



# **Inclusive Leadership: Enhancing Organizational Culture, Innovation, and Performance in the Digital Industrial Revolution**

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## **ABSTRACT :**

Inclusive leadership is increasingly important in diverse and technology-driven workplaces because it seeks to ensure that employees are respected, supported, heard, and able to contribute. This paper examines the role of inclusive leadership in organizational culture, innovation, employee engagement, collaboration, and performance, with particular attention to the digital industrial revolution. The study combines a review of the inclusive-leadership concepts presented in the supplied literature with primary survey data collected from 10 respondents through a structured Google Forms questionnaire. The questionnaire examined respondents' understanding of inclusive leadership, its perceived organizational outcomes, important leadership skills, and behaviors promoted by inclusive leaders. The results show that 90% of respondents defined inclusive leadership as including all individuals regardless of background; 100% associated it primarily with improving organizational performance and culture; 80% identified emotional intelligence as an important skill; and 80% associated inclusive leadership with collaboration and teamwork. The paper discusses the core principles of fairness and equity, openness and curiosity, empathy and emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, bias awareness, and collaboration and participation. The findings support the view presented in the source material that inclusive leadership can contribute to a respectful, collaborative, innovative, and adaptable workplace, while the small sample size limits the generalizability of the survey findings.

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**Keywords:** Inclusive leadership, diversity, inclusion, emotional intelligence, collaboration, organizational culture, innovation, digital transformation

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## **Introduction**

Inclusion has become an important concern in contemporary organizations because workplaces increasingly bring together people with different backgrounds, identities, experiences, and perspectives. In the supplied study material, inclusive leadership is described as a leadership approach that includes everyone rather than leaving individuals out on the basis of background, race, status, gender, or other differences. The approach goes beyond simply acknowledging diversity: leaders are expected to create conditions in which people feel respected, supported, and empowered to contribute.

Inclusive leadership is presented as both an ethical approach and a strategic capability. The source material links it with collaboration, employee satisfaction, knowledge sharing, creativity, digital readiness, and organizational performance. In rapidly changing environments, leaders who invite diverse perspectives and create psychological safety may help teams exchange knowledge, identify problems, and develop creative responses to technological and organizational change.

The present paper therefore focuses on the meaning, development, principles, benefits, and workplace relevance of inclusive leadership. It also reports the results of a small primary survey of 10 respondents included in the supplied paper. The research is descriptive and quantitative, using a self-structured questionnaire administered through Google Forms.

### **1.1. Meaning and importance of inclusive leadership**

Inclusive leadership refers to leadership behavior that actively creates belonging while valuing individual differences. The supplied material emphasizes self-awareness, awareness of conscious and unconscious bias, empathy, emotional intelligence, open communication, participation, and equitable decision-making. Inclusive leaders seek diverse perspectives and encourage people to express ideas, concerns, and alternative viewpoints without fear of judgment.

A central feature is psychological safety. When employees feel safe to speak, make suggestions, raise concerns, or acknowledge mistakes, teams may be better positioned to learn and adapt. Inclusive communication also requires leaders to use clear and accessible communication methods and to structure meetings so that quieter voices can participate. Examples in the source include round-robin sharing, anonymous idea collection, and breakout groups.

### 1.2. Inclusive leadership and the digital industrial revolution

Digital transformation requires organizations to develop new skills, adapt processes, and coordinate work across functions. The supplied paper argues that inclusive leaders can support this transition by encouraging knowledge sharing, continuous learning, flexible thinking, and participation from employees at different levels. Diverse teams may contribute varied perspectives that help organizations anticipate challenges and respond to innovation.

The leadership role is therefore not limited to formal decision-making. It also includes building a workplace climate in which people can learn from one another, challenge assumptions, and contribute to change. Humility and courage are identified as important traits: leaders should acknowledge when they do not have all the answers, remain open to correction, and challenge discriminatory or exclusionary practices when necessary.

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### Literature-based framework

The supplied paper identifies several stages in the development of inclusive leadership: foundations in early leadership theories (1950s–1980s); the rise of diversity and equal-opportunity movements (1980s–1990s); the development of psychological safety and social identity perspectives (1990s–2000s); the formal emergence of inclusive leadership research (2000s–2010s); and increasing attention to inclusive leadership in the digital age (2015–present).

The source material draws on work associated with Randel et al. (2018), Shore et al. (2011), and Carmeli et al. (2010). It presents inclusive leadership as a mechanism through which belonging, uniqueness, employee involvement, creativity, and participation can be strengthened. The paper also identifies equity, transparent communication, fair opportunities, mentoring, sponsorship, flexible work, accessible design, DEI training, and mechanisms for reporting bias or harassment as organizational practices consistent with inclusion.

### 1.3. Core principles of inclusive leadership

The six core principles identified are:

- **Fairness and equity:** Treating employees fairly and providing equal opportunities.
- **Openness and curiosity:** Being receptive to new ideas, questions, and perspectives.
- **Empathy and emotional intelligence:** Understanding employees' experiences, feelings, and challenges.
- **Cultural intelligence:** Navigating and appreciating differences in culture, identity, and worldview.
- **Bias awareness:** Recognizing and addressing personal and systemic biases.
- **Collaboration and participation:** Encouraging team members to speak up, contribute, and engage.

### 1.4. Benefits of inclusive leadership

The supplied material identifies increased innovation, improved team performance, higher employee engagement, stronger organizational culture, and better decision-making as major benefits. Diverse viewpoints can support creative solutions and constructive debate. Psychological safety may support collaboration and reduce fear around expressing ideas or concerns. Employees who feel respected and included may also show stronger commitment and motivation.

Inclusive decision-making is presented as a way to reduce blind spots because leaders consider multiple perspectives before making decisions. At the organizational level, inclusive leadership can also reinforce trust, transparency, mutual respect, and adaptability.

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### Research methodology

#### 1.5. Research design

This study follows a descriptive research design. The purpose is to understand perceptions and attitudes related to inclusive leadership and to describe how respondents view its meaning, outcomes, important skills, and organizational behaviors.

#### 1.6. Research approach

A quantitative approach was used. Data were collected through structured multiple-choice questions so that respondents' opinions could be summarized using percentages and graphical representations.

#### 1.7. Instrument and data collection

The questionnaire was self-structured by the researcher using inclusive-leadership concepts identified in previous studies cited in the source material, including Randel et al. (2018), Shore et al. (2011), and Carmeli et al. (2010). The questionnaire was administered through Google Forms to 10 respondents. Responses were recorded automatically and analyzed using percentage calculations and graphical representation.

### 1.8. Sample and scope

The study contains 10 responses. Because the sample is small and no broader sampling frame is reported in the supplied material, the findings should be interpreted as descriptive of this respondent group rather than as representative of employees or organizations generally.

## Results and discussion

The survey results provide a concise picture of how the 10 respondents understood inclusive leadership. Four questions were reported in the source paper. The following figures reproduce the response distributions as pie charts, and the discussion interprets the percentages reported in the supplied material.

**What is inclusive leadership?  
10 responses**



**Fig. 1 - Respondents' understanding of inclusive leadership.**

For the first question, 90% of respondents selected “including all individuals regardless of background.” The remaining 10% selected “focusing only on profit.” None selected “ignoring diversity” or “managing only senior employees.” The distribution indicates that most respondents associated inclusive leadership with broad participation rather than exclusionary or profit-only approaches.

**Inclusive leadership mainly improves:  
10 responses**

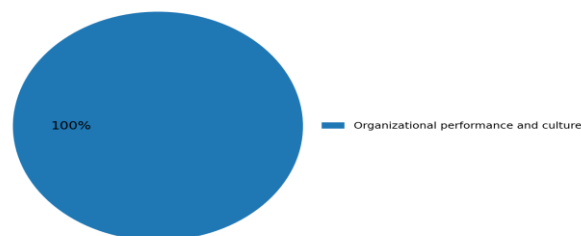


**Fig. 2 - Perceived primary outcome of inclusive leadership.**

For the second question, all 10 respondents (100%) selected “organizational performance and culture.” No respondents selected “only salary,” “only rules,” or “only attendance.” Within this sample, respondents therefore connected inclusive leadership with organizational and cultural outcomes rather than with a single administrative or compensation-related outcome.

**Which skill is important for inclusive leaders?  
10 responses**

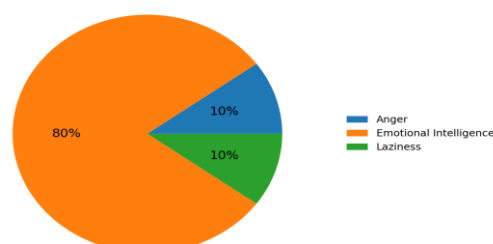


**Fig. 3 - Skill identified as important for inclusive leaders.**

For the third question, 80% selected “Emotional Intelligence.” The remaining 20% was divided equally between “Anger” and “Laziness,” while “Ego” received 0%. The response pattern places emotional intelligence clearly ahead of the other listed options as the skill associated with inclusive leadership in this sample.

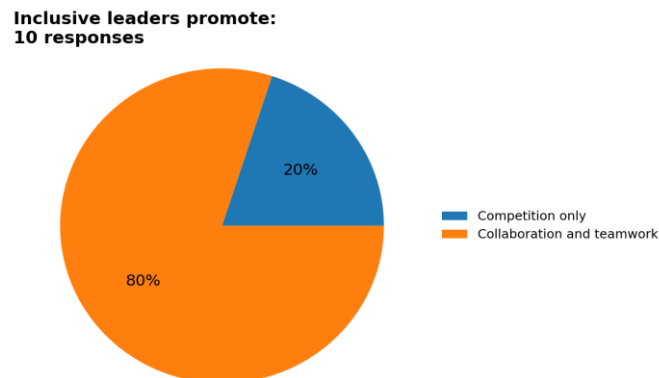


**Fig. 4 - Organizational behavior promoted by inclusive leaders.**

For the fourth question, 80% selected “Collaboration and teamwork,” while 20% selected “Competition only.” “Isolation” and “Strict hierarchy” each received 0%. This result is consistent with the source paper’s emphasis on participation, collaboration, constructive debate, and shared leadership.

### 1.9. Interpretation of findings

Across the four questions, the responses broadly align with the conceptual framework presented earlier in the paper. The 90% response to the first question reflects the idea that inclusion means not leaving people out because of background. The 100% response to the second question associates inclusive leadership with organizational performance and culture, which matches the source paper’s emphasis on culture, collaboration, and performance.

The 80% response for emotional intelligence is also consistent with the literature-based discussion in the source, where empathy and emotional intelligence are described as important for creating psychological safety and understanding employees’ experiences. Similarly, the 80% response for collaboration and teamwork corresponds with the source’s emphasis on shared leadership, constructive debate, diverse thinking, and participation.

At the same time, the survey contains only 10 respondents and uses a small set of multiple-choice questions. The results therefore provide descriptive evidence for this study rather than a basis for broad statistical generalization. Future research could use a larger and more diverse sample, additional questionnaire items, and comparative analysis across industries or organizational levels.

## Implications for organizations

The source material suggests that inclusive leadership has implications at both the individual-leader and organizational-system levels. Leaders can strengthen inclusion through open communication, equitable opportunities, active listening, mentoring, sponsorship, and transparent decisions. Organizations can reinforce these behaviors through flexible work arrangements, accessible design, DEI training, and mechanisms for reporting and addressing bias or harassment.

In digital transformation settings, organizations may particularly benefit from leadership practices that support continuous learning and knowledge sharing. Inclusive leaders can encourage employees at different levels to contribute ideas and identify challenges associated with technological change. This can make inclusion part of everyday organizational practice rather than a separate initiative.

## Conclusion

Inclusive leadership is presented in the supplied study as a mindset and leadership approach centered on equality, respect, participation, and belonging. Its major dimensions include fairness and equity, openness and curiosity, empathy and emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, bias awareness, and collaboration. The paper also connects inclusive leadership with innovation, team performance, employee engagement, organizational culture, and decision-making.

The primary survey of 10 respondents found that 90% identified inclusive leadership with including individuals regardless of background, 100% associated it with organizational performance and culture, 80% identified emotional intelligence as an important skill, and 80% associated inclusive leaders with collaboration and teamwork. These findings are consistent with the conceptual framework presented in the source material, while the small sample means that the results should be interpreted cautiously. Overall, the study highlights the importance of creating workplaces where people can contribute, communicate, and develop without being excluded because of their differences.

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