

Exploring the dimensions of inclusive leadership behaviour and assessing the relevance in a disruptive workplace environment

Email: 28106327@mygibs.co.za

Student Number: 28106327

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ABSTRACT

Although much research has been conducted on the moderators and mediators of leadership inclusivity, the understanding of leadership behaviours driving the theory of inclusive leadership required exploration in order to provide practical guidance on the advancement of the theoretical model. Whilst little is known about a four-dimension model for inclusive leadership, research has provided evidence of two of the dimensions in contributing to this model. Therefore, in this study the inclusive leadership behaviours of uniqueness, belongingness, appreciation and organisational support was explored, in terms of a four-dimension model, in a fast-moving consumer goods environment.

Through this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with twelve participants and their perspectives on these dimensions were examined to determine whether these four attributes are imperative and whether they exist in the environments that the individuals find themselves to be in. This study was furthered in that the exploration of these dimensions were considered in an environment without the concept of disruption being brought in, and together with the concept of disruption being considered. The study found that the model is indeed valuable and relevant in the consideration of disruption.

This study contributes to towards literature by exploring these dimensions in a practical environment as well as exploring these dimensions during periods of disruption. As a result, the framework was evidenced to be an indicator of inclusive behaviour and was shown that certain of the concepts of these models were more valued than others.

KEYWORDS:

Leadership Inclusivity, uniqueness, belongingness, appreciation, organisational efforts

DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

Urisha Parag

4 November 2024

ABBREVIATIONS

FMCG:	Fast-Moving Consumable Goods
VUCA:	Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous
LMX:	Leader-Member Exchange
MD:	Managing Director
CEO:	Chief Executive Officer
SOP:	Standard Operating Procedures
DEI:	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
RQ:	Research Question
BU:	Business Unit
VP:	Vice President

1. Chapter 1: Definition of Problem and Purpose

1.1 Purpose

Inclusion is often cited as mandatory concept in today's workplace environment. Not only does an individual feel as if they require this in order to ensure their happiness and well-being is met, but it has also been challenged in terms of disruption caused by COVID 19 (Bejer et al., 2024). Environments in which diversity and inclusion are packaged together, shows that it is becoming more evident that inclusion goes beyond just having diversity in a workplace in order to cultivate an equitable workforce, but it is also required to explain how an individual sees themselves as an insider to their workforce (Korkmaz et al., 2022).

There is an abundance of literature on inclusive behaviours, however, through a literary review process, one conceptual framework proposed that there needs to be a sense of belonging for an employee, the employee also needs to feel their sense of uniqueness is satisfied, appreciation is experienced, and that a leader needs to show support towards organisational efforts (Korkmaz et al., 2022). Secondly, these problems are always researched interdependently and the importance of these four dimensions to an employee is unknown. Lastly, Beijer et al. (2024) suggests that studies performed have been done in a context of a stable work environment, therefore not considering how evolving circumstances such as disruption, factors into inclusivity. Therefore. this is an area that needs development.

The purpose of this study is to therefore use this framework to explore the dimensions of inclusivity whilst determining from the perspective of an employee as to whether these dimensions are relevant to a disruptive environment. Secondly, the study will determine whether additional elements of inclusivity should be explored.

1.2 Background: Context of the study

In certain circumstances, organisations spend effort and time on developing leaders and investing in their capabilities and development, however, the evidence is overwhelmingly minimal in terms of demonstrating how effective leaders are (McCauley & Palus, 2021). Top level management thus, are concerned about leadership talent pools and the engagement levels of staff. Keeping this in mind, the field of leadership development and theory, focuses heavily on the behaviour of the leader, however the actors on this global stage are pointing heavily towards a power shift, in which the follower, and in this case the employee has a much more pivotal role to play (McCauley & Palus, 2021). Therefore, in this shift, it is noteworthy to

recognise that not only the individual performance of a leader needs to be kept in mind, but their impact on the collective performance of the team as a whole and what is driving the workplace climate in terms of their influence on their teams (McCauley & Palus, 2021). Thus, in examining the effectiveness of a leader and their influence on the difference dynamics of a team, inclusivity as a factor needed to be considered.

Shore et al. (2011) indicated that the antecedents of inclusion are an inclusive climate, inclusive leadership and inclusive practices. These antecedents foster an individual's perceptions of inclusion with inclusive leadership being one of the core elements defining inclusion. Although, much of the literature has been centralised around both diversity and inclusion, inclusion as a concept on its own, has not had a common framework to define what components need to be included (Korkmaz et al., 2022). Therefore, this study examined a particular framework posited for inclusion.

Most literature available on inclusivity was developed in a Western context, therefore this research will focus specifically on an African context. Even narrower, it focused on the South African workforce which is made up of a diverse range of individuals in terms of its demographic composition. The existing theories and literature were brought into an environment not tested in practice and this will be the contribution to the existing models. One of the factors that makes this study unique, is whilst inclusivity is pertinent, it is even more pertinent in the context of dealing with change and disruption in diverse organisations. Disruption was looked at in a holistic view in the study performed, and also as to how it was defined by the employee.

According to Statista (2024), South Africa's population is around 61 million individuals with the majority of the inhabitants being Black South Africans, that being nearly 49.1 million South Africans. In South Africa, individuals from the smallest demographic, that being Indian or an Asian accounted for roughly 1.56 million individuals of the population (Statista, 2024). The labour force participation rate in South Africa, during the last quarter of 2023, represented by Black South Africans accounted for over 59% of the population, below is a depiction of the labour force participation rate in South Africa (Statista, 2024). Therefore, the statistics demonstrate that the South African workforce is made up of a diverse range of individuals.

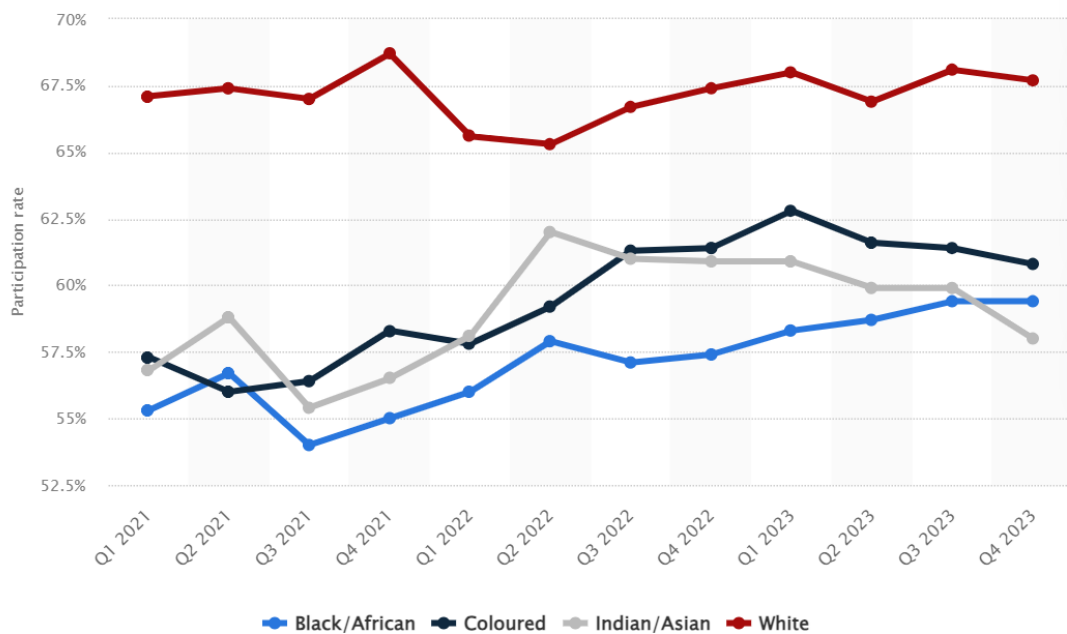


Figure One: Labour force participation rate in South Africa from quarter one 2021 to quarter four 2023, by population (Statista, 2024)

The results, therefore, from this study depicts the perspectives from a variety of individuals in terms of demographics. Therefore, the significance of this study also relates to the diverse individuals in the workforce, as well as to the way that the different demographics relate to the aspect of leadership inclusivity. South Africa also has a history of deep division; therefore, this study is also relevant to determine whether hurdles of the past have been overcome, in how the workforce treats inclusivity and particularly in relation to belonging and uniqueness.

Also, in today's volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) world, for the business environment to thrive, now more than ever, leadership is needed to be more effective in terms of their behaviours and in terms of understanding leadership frameworks (Elkington, 2020). Schoemaker et al. (2018) argued that if corporates are going to continue to work in ways that they are used to and not evolve, their success will be jeopardised. VUCA, therefore, warrants a shift in how they think and how they adapt their businesses to survive, which will requires innovation. Part of the success of this innovation is derived from the six leadership disciplines which provide a framework for VUCA (Schoemaker et al., 2018). Some of these principles speak specifically to alignment, which is required when there are different perspectives in achieving a strategic outcome. Therefore, taking this into account, it is ever more

crucial that a leader can steer the direction of the company while valuing individual contributions from an employee which directly comes from how a leader displays inclusivity.

1.3 Problem Statement

The different aspects of leadership inclusivity have been developed over the years, however, there has not been one overall study to combine the elements of inclusivity which come across in various studies. Korkmaz et al. (2022), produced a conceptual framework of inclusivity, through a literary review process, and the purpose of this study will be to examine the importance and relevance of each of these components from an employee perspective. What was not known, from these four elements, is whether an employee needed all these elements to be present and whether some of these variables were more important than others. Disruption and change are constant, and with the most recent disruption caused by Covid-19 in workplace practices, it is ever more important that employees feel included. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to combine these elements to determine whether an employee identifies with these components in a South African context and specifically within the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry, as the study focused on individuals within this environment. Secondly, in the mass of disruption faced by organisations, an investigation was done to research if employees still felt inclusive behaviours by leaders are portrayed.

1.4 Significance of the study

Whilst Beijer et al. (2024) examined these dimensions of leadership in a post disruptive era, a qualitative study was performed and this focused on three out of the four elements. It also did not consider the organisational context setting and the ability of inclusion in terms of organisational efforts. In the context of the study done by Beijer et al. (2024), it also focused on leader-follower behaviour, however, the context of this research focuses on whether employee inclusion and furthermore, whether all four of these dimensions are experienced by an employee. Additionally, perceptions of these factors were examined to determine how relevant they are in terms of disruption. Employees were also engaged to determine if something other than these factors were needed.

It is also suggested in previous research performed, that inclusivity as a practice, needed focus, as there is increasing emphasis on the experience of an employee which addresses the interaction between an employer and employee (Mohanty &

Kulkarni, 2023). There is a link between employee experience and the behaviour that they display in disruptive environments. It can be inferred that what will ultimately drive these experiences is the way that the leadership of the environment behaves. Thus, leadership behaviour was investigated to determine the experience of inclusion. Whilst disruption can take many forms, over the last decade, there have been many visible forms of disruption for the employee, and whilst leadership is responsible for strategy development and implementation, it is the employee who must ultimately deliver on these goals (Mohanty & Kulkarni, 2023). Secondly, employees from the fast-moving consumer goods environment will be the focus of this study.

Executives would anticipate that staff members would not only fulfil current objectives, but also demonstrate innovation in order to satisfy the company's growth targets, and to be relevant for the future (Mohanty & Kulkarni, 2023). With the move to remote work during the pandemic and the changing ways of working in a physical context, known assumptions applied in leadership practices and behaviours have experienced a shift (Beijer et al., 2024). Therefore, because leadership behaviour is a set of behaviours, leaders are also expected to adapt in order to be inclusive. In this particular context of disruption, workers, experienced a sense of disturbance to the social relations in a workplace setting.

Korkmaz et al. (2022), provided a summary of empirical evidence in terms of what the outcomes of leadership inclusivity are. The organisational outcomes include business model innovation, project success, problem solving abilities and innovative thinking, and by inference, the lack of leadership inclusivity would mean that these would not be accomplished. Therefore, it could be argued that it drives a variety of business and strategic outcomes.

In trying to understand what drives team success, studies over the last few years have shown that leadership inclusivity positively influences a variety of organisational factors. Ye et al. (2018), hypothesized that inclusive leadership contributed to an employee's positive mood, thereby, directly influencing their ability to learn from errors. These errors are normally undesirable as they lead to a negative impact for an organisation. However, it was found that inclusive leadership elicits an affective response from individuals therefore, encouraging a positive mood in an employee which subsequently leads to higher motivation and the willingness to learn from

errors (Ye et al., 2018). From this analysis it has been determined that there is a correlation between inclusive leadership and organisational success.

Furthermore, specifically to an employee, inclusive leadership has been positively related to outcomes such as motivation to work, employee engagement, job embeddedness, job performance, employee voice and employee creativity (Korkmaz et al., 2022). Thus, the evidence of the outcomes suggest that this is an imperative behaviour for the overall well-being of an employee.

Earlier studies have focused on diversity management being a fundamental attribute of a successful business environment. However, the issues associated with diversity management and the challenges faced, have led to determining whether another aspect such as inclusion is required, as inclusion focuses on the integration of diversity into the workforce (Nishii, 2013). Shore and Chung (2022) suggested that inclusion goes beyond that of diversity, in that diversity is not enough to ensure that innovation is fostered, work was performed effectively or that well-being was achieved.

Furthermore, for many leaders it was thought that having a diverse workforce was an important component in improving the performance of teams, however, this was not the case (Randel et al., 2018). In order for individuals from a diverse background to maximise their abilities and increase their contributions to the organisation, more evidence points to another characteristic that is required, such as inclusion (Randel et al., 2018).

In terms of context besides the pandemic, disruptive changes comes about from other complexities, such as the complexities arising from globalisation, working from home, technology, environmental and climate change, as well as political and economic factors (Simmons & Yawson, 2022). The concept of disruptive change is not a new concept, however, the warp speed at which this is happening, requires a real time response which can be seen as an awful task (Christensen et al., 2018). These forces ultimately evolve workforce demands, dispute process narratives and ultimately challenge the behaviour and stance of leaders in effectively managing and coping with these forces (Simmons & Yawson, 2022). This translates into leaders having to adapt, strategize and focus on inclusivity as a way to manage and meet the shift of the evolving landscape in which they find themselves (Simmons & Yawson, 2022).

1.5 Delimitations

An exploratory study was performed in the context of the FMCG organisational setting focusing on the individual employee perceptions surrounding a framework for inclusivity. Therefore, the framework suggested as an explanation of inclusivity may not be relevant to other industries or may need additional exploration in other industries.

2. Chapter 2 - Theory and Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, existing literature on leadership inclusivity will be discussed, together with the construct of disruption. Theories linked to inclusive leadership that have been identified will be explored, together with, the different leadership styles linked with the framework. Furthermore, each element of the framework will be examined in light of the research questions posed. Below represents an overview of the literature review together with a sequential flow of the research questions:

Framework for Leadership Inclusivity (Korkmaz et al., 2022)



Figure Two: Framework for Leadership Inclusivity

From the above the following propositions have been identified as part of the exploration and the literature review will follow in the order:

Research Question 1	Research Question 2	Research Question 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion around the following elements:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2.2 Definitions• 2.3 Uniqueness• 2.4 Belongingness• 2.5 Appreciation• 2.7 Efforts towards Organisational efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2.8 Trends around the importance of each element	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2.9 Disruption and in the perspective of inclusivity, how do these elements fair

Figure three: Breakdown and analysis of the chapter

2.2 General Definitions of Inclusivity

One of the components surrounding this study hinges on the definition of inclusion. Shore et al. (2011) suggested that inclusion is “the degree to which an employee perceives that they are an esteemed member of the work group through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness” (p.1265), therefore, this is inferred to be when an employee feels as if they are part of an organisation and secondly that their individuation is recognised by members in the organisation, this will lead to inclusion being felt. In establishing this definition, Shore et al. (2011) proposes that both these feelings need to be present side by side and that the feeling of uniqueness is required to be valued by the group.

Carmeli et al. (2010) suggested that there are three elements in how leaders demonstrate inclusive behaviour, that is, they are open, accessible and available for cooperation and communication with their subordinates. In this definition, Carmeli et al. (2010) indicates that this type of leadership behaviour is a form of relational leadership, in that by demonstrating openness, accessibility and cooperation, employee perceptions are formed, and these perceptions are directly related to work outcomes.

This concept had been earlier developed by Nembhard and Edmonson (2006) who suggested that when a leader exhibits behaviour in which they not only request inputs from their team members but also show a sense of appreciation of those inputs, inclusive leadership will be demonstrated. Additionally, an employee must perceive that their input is being genuinely valued (Nembhard & Edmonson, 2006). In staying with the aspect that leadership inclusivity is believed to involve a relational attribute, Randel et al. (2018), identified that this concept may be about developing strong, quality relationships with members of a team, or who are part of the organisation that are in the minority, therefore, being members who are under-represented in the group. This is directly related to the feeling of belongingness.

Moreover, Hollander (2012), put forward another definition of inclusive leadership which includes showing employees respect and understanding, taking responsibility and being able to give feedback to an employee. In showing respect for an individual, part of this comes with the ability to make an employee sense as if they are receiving fair and equitable treatment (Randel et al., 2018). In cultivating this equitable

treatment, employees are to believe that justice is intertwined in the behaviours of a leader (Randel et al., 2018). This is done by having the foresight to determine how every decision made and implemented by a leader, will impact each employees' feelings of being treated equitably (Randel et al., 2018).

In a workforce that is filled with diverse team members, an assumption is made that inclusive leadership is necessary in order to show support and gratitude from participation by a diverse group force (Ashikali et al., 2021). Since diversity is not enough to maximise the potential of team members, something more is required to be present, such as the feeling of inclusion. The manner in which this is done, is by creating an inclusive climate, therefore, Nishii (2013), posits additional facets in terms of an additional two dimensions supporting inclusive behaviour, that being, integration of differences and the inclusion of these differences in the implementation of decisions. Ultimately, these factors which have been identified, underpin the model of inclusivity, which can be broken down and analysed by the concepts of uniqueness, belongingness, appreciation and organisational identification and support (Korkmaz et al., 2022).

2.3 Uniqueness

Uniqueness in an organisational setting can be described as what an individual employee brings to the workforce, that does not have a common relationship with their counterparts from both an identity and a perspective point of view (Randel et al., 2018). The opportunity for an individual to be able to provide their talents and their contributions in order to promote teamwork is central to the ability to create value (Randel et al., 2018). In addressing the element of uniqueness for leader inclusivity, Korkmaz et al. (2022) determined that this concept can be separated in four categories with this being, supporting employees as individuals, promoting diversity, empowering employees and lastly uplifting an employee through learning and development.

Organisations tend to hire individuals and develop individuals from diverse backgrounds, as a way to stimulate creativity and innovation (Randel et al., 2018). The benefit of having individuals from these diverse backgrounds, whilst being an inclusive leader, is that these members provide distinctive qualities, perspectives and elements which are unique, and in turn can lead to organisational success (Randel et al., 2018). In terms of leadership styles and practices, there has not been an approach that has been adopted that addresses the basic need of groups or

individual members to be valued for their uniqueness (Randel et al., 2018). Therefore, leadership inclusivity is looked upon for this approach.

Employees are also unique in the sense that each employee brings with them their own unique social identity. Therefore, part of a leader's role and responsibility, is to make sure that they do not adopt a one size fits all approach in how they manage their employees. Dhanani et al. (2024), indicated that in order for an employee to feel included in the workplace, they should be treated as equal regardless of their social identities, and, moreover, they should be allowed to express themselves authentically. Keeping this in mind, an employee may need a unique practice by leaders to demonstrate being accepted for their unique contribution.

Dhanani et al. (2024) found that minoritized individuals may be more prone to value uniqueness in a team, because they are seen to be less prototypical and as such this may be one of the most significant variables for them to feel part of the organisation. These employees will thus look to their leaders to engage in behaviours that are more recognizable with their identities. Combined with this, is that when an individual feels a sense of value for their uniqueness, they will feel as if they are an insider, their psychological well-being will be positively construed, and they will feel accepted in their social groups (Roberson & Perry, 2022).

2.4 Belonging

Shore et al. (2011), defined three elements that are likely to explain what belongingness means. That being, a leader's ability to demonstrate support for team members, each member perceives that justice and equity are displayed and lastly, the involvement of team members in decision making. Supporting team members, encompasses ensuring that all members feel comfortable in the environment that they work in, by ensuring that their needs are fulfilled and listening to their opinions (Shore et al., 2011).

A leader sends signals to members of an organisation as to what the dominant cultures are seen to be in the organisation, thereby emphasizing the aspect of assimilation within an environment (Shore & Chung, 2022). Assimilation speaks to both aspects of belongingness and uniqueness (Shore et al., 2011). To be seen to be as fair and equitable for minority groups and women in particular, is important in preventing discrimination between groups and perceived bias (Buengeler et al., 2018). It is easy for individuals to feel a sense of belonging in terms of fairness and

equity, they identify with the dominant culture, however the individuals from marginalized groups may feel insecure with these concepts (Shore & Chung, 2022). Therefore, the absence of these variables can often prove to make one feel as if they do not belong. Since workforces are made up of a diverse set of individuals, in terms of culture, gender, ethnicity, values, and social identities, each person will desire to feel a sense of belonging within an organisation.

As presented by Randel et al. (2018) building upon Baumeister and Leary's (1995) work, belongingness also appeals to the need to one's ability to develop and grow long-lasting and strong interpersonal relationships. Randel et al. (2018) also describes belongingness as to how accessible a leader is to a follower, which is directly related to the level of support that they feel. Thus, these interpersonal relationships can be inferred as a direct relationship between a leader and an employee. It is, therefore, part of a leader's responsibility to ensure that an employee feels a sense of being involved and accepted as an integral member of that environment (Lui et al., 2022). Additionally, belongingness can be seen as protective factor aiding mental and emotional well-being, which in turn leads to belongingness being a motivating factor in an employee (Canlas & Williams, 2022). Belongingness is therefore also part of a relational theory of leadership.

Bryer (2020), extends this argument by focusing on a need to ensure that there is a balance between the organisational efforts in creating a sense of belonging and the personal efforts made by a leader, in that when just the business success is emphasized, without considering the relational efforts required, an organisation will not provide the means necessary to create a sense of validation and acceptance. Liu et al. (2022) strengthens this argument, in that leader's feedback is key to creating a perception of belonging by the employee. Therefore, once an individual is considered to belong, the individual will direct their efforts in the work goals to be achieved and enhance the cohesion of a group (Canlas & Williams, 2022).

2.5 Appreciation

Appreciation can be found in terms of three elements, that being able to acknowledge the efforts displayed, as well as the contributions of individuals and lastly applauding the achievements of an individual (Korkmaz et al., 2022). It is a salient dimension to inclusive leadership as it has a direct impact on the organisation and the elevation of the organisation. Roberson and Perry (2022), in providing a thematic analysis of inclusive leadership in terms of the thoughts and actions of individuals, found that in

diverse teams, appreciating individuals and using diverse teams in terms of their skills and experiences, led to a higher performance of a team. Furthermore, one of the themes that emerged from this analysis is that it created an environment which was construed to be welcoming and productive (Roberson & Perry, 2022).

In terms of inclusive leadership, appreciation also creates a sense of empowerment amongst individuals which creates an attitude of capability in an employee (Roberson & Perry, 2022). A capable employee is powerful, in the sense that it allows an employee to feel as if they are relevant and create the self-belief that they can even achieve more. Malik et al. (2021) in expanding the work of Klein (1997), refers to gratitude as a feeling of eagerness and willingness in appreciating others. It is thus associated with positivity and heightened positive emotion. Malik et al. (2021) goes on to further clarify that it is one of the key components to maintaining social relationships which ties to the relational aspect of leadership inclusivity. Thus, this can be seen as a mediating factor between organisational and individual positive outcomes. It is therefore evident, that leadership behaviours which invite and acknowledge other viewpoints as well as highlighting the importance of input from members all contribute to inclusivity factors (Roberson & Perry, 2022).

Beijer et al. (2024), determined that the feelings of inclusion by leaders consisted of acknowledging and appreciating what their followers have presented in their work in a way that suited the individual's needs. The results showed that in paying attention to what the follower has done well, their achievements, giving credit and being alert to their success, appreciation was shown to be key in how a leader demonstrated inclusion.

2.6 Supporting Organisational Efforts

In terms of supporting organisational efforts, Korkmaz et al. (2022) considers this as the last dimension of inclusive leadership. This dimension looks at what a leader does in relation to organisational strategy and change but also taking into consideration inclusion (Korkmaz et al., 2022). Being open to organisational change may provide the platform for new opportunities, being innovative and lastly provide the ability to achieve new goals (Korkmaz et al., 2022).

In describing what it means to support organisational efforts, it was deduced that this entailed for example, supporting the initiatives of the organisation such as efforts towards fairness and reduced discrimination (Korkmaz et al., 2022). Part of

supporting this notion of organisational efforts, is adapting and welcoming organisational change and encouraging the organisation's mission on inclusion. Thus, supporting organisational efforts can be further divided into the above two subcomponents.

This is further supported by Caron et al. (2019) in which it is suggested that employers are to provide work conditions that are appropriate and evidenced by the demonstration of organisational support. This must also be complemented by diversity-promotion activities. These two factors together with productive leader members exchanges (LMX) will enhance the perceived insider status of an employee (Caron et al., 2019). By encouraging these behaviours, employees are said to feel included.

As an employee, once the concept of perceived insider status is felt, a sense of belonging is felt, and this, enacted by how a leader demonstrates inclusivity and is shown to be a symbol of the relationship between the organisation and the employee (Caron et al., 2019). From the above, it is determined that organisational support could mean different things to different individuals. However, bringing an employee along on this journey is what is deemed, to represent inclusive behaviour and this also depends on the message that the organisation is trying to convey.

2.7 Trends around the importance of each element

2.7.1 Role of uniqueness in leadership inclusivity

Beijer et al. (2024) interpreted through their research process that leaders intend to support followers who are diverse based on their distinctive qualities and their needs. Through the discussions it was found that it was particularly relevant to acknowledge an individual's uniqueness as it reveals an individual's potential by allowing the different qualities inherent in the concept of diversity to surface (Beijer et al., 2024). From an employee perspective, supporting the four dimensions that Korkmaz et al. (2022) considers for uniqueness, followers particularly found that the empowerment aspect of supporting an individual for their uniqueness is particularly relevant when an individual is treated inclusively by their leader, specifically for an attribute that made them feel excluded in social settings in the past, such as a disability (Beijer et al., 2024).

Two other sub-components of uniqueness that Korkmaz et al. (2022) explored is that of supporting employees and promoting the diversity of employees. It can be

deduced that the concept of supporting employees is a wide construct. The same can be said, when considering the definition of uniqueness, as an individual may be unique by gender, race, age, religion, sexual identity, educational background and so forth. This can also be an extensive list. Whilst these constructs are rather broad, Dhanani et al. (2024) suggest that the individuals will look to the organisational leaders to provide signals that social groups are valued and thus, look for practices that are more salient to that individual's unique identity. Therefore, there is a link between organisational climate and the support for uniqueness. Nishii (2013) demonstrates three ways in which an organisation can show signals, that being by instituting fair practices, integrate differences and including individuals in decisions.

In staying with the theme of organisational climate, involving individuals in decision-making, highlights the pertinence of creating a conducive environment in which the members of that environment can share ideas and build on these (Robertson & Perry, 2022). Leaders will ultimately make themselves available to leverage on those ideas and use this in decision-making (Robertson & Perry, 2022). Leaders who thus, encourage different perspectives from individuals and welcome diverse approaches by reducing barriers in participation will create the notion of uniqueness (Randel et al., 2018).

The importance of this characteristic goes beyond that of a leader demonstrating acceptance of an individual for being unique. Robertson and Perry (2022) indicate that the aspect of inclusiveness is to ensure that the decision-making is distributed across work members so that they each get a say in how the work is done and be open to opinions even when those opinions may diverge from what is expected as the norm.

Randel et al. (2018) propose that leaders should behave in a manner which indicates the value for uniqueness, as it is an understated quality in terms of literature, as literature tends to emphasize belongingness. By emphasizing the value seen for uniqueness, it gives an employee the opportunity to define themselves and also build self-worth, which cannot be achieved solely by a leader encouraging perceptions of belongingness (Randel et al., 2018). Examples of the behaviours that could be demonstrated by a leader could be speaking privately with different members of the team to understand what are their strengths or preferences, and using those discussions to facilitate contribution (Randel et al. 2018). In this way it also encourages members of a group to be their authentic selves.

Driving the understanding of uniqueness, is particularly relevant in understanding team dynamics and provides opportunities to enhance performance within a group. This is achieved by an inclusive leader serving an individual's learning and development needs, as each individual will be unique, in terms of aspects of strengths and weaknesses they possess (Korkmaz et al., 2022). An inclusive leader further needs to be open to an employee's growth within a team (Korkmaz et al., 2022). Ye et al. (2018) additionally demonstrated that there is a positive relationship between inclusive leadership and the ability of individuals to learn from errors.

Lastly in determining the relevance of uniqueness and leadership inclusivity, the leader who exhibits inclusivity in this aspect will show their support for an individual when their uniqueness is acknowledged (Ye et al., 2019). In terms of team innovation which can be defined as the generation of novel ideas or processes within a team, autonomy of idea generation is needed which requires the support of and encouragement of a leader (Ye et al., 2019). Furthermore, the individual leader needs to recognise the individual differences and demonstrate to the individual that the recognition thereof will be free from judgement, therefore the unique attribute will be valued and supported (Ye et al., 2019).

2.7.2 Role of belongingness in leadership inclusivity

Baumeister and Leary (1995) argue that belongingness is an influencer of human behaviour and can be compared to such needs as the desire for food, as much of what humans require is the need to provide belongingness in the service of others or for them to achieve belongingness themselves. Thus belonging, is a key fundamental need and the absence of it, is an indicator of poor environmental fit and feelings of inauthenticity which can evoke negative states such as anger (Slepian & Jacoby-Senghor, 2021). Thus in avoiding such negative states, Bryer (2020), posits relational efforts in an organisation need to be emphasized, to create a sense of social acceptance and validation.

Canlas and Williams (2022) unpack key factors which influence the perceptions of belongingness. To define the components of belongingness the individual and relational belongingness model is explored, across the individual, relational, personal and the organizational dimensions (Canlas et al., 2022). There are twelve factors displayed across four quadrants. The four quadrants are made of factors that define belongingness in terms of sense of self, team, other and organizational factors. Below is a depiction of the quadrants with the factors:

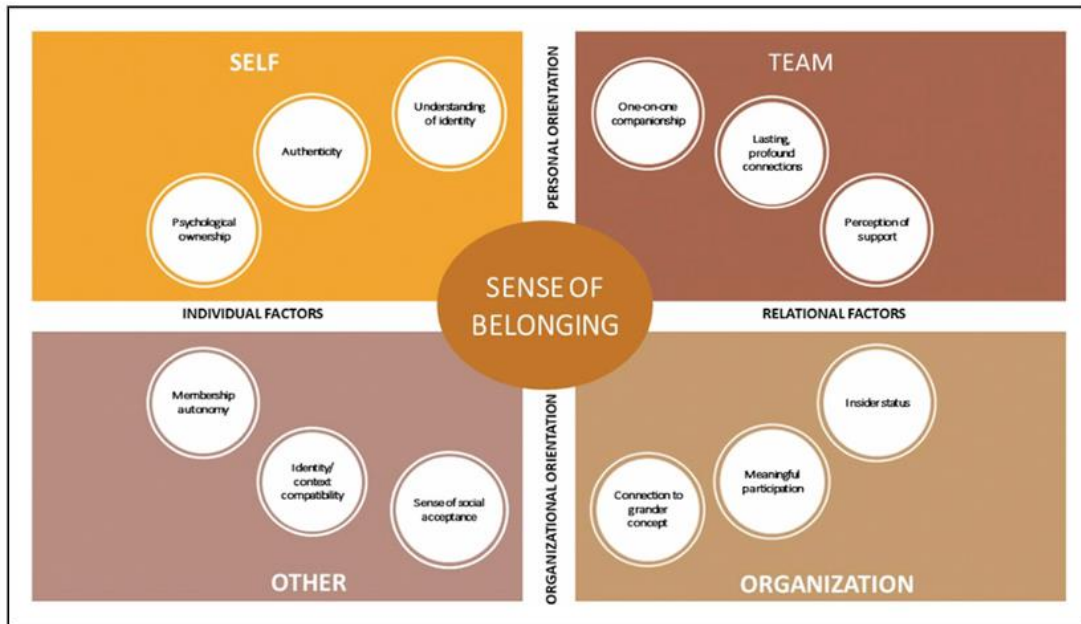


Figure Four: Individual and Relational Belongingness Model.

Key aspects of this model for inclusivity are related to belongingness within the organisation. Once the individual has a sense of belonging with one's self, the aspect relating to how they fit into their organisation and how that relates to their identity as well as to how it relates to others is highlighted (Canlas & Williams, 2022). This will also explain how an individual's perceives their identity, and what are the similar factors between their identity and the broader environment in which they operate and ultimately whether it is compatible with that broader environment (Canlas & Williams, 2022 ; Slepian & Jacoby-Senghor, 2020). This aspect of belongingness links to the support for the organisation element of inclusivity as it links to the ability to feel as if you are an insider.

The team quadrant links directly to that of the definition provided by Baumeister and Leary (1995), by emphasizing the belongingness and the relational aspect that this brings. This quadrant focuses on the fact that lasting and profound connections, which directly influence the factors of belongingness, by the creation of meaningful relationships, impact the feeling of belongingness (Canlas & Williams, 2022). From the above four quadrants, the insight that is depicted is that belongingness is a key component for inclusivity. Lastly, an important element to consider is that of the aspect of social acceptance. Shore et al. (2011) solidifies this argument in that belonging is created once one feels as if there is a social connection to a social group.

There is often tension in the feelings of belongingness and uniqueness. Brewer (1991), argues that in an individual striving to balance the feeling of being part of a bigger social group, together with the need to still feel a distinctive identity often translates into tension for both these inclusivity concepts (Roberson & Perry, 2022). Leader interactions that would support the theme of belongingness includes activities such as regular team activities and regular team meetings (Roberson & Perry, 2022).

Additionally, in terms of the factors of belongingness, work group identification is an output of belongingness in that those individuals whom appear to have strong work group identification, will feel that the success or the failure of their work groups are their own successes and failures (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Furthermore, should workgroup identification be established through belongingness, there will be positive associations with job performance, creativity and a negative association with staff turnover (Randel et al., 2018).

2.7.3 Role of organisational efforts in inclusivity

When it comes to inclusion, an employee's perception of this depends on their interpersonal experiences with an organisation (Nishii & Leroy, 2022). The link however, between the organisation and the experience is the leadership, not just at a manager, employee level but at all levels of the organisation (Nishii & Leroy, 2022). Therefore, the fostering of an inclusive climate stems from inclusive leadership. The concepts of organisational support, in terms of supporting the organisations mission would stem from senior leadership who would espouse the organisations ideals and strategy, but it is the lower levels of management's responsibility, to ensure that the practices and policies designed to support the strategy are implemented to reflect inclusivity (Nishii et al., 2018).

In terms of self-determination theory, for individuals to achieve organisational goals and be motivated to do so, three elements need to be present. That is belonging, or in this case identifying with the organisation, autonomy and competence (Nishii & Leroy, 2022). The achievement of these three goals, together with satisfying the integration of them with the environment will foster inclusivity (Nishii & Leroy, 2022). This links into Cha et al. (2019) who delves into authenticity in the workplace. It is thought that when individuals feel as if they are unsupported by an organisation, having been stereotyped as incompetent or cannot identify with the organisation, the

individual feels threatened and become consumed with protecting themselves, therefore inclusion is not felt (Nishii & Leroy, 2022).

Taking into consideration the above, there are behaviours within the leaders control, that would directly support the needs of the individual's inclusion, yet there may be factors outside the control of a leader, therefore the leadership behaviours that enable the follower to experience inclusion, need to be focused on that which are within the control of the leader (Randel et al., 2018). For this there may be a variety of factors such as involvement in decision making and individuals feelings of perceived justice and equity, yet it is important for the leader to be careful in the exchanges when creating feelings of equity as the diversity of individuals plays an impact (Nishii & Leroy, 2022).

In terms of the relevance of LMX, high quality relationships with leaders and their followers are created by the trust and respect that leaders and followers have for each other which signals acceptance of an employee by a leader (Graen & U-Bien, 1995). In establishing these high-quality relationships, what is challenged is the assumptions between leaders and followers from previously marginalized groups, together with arbitrary hierarchies (Nishii & Mayer, 2009). In terms of this, the needs of marginalized groups will differ from that of non-marginalized groups, therefore the inclusive leaders will need to heed this consideration.

Ashikali et al. (2020) posits that inclusive leaders will create an environment in which they will be open to the differences of the various groups, and they will express the value add, that these differences will bring. By doing this the effect of intergroup biases will be reduced (Randel et al., 2018). Acceptance of the differences by diverse team members will also enhance the perceptions of being regarded as an insider and therefore, further contributes to perceived organisational support and the achievement of organisational goals (Ashikali et al. 2020). The aspect of perceived justice and equity purported by Korkmaz et al. (2022) in achieving organisational support is thus also met by reducing biases and encouraging acceptance.

In terms of the organisational support theory, it is believed that employees have certain expectations in terms of how an organisation supports their wellbeing in terms of their emotional and social requirements (Vermeulen & Scheepers, 2020). This contributes to the employees' sense of value from the organisation as well as how an employee thinks an organisation appreciates what they bring to the organisation

(Vermeulen & Scheepers, 2020). Therefore, the actions of the organisation are dependent on the actions and exchanges of one person to another person such as those from leadership interactions (Vermeulen & Scheepers, 2020).

In this aspect of the leadership dimension, relational leadership is relevant to building an inclusive climate. Nembhard and Edmonson (2006), describe, that when employees appreciate their input and feel that their voice is heard, employees will be more open to expressing themselves. In a similar fashion, when a leader is more open to discussing new ideas on how to achieve success and encourage the creation of new opportunities, an employee will feel safer to approach the subject of new ideas (Carmeli et al., 2010). From the above, it is therefore deduced, that an employee will feel psychologically safe and more inclined to be supported by the organisation (Carmeli et al., 2010). All of the above factors, ultimately make the employee feel as if they belong in the organisation.

2.7.4 Role of appreciation in leadership inclusivity

Li et al. (2022) explains that leaders with a trait of gratitude as well as the ability to demonstrate humble behaviour have the effect of sparking team innovation. Furthermore, the expression of appreciation and other-praising tendencies are said to bring out team voice (Li et al., 2022). Gratitude is seen to be a prosocial behaviour in that the individual whom it is shown to, is more likely to reciprocate to the individual demonstrating it by way of giving back (Ma et al., 2017). Li et al. (2022) also reinforces that in context of leadership, the tendency to show appreciation also enables the leader to gain insight into the team members values and in a manner also allow more involvement of team members (Li et al., 2022). More involvement of team members is additionally likely to exhibit inclusivity.

Appreciation in terms of leadership inclusivity is also rather complex in that appreciation can be further sub-divided into displaying appreciation to the team as well as displaying appreciation to the individual (Korkmaz et al., 2022). Whereas Korkmaz et al. (2022) illustrates that appreciation goes towards satisfying a basic human need, that's is a need for an individual to realize that their efforts and their contributions are being valued. This can be achieved by three common directions, that being, noticing the efforts, acknowledging the contributions and praising achievements (Korkmaz et al., 2022).

Korkmaz et al. (2022) advances this dimension into explaining that appreciation is linked to the positive effect of well-being (Stocker et al., 2019). It was found that appreciation by supervisors assisted in moderating the effects of stressors in environments that impact well-being, self-efficacy and ultimate job satisfaction. Appreciation was also linked to strengthening one's own professional identity in the sense that it reduces the need for self-protection in a workplace environment (Stocker et al., 2019). Self-protected behaviour can be linked to not invoking a self-perception of insider status, therefore if appreciation reduces this behaviour, it can be said that the presence of inclusion can be found.

2.7.5 Role of openness and inclusivity

Openness is a broad concept in terms of literature, and the themes that are prominent in literature address a shift in terms of values, to there being equal opportunities in organisations, a sense of accountability, democratization and further to this, liberalization (Dobusch et al., 2019). Splitter et al. (2023) through a literature review focused on three important pillars to define openness. The first dimension being transparency and the second dimensions, together, being that of inclusion and rights to make decisions. In these elements there are further attributes that create challenges for openness, this being epistemic which is a concern to the amount of knowledge that can be shared within an organisation which further falls into normative challenges, which lends itself towards political factors such as dealing with power within an organisation (Splitter et al. 2023).

Openness, therefore, sometimes becomes a trade-off between these three dimensions. Taking this into consideration, and the three pillars above, the concept of an open organisation is borne, as the dimension of transparency, and the absence thereof, leads to opacity within an organisation, the dimension of inclusion and the absence thereof, can further lead to exclusion and lastly the availability in decision rights and the absence thereof, can lead to concentrated decision rights (Splitter et al. 2023).

Carmeli et al. (2011) drawing from Nembhard and Edmonson (2006), posits the ideal of openness is leadership inclusivity. The instruments in the delivering of openness are thus leaders, and their demonstration of openness, specifically leans in to how the level of openness in an organisation are displayed. Yet this aspect has further evolved in its definition to include a balance of inclusion. Leaders in terms of inclusion, therefore, have to find the trade-off in terms of how this is displayed in the

organisation, in terms of showing support and ensuring that individuals within the organisation belong.

2.3 Construct of disruption and salience with leadership inclusivity

Mohanty and Kulkarni (2023), describes an employee as a consumer and the environment of the consumer, is the workplace. This concept of an employee experience includes all interactions with an employee which contributes to employee performance, happiness and engagement. A dimension identified of an employee experience is inclusiveness (Yadav & Vihari, 2021). Inclusiveness in this instance related to belongingness, uniqueness and appreciation. In shaping this idea of employee experience, the leader is also called upon in terms of ensuring that the vision of the organisation is understood and that they are able to perform and are also able to contribute to a culture of innovation (Mohanty & Kulkarni, 2023).

Disruption for example, in terms of the ways of working, have had a significant impact on the employee and experience within the organisation, therefore a leader will be called upon to ensure that the relationship between the employee and the organisation is seamless, as they are the bridge between these two facets of the organisation. One of the ways that this will be achieved is by ensuring that inclusivity as the member of the organisation is embedded (Yadav & Vihari, 2021). Therefore, the requirement of having an inclusive leader is directly related ensuring that disruption is handled effectively.

In terms of emerging trends that contribute to leadership challenges such as disruption by technological changes, globalisation, environmental change and changing workforce demands, an inclusive leader should optimally find solutions for such problems by utilisation of the talent capital (Simmons & Yawson, 2022; Peterson et al., 2018). The argument therefore is that inclusive leadership sets the bar for finding solutions for complex environments brought about by disruption (Simmons & Yawson, 2022).

The concept of preserving organisational trust is also a fundamental characteristic to manage during times of disruption (Gustaffsson et al., 2021). In this argument, trust is explored in that it is an ongoing goal directed by the organization's actors. Three elements constitute the development of trust, with two of those pillars being cognitive bridging and inclusive enacting (Gustaffsson et al., 2021). An organisational member's understanding of this element is critical to the preservation of this aspect

of trust. Disruption during these periods, lead to change with the familiar, making individuals feel exposed to uncertainty and thus organisational leaders having to take deliberate steps towards preserving of trust (Gustaffson, et al., 2021).

Inclusive enacting is a practice which is displayed by ensuring that members of an organisation are given a platform in which to voice their opinions throughout an entire disruptive period as well as to ensure that during disruptive events, the processes in place are fair and are seen to be consistent (Gustaffson et al., 2021). The structures of the organisations also ensure that during times of disruption, that the processes and structures are seen to involve people (Gustaffson et al., 2021). Leaders, thus acknowledge that individuals, from diverse backgrounds and different stakeholder groups also have the need and right to be heard for their relevant contributions during periods of disruption (Gustaffson et al., 2021).

Further to the above, the sense of empowerment given to the employee by making them feel as if their concerns were relevant during these times helped them to cope with the vulnerability that emerged from this disruptive period (Gustaffson et al., 2021). In terms of the treatment of each individual an understanding of the element of fairness in the process is required, this links with the feeling of belonging in the sense that individuals sense fairness and equity in terms of how the principles and practices are applied throughout the organisation during these periods.

In terms of cognitive bridging, this process assists members in dealing with the uncertainty that exists by helping the individuals understand why the change is required and further to this show the individuals how the past is connected to the future and in that way build a bridge between these two periods of time (Gustaffson et al., 2021). In this element there is a focus on a cognitive shift which assists the individuals in coping with the disruption event by linking the past, present and the future (Gustaffson et al., 2021). Therefore, this element can be linked to the dimension of showing support for the organisation in that the strategy of the company is unpacked, in this particular example of disruption, in which change is brought about.

In the past five years, the ways of living, working and even relating to one another have been disrupted. Work is also an important aspect of one's life in that work gives meaning and it is also a means of satisfying material, social and psychological needs (Antonacopoulou & Georgiadou, 2021). Work becomes a critical element in how we

as individuals experience quality of life, how we are socially accepted, whether the feeling of belonging is upheld and lastly even defines how one construes themselves as a person (Antonacopoulou & Georgiadou, 2021). Inclusion by extension is also argued by Antonacopoulou and Georgiadou (2021) as a new construct that guides meaningfulness of work specifically by the actions of leaders.

In terms of inclusivity, the future of leadership is becoming a focus as the traits and virtues of a leader are essential for building a dynamic for effective leadership (Antonacopoulou & Bento, 2018). As the world keeps changing in terms of the knowledge age, we find ourselves in and the fourth industrial revolution, we require leadership and governance systems to be mobilized in terms of the fourth industrial revolution (Antonacopoulou & Georgiadou, 2021).

Antonacopoulou and Bento (2018) argue that traditional aspects of leading will experience difficulty if they cannot adapt to chaotic environments and in turn appropriately respond to the VUCA conditions. These responses include that of feeling safe and demonstrating an aspect of inter-connectedness and interdependence which in turns can be determined to be inclusive behaviours (Antonacopoulou & Georgiadou, 2021). Furthermore, in the ways of working, now changing, leading through social distancing needs to conjure a culture of inclusiveness as it will promote ideologies of social inclusiveness (Antonacopoulou & Georgiadou, 2021). This is therefore, brought back to the employee experience and what the individual deems disruption to be, and how leaders can create environments that promote cohesion and inclusive behaviours in a workplace.

2.4 Theory

Three theories underpinning the research are optimal distinctiveness theory as developed by Brewer (1991), social identity theory as founded by Tajfel & Turner (1979) and social exchange theory which dominates the literature (Blau, 1964). In terms of social exchange theory, themes such as leadership inclusivity and how they relate to organisational commitment and the mediating role of how change in an organisation which is a key element in disruption, connects leadership inclusivity and an employee's motivation emerge (Korkmaz et al., 2022). Social identity theory also is prevalent in prior studies as it explains how an individual identifies with their teams and their organisations which leads to different types of employee outcomes (Korkmaz et al., 2022).

In terms of optimal distinctiveness theory, this correlates with Shore et al. (2011), in which inclusion is necessary in terms of two needs, that feeling of fulfilment, that being uniqueness and belongingness, and then finding a balance between these results in optimal distinctiveness. However, in terms of theory development, social exchange theory and social identity theory will underpin this research. This would seem as the most appropriate in terms of the research propositions as the comprehension of leadership inclusivity, and further, the comprehension during disruption, and exchanges, that occur between followers and leaders will ultimately determine if the dimensions explored are grasped and are indeed required.

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion the research problem in trying to address whether leadership inclusivity is defined by these four elements and furthermore during periods of disruption is broadly examined in this chapter. This body of literature forms the basis for the research questions which will be addressed in the next chapter.

3. Chapter 3- Research Questions

3.1 Research Propositions

The purpose of the research is to determine whether all four of these dimensions are present in the leader-follower relationship. In terms of the propositions selected, this would be whether a follower feels included in terms of their unique identity, a sense of belonging in the relationship held with the leader, is appreciated and is included in the understanding of the organisational goals and strategic directions as well as support for the organisation.

In terms of the research, the first proposition also intends to examine whether in the context of the research, being fast moving consumables goods entities, whether the individuals feels as if all of these elements are indeed present or if some of the elements are lacking in their understanding of leadership inclusivity. The questions are designed with each one of the elements in mind and also intends to explore what leadership inclusivity means for the individual employee.

Another objective of the research was to determine whether for an employee, whether one of these elements is more important than the other in determining the extent of inclusivity felt by the individual. The research also touched on the concepts of uniqueness and belongingness, and this was emphasized to determine if one of these elements outweighs the other, in terms of how an employee is treated by leaders in the organization. However, in terms of the framework to be examined for inclusivity, all four of the elements were also discussed with the individual to determine if all of this was felt by the employee and if one or more of the elements is felt more deeply.

In terms of the construct of disruption, the understanding of whether an employee feels the presence of this in the organisation, what do they understand by the definition of disruption and whether inclusivity is felt in terms of events of disruption in the organisation. was investigated. The question was examined in terms of the behaviours of leadership, in terms of inclusivity pre and post an event of disruption, to determine if inclusivity is prioritised in a disruptive event.

Therefore, the propositions are as follows:

1. Do employees understand the concept of leadership inclusivity and do they need to identify with all elements identified in order for inclusion to be felt
2. Employees feel through the discussion of the various elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other
3. During times of disruption, leadership inclusivity is a priority in the organisation

Below is a visual display of proposition one and two:

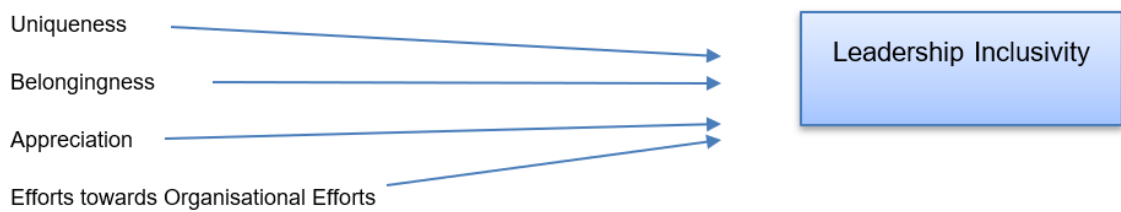


Figure Five: Research Question One

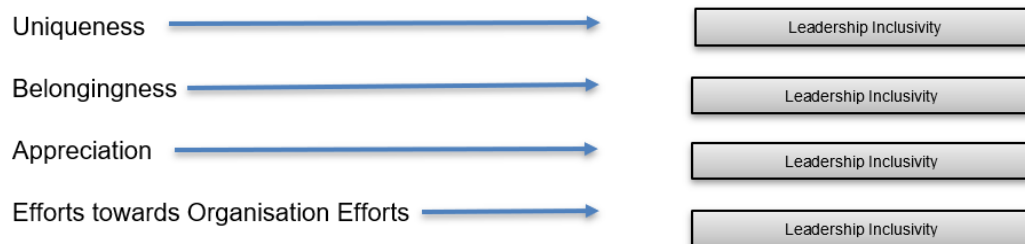


Figure Six: Research Question Two

4. Chapter 4- Proposed Research Methodology and Design

4.1 Introduction

The research methodology and design chapter focuses on the design of the research in order to provide clarity and feedback to the research questions proposed above in Chapter three. A qualitative approach was used in order to explore the dimensions of leadership inclusivity and bring insights as to the manner that it is approached with from an organisational perspective as well as to obtain evidence as to whether this is present in disruptive environment. The data was obtained through semi-structured interviews and conducted at an individual level. The data was further analysed and categorised according to various themes identified as per the literature review in Chapter two.

Any concerns regarding the reliability of data were considered during this chapter in terms of the validity of the data obtained and was appropriately mitigated for in terms of the research methodology design, the collection of data as well as the analysis of the data. The mitigation strategies regarding the validity of data were taken into consideration with the time constraints in mind and the available resources of the researcher. The ethical considerations were also considered in this chapter together with the limitations of this study.

4.2 Purpose of Research Design

The main focus of the study was to determine whether the elements of inclusivity are present and felt by individuals. Saunders and Lewis (2018) suggested that research which is focused on the investigation of information on a subject which is not clearly understood leans more towards an exploratory study. Therefore, the way in which the research was designed, took this into account. Whilst much research has focused on quantitative methods in which employees are targeted to determine if a certain aspect of the framework is addressed, this research will be used to shape our understanding of whether leadership behaviour needs to be associated with all of these aspects by targeting an employee's needs and understanding of this topic.

4.3 Philosophy

The research philosophy that was adopted was an interpretivist paradigm since the researcher understands that the concept is a subjective matter, as construed based on social phenomena by different individuals within different levels of the organisation (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). To gain an understanding of whether all of the above requirements are necessary to be an inclusive leader, Beijer et al. (2024)

used a similar method in that an exploratory study was performed, however the study suggested what may constitute inclusive leadership in one organisation may not necessarily be considered as inclusive leadership in another organisation. Therefore, through the subjective and context specific, reality of the research, the researcher obtained meaning as to whether this concept is intentionally felt in day-to-day activities. Dhanani et al. (2024) used a similar approach when determining whether workplace inclusion meant the same for employees across social identities. This research will follow a similar approach; however, it will be directed at understanding what practices and behaviour a follower associates with inclusion during time of disruption. The researcher through the exploratory process also was open to new information and knowledge that was dispensed by the informants to determine if there were any new contributions that could be added to the literature.

Simmons and Yawson (2022), doubt whether traditional ways of leading across different modalities will work when confronted by unpredictable changes to the workforce and workplace. The research therefore aims to understand whether a traditional model such as the one considered can be used with emerging complexities. Therefore, the design of the research in terms of this social phenomena considered the relevance of this framework in a changing environment.

4.4 Approach Selected

Inductive testing was applied as we have four variables, and we wanted to understand their relationship and salience of the factors together with their relationship to disruption. We have a model and framework that is proposed by Korkmaz et al. (2022), however, we need to determine whether these specific observations resonate in a fast-moving consumer goods environment. In terms of inductive reasoning, disruption can also mean different things to different individuals. Since disruption is evident in everyday life, how do leaders use these tools and frameworks of inclusivity to navigate this, such that an employee will feel inclusivity resonates within the organisation. Inductive testing was also applied in the sense that with these four variables, are they evidenced in these FMCG environments without considering the disruptive events at play or are they enhanced during a disruptive period. Korkmaz et al. (2022) performed an analysis of the literature on leadership inclusivity and identified the framework which this study is based on, therefore the findings from the research will inform the evidence of the framework

and add to the current literature. This will be based on a single study whereas in the past this was based on multiple studies using a single lens.

4.5 Methodological Choices

A mono-qualitative method was applied to the study. Since an exploratory study was performed, a qualitative method has been chosen to be most appropriate to the study. A mono-method qualitative study is supported in that, Dale Oen et al. (2022) used a similar approach to determine what type of psychological processes and behaviours are needed in times of disruptive events such as crises. In the theory building of these concepts, thematic analysis of past literature has been done, in order to identify these concepts in the development of inclusive leadership theory, however, little has been done to determine from today's employees about their stance on the topic. In terms of the leader and follower approach, the theory can be developed from a follower perspective. To use an inductive approach also provides more flexibility in terms of how the understanding of these elements can be utilized for an organisation to determine what approach can be adopted to be more inclusive. Any new themes identified during the discussions were incorporated into the existing framework identified and further explored from a literature perspective.

4.6 Strategy

In terms of the strategy a qualitative study was done to explore a phenomenon, particularly an understanding in an FMCG environment, whether belongingness, uniqueness, appreciation and, organisational identification and efforts, are what contributed to inclusivity. In-depth interviews were conducted with individuals from different FMCG businesses in order to triangulate collection and improve the trustworthiness of data collection. Participants were interviewed according to the themes identified in the literature review. The data collected followed a discussion which had a conversational tone. The purpose of the conversational tone was to ensure that individuals felt the freedom to contribute openly via their experiences with the topic. Randel et al. (2018) built a theoretical model related to inclusive leadership and presented certain of these items as propositions, and further proposed that a measurement of inclusive leadership be built on the theoretical foundations. Therefore, this study aims to do such, in measuring the phenomenon that is inclusive leadership. In a study to determine whether inclusive leadership assisted in assisting employees who are emotionally reactive to perform at higher standards, a qualitative study was performed looking at leadership heads across different sectors in India

therefore this supports the concept of using a qualitative study for the research (Rawat et al., 2020).

4.7 Time Horizon

Since we were under a time constraint a cross-sectional study was used at a particular point in time to achieve the results of the research questions (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). A cross-sectional study would also seem relevant to the proposed research, as a similar approach was used by Rawat et al. (2020). Therefore, interviews were conducted once at a particular point in time. As such the inferences was representative of this particular period of the informant's experiences and in this particular period of their career.

4.8 Population

In the reviews performed, Fang et al. (2021) chose certain groups of people such as those who worked in high-tech enterprises and in other research, nurses in Wuhan were studied during the period of Covid (Ahmed et al., 2020). Elsaied (2020) considered a population that consisted of employees who worked in five star-hotels. Ye et al. (2018) considered a range of employees across multiple industries such as manufacturing, health, energy, IT and training. In order to ensure the generalisability of the research, the interviewees were selected across a variety of employees from different companies within the FMCG industry. This is also what will make the study unique.

4.9 Unit of Analysis

As explained above, the unit of analysis will mainly be individuals from the FMCG sector. For the purposes of the research, individuals who report to leaders in senior management positions will be considered.

4.10 Sampling Method and access to sample

Access to the fast-moving consumer good industry was thought, to not be difficult, as the researcher has access to the industry. Non-probability sampling was used to select the sample as a complete list of the population was not possible, given the vast magnitude of individuals that the FMCG business environment is made up off in South Africa. (Saunders and Lewis, 2018). Even if a complete list was available of all of the individuals who were employed in the fast-moving consumables business, the time constraints imposed on the research would not allow for the entire sample to be interviewed. Lastly, purposive sampling will be used as we will be looking for

employees within the organisation who demonstrate certain characteristics such that they must be directly reporting to senior management (Saunders & Lewis, 2018).

Beijer et al. (2024), chose to interview leaders who had at least two to three followers, therefore a similar approach will be followed in which an employee will form part of a team reporting to a single leader. Employees of various leaders in terms of demographic composition, age and gender was obtained to determine if there is a difference in terms of their inclusivity behaviour. Since there are no set rules for the sample size in qualitative research, the researcher set boundaries for the interviews at twelve to fifteen individuals to be selected for participation, or interviews with individuals will be done until saturation point is reached (Patton, 2002 ; Saunders & Lewis, 2018). The aim of the study is not to collect a set number of interviews but rather to discuss the research questions with the participants until enough meaningful data is obtained. Patton (2002) also indicates that different demographics should be considered in order to capture data from multiple perspectives.

Although the researcher worked in the FMCG business, it proved difficult to obtain individuals to participate in the research, especially from the researcher's own company as there was a certain level of mistrust, although confidentiality was guaranteed as part of the research process. The topic proved to be sensitive as many individuals felt discussing leadership was not as easy to talk about. Therefore, the researcher had to look out to other companies and individuals to gather the information required.

4.11 Measurement Instrument

The measurement instrument will be an interview guide and will take the form of a semi-structured interview. Rawat et al. (2020) based the qualitative research conducted using a semi-structured interview. A semi-structured approach suits the method to be used as key themes were focused on in the questions.

The questions were designed to take into account each of the elements of inclusivity. The concept of disruption was also explored in terms of what this meant to an individual. Therefore, the questions were considered taking into consideration the various theoretical concepts underlying inclusivity. A pilot test was performed in terms of the interview to determine whether the questions were clear and made sense to the respondent. Any ambiguities were resolved before collecting the data from the various respondents.

4.12 Data gathering process

In terms of the data gathering process, interviews were held with employees in the fast-moving consumables good environment to determine whether these practices are evident. The research was triangulated to individuals that worked in FMCG entities in the Gauteng region. Furthermore, most of the respondents worked in multinational corporations or in entities which has some link to a multinational national corporation. The reason as to why the interviews were collected from individuals within the Gauteng region was due the convenience of the researcher being based in Gauteng as well as for the researcher's network limited to Gauteng. All responses were obtained with prior approval from the respondents. Interviews were held in person where the circumstances allowed, however, virtual interviews were held in instances where a face-to-face conversation could not occur. However, a request was made for cameras to be on to determine any body language cues.

Each interview commenced with the permission of the interviewee to record the interview, whether this being in a virtual setting or whether this was done face to face. The researcher explained the purpose of the interview and explained what the research topic was about. It was communicated upfront to the participants as to the time each of the interviews would take. Each individual was also provided with the consent form which they had signed prior to the commencement of the interview. The researcher commenced with the interview and allowed for adaptation and interaction to facilitate the answering of the questions depending on the circumstances of the interview.

In terms of data gathering, the respondents were encouraged to indicate in the interview process whether clarification was required in terms of questions, even though a pilot was done to reduce ambiguity and likewise the researcher requested clarification in terms of responses were it was required.

4.13 Data analysis approach

In terms of data analysis, a two-step process was followed in which codes will be identified from initial data and sorted into categories, thereafter, themes were identified from the codes. These codes were obtained inductively from the respondents (Rawat et al., 2020). The semi-structured interview allowed for diversion from the interview guide questions depending on the context of the situation therefore allowing for open-ended questions (Dale Oen et al., 2022). The purpose of the pilot

interview undertaken was also to ensure that the questions are feasible (Dale Oen et al., 2022).

In the case where a virtual interview was held this was held on teams, and the team's transcription tools was used to transcribe the interview. However, it was noted that Microsoft Teams did not account, in some of the circumstances for the different dialects of the individuals, therefore each interview was listened to again and the transcription was examined to determine if what the respondent said was in fact documented appropriately. In the circumstances were this was not the case, correction to the transcription was made. The permission of the participants was obtained via a consent form and notes were taken were necessary in order to increase the trustworthiness of data. Where a meeting was held in person, the recording was still made with Microsoft Teams and transcribed appropriately. To the extent possible, computer aided qualitative data analysis software was used to analysis the data (Saunders & Lewis, 2018; Dale Oen et al., 2022).

The researcher does acknowledge during the data gathering and analysing process, biases may have been applied which may impact the trustworthiness of the data that was collected (Maxwell, 2013). These biases would be formed through the researchers own experiences in terms of leadership inclusivity as well as through the research process. However, to the extent possible, it was determined to adopt an objective mindset in the process as well as to maintain a sense of neutrality were possible.

In terms of the analysis process, an understanding of each of the participants responses was obtained through reading the transcripts and applying the concept of interpretivism (Saunders & Lewis, 2018). Then the data was analysed in terms of generating codes from the data obtained. Themes were than allocated to the codes emerging from the analysis. A thematic analysis of the themes was generated. This was compared to the framework for inclusivity to determine if there were any additions to the literature.

4.14 Research Ethics

Before the start of the data collection, the researcher obtained Ethical Clearance from the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS). Please refer to Annexure B. As discussed, respondents to the interview were asked to sign a consent form before commencing with the research. Please refer to Annexure C. As mentioned above,

the confidentiality of the research was maintained and discussed with the participants. The participants' anonymity was maintained by using pseudonyms to ensure that the real names were not reported in the findings of the study.

4.1 Quality Controls-including validity/trustworthiness criteria

We will control for the variable of type of industry used in the study (Fang et al., 2021).

4.2 Limitations

Limitations of the study is that research is focusing on a specific sector of the organisation and not on a variety of sectors within the organisation. Another limiting factor could be that we are looking at employees who fall within a variety of age groups and by not keeping this consistent may result in different perceptions being experienced by different individuals.

Secondly, this will be a cross-sectional study therefore perhaps a longitudinal study may be more relevant for future research seeing as perceptions and subjectivity of answers may depend on a person's emotional state of mind at that point in time. Another limitation of the study could be that this focuses on the study from the perspective of an employee however, what about the perspective of a leader, will leaders feel the same way about the aspect of inclusivity in a disruptive environment.

A fourth limitation could be that we are not looking at the research from a gender specific angle as we will collect information from all employees. Lastly, another limitation of the study could be that the information was collected from South African employees only, who would have their own set of values and cultural norms.

Another limitation could be that that we are restricting the employees selected for participation in the interview to those who report to senior management and not including employees in the study that could report to leaders at any level. A mixed method study may be more useful in terms of this study approach in order to triangulate the data in a more appropriate manner, however time constraints prevent this (Kuknor & Bhattacharya., 2020).

There is also a limitation in the sense that the risk of bias inherent in qualitative research. There may also be biases in terms of the ethnic profile of the respondents as well as cultural differences in the way one may perceive inclusivity.

5. Chapter 5 - Results

5.1 Introduction

As highlighted in the methodology section above, 12 to 15 interviews formed the strategy in terms of how many participants were to be selected for data collection. Twelve interviews were eventually conducted. This section thus begins with the details of participants in the interview, in order to gain an understanding of the background of the participants and to give context in terms of the interviews conducted. This section also highlights the qualitative analysis of the responses from the participants with key themes emerging in terms of each of the research questions.

5.2 Background of participants

Participants names have been changed to pseudonyms, as can be seen from below, as confidentiality of the participants is being maintained. The participants varied across companies, in terms of functions and in terms of expertise in the FMCG sector. The participants were further diversified in terms of experience level.

Interviewee	Title	Years in industry	Works for a Multinational or Local company
Participant one	Sales Revenue Planner	9	Multinational
Participant two	Category Finance Manager	10	Multinational
Participant three	Brand Manager	5	Multinational
Participant four	Shopper Marketing Manager	6	Local
Participant five	Recruitment Specialist	4	Multinational
Participant six	Account Manager	10	Multinational
Participant seven	Market, Strategic Planner	10	Multinational
Participant eight	Senior Finance Manager	4	Multinational
Participant nine	Account Director Modern Trade	10	Multinational
Participant ten	Regulatory Affairs Manager	20	Multinational
Participant eleven	Group Marketing Manager	17	Multinational
Participant twelve	Account Director: Chanel and Distribution	13	Multinational

Figure Seven: Demographics of Interviewees

5.3 Context

Interviews were conducted mostly via Microsoft Team's meetings due to the constraints of time and the availability of the participants to meet face-to-face. As from the above, it can be seen that the participants have a wealth of industry experience. It was observed that the average level of experience was around 9.8 years with the lowest level of industry experience being only four years for one of the

participants. Before the interviews were conducted, the willingness of each participant to partake was required. Interviewees expressed interest in the subject matter as this is a pertinent topic, especially for the South African climate.

5.4 Overview of Results

Annexure A provides a guide to the interview questions that were discussed with the individuals from the various companies. The questions were derived from key concepts that were identified from the literature review. The proposed questions were designed to determine if the components of leadership inclusivity are present in the various organisations that the individuals represent and with the research questions in mind.

5.5 Results: Research Question One

5.5.1 Understanding the Concept of Leadership Inclusivity

In terms of whether the participants understood the concept of leadership inclusivity the following themes emerged from the context of the discussions held:



Figure Eight: Context of Leadership Inclusivity in South Africa

5.5.1.1 Diversity in terms of demographics

Participants expressed that because of South Africa's political past, inclusivity from leaders is considered to be considered of from a racial perspective, initially. However, it was expressed that to make one feel included, one needs to look beyond just race, ethnicity, age and education. Participants expressed this in the below statements:

“So, inclusivity in the sense of like the choice of people from a racial perspective...the current leadership is lacking inclusivity in terms of those from the lower levels of the hierarchy and it’s our business structure, it is hierarchical.”

“Leadership inclusivity, I think can have multiple different elements depending if it is race, age, background and maybe experience.”

“So, I think they really value everyone's own point of view or voice. So I think that helps create an environment where you do feel included and not excluded because your point of view matters, no matter your age, experience, educational background, race, class like.”

5.5.1.2 Challenges hindering Inclusivity

Participants also expressed how factors such as organisational designs and having too many layers also hinder the ability to be inclusive as it can lead to questions about the approachability of senior leaders.

“So that's something for me that is a pain point and I think everybody's been raising that because you can almost see the hierarchy, leadership was becoming unapproachable in saying that though, we've just gotten a new MD who's breaking down those barriers for me, I feel that if somebody has an open door policy from a leadership perspective and you can approach them, it for me that covers inclusivity.”

In terms of the current climate in which businesses are pressured by the underperforming economy, businesses are going through changes, and these changes have a direct impact on the employee experience and the feeling of being, not so inclusive. In terms of decision-making as there are layers to an organisation, an employee’s voice is important and also the feeling of being heard, therefore employees’ perceptions of this need to be understood.

“I would think about leadership coming to us as a team in making decisions, including the team making us feel like our opinion matters and that its heard and that, you know in the bigger decision in the scheme of things that’s what I understand by leadership inclusivity.”

“We've come through a very turbulent time in my current, in the current company, I'm in from a restructure and obviously when there's a restructure, that's

upheaval and a lot of people are leaving, and from that I think they realized that before, it wasn't always like this."

"It was always decisions were made on the top and then you know the bottom, we would just need to execute and follow, I think in the past two to three months I've seen the change where it's become more collaborative in a sense. So we always still follow the strategic decision of leadership, but we do, they do take our consideration into account. We know what the end goal is, but I do see them using our opinions a lot more than they used to."

5.5.1.3 Contextualisation of employee experience

Leadership inclusivity also relates to the ways that different people prefer to be lead, taking into account the type of experience that they have and also the development needs of that individual. The focus being how you lead different people based on the contextualisation or situation in which the leader and follower find themselves. Therefore, to be inclusive, the capability of the individual needs to be taken into account and what would motivate individuals based on their unique needs. This also contributes to valuing and appreciating diversity.

"You can look at it from different angles, but I think for me how I look at it is the type of way that you lead different people....it's called situational leadership and basically shows you how you need to actually as a leader have a different style of leadership for different individuals based on where they are from a capability and motivation perspective."

"So, it's about understanding how they would like to be led, firstly because I feel if your style of leadership is not fit for that purpose, then it's not going to work."

"So, I think leadership inclusivity is also letting your team have the ability to shine and let them play to their strengths."

The leader's understanding of the concept of inclusivity and the manner in which they lead also seemed to come through in the way that individuals perceived the concept of inclusivity. The importance of the traits of the individual's personalities and the identification and recognition thereof, by leaders was crucial to certain of the interviewee's perception of inclusivity.

"Having a leadership team that I report to you that understands there's these different types of people and they modify their management styles or according

to the people that they need to manage so that they don't expect me as an individual to fit into a certain mould or according to what they expect.”

Another facet of inclusivity is to create an environment for the employee to feel as if they are in a safe place to be able to contribute as leadership inclusivity is a perception in an organisation. It is a perception that is created once the individual feels as if what they bring to the table is valued by their leaders. This is generally developed via feedback that is given.

“I think some of the things that we try, and do to make people feel connected is, and it's easier said than done, but we definitely try and create a space where people feel like they're safe to speak about what you know what's on their mind.”

“One of the things that I've come across consistently that I think we're trying to address is really looking at what people are saying in terms of the surveys circulated, in what is important to them and what and where we can improve.”

5.5.1.4 Communication as a factor of inclusion

To feel inclusion is seen to be included from an aspect of communication in that leaders who openly communicate create a sense of being an insider in the organization and this assists in bringing people together in terms of the goals of the organisation.

“Ok, so I think one of the major one's is obviously like open communication, but it's sometimes doesn't have to be personal, just like general communication via you know the work channels, like teams or emails, just like an overview of what's actually happening in the organisation. But I think that kind of keeps us connected, but then having that one-on-one discussion if needed to understand on a deeper level what that means for you specifically in your role or your team. So, if it is needed like you know it's available to you, to have those conversations.”

Another aspect of communication is that all leaders are accessible and make employees feel comfortable no matter the status of the leader. If a leader can communicate with employees regardless of the type of role that they are in, it is thought to be inclusive.

“So, for example, in one company I worked with, I didn’t realize the VP was the person I was talking to at the tea station, when I first joined, and I was a temp. Completely did not know I used to have conversations with him all the time about the company, real conversations.”

“Not really high-level conversations and that slowly but surely, he started getting me thinking about stuff, until someone actually asked me do you know who you are talking to, and I was like no, I don’t, he works here right.”

“And he was like that’s the VP, and I was oh, and it’s that sort of element, the emotional element, the realness of a person, the understanding of that’s quite key and that makes you feel more inclusive.”

5.5.2 Should all components of inclusivity be present in an organisation to make employees feel included

In determining whether all components of inclusivity should be felt by an employee in the organisation, statements were analysed to determine the codes and further to determine the themes.

Identifier/Codes	First Order Themes	Second Order Themes
Statements about recognition	Recognition and acknowledgement of efforts Empowerment	Valuing Employees
Statements about being awarded		
Statements about team voice/opinions		
Statements about being valued		
Statements about rewards programmes		
Statements about employee Involvement in decisions	Fairness and Equality Openness Fostering relationships Decision Making	Demonstrating behaviours that show employees matter
Statements about availability		
Statements about being treated fairly		
Statements about involvement of all ethnicities		
Statements about career advancement		
Statements about positive relationships with managers		
Statements about employee feedback		Valuing Uniqueness

Statements about no judgement	Support for employees based on their unique qualities	
Statements about different personality traits		
Statements about being themselves		
Statements about organisational change and support	Including individuals in organisational change	Demonstrating behaviours aligned with organisational activities
Statements about communication		
Statements about restructuring		
Statements about hierarchies		

Figure Nine: Themes

5.5.2.1 Recognition and Acknowledgement of efforts

Each individual interviewed expressed what their organisation did to demonstrate what value they brought to the organisation. Certain individuals expressed that their companies had robust rewards recognition programs in that the awards filtered down from the CEO of their organisation. In addition to this, the highest form of reward that could be achieved was in terms of a promotion or a career advancement opportunity that could be created in recognition of the effort that they bring to the organisation.

“So, if you get promoted, in what you're doing, that is like the biggest recognition, that what you're doing is actually contributing to company.”

“And then there's also awards a lot of time. There are awards given out to individuals throughout the year. I recently received the CEO Award, which is one of the highest ratings in Africa.”

In the awards that people receive, one of the biggest forms of recognition by the employees is that the awards are not only monetary in nature, but the awards are given to individuals being mindful of the nature of the value that one considers as thoughtful recognition and is than, recognised in that manner, with which the individual places value, thus taking into consideration the unique way in which they would prefer to be rewarded.

“So, I think on this one as well, we need to understand that recognition and rewards are different for different people... I think you take for granted what rewards actually mean and what recognition mean and what recognition

actually means, because for some people, what they value is public recognition, or an actual award or money.... If I gave one of my team members, I don't know, a gift card as value, and between the two of us, I was like well done...it might actually mean less to them than if I call him out at a town hall to say, well done to this person."

In terms of recognition and rewards, it was also suggested by some of the participants that recognition and reward could possibly have the opposite effect to feeling inclusive in that recognition and rewards could leave those feeling that only certain groups receive recognition and reward with other groups feeling as if they have been left out, spurring exclusive behaviours. Another interviewee shared a perspective that once reward and recognition is received, it could result in change of team dynamics in that the reward may often come with work overload, making one feel as if they were less supported by bringing on a feeling of being overwhelmed.

"It's a big focus and I think people who tend to be the high performers are recognised fairly regularly.....Sometimes has the opposite effect, where people who are not being recognized, the lack of, you know well, I will never get recognized anyway. So, it serves either as a motivator or a demotivator depending on the person."

"The work you do than just multiplies and multiplies so you do it and then they say well, ok cool, well done, now you do more... and then it's more and it's almost like a never-ending cycle where you are always feeling overworked and burdened because no matter how well you do, they would say yes, well done and give you more."

5.5.2.2 Empowerment

Being valued by the leaders and organisation, provided individuals with a sense of empowerment, in that they felt that their opinion mattered. Empowerment also brought on motivation in that it prevented individuals from feeling as if they had no impact and as a result, they were able to demonstrate value to the company. Therefore, rewards play an important role in the organisation from a motivational perspective and generally towards feeling included.

"It's those small acknowledgements that's quite key, there's monetary rewards, being called out in a quarter, or simple things, like being taken out for lunch."

“Small things just to acknowledge the fact that you are adding value to the company because once you stop adding value, you get bored.”

Recognition programs also made individuals feel as if they were empowered as the appreciation came in different manners, depending again on how the individual would value recognition because acknowledgement of contributions also helped people to grow and develop their skills, but in this sense bringing on more work were the individual welcomed this.

“I have been asked to develop somebody else who wants to move in.....I’ve set up sessions to mentor her, I’ve been mentoring graduates.”

Another aspect is that if an employee felt if they were given a team voice and they felt if they were free to be themselves, they felt as if they were included in a team. In this way an employee feels as if they are validated, and a different sense of recognition is achieved that leads to the perception of validation.

“We have a concept of, what do you call it, it is where you are free to talk, free to express yourself.”

“Bring your full self to work, where you know you don’t have to be scared..... you have a right to speak up and you know everyone is welcome.”

5.5.2.3 Fairness and Equality

In determining whether there is a perceived sense of fairness and quality in the organisation, respondents associated this with taking into consideration the demographics of the organisation. Furthermore, the associations that were made, that these existed in the organisation was with regards to the diversity of the organisation. In certain instances, it is rooted in the company culture, that is, the display of fairness and equity in the organisation is shown.

“One of the key fundamentals when you first start at my company is that everyone is equal, irrespective of what your background maybe and you can actually see that in the workplace.”

In terms of creating the feeling that they belong in terms of the culture and the ethnic groups they fall in, it appeared that individuals were represented fairly in this respect.

“There is a broad spectrum of people from different backgrounds, religions etc.”

“So, I think they really value, one’s point of view, so I think that helps create an environment where you do feel included and not excluded because your point of view matters regardless of your age, experience, background, race and class.”

“I do think the culture allows to speak freely without discrimination, we do have a space where you are able to speak up... I do feel that it is fair, like there is a very unbiased approach to things, where you know, anyone can kind of share.”

Certain individuals demonstrated fairness and equality to be looked at through a different lens in that they worked for an American company with a huge footprint in Africa. In terms of their hiring expertise, local hires were considered only if they had the expertise. However, if they did not, expat hires would be made, however, only to build capability of local talent. In that way, they deemed this to be fair only with the aspect of building capability in mind.

“So, I think it is a balance, I think we can’t expect to build capability, if we don’t bring in expats, from the global community, and we export South African talent, so those things need to happen in parallel.”

It was also clear that in terms of fairness and equality, it was difficult to appease everybody’s feelings with regards to this, or individuals’ perceptions about this theme were divided. Some felt that the terms laid down by their leaders and the organisation were fair while others did not. Individuals reiterated that their personal experiences with this topic in that this can be interpreted in many different ways by individuals.

“I think there is a big shift, and I think a lot of organisations are back at work... And now we’re back to the office three days a week, and it’s mandated on those days... and that can have an impact on the inclusivity piece because it affects people differently... like single mums with sick kids, what does that mean for them.”

“It has evolved slightly in terms that there are agenda’s in place and there is very much of a political play, and that’s actually quite key and there’s an element of where you just accept, and you do your work and try to move on.”

5.5.2.4 Openness

Demonstration of openness by leaders was evident in determining how approachable leaders presented themselves to employees within the organisation. The theme was identified in terms of the organisational design, designated offices

for leaders were minimal which encouraged open conversation. It also made individuals feel as if their leaders were much more approachable. In terms of openness, many individuals mentioned that open door policies are evident within their organisations.

“They’ve got open door policies, we all sit together, when my manager was on maternity leave, I reported directly to her director, who was accessible all the time.”

“Well, they shared their calendar... it’s simple right because like most companies, well, they don’t share their calendar...some even show you like what the subject is of their own meeting.”

“I’ve certainly felt like our leaders are highly accessible and they all sit in one place.”

However, individuals have associated the concept of openness with that of visibility. When leaders are not visible in the organisation, this aids in the feeling of not being open and therefore, in a manner not accessible to individuals. Some individuals had an issue with how openness was demonstrated due to the circumstances that the organisation found itself in. However, leaders had to change their way in terms of this as it had a direct impact on the organisation.

“She’s not available a lot, although when you do engage with her, the engagement is there and she wants to be, so I think the intent is there, it’s just that she is extremely busy.”

“We’ve come from a very turbulent time and my leader, he was very reserved at first, and I think when they saw the resignations coming, you know all of that, he had to open himself up and listen.”

In certain instances, individuals felt that although leaders came across as open, in demonstrating the openness, their boundaries were not respected, in that although they spoke their mind, the concept of the right to speak had consequences.

“I did have the inverse experience, you know, going on a level higher than my leader and having a conversation, an uncomfortable conversation, airing a few concerns, and I felt in my way, you know that my opinion was held against me, but that was a while ago right, now I don’t feel that way.”

5.5.2.5 Fostering relationships

Fostering relationships with individuals embeds a sense of belonging in your organisation, that is if you feel that you can identify with the leaders in the organisation. Individuals look to the leaders for support and to feel as if they matter to the individuals into whom they report to. Additionally, individuals felt as if that element of support that they feel, needs to come from a place in which a relationship can be carved out. The relationship built with the manager exemplified their feeling that they mattered in the organisation.

“They are very open to having discussions with you, so either approachable that you can actually speak, to speak to them about whatever, that’s maybe on your heart or on your chest, whether its work, or if we just want advice or mentorship, or even advice about like life.”

“I think I have a good relationship with each one of them, open, inclusive, I can tell him if something’s bugging me, I can tell them if I need help, I can share if something’s not working well, so there’s no fear of being open and honest.”

“I think I do feel like I can relate to my manager, she understands what I’m saying, my perspectives, my aspirations....so I feel we do relate to each other in terms of you know the business, but also outside of that, we can still have a relationship.”

“Personally, for me, for me and my leader, we are like sisters, and you know, we’ve got like a friend relationship.”

However, participants also displayed dismay with regards to the fostering of relationships with those in senior positions. Whilst it is an important feeling for making one feel as if they matter, the question posited, raised concerns with some individuals indicating that this need was not met in circumstances, or that individuals feel a sense of distrust in how their relationship with their managers evolves. Individuals also felt that it is clinical in a sense of just ensuring that the work gets done.

“I would say that the relationship is as we say straight talk, they are straightforward.”

“My manager currently, it’s strange because he was senior to me, and I’ve never reported to him, so I’m reporting to him recently, and I was really uncomfortable about it...So I did thread very carefully, but I must say we’ve taken strides.”

“Across my managers, they all have been fairly good, no key challenges, there’s an element of trust but everyone will let you down at some point, right. So, there’s levels of trust.”

Individuals also considered whether their leaders considered their career advancements which demonstrated that they had positive relationships with their leaders. The understanding, between their leader and themselves that their career is important to the employee, and the leader taking this into consideration, as an element they also deem important, needed to be bridged and the understanding demonstrated.

“The fact that I’m able to speak up and share and have those relationships or someone’s interested in my career development.”

“So, she sees it as a personal failure not to develop my career plan. So, she’s been the first person to push me or push for my promotion or push for my career succession planning.”

5.5.2.6 Decision-Making

A wide perspective about decisions was obtained from the respondents. Some of these perspectives are the ability to make the decisions as well as the group-wide decisions made by leaders and how they impact employees. The participants from the interviews felt as if sometimes the consequences of decisions made from the top were not taken with their interests in mind or made without being open and inclusive.

“There’s something that was very bad....was corridor conversations because leadership would make the decisions. Leadership would have conversations, and you would suddenly hear that you’re moving roles, but you yourself don’t even know yourself.”

In demonstrating inclusive behaviours, the ability to give individuals decision-making capabilities and growing those decision-making capabilities also appeared in the conversations. It also empowered individuals as there was a certain degree of trust exuded by leaders. Where the outcome of the decision was good or bad, the individual still felt a level of growth from knowing what they did mattered. It was also understood that the ability to make the decisions are deemed to be part of what the pre-defined role was, so the ability to make decisions comes with limits, yet is still deemed to be inclusive because of the understanding of what the role is.

“What do you think about this? You’ve been in the process. Is this feasible? He just gives responsibility to you in a larger setting and that grew my confidence.”

“So, they like do things very differently and then in the beginning, you will be, all get challenged of like a decision that you make, and then also like you know there’s a lot of questions because they also want you to understand like how business works.”

“So, I would say yes, but with a caveat, again I can for example, I can ask, want to simplify our SOP’s, and they will differently entertain the recommendation and try to include or execute as much of it as possible, within what’s allowed within the limits of authority, they’ll definitely have the flex to listen, to implement.”

5.5.2.7 Support for employees based on their unique qualities

A question was posed to interviewees as to whether they felt as if they could be themselves at work and therefore display their unique qualities. The question was answered quite standardly by some as yes, however, not everyone felt as if they could be themselves at work. For some, there were reservations as to how free they could be or how free they perceived themselves to be. Individuals believed that to an extent, you could be yourself as you still had to ensure that you deliver yourself professionally.

“It depends on how people perceive authenticity. Right? It’s almost two extremes, like you don’t want to be robotic at work, but you also want to maintain a professional environment right.”

“But at the end of the day, we had to deliver business, and I know that sounds . . . it might sound very critical, but the reality is that I’ve seen circumstances where people are far too comfortable and then you know, the work suffers and the reality is if you don’t deliver on the work, we won’t have a business.”

“If you in a senior management meeting, well there’s somethings you can and cannot say right.”

Many felt as if they could be themselves in the workplace and had no issue expressing that they could. The environment welcomed their uniqueness displayed in terms of the diversity that they bring to the organisation as well as the environment catered to them being able to express themselves. Participants, without any hesitation indicated yes, that they could be themselves.

“They do allow people to be authentic, to be themselves, and they encourage inclusivity, and you know, diversity.”

“Personally, I do feel like I can, but I think it comes down to you as a person, like how much, you know how much your job kind of fits into your life and what it means to you.”

“So, I do feel I can be myself, I’m more a quiet, reserved person, so I’m not the most outspoken. I’m not going to try and be the centre of attention. And I always felt that would hold me back, especially in my environment, I mean because there’s a lot more outspoken people....people know who I am without me actually, alright, try and change who I am.”

Individuals have alluded as a result of their personality, that they are able to be themselves in the work environment, and that it really filters down to who the individual is and what is their personality type is. Therefore, in displaying their uniqueness, they believe that it is a personality type to be able to do this. It also related to authenticity; in that they are not pretentious in how they display themselves. Even if they disagree with a topic, if they maintain their respect in handling the situation, then one can be oneself.

“I suppose, I’ve never had to not be myself at work. I’ve never had to be pretentious, ever in meetings, we’ve always been able to chat to the directors and to our leaders and I think, me being a people’s person, it was easy for me.”

“If I agree with something, I’ll say so, if I disagree, I will also say so. So, I mean, as long as I can always be respectful to others as well, which is who I am.”

Demonstrating inclusive behaviour for employees also included accepting individuals for their uniqueness in terms of their diversity in their religion as well as their capabilities. In certain circumstances individuals pointed out that it’s gone beyond just hiring in terms of for example diversity, but recognising the unique set of skills and traits that individuals bring and therefore, hiring based on the needs of the company in terms of this.

“I think being in a South African context, we need to acknowledge, the different demographics we have in our country and that is how we became a democracy, and I think that is illustrated in the company that I work for. But in terms of feeling acknowledged for my diversity, I’m Hindu and I’m allowed to celebrate my Hindu

beliefs. I'm a male, I'm allowed to be a man, being respectful and all of that. I feel like we are allowed to be diverse even in our thinking now."

"I've seen recent hires of many colours, not just BEE hires or, you know, the traditional hires, but I think recently they have been putting the correct person in the correct job no matter of race, creed, you know, gender."

Another theme that emerged is through the feedback process given to leaders as to whether an individual's unique point of view is acknowledged. If any individuals unique point of view is acknowledged, this insinuated that the individual felt included in the conversation and the discussion. This was typically done via one-to-one feedback sessions however, many individuals suggested that group wide surveys can also be used to address their unique concern, if the feedback is acted upon.

"One of the things that I've come up consistently that I think we'll try, we're trying to address is really looking at what people are saying in terms of the survey that's important to them and what and where we can improve. And then sort of really build plans like tangible plans around how we can improve on this."

"I wouldn't say in the greater organisation, but my leader in particular is really big on feedback sessions, although he is busy, every three weeks, you know, he sits down from me as a shopper manager, all the way to the analyst underneath him for feedback, you know, to get our to do list and check and align our priorities."

5.5.2.8 Including individuals in organisational change

In exploring this dimension of leadership inclusivity, participants expressed a generalised view of this theme. Employees also expressed confusion around this topic as a particular question was posed to them in, that being, in what way the support for organisational activities was demonstrated. In certain instances, employees felt that organisational support came across, in that employees felt as if the organisation advocated for their development and training and that this demonstrated interest in their desires and thus inclusion.

"But in supporting my role development 100%, and we have LinkedIn learning, and you know, we used to have Udemy. If they do see potential in talent, they put you on really good strategic courses to, you know, accelerate your growth and close gaps."

“But from a strategic point of view on organisational support in the sense that they create development, you focus on people’s learning and development and then also vice versa, like your people feel included in the organisation, that they want to contribute, not just to deliver performance.”

“They have massive resources in terms of, you know, online tools, a lot of training focus.”

Supporting organisational activities also revealed that the support needs to come from a bottom-up perspective and not just from a top-down perspective in terms of an employee’s continued support of corporate social activities of their company’s. Therefore, it detracted from just supporting individuals in terms of their ability, to just deliver on performance. Specific examples were mentioned in that activities towards diversity, equity and inclusion were supported from both the bottom down and from top up.

“As part of the organization that I work for, what we have is what we call the agenda for DEI you know, and that’s the diversity, equity and inclusion.”

There were contrasting views in terms of the hierarchies of organizations and how communication gets filtered down. Comments illustrated that communication and difficulties of open channels as a result of the hierarchies in some instances lead to the lack of openness and that this hampered clearly articulating what the organisation was trying to achieve.

“It’s our business structure, is currently very hierarchical and we’ve never been like that, so that’s a pain point and I think everybody’s been raising that because you can almost see the hierarchy, where leadership was becoming unapproachable.”

“I would say again some of the time, I often feel like we don’t get the full story until maybe three or six months later, whereas if they shared with us at the beginning, this is their expectation, or this is the expectation of the region and the bosses, and these are the things we need to do, it would save a lot of back and forth.”

Participants illustrated that as part of organisational re-design, it was difficult to determine how the strategy of the company promoted inclusivity. Much more than that, it made individuals feel as if they were unsettled.

“I have been here for eight years, I’ve seen this cycle happen a few times when there’s a very good leader that leaves the business. You’ll notice a mass exodus with like a very good group of talent that ends up leaving with the director or with the leader because they felt that they belong to what that person stood for.”

5.5.3 Summary of findings Research Question One

Research question one indicated that the display of features associated with uniqueness, belongingness, appreciation and organisational support lead to individuals feeling included. In terms of the features however, behaviours that diverted from these characteristics portrayed feelings of discontent which made individuals feel less included. The understanding of leadership inclusivity was closely related to feelings of been appreciated for diversity however, it also had much to do with the employee’s experience and where they found themselves in their career and organisation journey. Furthermore, communication played an important role in inclusivity based in the feeling that the entity was open.

The features associated with rewards, career advancement opportunities and how the individual personally needs validation were associated with uniqueness. Empowerment was a subject of appreciation. In terms of making individuals feel as if they belong, prominent themes surrounded concepts such as fairness, openness, building relationships and being a part of the decisions of the entity. Diversity and appreciation for individual traits were revealed to be factors supporting uniqueness. Organisation support centred around learning and development as well as factors other than delivering of business objectives.

5.6 Results: Research Question 2

Research Question two focuses on the salience of these questions in terms of whether one of the factors outweighs the other. The question was specifically asked to the participants to get their views on how this impacts their own interpretations of leadership inclusivity. The below table represents the views of the interviewees:

Participant Number	Factor of Inclusivity which is the most important
Participant one	Uniqueness
Participant two	Belongingness
Participant three	Appreciation
Participant four	Organisational Support
Participant five	Appreciation and Belongingness
Participant six	Organisational support
Participant seven	Appreciation

Participant eight	Appreciation
Participant nine	Components are fluid
Participant ten	All components are important
Participant eleven	Organisational support
Participant twelve	All components are important

Figure Ten: Participant Preferences

From the above, it was determined that the participants had different views on these components therefore their own experiences directly influence these elements. Below is therefore, a discussion on why the different elements hold different value to each of the participants.

5.6.1 Salience of belongingness

In terms of this component, contrasting the individual views of the participants, it was determined that each of the participants felt that their environment determined how they view the different components of inclusivity. Therefore, this concept was impacted largely by the context and culture one finds themselves in. Belongingness was therefore, considered from a team perspective in terms of how this relates to the company culture as a whole.

“I feel when I have sense of belonging than my collaboration with my colleagues becomes easier because they trust me, and I trust them all. We’re having open conversations with all about work, things that we need to get done, but we’re communicating with each other.”

In determining the answer to this question, participants looked to the organisation as a whole and how this fits into the South African context therefore, attributing their sense of belonging to how it fits into the grander history of the South African setting. The feeling of belongingness is therefore, attributed to the identity of us as a country and how that identity assists us to deal with challenges.

“Belonging for me, would be the other one that would be key, because as South Africans, if I look at the market, these two are very important to help us get through any situation, no matter what happens, if we have these two, we feel supported.”

5.6.2 Salience of Uniqueness

Uniqueness was looked at by individuals from the perspective of personality traits. The concept of including me for the inherent characteristics of my being, led to individuals choosing this concept over all else. Participant one sensed that if one

could accept them for who they are, this would attest to the highest value of inclusivity.

“I would feel like my uniqueness is the most important for me because along with my uniqueness, I can build on other elements within the organisation.”

“I can develop a sense of belonging; I can adapt to the organisation by developing a sense of belonging.”

“Your uniqueness doesn’t need to be shut down by the business...it needs to be developed...it needs to be noticed.”

5.6.3 Salience of Organisation Support

Advocates for organisational support viewed this as the dimension that shows that the organisation is interested in them as individuals, on their development and well-being. Therefore, the organisation supports them in terms of the strategic growth objectives of the organisation in terms of retaining and developing talent. Comparing the participants responses with who indicated this, they deemed organisational support to include what the organisation does to show they value the employee in terms of the growth of the employee.

“If they see potential in talent, they put you on really good strategic courses to, you know, accelerate your growth and close gaps. They’re really good at doing people tree assessments.”

“If you want to grow your career....and if you’re not feeling a sense of inclusivity, and you know you’re able to actually speak up on that and get support.”

Organisational support was also pointed out as being a dual concept in that if you support the organisation, the organisation will support you back, if you are able to properly articulate what you are trying to deliver, and if this is aligned with the organisation, it will be well-received.

“I think if you can clearly articulate what you’re doing, why, why you need support, you absolutely get it. So, I think it’s incumbent on us as leaders to push our teams to make sure that you are clear in what you are trying to deliver and how what you’re doing supports our overall business objectives.”

5.6.4 Salience of Appreciation

It was observed that four of the participants declared this to be the component they were most captivated by when thinking of inclusivity. It is also noted that this is the most tangible form of inclusivity, and by being visible, attracted employees to deem this to be the most important dimension. Employees also felt that in some cases both monetary and non-monetary rewards showed validation, thereby acceptance by the organization and feeling valued.

“Appreciation leads to financial award.”

“To me, this is one of the main aspects of being a happy employee, because if you valued and appreciated, you will bring your best to what you’re doing, the minute you don’t have that, you kind of loose interest, you lose focus and then it’s downhill from there.”

5.6.5 Salience of including all four concepts of inclusivity

Three of the participants in the study alluded to these concepts being inextricably linked, and in some way or form, all these concepts would need to be present within any organisation. One of the participants pointed out that in their in a career journey, these concepts would rarely have the same meaning depending on where they find themselves in their workplace environment. Secondly, the context of where the entity finds themselves also matters in this model of inclusivity as the concept of organisational performance takes precedence in some industries. A participant alluded to their being all these factors in the organisation yet couldn’t point out which one would outweighed the other.

“Look your sense of belonging and unique point of view, it does matter. And the support structure, we here to support you, but the job needs to get done, and then there’s ten jobs that need to get done, and we only have three people, so that support, although it matters, it’s a constraint and that’s probably the least priority.”

“Be your authentic self and you know, be open and feel that you belong and it’s important that the company support’s you, because you know, it’s all about organisational performance and so on.”

5.6.6 Summary of findings Research Question two

All components of inclusivity were highlighted as being important to the particular individual. The findings show that each dimension does indeed deserve to be called out as a separate dimension to inclusivity. Whilst appreciation normally lacks

specificity and is demonstrated in ways such as noticing efforts and recognising contributions, participants in the interview called out specific examples of how appreciation is shown. Uniqueness and belongingness were key categories of inclusivity due to the empowerment it created, and belongingness was highlighted, due to the shared responsibility of the organisation and the participant to feeling included. Supporting organisational efforts was highlighted due to individuals taking note of management efforts in supporting the individual themselves and also in terms of the individual employee recognising that their efforts were needed to meet key performance objectives. Participants suggesting that the consolidated concepts are also key to an inclusive climate were also relevant, thereby determining that the model itself, is relevant as a framework for inclusivity.

5.7 Results: Research Question 3

Having unpacked research question one and two with the participants, research question three was designed to examine whether in the experiences of participants, inclusivity is felt within the organisation in disruptive periods. As individuals have different perspectives and opinions on disruptive events in their organisations, an understanding of what disruption meant for the participants was obtained. Below represents a table of the findings in relation to this.

Research question three -During times of disruption, leadership inclusivity is a priority in the organisation	
Understanding of Disruption	Themes Emerging around inclusiveness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructuring • General Changes • New Products • COVID-19 • Geopolitical Changes • New competitors • Business Model Shifts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement • Employee Well-being • Varying degrees of inclusiveness depending on the disruption event

Figure Eleven: Context of Disruption

5.7.1 Types of Disrupting Events

Conversations were had with the individuals from the sample group in order to determine what they considered as disruptive events in their entities. Many of the participants concurred that disruption is anything that causes change to the business in terms of business processes, launching of new products as well as any changes in ways of working in terms of business processes. Disruption also meant for certain

individuals any macro-economic level changes that could affect their ability to reach business targets and deliver the results required.

From the data gathered, it was also noted that the type of disruption that the employee experienced lead to the theme of the varying levels of inclusivity that was felt by the individuals. Certain participants agreed that disruption is endemic within their organisation in terms of how the organisation is designed and the ways of working are constantly evolving. Another common understanding of the term disruption was the restructuring that companies had gone through.

“I’ve actually seen this cycle happen three times now and in that saying that we’ve lost amazing talent, who are also regretting their decisions, but we’ve lost amazing talent because of poor choices.”

Restructuring and the turbulent nature thereof, emerged as a theme for disruption which impacted the role of leadership inclusivity in organisations. However, in companies where this change was a common disruptor event, it was accepted and hence employees were open to the change. Another example in which employees are open to change was with regards to how leadership changes every so often. Employees however, considered this as a disruptor as it affects the ways of working of the organisation.

“But I think it happens too often to a point where we’re losing institutional knowledge, where we’re getting people leaving because it’s changing so much, and those people take a lot of information with them.”

5.7.2 Engagement

Comparing views of participants during periods of disruption, participants indicated that communication was important in dealing with the disruptive event and during these periods, thus the level of organisational support was magnified. There were various methods that companies deployed in communicating with individuals and even in terms of the feedback. Additionally, the receiving of feedback assisted individuals in feeling that the organisation was being transparent about the disruptive event. The engagement also didn’t just take the form of communication. The involvement of individuals of new happenings in the business also brought about inclusivity. The engagement also helps to build organisation trust in the eyes of the employee.

“Or a new campaign launching, we celebrate it in the office with internal launches, so as much as we put it out into the market and into trade for our buyers and stuff, we try and create a small celebration in the office so that our colleagues know what’s happening within the brand.”

“It’s a level of maybe communication or interaction were they’re regularly speaking to you, to me or communicating throughout the changes, having check-ins on how the changes affect my, you know, daily or cyclical work, explaining the expectations that they have now.”

Contrasting this view with other participants, some participants indicated that engagement was reactive in terms of change events and that the inclusion was the result of negative consequences occurring such as employees leaving which triggered management to discuss these events and by default including them in change discussions as far as management reasonably can.

“He also sits with us as a team and, you know, tells us what’s going on, where he can obviously, but in the greater organisation, that’s just the plans he put in our place, because he heard our frustrations.”

5.7.3 Employee Well-being

Statements about employee well-being is linked to employees having a sense of belonging in their organisation. During times of disruption employees indicated that morale is normally affected. During disruption events, mental well-being is certainly a focus as well to ensure that the organisation still performs. Should this be a group wide dilemma, management seeks ways to correct this to ensure that employee well-being is protected.

“Because and just giving an example again with COVID, although we came from home and it was really difficult for people in terms of different reasons and you know people have challenges, maybe your family is sick and you cannot be your authentic self because of the situations at home, the leaders, my leaders would always make me feel, you know valued.”

“And when we had our existing, previous BU president, who’s now exited the business, you could feel that the entire morale of the business was down. The feedback that we are receiving in the pulse surveys and two annual surveys was very, very negative.”

Contrasting other views of employees, employees felt that certain disruptive events placed emphasis on the mental health of employees, causing companies to go above and beyond what they would normally expect. However, some felt that it was the same, the focus being on operating the same way as if the disruptive event did not take place and placing the same emphasis on mental health, before and after the disruptive event.

“So, so they they actually made it a very big point during COVID. They made it a very big point to check on mental health during COVID, but since we’ve gone back to the office in a hybrid, I feel like they’re doing it even more now because they’re using it to motivate people to actually come to the office.”

“But from operational leaders, I felt that they just expected you to be churning out the same output, but from a different location.”

5.7.4 Varying degrees of leadership inclusivity based on disruptive event

The aspect of inclusivity during an unstable period, however, was evident from the findings that it varies depending on what the disruptive event is. Contrasting the views of various individuals, there was agreement that if the disruptive event equates to a business change that is part of the organisation, as a whole’s efforts, towards delivering performance, the disruptive event’s impact on inclusivity is not held in the same esteem.

“I think it depends, right? I mean it also depends on the level of disruption.”

“When the pressures on then I do feel like those things become secondary because if you’ve got a deadline on Friday, no one cares if you feel like you belong or not right now, you waited, deliver your deadline and then next week, we should talk if you belong or not right now.”

“And I think though, the global economy is under pressure and particularly in South Africa, and I think, the more results come under pressure, the more the softer things become less important, and it’s around let’s deliver results because we need to deliver the results.”

Additionally, it was revealed that this type of view is fluid, and that the disruption affects individuals differently based on the life stage that they are experiencing and that the elements of leadership inclusivity had different bearings on this.

“But then you have a family, and you probably wanted to be a bit more balanced and all. Support would probably need to be bigger as well as reward and recognition because you want to feel like you are more supported at work with the workload and doing the work life balance.”

5.7.5 Summary of findings Research Question three

The summary above shows that disruption in organisations is perceived in various different ways. These disruptive events affect an employee’s sense of inclusivity by some seeing it as an inherent part of the business whilst others seeing it in a negative light. Leadership, thus has a crucial role to play in inclusivity, especially during a restructuring. Communication seems to be a key factor in making inclusion possible. Overall, inclusion during disruption varies depending on the life stages of the individual and how the organisation manages the change.

6. Chapter Six-Discussion

6.1 Introduction

The results from the analysis of the data, that has been collected from the semi-structured interviews that have been presented in Chapter five above, are discussed in detail below. This discussion therefore proceeds, in sequence to provide insights to the different research questions that have been posed and furthermore, illustrates whether these dimensions of leadership inclusivity need to be present.

The results collected, are therefore, contrasted to the existing literature available, in order to contribute to the existing body of literature.

6.2 Discussion: Research Question 1

Research Question 1: Do employees understand the concept of leadership inclusivity, and do they need to identify with all elements identified in order for inclusion to be felt?

The first question explored the concept of leadership inclusivity in the context of the model proposed to determine whether all elements need to be identified with by the individual employee. According to the theoretical model proposed, Korkmaz et al. (2022) indicated that belongingness, uniqueness, appreciation and supporting organisational efforts form the foundation for leadership inclusivity of employees. Furthermore, Carmeli et al. (2010), suggested that inclusivity is displayed by being open, accessible and leaders being available.

Korkmaz et al. (2022) indicated that the existing definitions and the model defined by Randel et al. (2018) in terms of fostering uniqueness and strengthening belongingness in a team, needed to be expanded as appreciation satisfies a basic human need in terms of valuing and recognising an employee as a resource in the workforce. Lastly, supporting organisational efforts, as a dimension that stands on its own has also been identified as it shows alignment between the organisation in terms of promoting fairness and discrimination, bridging human resource policies and leadership, as well as being open to organisational change (Korkmaz et al. 2018).

The definitions of leadership inclusivity as posited by Nembhard and Edmonson (2006), indicate that inclusivity is two-way process in that individuals input needs to be considered by leaders and additionally be appreciated by a leader. This definition

was expanded by Hollander (2012), in that respect, understanding and feedback are further valued by any employee. Lastly, Carmeli et al. (2010) indicated that inclusive leadership is a form of relational leadership. Therefore, the discussion below will be conducted keeping this in mind.

6.2.1 Concept of Leadership Inclusivity

In order to identify whether individuals understood this concept or felt the presence of this in the organisation the concept was explored and investigated with the employee. Leadership inclusivity is grounded in social exchange theory and social identity theory which rationalizes that leadership inclusivity is linked to relationship of the individual to the leader, as well as to the organisation, and at the same time in understanding how the view of inclusivity, relating to those relationships are grasped. Blau (1964), indicated that the exchanges drive behaviour, therefore the perception of these exchanges will be discussed. Furthermore, Tajfel and Turner (1979), links identity with team behaviours and perceptions, therefore, this is also relevant in examining inclusivity.

The study found that leadership inclusivity was driven by how the individual identified with the organisation in terms of the diversity from a demographic perspective, therefore, feeling included needed to fulfil a fundamental need associated with belonging from this aspect. Furthermore, the perceptions linked with the exchanges based on different demographics, deemed the exchanges to be inclusive or not.

Contextualisation of the employee experience is also associated with this in that appreciation of the differences between individuals and their leadership preferences was a key factor in understanding the meaning of this concept. This, therefore, links to identification in terms of the theory development. The ability of the individual to also have the openness and candid relationship with the leader in order to be able to articulate these feelings plays a role in feeling included.

In addition to the contextualisation of the employee experience, a safe environment which welcomes feedback was highlighted by employee experiences. For one, this shows that the leader welcomes the feedback and evidently, appreciates the feedback, thereby the association between the above, and Nembhard and Edmonson's (2006) definition of inclusivity is made.

Another revelation during the semi-structured interview process was that communication was a factor to consider in the process of inclusivity which also links

to the social exchange theory. Communication bridged the gap in terms of ensuring that the organisation came across as open, accessible and available to meet the needs of employees (Carmeli et al., 2010).

Communication also provided employees with the notion that they were treated as insiders to the organisation which linked to the elements of organisational support and providing the feeling of belonging which are key elements for inclusivity (Caron et al., 2019). Furthermore, communication by senior leaders to employees at all levels validates that the status of the employee should not matter for a leader to be inclusive. The individual will be seen to have received fair and equitable treatment, thereby, achieving inclusive behaviour (Randel et al., 2018).

Overall employees regarded transparency at an organisational level as salient to the concept of inclusivity in that communication formed one of the pillars for them in feeling included. Communication enhanced feelings of belongingness and obtaining organisational support.

In the discussion which focused on openness and accessibility of leaders, the layout of the organisation was key to finding out whether leaders are actually accessible. Therefore, it was found that organisations without an open plan, provided challenges in being inclusive. Leading from this, openness was associated with the visibility of leaders and leaders being physically present. However, intangible components were also included in terms of openness, in that the time of leaders, in terms of open calendars made individuals feel as if leaders were accessible. Communication also needed to be two-way and not just top down as the employee's voice needed to be heard and the feedback given by the employee assisted with this. Employees felt appreciative if their input was valued as indicated by Nemhard and Edmonson (2006).

6.2.2 Discussion relating to elements of inclusivity

The purpose of this research question was to establish whether individuals felt that all elements of inclusivity mattered to the employee and whether this is experienced by the individuals in the organisation.

6.2.2.1 Discussion relating to Appreciation

Korkmaz et al. (2022) theorises that applauding individual is a salient part of the inclusivity dynamic. It was later found that the feeling of validation is linked to motivating individuals and therefore the higher levels of performance by the

organisation, as it empowers individuals (Roberson & Perry, 2022). Furthermore, this enhances the capability aspects of the individual. Korkmaz et al. (2022) suggest that appreciation can be shown in three ways that being, noticing efforts, acknowledging contributions as well as praising achievements.

Since the research takes on an interpretivism approach, it was determined as to what an employee considers as recognition and validation in the workplace and whether this is experienced, as well as to the nature of appreciation. It was found that the existence of programs such as robust recognition programs as well as career advancement opportunities in an organisation promoted the sense of appreciation within the organisation.

The employee's perception of advancement opportunities in the organisation, thus assists in the process of building the individuals capability in the organisation. It was noted however, that the existence of rewards and recognition in the form other than that of monetary awards also appealed to employees. To consider the individual's different characteristics and traits when validating the employee, also takes into account the uniqueness of the employee and the individual preferences in the rewards process. Furthermore, the empowerment felt by employees when being valued by leaders, spurred on employees as they were aware that their value was important.

Noticing efforts and acknowledging contributions however, since reciprocal, could also lead to the leader, reciprocating in an undesirable manner in which the employee expressed the feeling that they become more burdened with work overload. This did not, therefore, have the positive effect of well-being as explained by Korkmaz et al. (2022). Furthermore, noticing efforts had to also be seen as equitable however, if a minority receives the praise often, it could lead to feelings of exclusivity for those whose contributions do not get recognised.

The study therefore finds that appreciation, while valued by employees, can be seen to have a dual effect in inclusivity. On one hand it may encourage more input from employees however, how the recognition is validated negates the positive effect of appreciation on inclusivity.

6.2.2.2 Discussion relating to Belongingness

Themes contributing to belongingness explored with individuals evoked responses that created the sense that the employee matters. The study shows that the affinity

for belongingness was identified with in terms of decision-making, focusing on relationships, how fair that the individuals deemed the organisation to be and lastly how open the organisation was.

Shore et al. (2011) suggested that there are three dimensions of leadership inclusivity, being, support, perceptions of fairness and equity and lastly involvement in decision making. The study found that these three dimensions were present in the organisation. It was especially important for the organisation to be seen as fair and equitable to employees.

Associations of being fair and equitable were seen by the treatment of people in terms of their demographics but it was also something that employees found to be embedded in the culture of the company. Discrimination, therefore, is not a concept to be associated with organisational practices in the FMCG domain. The lack of bias by company leaders assisted in achieving fairness and equity.

Furthermore, the researcher's own bias purported that diversity would be more focused on in terms of belonging, considering the history of the country. However, it was not. Individuals understand that as an individual, diversity whilst, necessary in terms of the enterprise, does not relate to a successful organisation but capability of the individual does, which is similar to findings from Nishii (2013).

Randel et al. (2018) developed the logic that belongingness is associated directly with team members being able to foster high quality relationships within a team. It also contributes to individuals who are minoritised feeling as if they are part of a larger team. Baumeister and Leary (1995) also state that the development of long-lasting relationships with individuals contributes towards belonging within an organisation. Furthermore, cues from leaders such as accessibility of the leader correlates with the feeling of support that they feel. This further aligns with inclusive leadership being part of a relational type of leadership.

The study found that this is said to be true to the sample interviewed. The constituents of the interviews felt as if relationships and the type of support that they felt from the relationships built assisted with the feeling that they belonged. It was also important for the leader to build trust in the team so that individuals felt they could approach their leader should they feel there was a need to. Therefore, the ability to relate to the leader made the individual feel supported.

Furthermore, the relationship with the leader was linked to the individuals own growth as having a high quality or strong relationship translated into their own goals and desires being met in terms of career projection. The study found that when leaders had the necessary career discussions with individuals, this also further enhanced the feeling, that the dealings with the leader were not just at a transactional level but actually meant that leaders actually cared. When the relationship with the leader was in an infant state such as reporting to a new leader, it was evident that discomfort was felt initially, however as the dynamics of the relationship changed over time, it became easier to feel belonging. Therefore, the absence of a relationship had a negative influence over the relationship.

Canlas and Williams (2022) also identified what signifies the sense of belonging between teams and the organisation. Terms such as authenticity, which is being able to express oneself, having profound connections with a team and being able to have meaningful participation within the team enhanced these feelings of being able to belong.

Another key point that emanated from the study is that individuals cared about being involved in the decision-making of the organisation, which directly had an impact on inclusivity emanating from belongingness. The study found than when individuals where not part of the decision-making process and that the decisions were made from the top, it did not feel inclusive, especially when it was filtered back to individuals through corridor talk, in other words the individual did not hear this directly from the leader.

The study also found that when the employee was involved in the decision, no matter what the outcome of the decision was, it allowed employees to be themselves and thereby, it allowed employees to be their authentic selves. Further to this, participation was encouraged by leaders within the organisation which led to boosting one's self worth. Feelings such as these are therefore associated with displaying meaningful participation in teams.

Canlas and Williams (2022) also indicate that in terms of belonging, individuals need to feel as if they are connected to a grander concept. Individuals felt that when they were allowed to participate in decision making, it was not a one-sided decision that was created from the top, in that it involved all employees. Therefore, by involving employees, it displayed inclusion from the perspective of the employee.

Splitter et al. (2023) defined openness as being transparent and secondly as being involved in the decision making. The study found that openness was associated with accessibility of the leaders and this concept encouraged communication in terms of open plan designs. Further to this, visibility of the organisation's leaders meant that employees could openly engage. The opposite of being open, lead to negative outcomes for the organisation such as high turnover.

Being open was also linked to allowing for engagement by the leaders and by the employees, in that when leaders were open to engaging with employees, they could hear what was working and what was not working for employees. If changes were willing to be made around these discussions, it deemed leaders to be open.

The findings above, therefore, indicate that belongingness is a crucial element in terms of how it is shown in an organisation. However, belongingness in itself, can further be broken down into different elements as determined by Canlas and Williams (2022). Absence of these dimensions leads to an individual feeling as if they do not belong.

6.2.2.3 Discussion relating to Uniqueness

Randel et al. (2018) describes uniqueness as a quality that does not have a common relationship with others from both an identity and a perspective point of view. Adding to this is that the uniqueness of individuals stems from diversity and perspectives which can lead to greater organisational success.

The study found that individuals could bring themselves to the workplace but in varying degrees as not everyone felt that they could be themselves at all times depending on their role within the organisation. Some individuals felt confined by the level that they could be themselves as they had to display themselves in a manner that was conducive to that of a professional environment. The success of the enterprise would therefore come before being themselves. Therefore, the respondents did not feel as being themselves necessarily meant organisational success.

The study also found that the extent that someone could display their uniqueness also depended on whether they considered themselves and the job fit or related, based on the unique characteristics. Therefore, from a model perspective, the organisation would be felt to be inclusive depending on whether the job requirements fit with the personality type, then uniqueness would be valued.

Randel et al. (2018) views of uniqueness, also goes hand in hand with being authentic, individuals did feel in terms of diversity and religion, that they could bring this to the workplace. Further to this, employees felt that their unique perspective is acknowledged in the workplace and feedback is given and acted upon which makes them feel that their uniqueness is further valued.

With regards to uniqueness, whilst interviewees did think this was an important dimension in the inclusivity framework, again, the view is that the business success comes before that of the organisation success. There are reservations as to how included one feels based on the unique attributes that is brought to the organisation.

Beijer et al. (2024) also stated that it is through distinctive qualities of an individual, that potential will be recognised if left to surface by the individual. The study found that in instances where capabilities that needed to be delivered were prioritised, then the unique capabilities required would be sought, not necessarily taking into account diversity needs.

6.2.2.4 Discussion relating to Organisational Support

Korkmaz et al. (2022) views organisational support as new opportunities in the business that leads to organisational changes, however, with a view to enable strategy execution and design. Leader member exchanges will assist in the development of this for individuals and for business execution (Caron et al., 2019). Additionally, there should be support from an organisational perspective to make an employee feel as if they are an insider.

The study found that organisational support was construed differently from the traditional definitions provided and that individuals found this to perceive organisational support in terms of the learning and development. Korkmaz et al. (2022) indicated that human resource management should align with leadership, and this was found to be the case through the discussions held. Should there be harmony in the way that the organisation envisages this, they will promote learning and development.

The study also found that this dimension was also associated with the achievement of organisational goals. However, in terms of organisational design, some structures that existed in organisations hampered the achievement of organisational success in certain instances. The fact that these decisions are made by senior leaders, without effecting the proper change management required impacted this.

Furthermore, Korkmaz et al. (2022) perceived organisational support towards efforts to reduce discrimination and encourage fair practices. The study found that organisations and committees in the workplace that promoted diversity and equality were seen to be inclusive in this nature.

Moreover, what was emphasized during the research is that organisational change as defined as one of the elements in the definition of organisational support, required leaders to be consider the aspects of inclusivity with the structural changes that these involve.

6.2.3 Conclusion: Research Question 1

Through the discussion of the various elements of leadership inclusivity, it was determined that leadership inclusivity is understood by the participants in the study. Whilst individuals did convey that the meaning is understood, the experience of the employees indicated that in certain circumstances it is not always found. Through the analysis and the understanding of the various dimensions, employees generally felt that these concepts were present in the organisation and needed to be there, however, also depending on the context of the organisation were not always found to be present due to the exchanges between leaders and followers. Individuals also highlighted the importance of communication as a feature of inclusivity.

A surprising result from the discussions is that recognition and reward need to be present in organisations no matter the level it is at, but even the recognition and rewards needs to come across as being fair, as everyone wants to be recognised, and it may have the opposite effect of inclusivity if recognition is only focused on a select few individuals.

6.2.4 Discussion: Research Question 2

Research Question 2: Employees feel through the discussion of the various elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other

From the discussion of research question one, it was determined that the model was indeed pertinent, however, as further contributions to the literature, when exploring the topic, it needed to be gauged as to whether one of these factors would outweigh

the other in terms of how the participant viewed leadership inclusivity. The discussion of the relevant literature in comparison to the findings is presented below.

Beijer et al. (2024) considered uniqueness to be imperative in the workplace environment as it enabled different qualities to emerge as well as empowerment in the individual. Nishii (2013) further cements this, in that by organisations, demonstrating acceptance of uniqueness, it presents an inclusive climate in which members are not afraid to express themselves. Furthermore, Roberson and Perry (2022), determined that these unique expressions allow for unique business ideas to emerge.

The study found that individuals did think that uniqueness was an important element, in terms of them being able to express their uniqueness or to use whatever quality is innate to be able to express their strengths and preferences. Individuals believed that their definitive qualities are what enabled them to contribute positively to their environments. In contrasting the difference views on uniqueness, only one individual in the sample concluded this to be the most important element in terms of leadership inclusivity, due to the fact that you may downplay your uniqueness to fit into the organization. The unique element that individuals do bring, however, was conceded, that it needs to be acknowledged by leaders.

Slepian and Jacoby-Senghor (2021), expressed that belongingness was essential in explaining how the correct person for the job and environment ensured that individuals felt as if they could be their true selves in the organisation and thus felt included. Brewer (1991) declared that there is a constant struggle between the feelings of uniqueness and belongingness with individuals.

The study found that the element of belonging was desired more than the element of uniqueness in some instances. Participants felt this way as many worked in teams and it was important that everyone felt if they belonged in terms of the greater team dynamic as it allowed for greater collaboration within teams and thus a better output. In the richer history of the country, the study found that this was crucial for individuals, as feelings of displacement as a result of the past, had negative effects on belonging. Therefore, belonging had much more value. However, this was still not selected as the most important element of the model.

In line with optimal distinctiveness theory, there will always be a tension between the need to feel validated as a human, and associating that feeling to the desire to be

similar to others whilst at the same time wanting to be unique (Brewer, 1991). In the inclusion framework presented by Shore et al. (2011), feelings whereby individuals value belongingness more than they value uniqueness indicates that they want to assimilate into their environment and hence feel as an insider by downplaying what makes them unique. This was evident in the research as more individuals valued belongingness over uniqueness when it came through with these two elements.

Appreciation is determined to be a motivating factor, and once a leader identifies what an individual values, and how to show appreciation, it will allow for team members to become more involved in the activities of the organisation (Li et al., 2022). Li et al. (2022) also suggested that leaders who display trait gratitude, are far more likely to spark innovation which leads to positive business outcomes.

The study found that individuals far more valued appreciation, than the elements of belongingness and the feeling of uniqueness as there is often reward that is associated with appreciation. However, the rewards and the form of recognition need to speak to the individual employee in that the individual could identify with the form of recognition. Lastly the study found that employees concurred that this dimension is an underlying motivating factor in an organisation.

Furthermore, the study did find that when employees feel a sense of gratitude in terms of the work that they do, they are more motivated to perform as they will be more likely and willing to give their best to a situation and have more of a positive mindset in terms of what they set out to achieve. The study associated the feelings of not being appreciated to feelings of discontent in the workplace and in terms of the model, thus not feeling included.

Nishii and Leroy (2022) attributes the salience of organisational support in organisation with the relationships and experiences that individuals have with the organisation. The study found that when the organisation supported the employee, in the employee's development, that this enhanced the relationship between the individual and the organisation. However, individuals also pointed out that the organisation will support these efforts only when they deliver what is expected of them. Organisational support was specifically linked to the support in terms of a human resource perspective as career growth, was interpreted by individuals as meaning support and this is what made individuals identify with it as an element that outweighed other elements.

The study also found that individuals felt that all of the elements were inextricably linked, and many participants supported the view that these elements cannot exist without each other. Korkmaz et al. (2022) suggested that there is a consolidated conceptualisation of all of the elements within inclusive leadership. Existing literature already puts belongingness and uniqueness at the focus of inclusion theory (Korkmaz et al., 2022). However, what can be seen from the results of the investigation is that appreciation also guides this. Therefore, the study found that these concepts matter more to individuals and also depending on life stage individuals found themselves to be in.

In the study it was also revealed that there were mixed views on this which seemed highly dependent on employee experience. Therefore, the study could not definitively conclude whether one factor outweighed other factors, except that they were all relevant as a proposed model for inclusion theory.

Below represents the importance of the elements in terms of which elements outweigh the other.

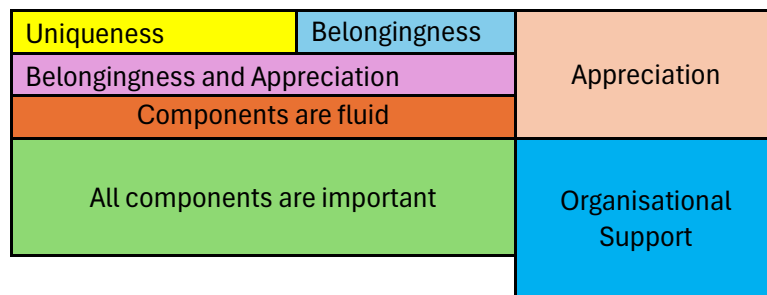


Figure Twelve: Weighting of each element

In terms of exploring the theoretical model by Korkmaz et al. (2022), it was determined that whilst the elements of uniqueness and belongingness are important, so too are organisational support and appreciation. All of these elements play meaningful parts in the model. Therefore, the study identified that model proposed by Korkmaz et al. (2022) is actually, a valid model.

6.2.5 Conclusion: Research Question 2

Korkmaz et al. (2022) deems that inclusive leadership targets not just considering the individual employee but their existence within a team structure and at the organisational level. The perspectives obtained from the constituents of the research showed that employees have different views on this, for instance uniqueness is related to the employees own unique experience whilst belonging aligns with that of a team dynamic, yet others will consider the organisational component of inclusivity

to be most valid to inclusive leadership. Moreover, appreciation appealed to employees at the individual level. As consistently laid out by Korkmaz et al. (2022), the manner in which inclusive leadership behaviour would be experienced will depend on how an employee will identify these elements themselves and depending on how they process the information that they receive. Therefore, these factors are dependent on the employee's unique experience and the social exchanges that they experience.

6.2.6 Discussion: Research Question 3

Research Question 3: During times of disruption, leadership inclusivity is a priority in the organisation

The study focussed on the elements of leadership inclusivity, however, it also considered whether the difficulties experienced during a disruptive event caused leaders to aspire to these behaviours or not. The study particularly focused on this, as inclusivity practices could be seen as soft features during disruptive events for an organisation to deal with.

In terms of the literature, Mohanty and Kulkarni (2023), position an employee as an input to the workplace whose direct experience is impacted by how the organisation treats them. This treatment will in turn shape the outcome of that experience, to determine whether it is a fulfilling experience or not. Yadav and Vihari (2021), indicate that the experiences of an employee are related to how inclusive the organisation is with regards to its organisational design. Secondly, in the time of disruption, inclusive leaders are called upon to deal with disruption (Simmons & Yawson, 2022; Peterson et al., 2018). Furthermore, inclusive enacting is called upon (Gustaffson et al., 2021).

The study found that disruption had different meanings to different individuals in that disruption could mean small changes to the environment which causes change to routine activities. However, disruption could have far bigger consequences which cause changes to ways of working and whether the company's targets have been met or not, which have a direct influence on employee experience.

During times of disruption, depending on the level of disruption, employees felt as if the organisation handled the experience differently. Organisational change and

restructuring in terms of the organisation was topical in terms of the effect it had on inclusivity during the period. For an employee, this brought on a certain level of discomfort associated with feelings of instability and the level of organisational support offered, as organisational support is linked to the strategy and the execution thereof. The study found that too much change meant individuals having to exit the business, who were key to the element of organisational support, as having institutional knowledge directly impacted the job that they did.

In terms of employees being the consumers in an organisation when it came to determining the approach to keep employees included in the conversation, it was noted that communication was a big factor in the delivering of the changes. This directly relates to inclusivity in terms of engagement with the employees and providing a sense a belonging during periods of disruption.

It was also noted however, that during these periods, organisations elicited feedback from employees in terms of their feelings during this period, thereby enhancing the levels of organisational support that was provided. In terms of inclusivity, management also ensured that the company was seen to be inclusive in terms of the levels of openness even when positive changes occurred in the business.

Check-ins were also done with employees in order to determine their well-being in periods such as these to determine what the experience of the situation actually is. In that way, recognition was also given, as management could communicate that the efforts of individuals have been considered. Check-ins with employees are two-way, therefore, it is leaders and the organisations way of letting employees know that they are seen and valued, and that the leader is actually accessible.

The study also found that in some circumstances, inclusivity in terms of decision-making is sometimes hierarchical in nature therefore, once a decision was made and the emotive reactions felt by employees, only then, did management consider the belongingness and organisation support awarded to individuals. The above is also relevant in terms of inclusive enacting as engagement ensures that employees have a voice throughout the entire process of disruption which is associated with belonging, in the sense that their needs are fulfilled and that they feel comfortable.

Gustaffon et al. (2021) also emphasized the sense of empowerment given to employees during disruptive periods, if they feel that their concerns are being heard, which the study found to be true, in how organisations engage with individuals.

Engagement with employees also allows for cognitive bridging in that it explains why the change was necessary, hence enhancing inclusion.

Antonacopoulou and Bento (2018) suggest that during VUCA times, leadership need to adapt their approaches in terms of leading. Feelings of safety, interconnectedness and interdependence need to be shown by leadership (Antonacopoulou & Georgiadou, 2021). The study found that during disruptive events such as COVID-19, that there was a focus on well-being and the emotive state of employees. Furthermore, the greater the disruptive event, the greater the focus there is on the overall happiness of employees. Management will always try to create a feeling of protection and safety. As a result, the sense of belongingness is than exacerbated.

Measures will also be taken to get a sense of where employees are in their overall headspace, through the conducting of research amongst employees. This will enable leadership to put mechanisms in place to address concerns that emerge from the results. All this is done to create and maintain the feelings of interconnectedness and independence amongst employees.

The study also found that during disruptive events, again depending on the type of disruptive events, emphasis is not placed on interconnectedness, interdependence and safety. The organisation and the leadership of the organisation would gauge what the disruptive event is and possibly not do anything to make inclusivity a priority as business goals need to be achieved. Hence, the expectation of employees is to perform the same, if not perform at a higher level.

During the research conducted, it was also found that uniqueness was also considered depending on the disruptive event, by identifying the circumstances that individuals found themselves in, for example during COVID-19, as family members were sick, and individuals couldn't really be themselves, management acknowledged this. Therefore, in certain circumstances uniqueness and authenticity was considered.

In the study conducted and the exploration done, uniqueness did not seem to have a high level of priority as to the other elements considered in the model. Whilst the feelings of belonging, organisational support and appreciation did surface, fostering and enhancing an employee's sense of uniqueness seemed to be downplayed by the organisation.

During conversations with respondents, it was found that the elements of inclusivity could change depending on the life journey that individuals were on. Therefore, whilst disruption is spoken of on a holistic level, there may be personal events of disruption that can impact individuals. Therefore, these elements are not static, and one could be more important at different stages in life. Therefore, leaders need to continually adjust their behaviour based on the perceptions of employees and the unique journey that individuals find themselves in, which is similarly linked to the findings by Beijer et al. (2024).

6.2.7 Conclusion: Research Question 3

In terms of whether leadership inclusivity is a priority during times of disruption depends on the magnitude of the disruption experienced. Leaders will adapt their behaviour in order to compensate for the disrupting event. These elements are therefore fluid in the sense that certain elements will be more focussed on, for instance organisational support in some events of disruption will be highlighted. From the above research that was conducted, it was found that these elements and reactions to them will need to be fine-tuned in response to the event causing change.

7. Chapter Seven- Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1 Introduction

The study was performed in order to address the concern raised regarding an individual's happiness and well-being in a workplace environment and during conditions of disruption in the workplace (Beijer et al., 2024). The proposition that leadership inclusivity needs have an element of fair and equitable treatment, belonging, feelings of appreciation and support of the organisation which collectively could display inclusivity was explored. Korkmaz et al. (2022) identified through a thematic analysis performed that whilst these concepts were investigated independently, a study was needed to bring all elements together. Furthermore, these concepts were investigated during what is considered to be stable work environments. Therefore, the context of this study was to bring together all these elements in a period of disruption.

The study focused, as presented in Chapter one, on the concept of inclusive leadership on a multilevel structure for organizations as it not only focused on the individual themselves, but also focused on the response of the organisation to the individual during favourable and unfavourable periods (Korkmaz et al., 2022). The inclusion of the organisational aspect indicated the openness to change of the organisation, and specifically how it brings about its promotion of inclusion during these times which many considered as disruption (Korkmaz et al., 2022).

With the research questions in mind, we spoke to the perception of actions of leaders by employees in order to understand the pertinence of these actions for inclusivity and whether leaders have to continuously adapt their behaviours (Beijer et al., 2024). By integrating views from employees of an FMCG environment, we determined whether the constituents and relational aspects of leadership had any theoretical implications for our model. Furthermore, this chapter discusses whether there are any theoretical implications as a result of the research findings.

Therefore, the continuation of the chapter will display any implications that the research has for theory development, any additional elements that the theoretical model may encumber, denotes the limitations of the research as well as suggest areas in which future research may be directed.

7.1 Research Findings

7.1.1 Theoretical contributions to definition of Inclusivity

Randel et al. (2018) proposed that inclusive leadership is a style of leadership that is not addressed by other definitions of leadership as it considers and the facilitates the addition of belongingness and the relevance of uniqueness that is not addressed by other leadership styles. Whilst transformational leadership considers the innate self-interest of the leader to execute the organisations missions and goals, it does not allow for the facilitation of a member's belongingness or the acknowledgement of a member's uniqueness (Randel et al., 2018).

Comparisons with inclusive leadership have been made with the LMX theory in that this type of relationship demands high quality relationships between a leader and their team, however, a high quality relationship is not thought to be considered as inclusive (Nishi & Mayer, 2009). In terms of this Randel et al. (2018) determines that whilst LMX is focused on facilitating the positive relationship by exchange between leader and followers of resources and sometimes support, inclusive leadership again brings into this the aspect of uniqueness and belonging.

McCauley and Paulus (2021) indicated that whilst time and effort is spent in developing leaders, the results of the leader are displayed in terms of how the individual performs in the collective manner of reaching the goals of the company as presented in Chapter one. Additionally, South Africa has a unique history and diverse environment, therefore, it was investigated as to what the factors are, that made individuals define the meaning of leadership inclusivity for a successful environment.

Through the qualitative research study, it was found that whilst the definition of leadership inclusivity focuses on the aspects of openness, accessibility and availability, employees found that whilst this is true, it needed to be shown in a manner which includes individuals from diverse backgrounds. However, whilst these definitions offer guidance, inclusivity is much related to the employee experience and the contextualisation of this. With the workforce now being made up of multigenerational consumers of the workplace, meeting the definition of inclusivity needs to be defined by the different expectations of the different groups, focusing on both demographic and non-demographic variables (Mohanty & Kulkarni, 2023).

Similar findings were evident in that, in the finding's of the research, participants experience is not defined by how accessible the leader is, but by non-demographic

factors such as how the organisational structure impacted the experience of the employee to this. Other observations made include that of the consideration of different situations people find themselves in with respect to the environment and how decision-making fits into this.

The element of disruption also shines a different light on the element of inclusion and disruption. The element of disruption focused on external factors, but the majority of factors pointed towards internal factors causing disruption and how the organisation treated these factors, furthermore within the realms of diversity and inclusion. Therefore, whilst the leader is representative of the organisation, there needs to be an element of organisational inclusivity to be considered, to add to the aspect of inclusive leadership and the focus on this element. Korkmaz et al. (2022), included the additional element in the model for inclusivity, therefore, an expansion of the definition could be considered. Since the study found that organisational support is a relevant factor to the model for inclusivity, the definition of leadership inclusivity could be expanded to take this into account.

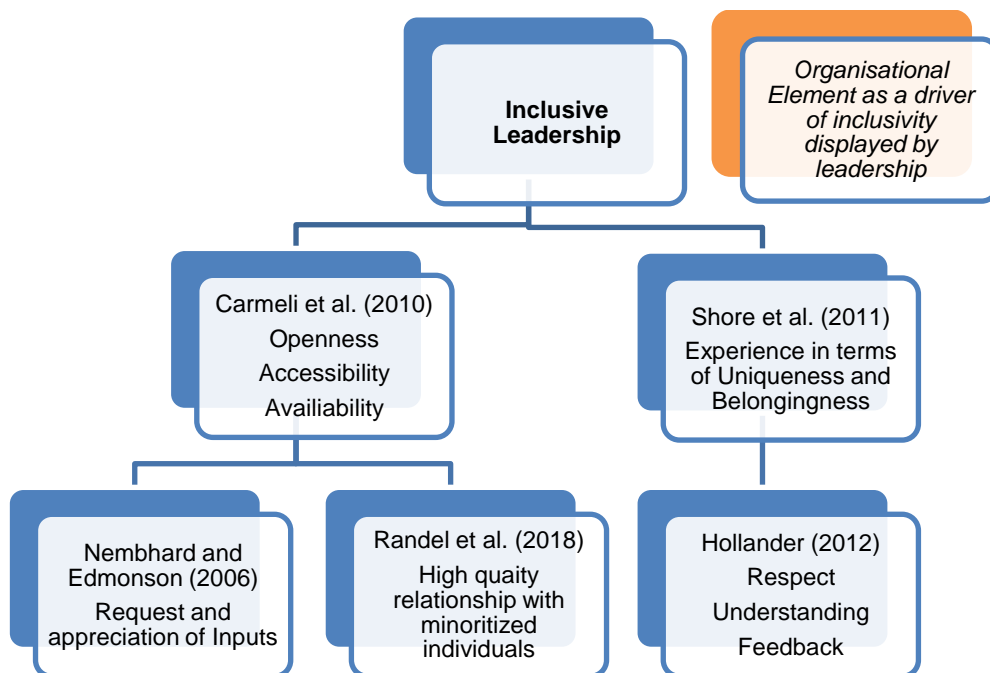


Figure 13: Additional elements to consider

7.1.2 Model for Inclusive Behaviour

In terms of research questions two and three, what is known about the research conducted in the past is that all of the elements presented a view of aspects that were needed for inclusive leadership, but these were not explored in a study valuing all these dimensions together and secondly how these dimensions stand off against one another.

As standalone factors, these factors form the foundation for inclusivity. Dhanani et al. (2024) found that individuals value authentic expression of themselves and the concept of uniqueness fuels this. Canlas and Williams (2022) determined that inclusion needed a strong commitment to both that of belongingness and uniqueness. In addition to this, being able to identify and equally satisfy an individual's unique motivational needs is necessary to achieve inclusion for harnessing synergistic business outcomes.

The model existed for the dimensions of uniqueness and belongingness, through the qualitative research approach, the success of the model together with the additional two elements of appreciation and organisational support, indicated that these factors are indeed required as two further elements of inclusivity. In terms of the study in a non-Western environment, the study revealed that the other elements need to be there and the same was found with regards to this study.

In terms of organisational support as an element for inclusivity, the underlying definitions of this according to the analysis by Korkmaz et al. (2022), were being open to that of organisational change and furthermore, focusing on promotional activities relating to diversity and inclusion. Another element which emerged through the conversations held was that support in terms of organisational support, meant what does the organisation do for an employee in terms of their own individual ambitions and career trajectory. Therefore, as an additional contribution to the literature, a suggestion could be to widen this definition.

Communication and feedback played a big component in determining how included an employee actually felt. In terms of the elements, communication in terms of team voice could be identified with, and also forms part of the definition of inclusivity. Communication was also a standout point in terms of the feedback received from the qualitative research. Therefore, as a model for inclusive behaviour, a further

theoretical contribution could be as to whether this additional concept to the model could stand on its own.

Appreciation and organisational support leans in with social exchange theory as well as leader-member exchanges as these elements are often shown via exchanges. The status of the research in regard to these additional elements when considering all the factors could be said to be in its infancy.

Appreciation was found to be the factor that outweighed the rest. Individuals identified with this as a leader's acknowledgement of contributions, is an affective characteristic, and often has a direct impact on an employee's happiness. Appreciation also inspired individuals to perform, as this dimension offered a tangible feeling, for example a reward.

7.1.2 Model for inclusive behaviour during times of disruption

Disruption evokes different feelings for different individuals in that individuals have different experiences when it comes to disruption. Experiences can be described as a moment that happens in the life cycle of an employee and how it makes the individual feel about their job (Mohanty & Kulkarni, 2023). A negative employee experience is associated with costs that impact the bottom line of the company (Mohanty & Kulkarni, 2023). In exploring the model during disruption, it is found that key elements were found to be present during periods of disruption.

The salience of the support for an individual's uniqueness did not seem to be a factor called out by individuals, however, support for their unique situation could be identified in some circumstances. During times of disruption employees determine that leadership inclusivity is relevant depending on the type of disrupting event. For example, an employee's experiences when a restructuring occurs, which would result in retrenchments, could mean something else entirely, contrasting this with how important inclusivity is as a result of a crisis such as a global pandemic.

Therefore, the fitness of the model depends on the situation. Another contribution in terms of a theoretical perspective is the fluidity of the model in times of disruption. Beijer et al. (2024) indicated that the model is not static and that leaders would need to adapt their behaviours and furthermore, it is an evolving set of behaviours that need to be fine-tuned. From the research conducted, a further theoretical contribution could be that the model is fluid even when considering organisational support as Beijer et al (2024) did not consider organisational support in the study performed. In

saying that, during times of disruption, if an employee does feel as if all the elements are present in the organisation, certain elements could outweigh the other, especially in circumstances of personal disruption.

7.1.3 Practical Implications for business

As we observe that businesses are impacted in a variety of ways through VUCA events which cause for instance, the ways of working to change such as transitioning to hybrid working environments, transitioning back to office environments, and a variety of change events, this study assists organisations to determine their impact on the ability of individuals to feel included. Whilst many leaders in the past focus on two elements, this study offers insights and validation into a four-dimension model and its relevance during disruption.

This study also offers insight into whether rewards drive inclusive behaviour and whether organisational support are salient features (Korkmaz et al., 2022). Furthermore, this study highlights that organisations need to see the softer components of business in terms of inclusive behaviour, with and without disruption. In terms of business strategy, diversity and inclusion in cross-cultural companies should forever be factors of focus. Considering that inclusive leadership might be demanding for leaders, especially those with wider teams to manage, in which an aspect of softer skills is required, this study could contribute to aspects of development needs for employees and individuals.

Dhanani et al. (2024) also considers that inclusion will become ever more an important aspect as gender norms are changing in terms of demographic variables. Therefore, this study could help in the development of workplace policies and procedures to ensure that it is felt across all avenues. This study can therefore contribute in assisting workplaces to adapt, considering minorities that emerge as a result of these cultural shifts.

The research did not embark to determine whether inclusivity existed in companies however, a point to note from the study is that organisations could redistribute efforts to unpack whether inclusive practices are actioned in companies as it was found that individuals have different experiences due to their own contextualisation of experiences. Whilst diversity, equity and inclusion were found to be present and a focus point on the mission for inclusive behaviour, as part of the company's strategy, for some individuals, especially those experiencing disruption, the focus thereon,

alluded to being rather reactive in some sense. Therefore, organisations need to ensure that concepts such as leadership inclusivity are even considered.

7.1.4 Suggestions for future research

Based on the research conducted, a number of areas can be considered for future research purposes.

- Model of Inclusivity

The framework for inclusivity could be tested experimentally in terms of a quantitative study in order to optimally determine whether the combination of the factors could be tested under different scenarios and whether there are correlations between the different scenarios. Correlations could be determined in terms of whether individuals identified with the different factors based on different demographics for example.

- Context of the study

The context of the study was based on participants from the FMCG environment. Extending the study to include individuals from different types of industries may add additional rationale as to whether this model can be applied to other types of businesses. Furthermore, the context of the study was to include employees, the study could be pivoted towards the senior leaders or even a leader-follower approach could be executed in terms of the sampling method.

- Additional elements of inclusivity

As much of the research has been executed in terms of a Western context, the dimensions of inclusivity have been obtained in terms of this context, as well as what is driving the theory of inclusivity. From a South African perspective, the concept of Ubuntu features strongly in terms of our context. Therefore, the model could be explored in terms of the addition of ubuntu as an additional element.

- Individual level vs team level dynamics

The research focused on the individual and their thoughts of inclusivity. The data could be extended to examine inclusivity in terms of how it actioned from a team perspective and whether the elements still outweigh each other when examined under this context

- Investigation as to leadership styles

Part of this research focused on the different styles of leadership and how inclusive leadership fits into the different styles of leadership. It would make for interesting research to determine as to what extent leaders see themselves as inclusive leaders in South Africa and whether this is something which takes precedence in terms of the traits to develop for inclusive leaders. What would be interesting to determine is what impact being an inclusive leader has on themselves, and whether it is only attributed to positive outcomes or whether any negative or adverse outcomes are associated with inclusive leadership.

- Focus on one element of inclusive leadership

The research broadly focused on all elements of inclusivity. The research could be pinpointed to explore certain of the dimensions of inclusivity as appreciation and the support of organisation efforts featured predominantly by respondents when enquiry was made as to the most salient feature.

7.1.4 Conclusion

This research provides insights into the behaviours of leaders in terms of leadership inclusivity as well as to whether the model is relevant during periods of disruption. The indepth-interviews that were conducted during this research were with individuals who held different functions in a fast-moving consumer goods environment. The findings of the research were contrasted, compared with each other as well as combined to determine what the outcome of the research was. The research found that the model was indeed valuable in a fast-moving consumer goods environment as well as during periods of disruption. It also considers the addition of an additional element to the model in order to explain inclusive leadership behaviours. This study also contributes to the literature on inclusive leadership in that it looks at leadership in an African context.

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Annexure A: Interview Guide

1. How would you describe leadership inclusivity, and do you believe your leaders display this?
2. Describe the behaviours that your leaders demonstrate to make you feel connected to the organisation?
3. Taking into consideration the diversity that you bring to the organization, do you still feel as if your leader acknowledges this and assists you, in using that to identify with the culture of the organization? If so, in what way?
4. Is your leader open to new ideas or suggestions such as new ideas in ways of doing work?
5. Do you feel as a result of the openness in their behaviour that you are able to openly contribute?
6. What are some of the ways in which your leader demonstrates the openness?
7. Do your leaders acknowledge your contributions to a workplace, in what way, do you receive any form of recognition or validation?
8. Does your leader make you feel as if you can be yourself in the workplace, in what way?
9. Do you believe work conditions to be favourable in the sense that there is perceived fairness and equity taking into consideration the diversity of the organization? Please elaborate.
10. How would you describe your relationship with your manager?
11. What does disruption in your organisation mean to you?
12. In disruptive periods within the organisation, do you feel the relationship is the same pre and post the disruptive event?
13. In events that cause change to daily routine activities, what does your leader do to make you feel your unique contribution is acknowledged?

14. During times of disruption, is there still a focus on supporting activities by the organisation or do these activities fall away?

15. If so, how do they do this, if it does fall away- describe if this makes you feel less included?

16. In terms of inclusivity, belongingness and uniqueness both play critical roles, do you as an employee give more preference to one or the other?

17. Theoretical concepts discuss other elements of inclusivity, such as the feeling of uniqueness, support for organizational activities and the feeling of appreciation, do you feel that within your organisation?

18. With regards to the above, do you feel that certain of these factors are more important than the other, why or why not?

19. Having recently experienced a disruptive event such as that of COVID-19, do you perceive that your leaders demonstrated and enacted behaviours of inclusivity in relation to the feelings of uniqueness, belongingness, appreciation and supporting organisational activities, if so please elaborate?

20. What feedback would you give to your leader regarding elements of inclusivity and which areas they could improve on?

Annexure B: Ethical Clearance

**Gordon Institute
of Business Science**
University of Pretoria

**Ethical Clearance
Approved**

Dear Urisha Parag,

Please be advised that your application for Ethical Clearance has been approved.

You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data.

We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.

[Ethical Clearance Form](#)

Kind Regards

This email has been sent from an unmonitored email account. If you have any comments or concerns, please contact the GIBS Research Admin team.

Annexure C: Consent Form

I am currently a student at the University of Pretoria's Gordon Institute of Business Science and completing my research in partial fulfilment of an MBA. I am conducting research on leadership inclusivity in a disruptive era and am trying to find out more information on the constituents of inclusivity in this period. Our interview is expected to last about an hour and will help us understand how whether the dimensions of inclusivity are felt by you and what is your understanding is of which elements outweigh the other. ***Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time without penalty.*** By signing this letter, you are consenting to this interview being recorded and the data will be used as part of a report that will be made publicly available once the examination process has been completed. All data will be reported without identifiers. If you have any concerns, please contact my supervisor or me. Our details are provided below.

Researcher name: Urisha Parag

Research Supervisor Name: Lyal White

Email : 28106327@mygibs.co.za

Email : whitel@gibs.co.za

Phone: 076 941 3636

Phone: +27 11 771 4000

Signature of participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature of researcher: _____

Date: _____

Annexure D: Consistency Matrix

Propositions	Literature Review	Data Collection Tool	Analysis
<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt</p> <p>2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Ahmed, F., Zhao, F., & Faraz, N. A. (2020). How and when does inclusive leadership curb psychological distress during a crisis? Evidence from the COVID-19 outbreak. <i>Frontiers in Psychology</i>, 11, 1898.</p>	<p>4. Is your leader open to news ideas or suggestions or ways of doing work and do you feel as a result of the openness, you can openly contribute, what are some of the ways in which your leader demonstrates the openness?</p>	<p>Relationship between psychological safety and inclusive leadership, empirical study performed in order to determine engagement during a period of disruption and whether inclusive leadership has any bearing on this. Also brings into considering Carmeli's ((2010) experience of openness and availability of leaders.</p>
<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt</p> <p>2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Ashikali T., Groeneveld S., & Kuipers B. (2020). The Role of Inclusive Leadership in Supporting an Inclusive Climate in Diverse Public Sector Teams. <i>Review of Public Personnel Administration</i>. https://doi.org/10.1177/0734371X19899722</p>	<p>2. What are the behaviours demonstrated by leaders in the organisation to make you feel connected to the organisation?</p>	<p>Diversity is not enough, inclusive leadership is something more that is required, looked specifically in the context of ethnic diversity, inclusive leadership is needed as results in greater effectiveness, more ideas and more responsiveness in a diverse environment</p>

<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt</p> <p>2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. <i>Psychological Bulletin</i>, 117(3), 497–529. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.117.3.497</p>	<p>12. Theoretical concepts discuss other elements of inclusivity, such as the feeling of uniqueness, support for organizational activities and the feeling of appreciation, do you feel that within your organisation? Do you feel that certain of these factors are more important than the other, why or why not?</p> <p>2. What are the behaviours demonstrated by leaders in the organisation to make you feel connected to the organisation?</p>	<p>In terms of analysis, this is strongly linked to the concept of belongingness as it is required to have strong emotional and social connections- arguing that the lack of belongingness means that there are ill effects on health, well-being and other behavioural consequences and therefore inclusion is not felt</p>
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<p>3. During times of disruption, leadership inclusivity is a priority in the organisation</p>	<p>Beijer, S. E., Knappert, L., & Stephenson, K. A. (2024). "It doesn't make sense to stick with old patterns": How leaders adapt their behaviour to foster inclusion in a disruptive context. Journal of Organizational Behaviour. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2766</p>	<p>7.What does disruption in your organisation mean to you? 13.Having recently experienced a disruptive event such as that of COVID-19, do you perceive that leaders demonstrated and enacted behaviours of inclusivity in relation to the feelings of uniqueness, belongingness, appreciation and supporting organisational activities, if so please elaborate? 8.How would you describe your relationship with your manager. In disruptive periods within the organisation, do you feel the relationship is the same pre and post a disruptive event? 2.What are the behaviours demonstrated in the organisation to make you feel connected to the organisation ? 9.In events that cause change to daily routine activities, what does your leader do to make you feel your unique contribution is acknowledged? 10.During times of disruption, is there still focus on supporting activities by the organisation or does these activities fall away, if so how do they do this, if it does fall away- describe if this makes you feel less included</p>	<p>This article uses the analysis that is obtained in the literature, that being in this current model suggested for inclusivity, during periods of disruption with COVID-19 as the base case for disruption that leadership behaviours are hampered by this, yet in this model leaders had to adjust their behaviours rather than use a static approach to this. Furthermore, this article poses some important questions which were also used to determine research questions</p>
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<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt 2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Brewer, M. B. (1991). The social self: On being the same and different at the same time. <i>Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin</i>, 17(5), 475–482.</p>	<p>In terms of inclusivity, belongingness and uniqueness both play critical roles, do you as an employee give more preference to one or the other?</p>	<p>This article speaks to one's personal identity and one's social identity- personal identity is conceptualisation of oneself, social interests represent the interests and accomplishments of colleagues- where one together with their colleagues feel a part of the organisation. This article forms the basis for the optimal distinctiveness theory which refers to both the need for assimilation and differentiation- social identity is derived from both human needs for validation and similarity to or differentiation and fits into the uniqueness piece</p>
<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt 2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Bryer, A. (2020). Making organizations more inclusive: The work of belonging. <i>Organization Studies</i>, 41(5), 641-660.</p>	<p>2. What are the behaviours demonstrated by leaders in the organisation to make you feel connected to the organisation?</p>	<p>The focus of this paper is how actors in an organization may make their organisation more inclusive and hence develop a sense of belonging, this focused on financial targets and budgets- this was an ethnographic study. However, what was important in this study is that it took place in a library- where formal book shops are being shut down, and at a time when Spain's economy was shrinking, also pointing towards a recession. Therefore, it was at a disruptive climate</p>

<p>Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Buengeler, C., Leroy, H., & De Stobbeleir, K. (2018). How leaders shape the impact of HR's diversity practices on employee inclusion. <i>Human Resource Management Review</i>, 28(3), 289–303. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2018.02.005005</p>	<p>3. Taking into consideration the diversity that you bring to the organization, do you still feel as if your leader contributes to you identifying with the culture of the organization? In what way have you experienced this?</p>	<p>This paper spoke to the how leaders can respond to HR policies with varying levels of alignment or even misalignment to clarify what this means for inclusion- diversity practices are explored, and the paper argues that while innovation, improvement in decision making or actual or perceived differences can lead to status distinctions. However, this speaks to fairness and equity in marginalised groups and focuses on creating inclusion. There is a specific concept herein in which it is discussed whether individuals may define themselves to an extent where they can identify with the collective identity of the company and how they contribute to communality</p>
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<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt</p> <p>2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Canlas, A. L., & Williams, M. R. (2022). Meeting belongingness needs: An inclusive leadership practitioner's approach. <i>Advances in developing human resources</i>, 24(4), 225-241.</p>	<p>2. What are the behaviours demonstrated by leaders in the organisation to make you feel connected to the organisation?</p>	<p>Refers to the factors that influence the perceptions of belonging-without understanding these factors the author argues that the potential business outcomes that they have the potential to bring will not be realised. This makes reference to individual and relational belonging. In this article, the various individual, relational, personal and organizational dimensions were scrutinized. Herein, the literature looked at pleasant reactions with other people and in terms of care and concern for one's welfare, whether that has been achieved. Therefore, relational aspects for belongingness can be investigated</p>
<p>3. During times of disruption, leadership inclusivity is a priority in the organisation</p>	<p>Carmeli, A., Reiter-Palmon, R., & Ziv, E. (2010). Inclusive leadership and employee involvement in creative tasks in the workplace: The mediating role of psychological safety. <i>Creativity Research Journal</i>, 22(3), 250-260.0.</p>	<p>4. Is your leader open to new ideas or suggestions or ways of doing work and do you feel as a result of the openness, you can openly contribute, what are some of the ways in which your leader demonstrates the openness?</p>	<p>This speaks to openness, accessibility and availability of the leader. It makes a link between relational leadership and inclusive leadership and how that may influence employee creativity. Furthermore, the survey delves into questions about uniqueness and belongingness- therefore the author makes a link between accessibility, openness and availability. Secondly, there may</p>

			<p>be a link between innovation, creativity and disruption and can take the form of creativity as well. May support uniqueness and disruption in terms of questionnaires</p>
<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt 2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Caron, J., Asselin, H., Beaudoin, J. M., & Muresanu, D. (2019). Promoting perceived insider status of indigenous employees: a review within the psychological contract framework. <i>Cross Cultural & Strategic Management</i>, 26(4), 609-638.</p>	<p>6. Does your leader make you feel as if you can be yourself in the workplace, in what way? Do you believe work conditions to be favourable in the sense that there is perceived fairness and equity in the diversity of the organization?</p>	<p>This is linked to promoting perceived insider status and is linked to the organisational efforts. This article spoke to psychological contracts but also how leadership measures and implements perceived insider status. Whilst the research focuses on indigenous clan, it references how, in order for a psychological contract to be fulfilled, there must be perceived organizational support. When leaders demonstrate inclusive practices, there are fruitful leader-member exchanges, and then employees are more likely to act as organizational citizens.</p>

<p>3. During times of disruption, leadership inclusivity is a priority in the organisation</p>	<p>Christensen, C. M., McDonald, R., Altman, E. J., & Palmer, J. E. (2018). Disruptive Innovation: An Intellectual History and Directions for Future Research. <i>Journal of Management Studies</i>, 55(7), 1043–1078. https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12349</p>	<p>7.What does disruption mean to you?</p>	<p>This document is a meta-analysis on disruption. The paper was used to develop the understanding of disruption and pointed to disruption in terms of technological changes and posed future questions on disruption theory, leads to resource-based view of the firm</p>
<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt 2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Dale Oen, V., Svihus, J., Solberg, S. H. R., Harris, A., & Eid, J. (2022). Crisis leadership in COVID-19: a qualitative study of Norwegian business leaders. <i>Frontiers in Psychology</i>, 13, 937935.</p>	<p>14.What feedback would you give to your leader regarding elements of inclusivity and which areas they could improve on?</p>	<p>This article explored crisis leadership during COVID-19, and the adverse changes felt by leaders and organisations in the world, focused on restructuring of organisations and the willingness to adapt to change, whether this was done easily, touched on the definition of a crisis. The method used is an online survey, and it speaks to leaders' relational attributes such as interpersonal aspects, personal experiences, emotional aspects. One of the questions touched on feedback from leaders to employees and whether leaders perceived their roles differently. Leaders also felt that employees perceived leadership behaviour well as when requesting what type of feedback leaders got, it was generally positive</p>

<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt</p> <p>2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Dhanani, L. Y., Sultan, M., Pham, C. T., Mikami, K., Charles, D. R., & Crandell, H. A. (2024). Inclusion near and far: A qualitative investigation of inclusive organizational behavior across work modalities and social identities. <i>Journal of Organizational Behavior</i>.</p>	<p>1. How would you describe leadership inclusivity and do you believe your leaders display this.</p> <p>5. Do your leaders acknowledge your contributions to a workplace, in what way, do you receive any form of recognition or validation?</p>	<p>This research focused on employees' views on workplace inclusion, adopted a one size fits all approach to inclusion and that it is felt the same by all individuals. Employees defined workplace inclusion as being accepted and treated equally regardless of their identities. It also addressed how employees see inclusion and what does it mean to them. The analysis also touched on the notion of appreciation. Elements of organisational identification, belongingness and uniqueness were also addressed, furthermore appreciation and organisational commitment and identification was also considered</p>
<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt</p> <p>2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Elsaied, M. M. (2020). A moderated mediation model for the relationship between inclusive leadership and job embeddedness. <i>American Journal of Business</i>, 35(3–4), 191–210. https://doi.org/10.1108/AJB-06-2019-0035</p>	<p>2. What are the behaviours demonstrated by leaders in the organisation to make you feel connected to the organisation?</p>	<p>Examines the crucial role between leaders and the promotion of job embeddedness. Also touches on organisational identification in that when employees realize the inclusivity of their employers, they identify with the organisation and also touches on the aspect of support for one's organisation</p>

<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt</p> <p>2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Fang, Y., Dai, X., & Zhang, X. (2021). An empirical study of the relationship between inclusive leadership and business model innovation. <i>Leadership & Organization Development Journal</i>, 42(3), 480-494.</p>	<p>7. What does disruption in your organisation mean to you?</p> <p>13. Having recently experienced a disruptive event such as that of COVID-19, do you perceive that leaders demonstrated and enacted behaviours of inclusivity in relation to the feelings of uniqueness, belongingness, appreciation and supporting organisational activities, if so please elaborate?</p> <p>8. How would you describe your relationship with your manager. In disruptive periods within the organisation, do you feel the relationship is the same pre and post a disruptive event?</p> <p>2. What are the behaviours demonstrated in the organisation to make you feel connected to the organisation ?</p> <p>9. In events that cause change to daily routine activities, what does your leader do to make you feel your unique contribution is acknowledged?</p> <p>10. During times of disruption, is there still focus on supporting activities by the organisation or does these activities fall away, if so how do they do this, if it does fall away- describe if this makes you feel less included</p>	<p>Innovation is thought to be disruptive in this context. What appears to lead to business model innovation and motivation in this context is leadership inclusivity. Further to this, positive outcomes for the organisation is also realised</p>
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<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt 2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Hollander, E. P. (2012). Inclusive leadership: the essential leader-follower relationship ([First paperback edition], Ser. Series in applied psychology). Routledge.</p>	<p>1. How would you describe leadership inclusivity and do you believe your leaders display this.</p>	<p>This analysis broke down the definition of inclusive leadership. Indicated that inclusive leadership shows employees respect and understanding, taking responsibility and giving feedback to employees</p>
<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt 2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Klein, W.M. (1997), "Objective standards are not enough: affective, self-evaluative, and behavioural responses to social comparison information", <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i>, Vol. 72 No. 4, p. 763.</p>	<p>1. How would you describe leadership inclusivity and do you believe your leaders display this.</p>	<p>This is reference to Klein's work, and what inclusivity entails, and refers to this as feelings of eagerness and willingness in appreciating others</p>
<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt 2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Korkmaz, A. V., Van Engen, M. L., Knappert, L., & Schalk, R. (2022). About and beyond leading uniqueness and belongingness: A systematic review of inclusive leadership research. <i>Human Resource Management Review</i>, 32(4), 100894.</p>	<p>11. In terms of inclusivity, belongingness and uniqueness both play critical roles, do you as an employee give more preference to one or the other?</p>	<p>This article is the foundation of the study in that it provides the theoretical framework on which the study is being based</p>

<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt 2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Kuknor, S., & Bhattacharya, S. (2020). Exploring organizational inclusion and inclusive leadership in Indian companies. <i>European Business Review</i>, 33(3), 450-464.</p>	<p>6. Does your employer make you feel as if you can be yourself in the workplace, in what way?</p>	<p>The study determines how an inclusive workplace can benefit organisational outcomes. This deals with how practitioners and policymakers perceive inclusion in the workplace- it works on how inclusion is perceived differently in an organisation</p>
<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt 2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Liu, Y., Xu, N., Yuan, Q., Liu, Z., & Tian, Z. (2022). The relationship between feedback quality, perceived organizational support, and sense of belongingness among conscientious teleworkers. <i>Frontiers in Psychology</i>, 13, 806443</p>	<p>14. What feedback would you give to your leader regarding elements of inclusivity and which areas they could improve on?</p>	<p>Literature examined the concept of belongingness, grounded in organisational support theory, focuses on feedback quality from a direct leader bringing a sense of belongingness. Research focused on feedback quality as being a mediator of belongingness and perceived organisational support</p>
<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt 2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Malik, M. F., Khan, M. A., & Mahmood, S. (2021). Increasing the efficiency of business process through authentic leaders and follower's attitude. <i>Business Process Management Journal</i>, 27(2), 529-545.</p>	<p>5. Do your leaders acknowledge your contributions to a workplace, in what way, do you receive any form of recognition or validation?</p>	<p>The article emphasizes the definition of leadership inclusivity in appreciating others and enhances on the definition of gratitude referring to feelings of eagerness and willingness in appreciating others</p>

<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt</p> <p>2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>McCauley, C. D., & Palus, C. J. (2021). Developing the theory and practice of leadership development: A relational view. The https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2020.101456</p>	<p>7. What does disruption mean to you?</p>	<p>Relational views of leadership are examined to determine how these views could impact the practice of leadership development, this touched on collective identification, touched on leadership development during globalization, technological innovation, political disruptions. looked at leadership in terms of programs and how they overlook how a leader assesses effectiveness by competencies or by their job performance. Field is also leader centric. Advocates how the relational aspect advocates for leadership effectiveness in terms of groups</p>
<p>3. During times of disruption, leadership inclusivity is a priority in the organisation</p>	<p>Mohanty, V., & Kulkarni, M. B. (2023). Employee experience-disruptive approach to employee engagement. <i>International Journal of Management Concepts and Philosophy</i>, 16(3), 195-210.</p>	<p>6. Does your employer make you feel as if you can be yourself in the workplace, in what way?</p>	<p>Looked at concepts such as employee well-being and employee experience, motivation of a workforce, or how to keep a workforce highly engaged. The dimensions of employee engagement include cohesiveness, vigour, wellbeing, achievement, inclusiveness and physical environment, furthermore in terms of disruption and a VUCA environment, what is required for an employee to feel included</p>

<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt</p> <p>2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Nembhard, I. M., & Edmondson, A. C. (2006). Making it safe: The effects of leader inclusiveness and professional status on psychological safety and improvement efforts in health care teams. <i>Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior</i>, 27(7), 941-966.</p>	<p>5. Do your leaders acknowledge your contributions to a workplace, in what way, do you receive any form of recognition or validation?</p>	<p>This expanded on the definition of leadership inclusivity specifically in that when a leader exhibits behaviour where they not only request inputs from the members of the organisation but also show individuals that what they do is valued</p>
<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt</p> <p>2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Nishii, L. H. (2013). The benefits of climate for inclusion for gender-diverse groups. <i>The Academy of Management Journal</i>, 56(6), 1754–1774.</p>	<p>6. Does your employer make you feel as if you can be yourself in the workplace, in what way? Do you believe work conditions to be favourable in the sense that there is perceived fairness and equity in the diversity of the organization?</p>	<p>Key theme is that diversity is not the only concept in terms of evaluating the effectiveness of leaders. Other concepts that come to mind is also inclusion, diversity also fits into the concept of inclusion under organisational commitment and the feelings of fairness and equity in the workplace</p>
<p>3. During times of disruption, leadership inclusivity is a priority in the organisation</p>	<p>Peterson, G., Yawson, R. M., Sherman, J., & Johnson Kanda, I. (2018). A systems model of using the Deliberate Leadership® framework for addressing wicked problems. <i>International Journal of Business and Systems Research</i>, 12(3), 262–289. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJBSR. 2018.091155</p>	<p>4. Is your leader open to new ideas or suggestions or ways of doing work and do you feel as a result of the openness, you can openly contribute, what are some of the ways in which your leader demonstrates the openness?</p>	<p>In certain aspects speaks to a move away from management from a traditional command and control model to a more inclusive approach, collaborative and dynamic approach when facing wicked problems. In addressing wicked problems, it requires you to consider new leadership and organisational development strategies. Looks at collaboration in one of the 7C's and listening to</p>

			all when making creative decisions
<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt</p> <p>2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Rawat, P. S., Lyndon, S., Pradhan, M. R., Jose, J., Kollenchira, M., & Mehta, G. (2021). Employee reactiveness and inclusive leadership: time to manage emotional diversity. <i>South Asian Journal of Business Studies</i>, 10(3), 357-376.</p>	<p>6. Does your employer make you feel as if you can be yourself in the workplace, in what way?</p> <p>Do you believe work conditions to be favourable in the sense that there is perceived fairness and equity in the diversity of the organization?</p>	<p>Touches on diversity- looks at emotional rationality of individuals and whether inclusive leadership assists emotional reactive employees</p>
<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt</p> <p>2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Randel, A. E., Galvin, B. M., Shore, L. M., Ehrhart, K. H., Chung, B. G., Dean, M. A., & Kedharnath, U. (2018). Inclusive leadership: Realizing positive outcomes through belongingness and being valued for uniqueness. <i>Human resource management review</i>, 28(2), 190-203.</p>		<p>Foundations for leadership inclusivity, bringing into consideration belongingness and uniqueness. Looks at differences of individuals, in terms of humility, diversity and how inclusivity in terms of belongingness and uniqueness supports this. In terms of leader, member exchanges, what are the behavioural outcomes that are achieved</p>

<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt</p> <p>2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Roberson, Q., & Perry, J. L. (2022). Inclusive leadership in thought and action: A thematic analysis. <i>Group & Organization Management</i>, 47(4), 755-778.</p>	<p>5. Do your leaders acknowledge your contributions to a workplace, in what way, do you receive any form of recognition or validation?</p>	<p>Thematic analysis of how leaders perceive and demonstrate inclusive leadership, looks at the importance of relational leadership- importance of making sure there is an environment in which an individual feels their contribution matters</p>
<p>3. During times of disruption, leadership inclusivity is a priority in the organisation</p>	<p>Schoemaker, P. J. H., Heaton, S., & Teece, D. (2018). Innovation, Dynamic Capabilities, and Leadership. <i>California Management Review</i>, 61(1), 15–42. https://doi.org/10.1177/0008125618790246</p>	<p>11. In terms of inclusivity, belongingness and uniqueness both play critical roles, do you as an employee give more preference to one or the other?</p>	<p>Ways of working, leaders need to sense, seize and transform when it comes to change. Discusses how business models, dynamic capabilities and strategic leadership intertwine to help organizations thrive in VUCA worlds</p>
<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt</p> <p>2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Shore L.M., Randel, A.E., Chung B.G., Dean, M.A., & Ehrhart. & Singh G. (2011). Inclusion and diversity in work groups: A review and model for future research. <i>Journal of Management</i>, 37, 1262-1289</p>	<p>2. What behaviours do your leaders display that enables you to feel connected in your organisation?</p> <p>12. Theoretical concepts discuss other elements of inclusivity, such as the feeling of uniqueness, support for organizational activities and the feeling of appreciation, do you feel that within your organisation?</p>	<p>This is the basis of the framework regarding belongingness and inclusion</p>

<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt</p> <p>2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Shore, L. M., & Chung, B. G. (2022). Inclusive leadership: How leaders sustain or discourage work group inclusion. <i>Group & Organization Management</i>, 47(4), 723-754.</p>	<p>2. What behaviours do your leaders display that enables you to feel connected in your organisation?</p> <p>12. Theoretical concepts discuss other elements of inclusivity, such as the feeling of uniqueness, support for organizational activities and the feeling of appreciation, do you feel that within your organisation?</p>	<p>Work group inclusion measure with belongingness and uniqueness as factors</p>
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<p>3. During times of disruption, leadership inclusivity is a priority in the organisation</p>	<p>Simmons, S. V., & Yawson, R. M. (2022). Developing Leaders for Disruptive Change: An Inclusive Leadership Approach. <i>Advances in Developing Human Resources</i>, 24(4), 242-262. https://doi.org/10.1177/15234223221114359</p>	<p>7. What does disruption in your organisation mean to you? 13. Having recently experienced a disruptive event such as that of COVID-19, do you perceive that leaders demonstrated and enacted behaviours of inclusivity in relation to the feelings of uniqueness, belongingness, appreciation and supporting organisational activities, if so please elaborate? 8. How would you describe your relationship with your manager. In disruptive periods within the organisation, do you feel the relationship is the same pre and post a disruptive event? What are the behaviours demonstrated in the organisation to make you feel connected to the organisation? 9. In events that cause change to daily routine activities, what does your leader do to make you feel your unique contribution is acknowledged? 10. During times of disruption, is there still focus on supporting activities by the organisation or do these activities fall away, if so how do they do this, if it does fall away- describe if this makes you feel less included</p>	<p>This is the fundamental analysis in terms of disruption and what makes up disruption events- focus on inclusivity in terms of disruptive events</p>
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<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt 2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Tajfel, H., Turner, J. C., Austin, W. G., & Worchel, S. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. <i>Organizational identity: A reader</i>, 56(65), 9780203505984-16.</p>	<p>2. What are the behaviours demonstrated by leaders in the organisation to make you feel connected to the organisation?</p>	<p>Theories underpinning the study</p>
<p>1. Employees need to identify with all elements in order for inclusion to be felt 2. Employees feel through the discussion of all elements of leadership inclusivity, one of the elements outweighs the other</p>	<p>Yadav, M., & Vihari, N. S. (2023). Employee experience: construct clarification, conceptualization and validation of a new scale. <i>IIB Business Review</i>, 12(3), 328-342.</p>	<p>6. Does your employer make you feel as if you can be yourself in the workplace? 5. Do your leaders acknowledge your contributions to a workplace, in what way, do you receive any form of recognition or validation?</p>	<p>How employee experience is a new concept and in the world of disruption this needs to be navigated, inclusiveness being one of the elements of the design</p>
<p>3. During times of disruption, leadership inclusivity is a priority in the organisation</p>	<p>Antonacopoulou, E.P., & Bento, R. (2018). From laurels to learning: Leadership with virtue. <i>Journal of Management Development</i>, 37 (8), 624-633. https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-12-2016-0269</p>	<p>4. Is your leader open to new ideas or suggestions or ways of doing work and do you feel as a result of the openness, you can openly contribute, what are some of the ways in which your leader demonstrates the openness?</p>	<p>This article looks at the position of leaders to learners. Also looks at leaders to be a central aspect in different types of social affairs and in building different societies</p>
<p>3. During times of disruption, leadership inclusivity is a priority in the organisation</p>	<p>Antonacopoulou, E. P., & Georgiadou, A. (2021). Leading through social distancing: The future of work, corporations and leadership from home. <i>Gender, Work & Organization</i>, 28(2), 749-767.</p>	<p>4. Is your leaders open to new ideas or suggestions or ways of doing work and do you feel as a result of the openness, you can openly contribute, what are some of the ways in which</p>	<p>Focuses on working irrespective of where the place of work is</p>

		your leader demonstrates the openness?	
3. During times of disruption, leadership inclusivity is a priority in the organisation	Gustafsson, S., Gillespie, N., Searle, R., Hope Hailey, V., & Dietz, G. (2021). Preserving organizational trust during disruption. <i>Organization studies</i> , 42(9), 1409-1433.	10. During times of disruption, is there still focus on supporting activities by the organisation or does these activities fall away, if so, how do they do this, if it does fall away- describe if this makes you feel less included	Focuses on building trust during times of disruption. Explores what is trust as a phenomenon. Look at three trust building preservation strategies, which being cognitive bridging, looking at emotional embodiment and lastly inclusive enacting