	Fang et al. (2021)	IL motivates employee engagement in boundary-spanning activities, leading to business model innovation.
	Zheng et al. (2018)	Inclusive leadership has an inverted U-shaped relationship with subordinates' task performance.
	Jiang et al. (2022)	Inclusive leadership fosters an environment encouraging employee voices, especially for those with high achievement values.
IL and Employee Well-Being	Cao et al. (2023)	The well-being of employees is influenced by the inclusive leadership demonstrated by CEOs, a relationship that is partially mediated by the inclusive climate within departments and moderated by the structure of the organization.
	Ahmed et al. (2021)	Inclusive leadership reduces psychological distress and promotes psychological safety among healthcare workers.
	Luu (2018, 2019)	Inclusive leadership enhances well-being and engagement among employees with disabilities.
IL and Employee Behavior	Qasim et al. (2022)	IL fosters helping behaviors through the mediating role of PS and PE.
	Khattak et al. (2022)	Inclusive leadership positively influences pro-social rule-breaking, mediated by PS and leadership identification.
	Javed et al. (2021, 2018)	Inclusive leadership positively influences innovative work behavior, mediated by PS and (CSE) creative self-efficacy.
IL and Organizational Outcomes	Korkmaz et al. (2022)	Proposed a multilevel model of IL, consisting of fostering uniqueness, strengthening belongingness, showing appreciation, and supporting organizational efforts, with implications for various outcomes.
	Fang et al. (2019)	Inclusive leadership positively relates to new-generation employees' innovative behavior.
	Mitchell et al. (2015)	Inclusive leadership influences interprofessional team performance through shared identity and status differences.
Inclusive Leadership and Diversity/Inclusion	Alang et al. (2022)	Inclusive leadership promotes workplace diversity, and belongingness, and values Indigenous uniqueness.
	Ronoh (2017)	Inclusive leadership pathways promote inclusiveness in disaster risk reduction for children with disabilities.
	Banks et al. (2021)	Inclusive interventions are crucial to prevent exacerbating poverty and social inequalities during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Inclusive Leadership and Learning/Development	Meeuwissen et al. (2021)	Leader inclusiveness facilitates team learning behavior in interdisciplinary teams.
	Luu (2022)	Disability-inclusive leadership reduces work-family conflict and enhances enrichment among employees with disabilities.
Inclusive Leadership and Cultural Diversity	Gomez-Hurtado et al. (2021)	Inclusive leadership promotes an inclusive collaborative culture in education centers.
	Jin, Lee, and Lee (2017)	Inclusive leadership and diversity policy impact employee performance, with differential effects.
Inclusive Leadership and Specific Contexts	Fu et al. (2022)	Inclusive leadership fosters employee creativity, mediated by psychological safety and polychronicity, in healthcare contexts.
	Luu (2019)	Benevolent leadership that embraces disability inclusion has a positive impact on the job satisfaction and emotional commitment of employees who have disabilities.
	Luu (2018)	Disability-inclusive HR practices positively influence work engagement through organizational identification, with moral leadership enhancing this relationship.

Empowering SDGs through Inclusive Leadership: Gender Equality and Reduced Inequalities

Inclusive leadership aligns closely with (SDGs) and can significantly contribute to achieving specific SDGs, such as “SDG 5 (Gender Equality)” and “SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities)”. The extensive research conducted on inclusive leadership and its impact on diverse work groups provides compelling evidence of its potential to

advance these goals. Let's explore how inclusive leadership practices contribute to these SDGs, drawing upon the research findings you've provided:

SDG 5: Gender Equality

Inclusive leadership practices have been shown to positively impact gender equality in various ways:

1. **Equal Representation and Participation:** Research by Brimhall et al. (2023) demonstrates that inclusive leadership fosters an environment of trust and psychological safety, encouraging increased reporting of medical errors and learning from mistakes. This environment can lead to more equitable participation and representation of all genders, promoting gender equality.
2. **Empowerment and Voice:** Inclusive leadership encourages employees, including women, to voice their opinions and contribute ideas, as shown by Yousaf et al. (2022). This empowerment supports women's active engagement in decision-making processes, a crucial aspect of achieving gender equality.
3. **Reducing Gender Disparities:** Inclusive leadership, as studied by Li and Peng (2022), has been found to reduce emotional exhaustion among front-line employees during challenging times such as the COVID-19 pandemic. This contributes to a healthier work environment and can help mitigate gender-specific stressors.
4. **Economic Empowerment:** Inclusive leadership practices, highlighted by Katsaros (2022), facilitate an inclusive climate that supports women's career growth and professional development. This, in turn, enhances women's economic empowerment and opportunities for leadership roles.

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

Inclusive leadership plays a vital role in reducing inequalities, as evidenced by several research studies:

1. **Diverse and Inclusive Workforce:** Korkmaz et al. (2022) propose a multilevel model of IL that emphasizes dimensions such as fostering employee uniqueness and strengthening team belongingness. These practices contribute to a diverse and inclusive workforce, addressing inequalities in employment opportunities.
2. **Promoting Inclusion:** Alang et al. (2022) demonstrate that inclusive leadership positively affects workplace inclusion, particularly among Indigenous employees. Inclusive leadership practices that value uniqueness and belongingness help reduce disparities and promote inclusivity.
3. **Collaboration and Well-being:** Cao et al. (2023) reveal that inclusive leadership influences employees' well-being through a mediating role of department-level inclusive climate. This implies that IL can positively impact employees' overall well-being, reducing disparities in well-being outcomes.
4. **Enhancing Psychological Safety:** The research by Qasim et al. (2022) emphasizes the role of IL in fostering PS, which in turn influences helping behaviors among employees. By creating an inclusive and safe environment, organizations can reduce inequalities in interpersonal relationships and cooperation.

In conclusion, the extensive body of research on inclusive leadership provides robust evidence that aligns with the United Nations' "SDG 5 (Gender Equality)" and "SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities)". Inclusive leadership practices have been shown to positively influence gender equality, empower marginalized groups, and reduce inequalities within organizations, thereby contributing to broader sustainable development goals. Organizations that embrace inclusive leadership can make substantial progress toward creating more equitable and inclusive workplaces and, in doing so, contribute to the achievement of these critical SDGs.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The literature review analysis highlights several crucial research gaps in the area of inclusive leadership. Firstly, there is a need for the concept of longitudinal studies to assess the long-term effects & impact of IL on diverse work groups and how these behaviors evolve. Secondly, cross-cultural research is essential to examine how inclusive leadership practices differ across diverse cultural settings. Thirdly, exploring other potential mediating factors, beyond positive mood and affective organizational commitment, would enrich our understanding of the mechanisms through which inclusive leadership influences various employee behaviors and performance outcomes. Fourthly, the role of other moderating factors, apart from professional diversity, in shaping the relationship between IL and team performance remains largely unexplored. Fifthly, further investigations should explore the impact of inclusive leadership on broader aspects of employee outcomes, such as job satisfaction, performance, and turnover. Sixthly, comparative research across diverse theoretical frameworks and contexts would provide a comprehensive understanding of the intricate connection between inclusive leadership and diverse employee outcomes. Seventhly, effective strategies for developing inclusive leadership skills among organizational leaders require more research and identification of best practices and interventions. Eighthly, research on the organizational-level impact of inclusive leadership is limited and warrants more investigation. Ninthly, exploring how inclusive leadership interacts with multiple dimensions of diversity (e.g., gender, race, disability) and the unique challenges in non-Western cultural and organizational settings could provide culturally specific insights into effective inclusive leadership practices. Addressing these research gaps will advance our

knowledge of the role of inclusive leadership in fostering diversity and positive outcomes in diverse work groups and inform the implementation of inclusive leadership practices in organizations.

1. Longitudinal Studies: Randel and colleagues (2018) introduced a comprehensive framework for understanding inclusive leadership within work groups. Despite these insights, there remains a gap in research concerning the long-term effects of inclusive leadership on diverse work groups. Conducting more longitudinal studies would provide a deeper understanding of how inclusive leadership behaviors evolve and their lasting impact on group dynamics.
2. Cultural Context: While Ye, Wang, and Li (2018) examined inclusive leadership effects in a Chinese context, further research is needed to comprehend the variations of inclusive leadership practices across diverse cultural settings. Choi, Tran, and Kang (2017) shed light on inclusive leadership's impact on the Vietnamese service industry, yet additional studies in different cultural contexts are vital for a more comprehensive understanding.
3. Mediating Mechanisms: While Ye, Wang, and Li (2018) explored the connection & link between inclusive leadership and learning from errors through positive mood, there is room for research into other potential mediating mechanisms that connect inclusive leadership with various employee outcomes. Investigating alternative pathways could provide a more holistic view of the impact of inclusive leadership.
4. Moderating Factors: Zheng and colleagues (2018) unveiled the relationship between IL and the task performance of the subordinates, modulated by professional diversity. To deepen our comprehension, more research is essential to identify additional moderating factors that shape the influence of inclusive leadership across various employee outcomes and contexts.
5. Impact on Specific Outcomes: Javed and colleagues (2019) explored the link between inclusive leadership and innovative work behavior with a focus on psychological empowerment. However, more extensive research is needed to understand the wider impact of IL on various outcomes related to employees such as job satisfaction, performance, and turnover, among others.
6. Comparative Studies: Integrating theories like social role theory into inclusive leadership research, as demonstrated by Ye, Wang, and Guo (2019), provides valuable insights. Yet, to form a comprehensive understanding, more comparative studies spanning different theoretical frameworks and research contexts are required.
7. Inclusive Leadership Development: As emphasized by Ashikali, Groeneveld, and Kuipers (2021), organizations should prioritize the development of inclusive leadership skills among their leaders. This requires research to identify effective strategies for training and cultivating inclusive leadership behaviors across diverse industries and sectors.
8. Organizational Level Analysis: Expanding upon team-level research, similar to the study conducted by Ye, Wang, and Guo (2019), a more thorough investigation into the effects of inclusive leadership at the organizational level is essential. This endeavor would provide organizations with a more comprehensive understanding of the far-reaching consequences of implementing inclusive leadership strategies on overall innovation and performance.
9. Intersectionality: Luu (2019) illuminated the effects of Disability Inclusive Leadership on the employees wellbeing. Yet, a research gap remains in understanding how inclusive leadership interacts with multiple dimensions of diversity. Future research should delve into intersectionality to provide a more nuanced understanding of its impact.
10. Non-Western Perspectives: While studies by Luu (2019) and Ronoh (2017) examined inclusive leadership in non-Western contexts, more research is warranted to uncover the unique dynamics of inclusive leadership in various non-Western cultural and organizational settings. Comparative studies between Western and non-Western contexts can offer valuable insights into culturally specific factors influencing inclusive leadership effectiveness.

Incorporating insights from these research gaps, organizations and leaders can proactively promote and enhance inclusive leadership practices. This includes investing in longitudinal studies, cross-cultural training, exploring mediating and moderating factors, fostering comprehensive outcome analysis, promoting comparative research, developing inclusive leadership programs, assessing organizational-level impact, adopting an intersectional approach, and gaining culturally-specific insights. By addressing these aspects, organizations can create a more inclusive and effective leadership approach.

Considering the research gaps and insights distilled from the existing literature, organizations, and leaders are poised to proactively enhance and cultivate inclusive leadership practices through the following measures:

1. Invest in Longitudinal Studies: Organizations should actively support and participate in longitudinal studies that meticulously track the effects of inclusive leadership on diverse work groups over an extended temporal horizon. Such a comprehensive approach will facilitate a profound comprehension of

- the evolutionary trajectory of inclusive leadership behaviors and their enduring influence on group dynamics. This knowledge will empower informed decision-making within the organizational context.
2. **Cross-Cultural Training:** Leaders must undergo rigorous cross-cultural training to foster a heightened understanding and adeptness in adapting inclusive leadership practices across multifarious cultural settings. This specialized training will furnish them with the essential cultural intelligence imperative for navigating disparate contexts in a manner that is both sensitive and efficacious.
 3. **Explore Mediating Mechanisms:** Organizations should actively advocate and facilitate research endeavors that delve beyond the established mediating mechanisms of positive mood and affective organizational commitment. By embarking on this explorative path, a more comprehensive and nuanced comprehension of the intricate ways in which inclusive leadership exerts its influence on diverse employee behaviors and performance outcomes will be unveiled.
 4. **Consider Additional Moderating Factors:** Organizations have the prerogative to sponsor and champion research initiatives focused on unearthing potential supplementary moderating factors that intricately shape the intricate interplay between inclusive leadership and the spectrum of diverse employee outcomes. This newfound awareness will enable leaders to bespoke their inclusive leadership strategies to maximize their resonance and effectiveness.
 5. **Comprehensive Outcome Analysis:** Enlightened leaders should acutely acknowledge the imperative for scholarly investigations that venture beyond the prevalent purview and embrace a holistic exploration of the comprehensive impact of inclusive leadership. By scrutinizing a broad spectrum of employee outcomes encompassing job satisfaction, performance metrics, and attrition rates, leaders can meticulously curate a work milieu that is genuinely inclusive and imbued with heightened engagement.
 6. **Promote Comparative Research:** Organizations are well-served by nurturing and endorsing comparative research initiatives that transcend conventional theoretical frameworks and diversify research contexts. Such an expansive perspective will yield a holistic panorama of the symbiotic relationship between IL and the multifaceted factors that collectively employee outcomes.
 7. **Leadership Development Programs:** It is recommended that organizations invest resources in carefully designing comprehensive leadership development initiatives that prioritize the cultivation of inclusive leadership skills among their leadership team. These transformative programs should incorporate effective strategies and focused interventions that inspire leaders to genuinely model and promote inclusive actions.
 8. **Organizational-Level Impact Assessment:** Visionary leaders should actively engage in scholarly inquiry that navigates the intricate landscape of the organizational-level impact of inclusive leadership.
 9. **Intersectional Approach:** Astute organizations and leaders ought to wholeheartedly embrace an intersectional approach to inclusive leadership. This mandates an incisive comprehension of how the tapestry of inclusive leadership practices synergistically interacts with the kaleidoscope of intersecting dimensions of diversity - spanning gender, race, disability, and more - to meticulously craft an environment that is innately inclusive and genuinely empowering for every employee.
 10. **Culturally-Specific Insights:** Leaders are enjoined to accord precedence to scholarly inquiries that illuminate the singular challenges and latent opportunities that underscore the landscape of inclusive leadership within non-Western cultural and organizational milieus. Such culturally bespoke insights will be a beacon guiding the calibrated adaptation of inclusive leadership practices across the diverse mosaic of global contexts.

By diligently enacting these recommendations, organizations and leaders are poised to foster a work ecosystem that is intrinsically inclusive, advancing the ethos of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and engendering a positive ripple effect across employees, teams, and the broader societal fabric.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the comprehensive exploration of inclusive leadership's multifaceted impact on diverse workgroups and its alignment with the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) underscores its paramount significance in contemporary organizational and societal contexts.

The synthesis of various studies underscores that inclusive leadership transcends traditional paradigms by fostering psychological safety, trust, and inclusion. It stimulates a virtuous cycle of enhanced employee well-being, innovation, and collaboration, substantiating its role in achieving multiple SDGs. Notably, inclusive leadership resonates strongly with SDG 5 (Gender Equality), where it dismantles gender-related barriers and biases, empowering women in leadership positions, and thereby contributing to a more equitable world. Moreover, its pivotal role in achieving SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) is evident through its propensity to reduce disparities among diverse teams, foster belongingness, and amplify individual and collective potential.

This analysis illuminates the dynamic interplay between inclusive leadership and a spectrum of outcomes, from improved medical error reporting, enhanced care quality, and pro-environmental behaviors, to heightened

creativity, innovative work behavior, and overall organizational performance. It reveals the potency of inclusive leadership in mitigating inequalities, creating diverse and inclusive workplaces, and amplifying individual voices. Nonetheless, this overview merely scratches the surface of the potential of inclusive leadership in advancing the SDGs. Further research is essential to deepen our understanding of the nuanced mechanisms through which inclusive leadership drives positive change. Investigating its impact across different sectors, cultures, and organizational sizes could unveil context-specific dynamics. Moreover, the intricate interconnection of inclusive leadership with various SDGs warrants continued exploration to unravel its role in fostering sustainable economic growth, resilient communities, and responsible consumption and production.

In essence, as we embark on a collective journey toward achieving the SDGs, inclusive leadership emerges as a linchpin for transformative change. It is not only a leadership approach but a pathway to a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable future. Embracing and nurturing inclusive leadership is an imperative that holds the potential to reshape organizations and societies, propelling us toward a world where diversity is celebrated, voices are heard, and prosperity is shared by all.

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