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THE PATH TO INCLUSION:

A Literature Review of Attributes and Impacts of Inclusive Leaders

Abstract

The impending demographic shift in the United States (Vespa et al., 2020) will require leadership educators to reexamine the relationship between diversity and inclusive leadership. Our literature review revealed inclusive leadership has historically not been viewed with a diversity perspective. To better understand the link between diversity and inclusive leadership, we reviewed how leadership scholars, researchers, and authors have described the attributes and impacts of inclusive leaders. Through inductive coding, we identified seven attributes (i.e., characteristics and actions) of inclusive leaders. When these attributes are acted upon, inclusive leaders create various impacts on followers. These impacts are applied to Shore et al.'s (2011) inclusion framework. Both the attributes and impacts are presented to provide information and tools to better equip leadership educators with the knowledge to foster classroom inclusion in diverse classroom environments.

Keywords: inclusion, diversity, leadership, attributes, impact

Introduction

Over the past several decades, racial and ethnic diversity has increased across the United States. The U.S. Census Bureau indicated 2030 is a demographic turning point for the U.S. (e.g., Colby & Ortman, 2015; Vespa et al., 2020). The non-Hispanic White population will shrink by nearly 19 million people or 11.3% (Vespa et al., 2020). Additionally, international migration, racial, and ethnic pluralism is expected to grow. "The fastest-growing racial or ethnic group in the United States is people who are Two or More Races, who are projected to grow some 200 percent by 2060" (Vespa et al., 2020, p. 6). Leadership educators are in a unique position to understand ways which they may include students with wider ranges of diversity

than previously seen in classrooms. One reason for this is that there is a unique relationship between the educator (i.e., leader) and students (i.e., followers) that changes depending on the context of the situation. This supports Pierce and Newstrom (2011) who say "... leadership is a dynamic (fluid), interactive, working relationship between a leader and one or more followers, operating within the framework of a group context for the accomplishment of some collective goal" (p. 10).

Conversations around the growing demographic diversity urge a new understanding of inclusion. Inclusive leadership, a concept where leaders foster inclusion through their words and actions which "indicate an invitation and appreciation for others'

contributions" (Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006, p. 947), may be an option for leaders to better engage in diversity and inclusion conversations. However, studies of inclusive leadership are still relatively new among leadership educators, and there is a gap between inclusive leadership and diversity and inclusion literature. For example, a keyword search in the Journal of Leadership Education (JOLE) for the term "inclusion" revealed approximately 140 articles since the journal's first publication in 2002. Another keyword search in JOLE using the phrase "diversity and inclusion" showed eight articles dating back to 2016, and the phrase "inclusive leadership" returned nine articles dating back to 2015 and one from 2002. Our literature review was not limited to JOLE. However, this is a snapshot of how uncommon inclusive leadership is in academic research as well as the connection between inclusive leadership and diversity and inclusion literature.

Additionally, popular inclusive leadership publications (e.g., Carmeli et al., 2010; Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006) do not focus on diversity and inclusion efforts. Some recent literature has attempted to focus inclusive leadership on increasingly diverse environments (Thompson & Matkin, 2020). However, there is still much work to be done to intersect leadership and inclusion literature (Fine, 2019), specifically if that inclusion is contextualized to diversity efforts. For our research team to better understand this intersection, we chose to explore the attributes (i.e., characteristics and actions) and impacts (i.e., marked effect or influence) of inclusive leaders.

The purpose of this literature review was to identify the attributes of inclusive leaders and the impacts of inclusive leaders on followers. Additionally, to connect inclusive leadership literature closer to inclusion literature, we analyzed the relationship between the impacts identified in the literature review and Shore et al.'s (2011) inclusion themes of belongingness and uniqueness, as identified in Brewer's (1991) optimal

distinctiveness theory.

In order to purposefully identify ways that inclusive leaders connect to inclusion literature, we conducted a literature review to answer these three research questions:

- Research Question 1: What are the attributes of an inclusive leader?

- Research Question 2: What are the impacts of an inclusive leader on followers?

- Research Question 3: How do the impacts of an inclusive leader on followers relate to Shore et al.'s (2011) inclusion themes: belongingness and uniqueness?

The Gap Between Inclusive Leadership and Inclusion Literature

This review focuses on inclusive leaders instead of a broader exploration of inclusive leadership as a concept. Previous authors (see Ryan, 2007; Thompson & Matkin, 2020) have conducted literature reviews on the evolution or genres of inclusive leadership. We chose to explore inclusive leaders themselves to provide a different perspective on the ongoing conversation of inclusive leadership. Additionally, we examined whether inclusive leaders use attributes or create impacts on followers that closely align with inclusion literature, thus highlighting a connection between the two literature studies that has not previously been mentioned.

We found that neither the most-mentioned definition of inclusive leadership nor inclusive leadership measurement showed a specific focus on diversity as a central component of inclusive leadership. In our review, the most commonly mentioned definition of inclusive leadership was Nembhard and Edmondson's (2006) definition of leader inclusiveness. They

defined leader inclusiveness as "words and deeds by the leader or leaders that indicate an invitation and appreciation for others' contributions" (p. 947) and focused on the importance of psychological safety that leader inclusiveness creates. Complementary to Nembhard and Edmondson's leader inclusiveness, Carmeli et al. (2010) created a 9-item measure aiming to assess what they identify to be the three most common attributes of an inclusive leader: openness, availability, and accessibility.

Based on our literature review findings, these two articles serve as some of the foundational works for inclusive leadership research and scholarship. Yet, between the two articles, the authors mention diversity once (see Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006, p. 961). Diversity is an important component to inclusion (Chung et al., 2020). Inclusion literature scholars, not exclusive to the field of leadership, extend beyond the importance of diversity among group members to also articulate how an individual may feel valued and appreciated for their individual differences (Chung et al., 2020; Ferdman & Deane, 2014).

As the need to effectively engage and support diverse and marginalized groups increases, there should be a reexamination of how inclusive leadership fits into the context of diversity. How can leaders include followers if there is not an emphasis on individual differences? In order to focus on how inclusive leadership as a concept has evolved and how it can further be developed, it is important to understand the attributes (i.e., characteristics and actions) of inclusive leaders and the impact (i.e., marked effect or influence) of inclusive leaders on followers. In other words, does the way that researchers and scholars describe inclusive leaders align with the major inclusive leadership scholarship produced by Nembhard and Edmondson (2006) and Carmeli et al. (2010)?

Theoretical Framework

Shore et al. (2011) defined inclusion as "the degree

to which an employee perceives that he or she is an esteemed member of the work group through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness" (p. 1265). This framework was used to identify how inclusive leaders create an environment of inclusion for followers.

Shore et al.'s (2011) theoretical model, based on Brewer's (1991) optimal distinctiveness theory, reveals a 2 x 2 framework (see Figure 1) that includes elements of both uniqueness and belongingness. Brewer argued that individuals seek a balance between feeling similar to others (belongingness) and appreciated for their individual differences (uniqueness). Shore et al. extended this theory through their inclusion framework by arguing that inclusion is created when there is a balance between belongingness and uniqueness. While there may be appropriate times

for a leader to emphasize either component of inclusion, an overall environment of inclusion may result in positive impacts in the workplace (Shore et al., 2011).

Figure 1

Figure 1
Inclusion Framework

|	Low Belongingness	High Belongingness
Low Value in Uniqueness	**Exclusion** Individual is not treated as an organizational insider with unique value in the work group but there are other employees or groups who are insiders.	**Assimilation** Individual is treated as an insider in the work group when they conform to organizational/dominant culture norms and downplay uniqueness.
High Value in Uniqueness	**Differentiation** Individual is not treated as an organizational insider in the work group but their unique characteristics are seen as valuable and required for group/ organization success.	**Inclusion** Individual is treated as an insider and also allowed/encouraged to retain uniqueness within the work group.

Note. Reprinted from Shore et al., 2011, p. 1266.

Shore et al.'s (2011) theoretical findings and inclusion framework was critical to inclusion literature by showing that both the feelings of uniqueness and belonging are important to group members, not only one or the other (Randel et al., 2018). With this addition to inclusion research, there are still gaps in the research that explain how to create belongingness and uniqueness (Morgan, 2017).

Our goal was to learn more about the specific attributes an inclusive leader demonstrates that may create an environment of inclusion. We identified inclusive leader attributes as well as impacts that previous scholars identified as the results of the inclusive leader attributes. We then

sorted these impacts into the four cells of Shore et al.'s (2011) inclusion framework. This process is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2
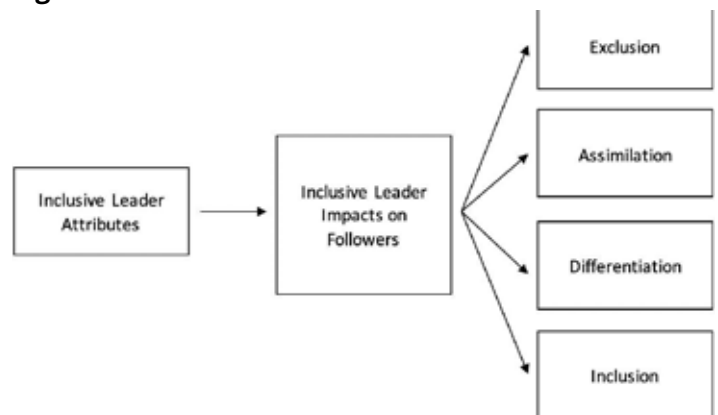
Note. The specific process for identifying the attributes and impacts is explained in the method section.

Methods

We utilized three steps in this literature review in which we identified inclusive leader attributes, impacts of inclusive leaders on followers, and the relationship between the impacts

and Shore et al.'s (2011) inclusion themes of belongingness and uniqueness, as identified in Brewer's (1991) optimal distinctiveness theory.

To answer the research questions, we conducted a literature review as well as a thematic analysis of the literature and identified two separate themes: attributes and impacts. These two directly relate to the first two research questions:

•   Research Question 1: What are the attributes of an inclusive leader?

•   Research Question 2: What are the impacts of an inclusive leader on followers?

We refer to the characteristics and actions of an inclusive leader as an attribute. When an inclusive leader utilizes the attributes, they may create various impacts on their followers. These impacts do not inherently create an environment of inclusion, or a balance between a follower feeling as though they belong to the group and are valued for their uniqueness (Chung et al., 2020; Shore et al., 2011). Some of these impacts may create an environment of assimilation or differentiation, not a balance of belongingness and uniqueness. Our coding process allowed us to illustrate this by identifying how the impacts relate to the various quadrants in Shore et al.'s inclusion framework.

•   Research Question 3: How do the impacts of an inclusive leader on followers relate to Shore et al.'s (2011) inclusion themes: belongingness and uniqueness?

Data Collection and Literature Review Criteria. This literature review featured scholarship from three pools of literature. Pool A was from Academic Search Premier with the search "inclusive leader*" (n = 159). Pool B was from Google Scholar with the same search term (n = 159). Pool B originally resulted in almost 900,000 results. To match Pool A's results, Pool B was sorted by relevance and the first 159 articles that were not already collected from Pool A were added to the literature review. Pool C was created using additional search terms on Google Scholar: community inclusive leadership, inclusive leadership development, inclusive leadership measurement, or inclusive leadership framework. Results of this search were added if they did not appear in Pool A or B (n = 12).

The next step was to review all literature (N = 330) to ensure it met the criteria agreed upon by all three researchers. The criteria were twofold. The first criterion stated that the selected literature must have a focus on at least one of the following relevant to this new call for inclusive leadership:

•   inclusive leadership (could be in the form of leader inclusiveness)

•   diversity and leadership (could be in the form of age, ethnicity, gender, race, sexual orientation, etc.)

•   inclusion framework or measurement

•   The second criterion was that the selected literature must meet at least one of the following focuses:

•   theory based (scholarly writing that does not include research)

•   research based (must be replicable if research based)

Table 1 shows the breakdown of how the literature reviewed met the criteria.

Table 1

Criteria Results

	Criterion 1			Criterion 2		
	Inclusive leadership	**Diversity and leadership**	**Inclusion framework or measurement**	**Theory based**	**Research based**	**Excluded**
Number of articles	85	20	13	82	73	242
Percentage of articles	25.76%	6.06%	3.94%	24.85%	22.12%	73.33%

Note. Articles were excluded if one or both criteria was not met. Articles may meet multiple categories of a criterion. The percentages are out of the total original sample (N = 330).

We initially reviewed 10 articles, and then we met to discuss our findings to ensure interrater reliability. Any discrepancies were discussed until we agreed on how and if the articles met the criteria. From there, the articles were divided among us and any questions about individual articles were brought to the group. This substantially narrowed down the literature pools. The total literature sample (N = 88) that met criteria was 26.67% of the original literature collected. This is worth noting because not all accepted literature was original research; there were many authors who repeated previous authors' findings. For example, Carmeli et al. (2010) identified that inclusive leaders exhibit openness, availability, and accessibility. Instead of conducting separate research to test the validity of these attributes, some of the selected literature reiterated Carmeli et al.'s interpretation of inclusive leaders and focused on impacts inclusive leaders foster for followers (e.g., Qi et al., 2019; Rodriguez, 2018; Tran & Choi, 2019). In some instances where there was original research on inclusive leader impacts, the authors based the research on attributes previously identified by other scholars (see Choi et al., 2015; Rodriguez, 2018). Our research team agreed that articles such as

these would be included in the literature review and be coded for both attributes and impacts.

Coding Process. In order to create two separate lists of inclusive leader attributes and impacts, we used multiple coding cycles. Similar to criteria checking, we coded the 10 identical articles to ensure intercoder reliability. Any discrepancies were discussed until all researchers agreed on all noted inclusive leader attributes and impacts. From there, the articles were divided among researchers and any questions about individual articles were brought to the group.

Inclusive Leader Attributes. We used three coding cycles to identify inclusive leader attribute codes, patterns, and categories. First, our team utilized inductive coding, also known as in vivo coding, which allowed us to put our predicted attributes aside and instead listen to the terms used by participants (Strauss, 1987), or in our case, researchers and scholars who authored the articles. Saldana (2016) referred to inductive coding as "participant inspired rather than researcher- generated" (p. 107). By first

"listening" to the literature, we identified nuances between the attributes identified and our predicted attributes. This became important as we finalized the attribute codes. Example attribute codes identified included pro-diversity beliefs (e.g., Randel et al., 2018), cultural competency (e.g., Vaccaro & Camba-Kelsay, 2018), and analyze conscious and unconscious bias (e.g., Molinari et al., 2019). The first coding cycle produced 602 identified attributes codes.

Attribute pattern coding was the second coding cycle method. "Pattern codes not only organize the corpus but attempt to attribute meaning to that organization" (Saldana, 2016, p. 235). One of us took on the role of synthesizing the codes into more cohesive patterns. An

example of this attribute pattern coding is that there were 24 initial attribute codes which referenced diversity (e.g., "pro-diversity beliefs," "valuing the differences of others," "acceptance of diverse background skills"). The attribute codes were grouped together because there was a similarity of diversity and recognition of differences. After recognizing the similarity, the researcher condensed the attribute codes into an attribute pattern labeled "commitment to diversity." Overall, the second coding cycle generated 602 attribute codes into 100 attribute patterns.

The same researcher used the pattern coding technique once more to further group, or categorize, the patterns to identify seven attribute categories. The researcher referred back to the in vivo coding, the original literature, and notes from the research team to most accurately categorize the attributes. Independently, there may be attribute patterns that do not fit under only one category. However, these attribute patterns are listed under the category which most aligned with the codes and patterns. For example, "commitment to diversity and cultural competency" was determined as a category instead of two separate categories (one for diversity and one for cultural competency). While diversity and cultural competency are separate concepts, they are intertwined and viewed by some scholars (e.g.,

Molinari et al., 2019; Morgan, 2017) as mutually inclusive (i.e., should exist together).

It should be noted that of the 100 attribute patterns, only 88 contributed to the seven attribute categories. The other 12 attribute patterns were identified by our research team as unrelated to the other categories. Each of these 12 attribute patterns were mentioned in less than five articles. The other researchers were brought back into the coding process to check the attribute categories. There was 100% agreement among us, and no discussion was needed to reevaluate these categories.

Impacts of Inclusive Leaders on Followers. We followed a similar coding process for the impacts of inclusive leaders on followers as we did the attributes. Our team utilized inductive coding again for the first coding cycle. Through inductive coding, we identified 139 impact codes. Examples of impacts on followers created by inclusive leaders included an increase in employee creativity (e.g., Carmeli et al., 2010) and an increase of psychological safety (e.g., Weiss et al., 2018).

During the second coding cycle, one researcher on the team used the impact codes to identify impact patterns, similar to the second coding cycle for the attributes. Through this process, we identified 24 different impact patterns within the 139 impact codes.

In the third coding cycle, one researcher determined that the 24 impact patterns were distinct enough not to be grouped into smaller categories. Thus, there were 24 impacts of inclusive leaders on followers deemed as our final categories. The other researchers were brought back into the coding process to check and agree upon the categories, and there was 100% agreement among us. Table 2 shows the numbers of codes, patterns, and categories identified at each cycle coding level for the attributes and impacts.

Table 2

Coding Results of Literature Review

	Inclusive leader attributes	Inclusive leader impacts onfollowers
Codes	602	139
Patterns	100	24
Categories	7	24

Impacts Relationship to Uniqueness and Belongingness. After the coding process, our research team agreed that while an inclusive leader may be able to use the seven attributes to create 24 different positive impacts on followers, that does not mean these impacts are always a balance of belongingness and uniqueness, which is discussed in Shore et al.'s (2011) inclusion framework and Brewer's (1991) optimal distinctiveness theory. In an attempt to connect inclusive leadership literature to inclusion literature, we sorted the impacts into the four cells of Shore et al.'s inclusion framework. We referred back to the in vivo coding and the original literature to most accurately sort the impact categories into Shore et al.'s inclusion framework. Independently, there may be impact categories that do not fit under only one cell as both feelings of belongingness and uniqueness were inferred by the original authors (e.g., increased person-job fit). However, the impact categories were sorted into the cells which the impacts primarily reflected. It should be noted that because the authors from the literature pool did not focus on inclusive leader impacts in terms of Shore et al.'s inclusion framework, there is not a hard line between how much any of these impacts do or do not create inclusion based on Shore et al.'s inclusion framework and Brewer's optimal distinctiveness theory.

Results

Seven attribute categories and 24 impacts of inclusive leaders on followers categories were revealed after the coding process. Next, we describe each attribute category, the overall impact categories, and the relationship between the impact categories and Shore et al.'s (2011) inclusion framework.

Attributes. This section explores the seven identified inclusive leader attribute categories from our analysis. Each attribute is explained as to how it relates to the characteristics and actions of an inclusive leader. Additionally, the attribute patterns from the second coding cycle process that contributed to the overall attribute categories are listed. The patterns may be viewed as descriptors of the attribute category. The attribute categories include authentic leadership, changemaker, collaborative, commitment to diversity and cultural competency, ideals, offers followers support, and openness.

Authentic Leadership. The authentic leadership attribute category is interpreted with Walumbwa et al.'s (2008) authentic leadership definition:

A pattern of leader behavior that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational

transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, fostering positive self-development. (p. 94)

All four components of authentic leadership Walumbwa et al. identified (self-awareness, balanced processing, relational transparency, and internalized moral perspective) were coded in the first coding cycle. While not all the attribute codes which contributed to this category are discussed through one of the four components of authentic leadership, we found that authentic leadership scholars did mention other descriptions or attributes of authentic leaders which aligned with our attribute codes. Although not all authentic leaders are inclusive leaders, Boekhorst (2015) noted how authentic leaders who use internalized moral perspective can naturally create inclusive actions. Additionally, we found that authentic leaders who act inclusively are able to gather input from followers and seek out perspectives different from their own (Walumbwa et al., 2008).

The following attribute patterns (n = 8), consisting of 59 codes, contributed to the authentic leadership category:

- authentic and/or transparent

- authentic leadership (specifically mentioned as a leadership concept)

- moral imperative

- fair

- perspective taking

- self-awareness

- self-regulation

- voice to speak on behalf of others not able to speak for themselves

The role of authentic leadership in inclusive leaders allowed leaders to critically reflect on the role they play in a group (Molinari et al., 2019; Vaccaro & Camba-Kelsay, 2018). Additionally, asking questions and learning new perspectives from followers is a good way to deepen one's understanding of diversity (Bourke & Dillon, 2016) and may provide ways to include others in a more authentic way.

Changemaker. The changemaker attribute category enables an inclusive leader to identify non-inclusive practices, areas of improvement, and areas of tension and then advocate for change. An inclusive leader who displays the changemaker attribute is able to navigate the change process. This category includes 16 attribute patterns (consisting of 168 codes) which may be actions of a changemaker. These patterns include:

- able to recognize when it is appropriate to include or exclude

- accountability

- adaptive

- conceptions

- conflict resolution

- difficult dialogues/intergroup contact

- facilitates development

- interrogating/questioning

- flexible

- leader advocacy

- leader expectations

- navigates change

- preparedness

- responsibility

- success oriented

- willing to speak up

In order to sustain inclusion, there is a need for leaders to consistently review and adjust organizational regulations and norms (Cox, 2018). Cox argued that inclusive leaders must "provide a meta-narrative for the organization where diversity is valued, boundaries are provided, modeled, and constantly questioned to make sure they work for all involved" (p. 38). While training may be beneficial, inclusive leaders have the task of continually ensuring group members do not forget about that training and instead act on the inclusion development discussed in order to continue change.

One role of being a changemaker is the ability to take responsibility for the role a leader may have played in leading in a less inclusive way. Hollander (2012) indicated inclusive leaders can be identified by the "four Rs": recognition, responsibility, respect, and responsiveness. It is important for an inclusive leader to take both individual and organizational responsibility and responsiveness for successes and failures. Doing so allows the leader to celebrate the positive impacts of inclusive leadership and encourage followers to engage in the change process.

The adaptability that comes from engaging followers in both the positives and negatives enables an inclusive leader to lean on followers for help (collaborative and authentic leadership also contribute this way). "Rather than leaders being the people with 'all the answers,' leaders need to help people ask the right questions and adapt to their situations" (Cox, 2018, p. 28). This adaptability also impacts how an inclusive leader might implement change. An adaptive inclusive leader is able to change their leader behaviors in order to benefit the needs of followers (Bristol, 2015).

Collaborative. The collaborative attribute category represents an inclusive leader's ability to focus on teamwork and follower engagement to achieve tasks. A finding from our literature review is that an inclusive leader consistently collaborates with team members. This attribute had the most attribute patterns (n = 19) which contributed to the category. The patterns

(consisting of 168 codes), which may help describe an inclusive leader who is collaborative, include the leader who displays the following:

an active presence and listens to followers at events, meetings, etc.

- appreciation and validation of followers

- collaboration

- communication

- community and cohesion

- concern for follower

- cooperation

- de-emphasis of hierarchical barriers

- encouragement of independence and free expression

- encouragement of input from all followers

- engagement of followers

- interest in follower support

- involvement of every member of the learning community in some form of "learning leadership"

- shared decision making and engagement in participative practices with followers

- shared language (we, us, our)

- shared leadership

- shared power and credit with followers

- shared vision

- team focus

An inclusive leader who emphasizes collaboration relies on followers to present new, unique, and diverse ideas to the team (Bourke & Dillon, 2016). However, inclusive leaders who may be open to working with followers does not inherently mean followers are

ready to share to provide input. Followers must want to share their diversities for the collaboration to be successful (Bourke & Dillon, 2016). For this to happen, a positive relationship must exist first.

An inclusive leader can cultivate this relationship in a few ways. One option is actively showing up and listening to followers. In a study about community-based coalitions, Wells et al. (2008) found that board leaders who were perceived more inclusively attended more meetings and invested more effort on coalition business than other board leaders. By actively engaging with organizational projects, these inclusive leaders were able to increase participation of followers. In this case, the actions of inclusive leaders are recognized and appreciated by followers. Inclusive leaders who attend meetings and actively engage in organizational goals are able to develop a collaborative relationship with followers.

Another way that an inclusive leader is able to cultivate collaboration is through voicing appreciation and validation of followers (Bristol, 2015; Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006).

Showing that inclusive leaders care about their followers is a great way to develop the psychological safety of followers so that followers feel comfortable to voice their opinions and contribute to group projects or organizational change (Hirak et al., 2012). When psychological safety is present, inclusive leaders are able to facilitate shared decision making and participative practices as a means of collaboration (Bourke & Dillon, 2016). Sharing the decision-making process also facilitates belongingness (Randel et al., 2018).

Commitment to Diversity and Cultural Competency. Diversity and cultural competency play a large role in inclusive leadership. As mentioned in the Methods section, diversity and cultural competency are intertwined (e.g., Molinari et al., 2019; Morgan, 2017), thus the patterns were coded into a combined category. In order to include all followers, inclusive leaders should celebrate diversity. This

attribute category was identified because inclusive leaders advocate and seek out diverse perspectives and followers.

Diversity can be viewed from a holistic approach. This approach highlights that diversity is not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation. While our research team does not underplay the importance of these identities, we know that diversity does not stop there. The uniqueness someone brings to the table is much more than just what you can see. Gardenswartz et al. (2010) utilize the four layers of diversity model. Gardenswartz et al.'s model highlights diversity in four dimensions: personality, internal (age, race, gender, etc.), external (religion, education background, work experience, etc.), and organizational (department unit, seniority, management status, etc.). One way a leader can promote this uniqueness is to encourage diverse contributions to a team (Randel et al., 2018).

In addition to seeking out diverse perspectives, inclusive leaders are aware and work to eliminate unconscious biases. Inclusive leaders who display this attribute are not only able to encourage diversity among their followers, but also recognize their own bias and prejudice as related to diversity and other cultures (Bourke & Dillon, 2016; Molinari et al., 2019). These inclusive leaders will also be knowledgeable of theoretical perspectives of race such as intersectionality theory (Taylor & Brownell, 2017) and have developed their own cultural competency (Vaccaro & Camba-Kelsay, 2018).

The attribute patterns (n = 8, consisting of 56 codes), which may describe how an inclusive leader displays commitment to diversity and cultural competency, include:

- awareness of work environment and restrictions

- cognizance of bias

- commitment to diversity and seeks to represent diverse voices

- cultural competency

- goes beyond diversity practices

- justice and equity

- knowledgeable

- knowledgeable of critical race theory and intersectionality theory

Ideals. Inclusive leaders also demonstrate their willingness to put themselves on the line for their followers. While these attribute patterns may overlap with the other six categories identified, these values become the ideals that enable an inclusive leader and deserve a distinct attribute category. These attribute patterns (n = 9, consisting of 48 codes) include:

- bravery

- courage

- drive

- empathetic

- forgiveness

- humility

- offering

- reflective

- vulnerability

The most mentioned pattern in this attribute category was the humility (n = 13) of inclusive leaders. Humility allows a leader to be aware of their personal strengths and weaknesses and lean on followers to help overcome limitations (Bourke & Dillon, 2016). To be humble requires leaders to be vulnerable. "There's a vulnerability to being an inclusive leader, because confronting others and the status quo immediately invites the spotlight to turn on the speaker" (p. 11). Those weaknesses and limitations are exposed. However, willing to be humble and vulnerable allows change to happen, thus helping inclusive leaders be a changemaker. Inclusive leaders have the courage to put the spotlight on themselves so followers

can begin to see inclusive practices being practiced (Bourke & Dillon, 2016).

Humility, courage, and forgiveness are all important characteristics of inclusive leaders who focus on the needs of others. A study specific to inclusive environments in Japan shows that these attributes are three of the five most influential inclusive leader attributes (alongside empowerment and accountability) that contribute to feeling as though their uniqueness matters and that they are included (Salib & Shi, 2017). Putting followers first and acting for the greater good of followers and organizations are values that characterize inclusive leaders.

Offers Follower Support. Another key attribute of inclusive leaders is their willingness and ability to offer support to followers. This attribute category represents the process that an inclusive leader is supportive of followers' ideas and helps them achieve team and personal goals. This category includes 14 attribute patterns (consisting of 68 codes), which may be ways for inclusive leaders to display how they offer followers support. These patterns include:

- "belief in the business case"

- challenge and encourage employees

- commitment

- empowerment

- ensures every team member has a voice

- gives feedback

- helpful

- informative and helpful during and after

- needs follower support

- offering coaching and mentoring

- recognition

- responsiveness

- supportive behavior

- understands how to fix systematic problems

The follower comes first; they must succeed before the leader can succeed (Nguyen et al., 2019). Inclusive leaders can help followers succeed through offering support. This support can come in different forms such as empowerment, offering information, mentoring, and more. "Inclusive leaders create a comfortable environment and exert influence by helping members with their needs and expressing support for them and their opinions" (Randel et al., 2018, p. 4). Support is often unique and individualized. This is because inclusive leaders are able to recognize the needs and approaches a follower might need in order to succeed. For example, a follower's disability may limit a traditional approach to accomplishing a task. An inclusive leader is able to problem solve and assist the follower in a way that still makes them feel as though they belong in the group (Randel et al., 2018).

Along with supportive behavior, inclusive leaders will also empower followers to reach their individual potential as well as the common good of their followers (Echols, 2009). However, empowerment is not an easy task (Echols, 2009). It means being able to give feedback (Minehart et al., 2020), challenging followers (Choi et al., 2015), and ensuring inclusive policies exist and are upheld (Dezenberg, 2017). By doing these actions, inclusive leaders offer support to followers that will help them succeed and be a member of an inclusive community.

Openness. Openness is one of the three central attributes of inclusive leaders, according to Carmeli et al. (2010). When doing our third coding cycle to identify attribute categories, we identified codes and patterns that went beyond the scope of openness, availability, and accessibility. We decided that Carmeli et al.'s attributes were similar enough to fit under

the same attribute category: openness. Openness was chosen as the attribute category label because the patterns (n= 14) contributing to it alluded to inclusive leaders being open to change and ideas from followers. We believe that accessibility and availability are just two ways for inclusive leaders to be open. Inclusive leaders who display openness create an environment where followers feel safe to approach and trust leaders.

The patterns (n =14), which consist of 138 independent codes, contributing to this attribute category include:

- accessibility

- availability

- coping with ambiguity

- curiosity

- doesn't undermine

- influence

- loyalty

- openness

- respect

- "tolerate and accept deviation from conventional practices"/welcoming different ideas

- trust

- understanding

- willingness to listen to followers' ideas and requests

- welcoming

Inclusive leaders are open and willing to listen to followers' ideas even when not sought out by followers. When inclusive leaders listen to and engage with followers, the leaders are perceived as more open, and the followers' affective organizational commitment increases (Choi et al., 2015). This openness also demonstrates the way

inclusive leaders, while recognizing their positional power, do not undermine the work and contributions of followers (Norman et al., 2018). Inclusive leaders develop trust and loyalty (Hollander, 2012) through being consistently open to change and ideas.

Impacts. When the seven inclusive leader attributes—authentic leadership, changemaker, collaborative, commitment to diversity and cultural competency, ideals, offers followers support, and openness—are acted upon, leaders are able to create impacts on their followers. We identified 24 impact categories from our literature review. While many positive impacts may be created by inclusive leaders, not all of these impacts emphasize both uniqueness and belongingness. We believe that while some impacts may relate more toward belongingness instead of uniqueness—such as increased organizational commitment—and are beneficial for overall inclusion,

inclusive leaders should be able to recognize the impacts they create as relating to both uniqueness and belongingness.

To aid this process for inclusive leaders, we listed all 24 impacts in Figure 3. However, instead of noting the impacts in one continuous list, we sorted the impacts to show how we believe the 24 impacts relate to Shore et al.'s (2011) inclusion framework. The authors from the

literature pool did not focus on inclusive leader impacts in this way; therefore, there is not a hard line between how much any of these impacts do or do not create inclusion based on Shore et al.'s framework. Rather, we believe our analysis may provide insight to leadership educators hoping to develop and reflect on their inclusive leadership impacts. We sorted the impact categories into Shore et al.'s framework from nuances in the literature during our first coding cycle when identifying impact codes.

Figure 3

Inclusive Leader Impacts on Followers

	Low Belongingness	High Belongingness
Low Value in Uniqueness	**Exclusion** • Lack of inclusive leadership makes followers feel undermined and undervalued • Lack of inclusive leadership makes followers with diverseexperiences outside of the "norm" feel marginalized anddiscriminated	**Assimilation** • Decreased emotional dissonance • Increased feeling of belonging(specifically mentioned) • Increased organizationalcommitment • Increased perceived organizationalsupport • Increased sense of togetherness • Increased team identity • Lower perceived status differences
High in Value Uniqueness	**Differentiation** • Reduced employee turnover • Followers feel affirmed, valued,and cared about (increased self-esteem) • Followers thrive at work • Increased feeling of uniqueness (specifically mentioned) • Increased follower creativity • Increased Person-job fit, job satisfaction, and job retention • Increased psychologicalempowerment	**Inclusion** • Increased desire from outsiders tojoin team • Increased follower motivation to take charge and reciprocate actions • Increased follower productivity, performance, and work engagement • Increased follower well-being • Increased leader-follower relationship (trustworthiness) • Increased organizational justice • Increased psychological capital • Increased psychological safety

Note. Framework adapted from Shore et al., 2011, p. 1266.

Inclusive leadership creates many positive impacts on followers. Psychological safety and follower productivity, performance, and work engagement were the most explored inclusive leader impacts. Often, psychological safety is even viewed as a mediator for other inclusive leader impacts, such as creativity (Carmeli et al., 2010). The inclusive leader attributes and impacts of inclusive leaders on followers often work simultaneously. For example, Weiss et al. (2018) indicated that "when leaders de-emphasize hierarchical barriers, they foster a climate of trust and psychological safety where employees feel safe to not only share suggestions, but more importantly, raise concerns regarding work-related issues" (p. 8). Weiss et al. found the leader's ability to support followers, be open, and act on follower-centric values was crucial to developing psychological safety. In return, the psychological safety enables a follower's devotion to collaboration to be possible.

Work engagement and performance were also large impacts on followers from inclusive leaders. Inclusive leaders who are able to make a follower feel unique for their contributions to a team, and feel as though they belong on the team, are motivated to give more time, effort, and ideas to the organization. Authentic leadership is one attribute that influences this productivity. Boekhorst (2015) indicated "authentic leaders who motivate followers to behave in an inclusive manner through positive reinforcement can help to stimulate vicarious learning of inclusive conduct by followers" (p. 256). In other words, inclusive leaders role model the inclusive environment of which they would like to be a member. While positive impacts exist when leaders emphasize either uniqueness or belonging separately, when emphasized together, leaders are able to see a greater impact on inclusiveness beyond the feeling of uniqueness and belonging. Followers invest themselves deeper into the organization (Choi et al., 2015).

Discussion

We performed our literature review to examine whether scholars who study inclusive leadership described the attributes and impacts of inclusive leaders differently than the major inclusive leadership scholarship produced by Nembhard and Edmondson (2006) and Carmeli et al. (2010). We found this to be the case. These findings are significant to inclusive leadership literature for two reasons. First, this is the first review of its kind, to our knowledge, to look at how scholars are specifically describing inclusive leaders. These findings may allow inclusive leaders to be studied and understood differently than broader reviews of inclusive leadership as a concept (e.g., Ryan, 2007; Thompson & Matkin, 2020).

Second, the findings connect inclusive leadership and inclusive leader scholarship to diversity and inclusion literature. While inclusive leadership and inclusive leaders have been studied for decades,

the relationship to diversity and inclusion literature is still in its infancy (Thompson & Matkin, 2020). We found that the inclusive leader attribute "commitment to diversity and cultural competency" suggests that inclusive leaders should find a way to include followers and highlight their uniqueness (i.e., diversity) and belongingness in a group.

Additionally, attribute patterns across multiple categories relate back to how Shore et al. (2011) describe inclusion. These patterns include, but are not limited to, appreciation and validation of followers, welcoming of different ideas, and welcoming of any followers. However, this literature review also found that neither the most commonly mentioned definition (Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006) of inclusive leadership nor inclusive leadership measurement tool (Carmeli et al., 2010) focus on diversity as a central component of inclusive leadership. Thus, there is a need to recognize diversity and inclusion within the definition and measurement of inclusive leadership.

The disconnect between diversity and inclusion literature and inclusive leader and leadership literature creates justification for reexamining inclusive leadership measurements. Carmeli et al.'s (2010) scale was the primary measurement used by scholarship in this literature review. However, this scale focuses on openness, accessibility, and availability. These attributes only begin to capture what it means to be an inclusive leader. Seven inclusive leader attributes were identified in this literature review: collaborative, authentic leadership, commitment to diversity and cultural competency, offers followers support, changemaker, openness, and ideals. In order to continue to develop inclusive leadership as a concept, measurements must be updated to accurately reflect the attributes of an inclusive leader. This provides the opportunity to create a new inclusive leadership assessment which measures inclusive leader attributes beyond openness, accessibility, and availability. If an assessment were created to measure the seven inclusive leader attributes identified in this literature review, new impacts and a greater connection to

inclusion literature may be explored. We posit that grounded theory research can be used to further explore these attributes to better understand the stages of development, antecedents to development, and inputs for development, thus adding to the field of inclusive leadership education, businesses, and community work.

Societal, as well as scholarly, conversations of diversity and inclusion urge for a more cohesive model to represent what inclusive leadership looks like in organizations, education, academia, healthcare, communities, and more (Ryan, 2007). This literature review contributes to that by providing information that has previously not been examined.

Conclusion

In expanding our understanding of how inclusive leaders relate to diversity and inclusion, leadership researchers and educators may better prepare and adjust inclusive practices to respond to the growing diversity in the United States (Colby & Ortman, 2015; Vespa et al., 2020). For leadership educators who choose to develop their inclusive leader attributes, they may see positive changes in their classroom such as student (i.e., follower) performance, productivity, and engagement in the classroom and assignments. This literature review could inform not only classroom inclusion, but also how educators create curriculum, deliver content, and who ultimately learns from our work. Leadership educators can benefit from this comprehensive review of the attributes and impacts of inclusive leaders on followers by considering how we embody the attributes and impacts both personally and in our work. This opens the opportunity to not only better prepare inclusive leaders, but also to study the developmental process of inclusive leaders.

As Fine (2019) noted, it is important for leadership educators to understand how inclusive leadership impacts students. When taught through a multicultural leadership course, Fine noted that students were open to "alternative conceptualizations of inclusive

leadership discourse" (p. 93). In response to the findings, it may be possible for leadership educators to prepare students for the increasing demographic diversity through a more accurate conversation in the classroom about inclusive leaders.

Leadership educators and higher education administrators may also see benefit on faculty and staff from displaying inclusive leader attributes. Researchers indicated that work engagement, productivity, creativity, and job satisfaction all increased when inclusive leadership was displayed by leaders. In order for employers, educators, and organizations to keep up with the predicted shift in demographic diversity over the next few decades, inclusive leadership should be promoted and developed.

Additionally, leadership educators need to provide students the resources and framework to become inclusive leaders. The need to respond to the increasing demographic diversity is not exclusive to CEOs and board presidents. Students engage with diverse groups every day in classrooms, campus organizations, work, and more. A grounded theory approach may help us uncover ways to make these daily student interactions more inclusive. A few examples of how an inclusive leadership development model may fit into leadership education include diversity or multicultural focused leadership classes, experiential learning and internship courses, and leadership educator training. As universities respond to diversity needs, an inclusive leadership approach awaits.

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The following literature are articles or books included in the review but not included in the Reference section as they were not specifically mentioned in this article.

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