

## Inclusive Leadership

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**Abstract:** The aim of this review paper is to explore the crucial role of inclusive leadership in enhancing organisational culture, innovation, and improving performance in the context of digital industrial revolution. The style of inclusive leadership which emphasises on the value of equity, diversity, and inclusion promotes decision-making processes that involve different perspectives. Key practices are highlighted in this review paper such as diverse recruitment, bias training, and inclusive decision-making, while examining their impact on organisational success. To illustrate the benefits of inclusive leadership, three case studies from diverse industries are used including higher employee engagement, innovation, and sustainable growth. Also practical strategies are offered for leaders with the aim to foster inclusivity and tackle challenges related to technological disparities and unconscious bias.

**Keywords:** *Bias mitigation, Digital industrial revolution, Diversity and inclusion, Employee engagement, Inclusive leadership, Innovation.*

### 1. Introduction

Knowing your leadership styles, as a leader, may help you provide adequate advice and feedback to your employees, and better understand of your thoughts, how you make decisions, and strategies you can consider implementing when making crucial decisions. Derived from the word ‘inclusive’, inclusive leadership style is simply a style that values the contribution of others. Inclusive leadership can be a very effective style of leadership in certain settings. However, there are similar definitions of inclusive leadership in the field, Bourke and Dillon (2018) define this style of leadership as a strategic approach that prioritises the significance of diversity, equity, and inclusion within organisations. Inclusive leaders are conscious of their own prejudices and make a deliberate effort to incorporate other viewpoints into decision-making. Inclusive leadership style cultivates a setting in which all individuals are treated with respect, all opinions are heard, and they are encouraged to share their unique perspectives. This ultimately results in innovative and effective solutions for the organisation (ibid. 2018).

Inclusive leadership, congruent with Shore et al. (2018), extends beyond mere acknowledgment of diversity. It entails establishing a cultural environment that appreciates diversity and fosters a sense of inclusion for each person. This form of leadership is crucial in the current globalised and swiftly evolving business landscape. Organisations that adopt inclusive leadership should anticipate enhancements in employee engagement, innovation, and overall performance. This type of leadership refers to the practice of promoting and valuing diversity within a leadership role. It involves creating an environment where all individuals, regardless of their background or characteristics, feel included, respected, and empowered. This style of leadership is important because it fosters innovation, enhances decision-making, and promotes a sense of belonging among team members.

Inclusive leaders acknowledge and appreciate the distinct contributions of every employee. This is essential for establishing an atmosphere in which every person feels appreciated and is motivated to provide their own perspectives, resulting in greater innovation and effectiveness in organisational outcomes. Studies (including Bourke & Dillon, 2018; Karimi, 2021; Shore et al., 2018) indicate a direct

correlation between inclusive leadership and increased levels of employee engagement, innovation, and overall performance. According to Randel et al. (2018) inclusive leadership is the act of ensuring that every member of a team feels respected, treated fairly, valued, and also has a sense of belonging and influence. This leadership style transcends superficial diversity and inclusion efforts; it involves integrating these concepts into the very essence of an organisation's culture and operations. Inclusive leaders are individuals who not only accept diversity but actively pursue and utilise varied viewpoints to facilitate decision-making and foster innovation.

Nishii (2013) adds that inclusive leadership is creating a conducive climate where diversity is not merely accepted but actively embraced and appreciated. This entails establishing environments in which employees feel secure to articulate their thoughts and viewpoints without apprehension of prejudice or retaliation. Leaders that employ inclusive leadership recognise that diversity is a valuable asset and that harnessing this variety may result in increased innovation and improved corporate results.

## 2. Relevance in the Digital Industrial Revolution

Organisations now greatly rely on technology and data-driven decision-making as a result of the digital industrial revolution. Hewlett, Marshall, and Sherbin (2013) have defined this period by rapid progressions in artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, big data, and other technologies that are restructuring industries. Within this particular framework, Nishii (2013) insists that the presence of inclusive leadership is of utmost importance. Leaders must adeptly negotiate intricate transformations while ensuring that all employees are esteemed and incorporated.

As a consequence of the digital industrial revolution, organisations are faced with both opportunities and challenges. On one hand, it provides unparalleled opportunities for groundbreaking advancements and enhanced productivity. On the other hand, it has the potential to worsen pre-existing disparities and give rise to fresh ones. For effectively tackling these challenges and ensuring that all employees can actively engage in and receive the rewards of technological progress, Bourke and Dillon (2018) consider the crucial importance of inclusive leadership in which the leaders have the ability to effectively utilise the complete capabilities of their diverse teams, resulting in improved outcomes in terms of innovation, problem-solving, and adaptability (ibid. 2018).

Moreover, in the digital world, as it has been emphasised by educators such as Shore et al. (2018), inclusive leaders must possess the skills to efficiently oversee diverse teams and effectively utilise the distinct abilities of each team member. This entails understanding and dealing with unconscious prejudices, as well as actively pursuing different perspectives and ensuring equitable inclusion of all voices. Through this approach, leaders have the ability to establish organisations that are more inventive and adaptable, enabling them to effectively negotiate the intricacies of the digital industrial revolution.

## 3. Purpose and Scope of the Review

This review paper examines the crucial significance of inclusive leadership in facilitating organisational change and attaining sustainable success in the era of digital advancements. This resource offers an in-depth analysis of the most effective methods for promoting diversity and inclusion within leadership teams, supported by practical examples from real-life situations. The paper also discusses prevalent challenges and provides actionable steps for leaders to cultivate and execute inclusive policies and practices.

By analysing the principles and practices of inclusive leadership, this paper seeks to offer a guide for leaders who aspire to cultivate a workplace that is more inclusive and fairer. It emphasises the benefits of inclusive leadership, such as enhanced innovation, higher employee engagement, and better organisational performance. In addition, it provides practical guidance on how to address common challenges and establish successful diversity and inclusion strategies (Ferdman & Deane, 2014).

#### 4. Key Points Covered in This Review

1. Impact on Organisational Culture: How inclusive leadership shapes organisational culture by fostering trust, respect, and collaboration.
2. Improving Innovation and Performance: The role of diverse perspectives in driving innovation and improving performance.
3. Equitable Opportunities and Employee Engagement: Strategies for promoting fairness and equality in the workplace.
4. Best Practices for Fostering Diversity and Inclusion: Practical steps for creating diverse and inclusive leadership teams.
5. Case Studies: Real-world examples showcasing successful inclusive leadership practices.
6. Challenges and Considerations: Common obstacles and strategies for overcoming them.
7. Actionable Steps for Leaders: Concrete actions leaders can take to foster inclusivity in their organisations.

#### 5. Exploring the Role of Inclusive Leadership in Driving Organisational Change

##### 5.1. Impact on Organisational Culture

Inclusive leadership is crucial in influencing the organisational culture. An organisation's success is fundamentally dependent on fostering a culture characterised by trust and respect. Inclusive leaders cultivate such a culture by promoting transparent communication and fostering collaboration. When employees experience a sense of respect and acknowledgement, they are more inclined to exhibit higher levels of engagement and dedication towards the objectives of the organisation.

Nishii's (2013) study discovered that inclusive workplaces exhibit elevated levels of employee engagement and satisfaction. Inclusive leaders proactively dismantle barriers to communication and collaboration, fostering an environment that embraces and appreciates varied viewpoints. This inclusive culture not only improves employee morale but also increases productivity and fosters innovation. Moreover, this type of leadership recognises that culture is the vital essence of an organisation. They foster environments that embrace diversity and ensure that all employees experience a strong sense of belonging. That means not just establishing the ideal environment and values from the highest level of leadership, but also integrating inclusive behaviours and policies throughout all levels of the organisation. For instance, implementing frequent team-building events, hosting open forums for discussion, and adopting inclusive policies can all enhance the strength and cohesiveness of an organisational culture.

Early studies conducted by Ely and Thomas (2001) recommend that organisational culture has a crucial role in determining the success of a business, and inclusive leadership is essential for establishing a favourable and all-encompassing culture. This involves not just advocating for diversity and inclusion, but also ensuring that these principles are evident in the organisation's policies, procedures, and every day interactions. Inclusive leaders recognise that fostering a robust and inclusive culture plays a crucial role in enhancing employee engagement, promoting innovation, and driving performance (ibid. 2001). Establishing an inclusive culture also involves understanding and rectifying power dynamics and structural inequities present within the organisation. Inclusive leaders must remain diligent in recognising and eradicating any obstacles that impede the engagement of all employees. This involves enacting policies and procedures that foster fairness and inclusivity, such as ensuring equal compensation, employing diverse recruitment methods, and providing accessible avenues for professional growth (Ferdman & Deane, 2014).

##### 5.2. Improving Innovation and Performance

Organisations that embrace inclusive leadership are more likely to leverage multiple views to generate innovative solutions. Hewlett, Marshall, and Sherbin (2013) conducted research that demonstrates a direct relationship between inclusion and organisational effectiveness. This is because diverse teams contribute a broader spectrum of ideas and methods to problem-solving. Inclusive leaders

promote this by actively soliciting input from all team members and fostering a culture that highly regards innovation.

Companies that have diverse leadership teams are more inclined to provide new products and services. The reason for this is that diverse teams offer a variety of perspectives and backgrounds, resulting in more innovative and efficient problem-solving (Ely & Thomas, 2001). Moreover, teams that consist of individuals from various backgrounds and perspectives possess a greater capacity to understand and fulfil the requirements of a diverse customer base, hence enhancing business success. Bearing in mind, innovation flourishes in environments that foster and appreciate a wide range of viewpoints. Inclusive leaders cultivate such settings by promoting transparent communication and fostering collaboration. They recognise that innovation is not just about having new ideas but also about integrating these ideas into effective solutions. Leaders establish an inclusive culture to ensure that all perspectives are considered and the most effective ideas, regardless of their origin, are put into action.

The significance of inclusive leadership in augmenting innovation and performance cannot be exaggerated. Teams that have a diverse backgrounds and perspectives are more inclined to question established norms and generate innovative solutions to intricate situations (Hewlett et al., 2013). Inclusive leaders possess the understanding and ability to establish conditions that encourage all members of a team to offer their distinct viewpoints. This results in the development of more inventive and efficient solutions that contribute to the achievement of corporate objectives. Moreover, the use of inclusive leadership can help organisations to access untapped markets and target new client categories. By harnessing different viewpoints and backgrounds of their workers, corporations may create products and services that more effectively cater to the requirements of a diverse consumer base. Not only does this stimulate innovation, but it also improves the company's competitiveness and market position (Roberson, 2019).

### *5.3. Equitable Opportunities and Employee Engagement*

Furthermore, inclusive leadership ensures that every employee is provided with fair and equal opportunity for their advancement and personal growth. Leaders may enhance employee happiness and retention by advocating for justice and equality in the workplace. Employees who are engaged are more inclined to demonstrate commitment towards their organisation's objectives and actively contribute to its sustained prosperity. Also, inclusive leaders strive to recognise and eliminate obstacles that hinder the progress of underrepresented groups. This could entail the implementation of mentorship programmes, the provision of training and development opportunities, and the establishment of a culture that places high importance on and celebrates diversity. Inclusive leaders contribute to the establishment of a fair and inclusive work environment, fostering the success of all employees (Ferdman & Deane, 2014).

Ensuring fair and equal opportunities is crucial for cultivating a driven and committed staff. Inclusive leaders ensure that every employee has equitable access to the necessary resources and assistance required for their success. This encompasses the provision of transparent career trajectories, the availability of professional growth prospects, and the establishment of a conducive atmosphere that fosters the empowerment of all employees to achieve their utmost capabilities. Employee engagement is a crucial factor in determining how well an organisation performs, and inclusive leadership plays a vital role in promoting and maintaining high levels of engagement. Inclusive leaders recognise that employees are more prone to becoming actively involved when they perceive themselves as being appreciated and assisted. This entails establishing an all-encompassing environment in which every employee is provided with the chance to flourish and achieve success. Leaders can enhance staff satisfaction, retention, and overall performance by taking this approach (Shore et al., 2018).

Bearing in mind that creating equitable opportunities also requires tackling institutional obstacles that may put certain groups at a disadvantage. Hence, inclusive leaders must take proactive measures to identify and dismantle these obstacles, whether they are present in the processes of recruiting,

promotion, or regular work practices. To do this, one must be dedicated to continuous learning and development, and be open to questioning established norms and implementing essential modifications (Nishii, 2013). Table 1, below, briefly demonstrates the practice and impact of inclusive leadership.

**Table 1.**  
Key inclusive leadership practices and their impact.

Practice	Description	Impact
Diverse recruitment	Implementing unbiased recruitment strategies	Higher diversity in leadership teams
Inclusive decision-making	Encouraging diverse viewpoints in decision-making processes	Better decisions and increased innovation
Continuous bias training	Ongoing education on unconscious bias and cultural competency	Reduced biases and more inclusive environment
Supportive policies	Developing policies that support diversity and inclusion	Enhanced employee satisfaction and retention
Employee resource groups	Creating groups for employees from diverse backgrounds	Increased support and networking opportunities
Mentorship programmes	Mentoring underrepresented groups	Equitable opportunities for growth and development

## 6. Best Practices for Fostering Diversity and Inclusion

### 6.1. Diverse Recruitment and Hiring Processes

In harmony with Roberson (2019), it is crucial to employ impartial recruitment strategies in order to establish diverse leadership teams. Demanding organisations to prioritise the establishment of diverse interview panels and the implementation of organised interview approaches to mitigate biases in the hiring process. This guarantees that candidates are assessed according to their abilities and potential rather than their personal history or characteristics.

Subsequently, organisations can employ blind recruiting methods, wherein identifying information is eliminated from applications, as a means to mitigate bias. In addition, they can also ensure the inclusion of diverse candidates in the interview process and ensure that interview panels exhibit diversity. These strategies aim to enhance the selection of the most qualified applicants based on their abilities and potential, rather than their history or identity (Shore et al., 2018). Also, objective recruitment is essential for promoting diversity within leadership teams. In doing so, inclusive leaders make sure that recruitment techniques are tailored to appeal to a diverse pool of candidates, and that selection processes are conducted with impartiality and fairness. This may entail implementing blind recruitment methods, establishing diversity objectives, and delivering training to hiring managers regarding unconscious prejudice.

In addition to using blind recruitment, organisations have the opportunity to utilise technology as a means to diminish prejudices in the recruiting process. AI-driven recruitment tools can assist in evaluating candidates based on their abilities and qualifications, rather than their demographic attributes. Nevertheless, it is of utmost importance to ensure that these tools are intentionally created and employed in a manner that does not unintentionally sustain prevailing prejudices (Bourke & Dillon, 2018).

### 6.2. Inclusive Decision-Making

Inclusive leaders promote the inclusion of varied perspectives in the decision-making processes. Implementing strategies such as inclusive meetings and discussions, in which every team member is provided with an opportunity to express their opinions, contributes to making the choices that are based

on comprehensive information and consider diverse viewpoints. This approach not only enhances decision-making but also cultivates a sense of inclusivity among employees (Ely & Thomas, 2001). For instance, inclusive leaders may employ strategies like conducting brainstorming sessions, where all team members are actively encouraged to contribute their ideas, or implementing organised decision-making processes, where diverse perspectives are taken into account prior to making a decision. These methods support the selections that are made based on thorough information and encompass a variety of viewpoints (Hewlett et al., 2013).

Inclusive decision-making is more than mere inclusion of various opinions; it necessitates actively pursuing and appreciating these ideas. Inclusive leaders foster an atmosphere in which every team member feels at ease expressing their thoughts, and where these opinions are sincerely considered. This not only results in improved decision-making but also cultivates a culture characterised by trust and collaboration.

Consequently, to enhance inclusive decision-making, organisations might adopt rules and practices that emphasise the participation of all individuals. This could involve establishing diversity councils or committees to offer input on important issues, or introducing anonymous feedback systems that enable employees to contribute their opinions without facing any negative consequences. Implementing these strategies can facilitate the development of a decision-making process that is both inclusive and collaborative (Roberson, 2019).

### *6.3. Continuous Bias Training and Education*

Furthermore, it is essential to have continual training programmes for reducing prejudices in the workplace. Leaders should employ efficacious bias reduction strategies and offer ongoing education on diversity and inclusion. This fosters the development of a more comprehensive and welcoming atmosphere in which every employee feels esteemed and treated with regard (Nishii, 2013). Organisations can offer training programmes on unconscious bias, which educate staff on various forms of bias and strategies to reduce their impact. In addition, they can offer cultural competency training, which equips employees with knowledge about various cultures and enables them to effectively collaborate with individuals from diverse backgrounds. These training programmes facilitate the establishment of a workplace that is more inclusive and egalitarian (Roberson, 2019).

Ongoing education on diversity and inclusion is crucial for cultivating an inclusive work environment. Inclusive leaders ensure that every employee, ranging from lower-level personnel to top-level executives, undergoes consistent training on unconscious bias and cultural competency. This facilitates the development of a workforce that is conscious and inclusive, with the ability to adeptly navigate the intricacies of a varied work environment.

Organisations can adopt novel approaches to teach staff about bias and inclusion, in addition to conventional training programmes. Virtual reality (VR) simulations, for example, can offer immersive experiences that aid employees in comprehending the consequences of bias and cultivating empathy towards others. Workshops that encourage active participation and hands-on learning can effectively foster comprehension and consciousness of diversity and inclusion matters (Ferdman & Deane, 2014).

### *6.4. Creating Supportive Policies and Programmes*

Inclusive leaders have a crucial obligation to create policies that promote diversity (D) and inclusion (I). Successful D&I programmes encompass many initiatives including as mentorship schemes, employee resource groups, and flexible working arrangements. These actions contribute to the establishment of a conducive environment that promotes the success and well-being of all employees (Ferdman & Deane, 2014). Organisations might establish mentorship programmes as a means to pair experienced personnel with underrepresented groups. Additionally, they have the ability to develop employee resource groups, which serve as platforms for individuals from diverse backgrounds to unite and provide mutual assistance. These programmes contribute to the establishment of a workplace that is more inclusive and supportive (Shore et al., 2018). Being mindful that supportive policies and programmes are crucial for



establishing a workplace that is inclusive. Inclusive leaders can ensure the implementation of policies and programmes within their organisations that actively promote diversity and inclusion. This may entail establishing employee resource groups, providing flexible work arrangements, and instituting mentorship programmes for marginalised demographics.

Moreover, inclusive leaders have the ability to champion policies that advance work-life equilibrium and help employees with a range of requirements. This may involve granting parental leave, helping with childcare, and ensuring that workplace facilities are accessible to all staff members. Also, leaders may improve employee happiness and retention by establishing a work environment that is friendly and inclusive (Hewlett et al., 2013).

## 7. Case Studies- Showcasing Successful Examples of Inclusive Leadership

### 7.1. Case Study 1: Tech Innovators Limited

**Background and selection:** The reason for selecting Tech Innovators Limited for this case study is its renowned position as a frontrunner in artificial intelligence (AI) and its proactive stance on diversity and inclusion. The company operates in a very competitive field where innovation is crucial for achieving success. Tech Innovators Inc. has maintained a competitive edge and cultivated a vibrant work atmosphere by prioritising inclusive leadership.

**Who they are and what they do:** Tech Innovators Limited is a company that focuses on creating advanced artificial intelligence solutions for several sectors such as healthcare, finance, and manufacturing. The company has a varied workforce consisting of engineers, data scientists, and business professionals that collaborate to develop cutting-edge products and services.

**Inclusive Practices:** The organisation has adopted various inclusive practices, such as establishing diversity councils and making inclusion training required for all employees. The diversity councils have the responsibility of fostering diversity and inclusion inside the firm and offering assistance to marginalised groups. The inclusion training facilitates employees' comprehension and reduction of their biases, hence fostering a more inclusive work environment (Bourke & Dillon, 2018).

**Outcomes:** Consequently, Tech Innovators Limited has seen enhanced innovation, elevated employee satisfaction, and enhanced market competitiveness. The company has created numerous groundbreaking goods and services, resulting in a substantial rise in employee contentment. In addition, the company has experienced a decrease in employee attrition and a rise in the variety of its employees (Hewlett et al., 2013).

**Key Takeaways:** The case study emphasises the significance of receiving assistance from higher levels of management and providing ongoing training to promote an inclusive work environment. The company's triumph illustrates that embracing inclusive leadership can result in substantial favourable consequences for both individuals and the organisation. This story highlights the importance of continuously prioritising diversity and inclusion at every level of the organisation (Ely & Thomas, 2001).

### 7.2. Case Study 2: Global Retail Group Ltd.

**Background and selection:** The Global Retail Group Ltd. was selected for this case study based on its widespread global presence and its proactive measures to address deep-rooted biases and reluctance to change. The company's wide-ranging clientele and presence in multiple geographical areas need a customised strategy to promote inclusivity.

**Who they are and what they do:** Global Retail Group Ltd. is an international retail firm that manages a diverse portfolio of retail establishments, encompassing supermarkets, department stores, and specialty shops. The organisation has a substantial and varied staff, catering to a global consumer base of millions.

**Strategies:** The corporation employed strategies such as bias training, the formation of diverse leadership teams, and the initiation of technology access programmes. The bias training facilitates employees' comprehension and reduction of their prejudices, while the diverse leadership teams

guarantee the inclusion of other viewpoints in the decision-making process. The technology access programmes ensure that all employees have access to the most up-to-date technology and receive training on its usage (Ferdman & Deane, 2014).

Effect: These endeavours resulted in enhanced customer relations, increased employee retention, and improved brand reputation. The organisation has had a substantial enhancement in client happiness, and there has been a notable boost in employee retention. In addition, the company has successfully drawn in a wider range of customers and enhanced its reputation in the industry (Shore et al., 2018).

Key Takeaways: The case study illustrates that implementing inclusive leadership can assist organisations in surmounting obstacles and attaining substantial favourable results. The company's triumph demonstrates that practicing inclusive leadership may result in stronger customer interactions, increased employee retention, and improved brand perception. This scenario emphasises the significance of customising diversity and inclusion initiatives to suit the distinct requirements of various areas and client bases (Roberson, 2019).

### 7.3. Case Study 3: Healthcare Solutions Ltd.

Background and selection: The reason for selecting Healthcare Solutions Ltd. for this case study is its unique approach to using digital solutions in healthcare and its dedication to inclusive leadership. The company's emphasis on designing for the needs and preferences of patients, as well as its commitment to having a workforce that is varied and representative, exemplifies inclusive leadership in practice.

Who they are and what they do: Healthcare Solutions Ltd. is a healthcare company that specialises in creating digital solutions to enhance patient care and optimise healthcare operations. The company has a varied workforce consisting of healthcare professionals, technologists, and business experts who work together to develop groundbreaking solutions for the healthcare sector.

Inclusive Practices: The organisation supports programmes for a wide range of groups and employs design techniques that prioritise the needs and preferences of patients. The support programmes offer aid to marginalised demographics and contribute to the establishment of a more diverse and equitable work environment. The patient-centred design techniques ensure that the development of healthcare solutions considers the demands and viewpoints of different patients (Nishii, 2013).

Advantages: These methods have led to improved patient care, increased employee involvement, and more efficient operations. The organisation has had a notable enhancement in patient satisfaction, and there has been a substantial boost in employee engagement. In addition, the organisation has successfully decreased operational expenses and enhanced the effectiveness of its procedures (Ferdman & Deane, 2014).

Key Takeaways: The case study underscores the need of inclusive leadership in the healthcare sector. The company's achievement illustrates that implementing inclusive leadership may result in enhanced patient care, improved staff engagement, and more efficient operations. This scenario further emphasises the need of healthcare organisations taking into account the diverse requirements of their patients when creating their products and services (Hewlett et al., 2013).

## 8. Challenges and Considerations

### 8.1. Addressing Unconscious Bias

Recognising and resolving unconscious prejudices is a substantial obstacle for leaders striving to foster inclusivity. Implementing bias mitigation strategies, such as bias training and the inclusion of diverse decision-making panels, is vital for establishing a workplace that is fair and equitable (Nishii, 2013).

Organisations can offer training programmes on unconscious bias, wherein staff are educated about various forms of bias and taught strategies to reduce its impact. Additionally, they can employ varied decision-making panels to ensure that decision-making takes into account a range of opinions. These



tactics contribute to the establishment of a workplace that is a more inclusive and equitable workplace (Roberson, 2019).

Unconscious bias is sometimes deeply rooted and challenging to change. Proactive measures must be taken by inclusive leaders to identify and address prejudices inside their organisations. This may entail regular bias training, developing impartial decision-making procedures, and fostering a culture where all employees feel at ease voicing concerns about bias when they observe it.

Effectively addressing unconscious prejudice also entails fostering a culture of responsibility, wherein both leaders and employees are motivated to voice their concerns when they observe instances of bias or discrimination. To handle bias effectively, it is necessary to develop explicit policies and procedures for reporting and addressing bias incidents. Additionally, it is crucial to provide support and protection to individuals who come forward with concerns about bias. Organisations can enhance their ability to tackle unconscious bias and promote inclusivity in the workplace by cultivating a culture of accountability (Ferdman & Deane, 2014).

### *8.2. Bridging Technological Disparities*

It is essential to ensure equitable access to technology during the digital industrial revolution. Organisations must offer comprehensive training and support to all employees in order to address any technology deficiencies and ensure that everyone can make valuable contributions (Shore et al., 2018). For instance, organisations can offer training sessions to educate employees on the utilisation of cutting-edge technology and ensure that all staff members have the requisite tools and resources at their disposal. In addition, they can support employees who have limited knowledge of technology. These methods facilitate effective contribution from all employees and enable the organisation to capitalise on the advantages of the digital industrial revolution (Ferdman & Deane, 2014).

Moreover, bridging technological disparities is crucial to create an inclusive workplace in the digital era. Inclusive leaders ensure that every employee is provided with the necessary resources and instruction to achieve success. This may entail implementing technology training initiatives, ensuring fair and equal access to technology resources, and assisting staff in acquiring the necessary digital competencies.

In order to reduce technological disparities, organisations should establish digital inclusion programmes that prioritise granting underserved groups access to technology and training. This could involve forming alliances with educational institutions, community organisations, and government agencies to offer technological education and resources. Organisations can foster digital inclusion to assure that all employees have the opportunity to succeed in the digital era (Bourke & Dillon, 2018).

### *8.3. Balancing Innovation and Inclusion*

The rapid pace of technical advancements can sometimes result in the exclusion or marginalisation of specific social groups. Inclusive leaders must formulate strategies to harmonise innovation with inclusivity, ensuring the involvement of all employees in the advancement and progress of the organisation (Hewlett et al., 2013). For example, as discussed earlier, leaders that embrace inclusivity have the ability to establish a culture in which every employee feels at ease in expressing their ideas and viewpoints. In addition, they can also ensure that a wide range of viewpoints are taken into account when making decisions, and that all employees are provided with fair and equal possibilities for advancement and personal improvement. These tactics facilitate both innovation and inclusivity inside the organisation (Roberson, 2019).

Leaders in the digital age sometimes may face a significant problem in finding the right balance between fostering innovation and promoting inclusivity. Inclusive leaders have the responsibility to ensure the participation of all employees in the innovation process and to acknowledge the value of their efforts. This may entail establishing inclusive innovation teams, promoting various viewpoints in brainstorming sessions, and ensuring that all personnel have the chance to participate to the advancement and progress of the organisation.

In order to effectively balance innovation and inclusion, leaders must also be mindful of the potential impact of new technology on certain demographics. This entails performing impact assessments to understand the potential consequences of technological innovations on different stakeholders and adopting methods to alleviate any adverse effects. Leaders may ensure that all employees reap the rewards of technology breakthroughs by adopting a proactive and inclusive approach to innovation (Nishii, 2013).

## 9. Actionable Steps for Leaders

### 9.1. Developing an Inclusive Leadership Mindset

Inclusive leaders must demonstrate a strong dedication to personal inclusivity and a relentless pursuit of ongoing growth. This requires introspection and a readiness to acquire knowledge and adjust accordingly (Bourke & Dillon, 2018). For instance, leaders can perform self-assessments to discover their biases and pinpoint areas where they can make improvements. In addition, they have the option to solicit feedback from their team and make a commitment to ongoing learning and growth. These strategies facilitate the ability of leaders to establish a workplace that is more inclusive (Ely & Thomas, 2001).

Cultivating an inclusive leadership mindset is a continuous and evolving endeavour. Inclusive leaders must possess the willingness to engage in self-reflection regarding their own biases and actively take measures to rectify them. This may entail soliciting input from coworkers, engaging in diversity and inclusion education, and dedicating oneself to ongoing personal and professional growth.

Worth noting, inclusive leaders can derive advantages by actively participating in diverse networks and communities. They can enhance their awareness of diversity and inclusion issues by cultivating relationships with individuals who possess diverse experiences and viewpoints, thus enabling them to get fresh insights. This can enhance their effectiveness and foster empathy in their leadership abilities (Roberson, 2019).

### 9.2. Implementing Inclusive Policies and Practices

It is important to develop and implement efficient diversity and inclusion policies. Leaders have the responsibility to ensure that these policies are both feasible and subject to regular evaluation and revision, taking into account feedback and results (Ferdman & Deane, 2014). For instance, organisations can adopt strategies to enhance diversity and inclusion, such as implementing mentorship programmes, offering flexible working arrangements, and establishing employee resource groups. In addition, they have the ability to consistently evaluate and revise these policies in response to feedback and outcomes. These strategies contribute to the organisation's ability to establish a workplace that is more inclusive and equitable (Shore et al., 2018). Adopting inclusive policies and practices is essential for cultivating an inclusive work environment. Inclusive leaders ensure the implementation of policies and procedures within their organisations that actively promote diversity and inclusion. This may involve developing mentorship initiatives, providing adaptable work schedules, and establishing employee resource groups.

To ensure the efficacy of these policies, leaders need also set clear metrics and benchmarks for determining success. This could involve monitoring diversity and inclusion indicators, conducting frequent staff surveys, and evaluating the effects of diversity and inclusion efforts on business results. Leaders can enhance their diversity and inclusion initiatives by utilising data to guide their decision-making process (Hewlett et al., 2013).

### 9.3. Measuring and Monitoring Progress

Setting benchmarks and monitoring progress is crucial to ensure the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion efforts. Leaders need to utilise data in order to adapt strategies and ensure ongoing improvement (Roberson, 2019). For instance, organisations can establish benchmarks to measure diversity and inclusion, such as the proportion of underrepresented groups in leadership roles or the level of satisfaction among personnel from varied backgrounds. In addition, they have the ability to

monitor and evaluate their progress in relation to these benchmarks and make necessary modifications to their strategy based on the outcomes. These techniques facilitate the organisation's ongoing enhancement of its diversity and inclusion activities (Hewlett et al., 2013).

Assessing and overseeing progress is essential to ensure the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion efforts. Inclusive leaders utilise data to monitor the effects of their initiatives and adapt their strategy accordingly. This may entail establishing diversity objectives, administering periodic staff surveys, and evaluating diversity and inclusion measures. Organisations can optimise their measuring efforts by utilising advanced analytics and technologies. For example, predictive analytics can be used to detect possible diversity and inclusion issues and opportunities, while machine learning algorithms can offer valuable information on employee engagement and retention patterns. Leaders can enhance their decision-making and promote ongoing progress by employing data-driven methodologies (Bourke & Dillon, 2018).

#### *9.4. Continuous Improvement and Adaptation*

Continuous learning and development are essential for inclusive leadership. Leaders must possess a willingness to embrace new challenges and possibilities and demonstrate adaptability in their ways (Nishii, 2013). For example, leaders can proactively pursue new learning opportunities, such as attending training programmes or conferences, to ensure they remain well-informed about the most current and effective strategies in diversity and inclusion. Additionally, they should be receptive to input and flexible in adjusting their strategies to accommodate the requirements of their team. These tactics aid in the creation of a workplace that is both inclusive and adaptable for leaders (Ferdman & Deane, 2014).

Efficient inclusive leadership relies on continuous improvement and adaptability. Inclusive leaders should possess a willingness to acquire knowledge and develop themselves, as well as the ability to adjust their methods according to the requirements of their team and the evolving dynamics of the workplace. This may entail actively pursuing new educational prospects, being receptive to constructive criticism, and consistently honing their approaches.

Beside promoting individual learning and growth, inclusive leaders have the ability to cultivate a culture of continuous improvement inside their organisations. This entails fostering a culture where people are motivated to contribute their ideas and feedback, exploring novel strategies, and gaining insights from both achievements and setbacks. Leaders can promote sustainable change and increase organisational performance by fostering an environment that values continuous improvement (Roberson, 2019).

## **10. Conclusion**

### *10.1. Summary of Key Points*

This review paper has explored the crucial significance of inclusive leadership in driving organisational change and achieving sustainable success in the digital era. Through fostering a culture of inclusivity, organisations can improve creativity, performance, and employee engagement.

Inclusive leadership encompasses the establishment of a work environment characterised by trust and respect, the utilisation of a wide range of viewpoints to generate innovative solutions, and the advocacy for impartiality and parity within the workplace. Effective strategies for promoting diversity and inclusion in leadership teams encompass several measures such as implementing diverse recruitment and hiring procedures, adopting inclusive decision-making methods, providing ongoing bias training and education, and establishing supportive policies and programmes.

The paper also featured case studies that demonstrated successful instances of inclusive leadership across different industries. These case studies illustrate the substantial benefits that may be attained through inclusive leadership, including increased innovation, higher employee satisfaction, and improved organisational performance.

### 10.2. The Future of Inclusive Leadership

Emerging trends highlight the need for inclusive leadership to be vital in the digital industrial revolution. Leaders must maintain a steadfast dedication to fostering diversity and inclusion in order to effectively navigate the intricacies of the future workplace. Organisations can utilise the advantages of the digital industrial revolution to establish workplaces that are more inclusive. This may entail using technology to deliver training and support to all staff members, fostering an environment that appreciates varied viewpoints, and ensuring that all employees have fair and impartial chances for advancement and progress.

### 10.3. Final Thoughts and Call to Action

Inclusive leadership is essential for achieving sustained success in the era of digital technology. Leaders are advised to embrace inclusive policies and establish cultures that foster the success of all employees. The advantages of inclusive leadership are evident: increased innovation, greater performance, and a staff that is more engaged and content. For instance, leaders can demonstrate commitment to personal inclusivity and ongoing growth, enact impactful diversity and inclusion policies and procedures, and systematically assess and track advancements to assure continual improvement. By implementing this approach, they can create a workplace that is characterised by inclusivity and equality, fostering an environment where every employee feels appreciated and empowered to share their distinct viewpoints.

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