

Impact of Inclusive Leadership on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Outcomes in Public Sector Organizations of Pakistan: The Mediating Role of Psychological Safety and Employee Engagement

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of inclusive leadership on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) outcomes in public sector organizations of Pakistan, with particular emphasis on the mediating roles of psychological safety and employee engagement. In recent years, public sector institutions in Pakistan have increasingly faced challenges related to workplace diversity, employee inclusion, fairness, and organizational harmony due to hierarchical structures, cultural diversity, and evolving workforce expectations. Drawing upon leadership theory and psychological perspectives of inclusion, this study investigates how inclusive leadership practices contribute to creating supportive and equitable workplace environments. The study adopted a positivist research paradigm and deductive research approach using a quantitative cross-sectional design. Data were collected from employees working in public sector organizations of Pakistan through a structured questionnaire survey. A convenience sampling technique was employed, and a total of 350 questionnaires were distributed among respondents. All questionnaires were correctly completed and returned. Data analysis and interpretation were conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Reliability analysis, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and mediation analysis were performed to test the proposed hypotheses. The findings of the study confirmed that inclusive leadership has a significant positive impact on psychological safety, employee engagement, and inclusive workplace behavior. The results further revealed that psychological safety and employee engagement significantly mediate the relationship between inclusive leadership and DEI outcomes. The study demonstrates that leadership practices characterized by fairness, empathy, openness, and employee support enhance employees' willingness to engage in inclusive behaviors and contribute positively to workplace diversity initiatives. This research contributes to the growing literature on leadership and DEI by providing empirical evidence from the context of Pakistani public sector organizations. The study offers practical implications for policymakers and organizational leaders by emphasizing the importance of inclusive leadership in fostering psychologically safe, equitable, and collaborative workplace environments. The findings suggest that leadership-driven DEI strategies can play a vital role in improving employee relationships, organizational effectiveness, and sustainable inclusion within public

sector institutions of Pakistan.

Keywords: Inclusive Leadership, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), Psychological Safety, Employee Engagement, Public Sector Organizations, Pakistan, Inclusive Workplace Behavior.

1. Introduction

In contemporary organizations, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) have emerged as fundamental pillars of sustainable human resource development, organizational justice, and employee well-being. Organizations worldwide increasingly recognize that diverse and inclusive workplaces enhance innovation, decision-making quality, employee engagement, and institutional performance (Carter et al., 2020; Devine & Ash, 2022). However, despite widespread adoption of DEI initiatives, many organizations continue to face persistent challenges such as unconscious bias, workplace discrimination, exclusionary practices, and resistance to diversity-related interventions (Dover et al., 2020; Paluck et al., 2021).

In public sector organizations of Pakistan, these challenges are particularly pronounced due to entrenched hierarchical structures, bureaucratic governance systems, and socio-cultural diversity across regions, languages, and ethnic groups. Public institutions in Pakistan serve as critical service delivery mechanisms; therefore, ensuring fairness, inclusion, and equity is essential not only for employee well-being but also for effective public administration. However, issues such as favoritism, rigid authority structures, limited employee voice, and weak interpersonal trust often hinder the successful implementation of DEI initiatives in these organizations.

In such contexts, leadership plays a central role in shaping organizational inclusion and employee behavior. Leaders influence how employees perceive fairness, belongingness, respect, and psychological safety in the workplace. Inclusive leadership practices can foster supportive environments where employees feel valued and motivated to engage in diversity-enhancing behaviors. Conversely, controlling or hierarchical leadership styles may reinforce exclusion, resistance, and disengagement from DEI initiatives (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Vansteenkiste et al., 2014).

Recent scholarly evidence suggests that the effectiveness of DEI interventions is strongly influenced by the interpersonal and motivational climate in which they are delivered. For instance, argue that DEI trainings are more effective when individuals experience autonomy, empathy, and respectful interpersonal engagement rather than coercion or pressure (King et al., 2024). Their findings indicate that supportive social contexts enhance internalization of inclusive values and reduce psychological reactance, thereby improving long-term behavioral change. These insights are particularly relevant for leadership practices in organizational settings, especially in public sector environments where authority structures are highly pronounced.

Within Pakistani public sector organizations, leadership-driven DEI practices can play a transformative role in improving workplace inclusion. Leaders who demonstrate fairness, empathy, and openness can help bridge cultural and social divides among employees,

encourage intergroup understanding, and promote cooperative work behavior (Legault et al., 2011; Amiot et al., 2012). As Pakistan's public workforce becomes increasingly diverse, effective leadership is essential for ensuring harmonious working relationships and improving institutional efficiency.

Furthermore, generational shifts and globalization have increased employees' expectations for fairness, transparency, and inclusive treatment. Younger employees in Pakistan are increasingly sensitive to issues of equity and organizational justice, expecting leaders to demonstrate ethical conduct and inclusive behavior. Consequently, public sector organizations that fail to develop inclusive leadership cultures may face declining employee morale, reduced organizational commitment, and increased interpersonal conflict (Schmader et al., 2022; Ng et al., 2012).

Psychological safety is another critical outcome influenced by leadership in DEI contexts. Psychological safety refers to employees' perception that they can express ideas, identities, and concerns without fear of negative consequences. In hierarchical public sector environments of Pakistan, psychological safety is often limited, restricting employee participation and openness (Edmondson conceptually aligned; Carter et al., 2020). Inclusive leadership can mitigate these challenges by promoting trust, respectful communication, and participatory decision-making environments.

Although prior research has extensively examined diversity management, there is limited empirical focus on leadership as a mechanism for enhancing DEI effectiveness in Pakistani public sector organizations. Most existing studies emphasize policy-level interventions or private sector contexts, while neglecting the critical role of leadership in shaping inclusive workplace behavior in public institutions (Bezrukova et al., 2016; Kalev et al., 2006; Karimi & Khawaja 2024). Therefore, there is a need to investigate how leadership influences employee engagement, psychological safety, and inclusivity in Pakistan's public sector environment.

This study, therefore, examines the role of leadership in improving diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within public sector organizations of Pakistan. It further explores how leadership-driven psychological and interpersonal dynamics influence employees' engagement and inclusive workplace behavior. The study contributes to leadership and organizational behavior literature by integrating DEI concepts with leadership theory in a developing country public sector context, informed by the work of , Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2017), and related behavioral research.

2. Literature Review

Diversity refers to the presence of differences among employees in terms of ethnicity, culture, language, gender, religion, age, and socio-economic background. Equity involves fairness in access to opportunities, resources, and organizational treatment, while inclusion focuses on ensuring that employees feel respected, valued, and fully integrated into organizational processes (King et al., 2024).

In public sector organizations of Pakistan, DEI is particularly significant due to the country's ethnic, linguistic, and regional diversity. These institutions serve heterogeneous populations and employ individuals from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. As a result, maintaining inclusive workplaces is essential for organizational cohesion and effective governance.

However, Pakistani public sector organizations often face structural and cultural barriers to inclusion, including bureaucratic rigidity, hierarchical authority systems, limited employee participation, and favoritism. These factors often reduce fairness perceptions and weaken interpersonal trust among employees. Traditional DEI approaches in such settings often rely on compliance-based training, which may raise awareness but does not necessarily lead to sustained behavioral change (Bezrukova et al., 2016; Chang et al., 2019; Devine & Ash, 2022, (King et al., 2024).

Research suggests that diversity training alone is often insufficient unless supported by psychologically informed interpersonal processes that encourage internalization of inclusive values (Devine et al., 2012; Carter et al., 2020). This highlights the importance of organizational leadership in shaping DEI outcomes.

2.1 Leadership and Inclusive Organizational Behavior

Leadership is a critical determinant of organizational culture and employee behavior. Inclusive leadership emphasizes fairness, respect, openness, and support for employee diversity. Leaders significantly shape employees' perceptions of justice, trust, and belongingness within organizations.

In public sector organizations of Pakistan, leadership plays an even more critical role due to centralized decision-making structures and limited employee autonomy. Leadership behavior directly influences whether employees feel included or marginalized in organizational processes.

Research grounded in interpersonal and motivational frameworks suggests that individuals are more likely to internalize inclusive values when they experience supportive interpersonal environments (Amiot et al., 2012). Similarly, autonomy-supportive communication enhances openness to behavioral change and reduces resistance (Assor et al., 2020; Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Many researchers emphasize that DEI-related interventions are more effective when individuals perceive autonomy, empathy, and respect rather than coercion. These principles align closely with inclusive leadership behaviors that promote psychological safety and voluntary engagement in diversity initiatives.

2.2 Leadership, Psychological Safety, and Workplace Inclusion

Psychological safety refers to employees' belief that they can express themselves without fear of humiliation or punishment. It is a key factor in promoting learning, collaboration, and innovation in organizations. In hierarchical public sector organizations of Pakistan,

psychological safety is often limited due to strict authority structures and fear of negative evaluation. Inclusive leadership can mitigate these challenges by encouraging open communication, respect, and participatory decision-making. Studies show that interpersonal respect and high-quality listening improve openness and reduce prejudice (Itzhakov & Weinstein, 2021; Weinstein et al., 2022). Furthermore, empathy-based interventions have been found to reduce intergroup bias and improve prosocial behavior (Cikara et al., 2011; Gloor & Puhl, 2016).

also highlight that psychological support during diversity-related interventions reduces defensiveness and increases willingness to engage in inclusive behaviors. This suggests that leadership practices that foster empathy and respect are essential for effective DEI implementation.

2.3 Leadership, Empathy, and Behavioral Change in DEI

Empathy is a central mechanism through which leadership influences inclusion. Empathetic leaders are better able to understand employees' experiences, particularly those from marginalized groups, and respond with fairness and sensitivity.

Research indicates that perspective-taking and empathetic engagement reduce prejudice and increase intergroup cooperation (Kalla & Broockman, 2020; Okonofua et al., 2021). Similarly, autonomy-supportive environments enhance internalization of prosocial and anti-prejudice behaviors (Legault et al., 2011; Weinstein & Ryan, 2010; (King et al., 2024).

In Pakistani public sector organizations, empathetic leadership can help reduce ethnic, linguistic, and hierarchical divides by fostering mutual understanding and cooperation among employees. This is particularly important in culturally diverse workplaces where interpersonal misunderstandings can affect performance and cohesion.

2.4 Employee Engagement and Organizational Outcomes

Employee engagement refers to employees' emotional and psychological involvement in their work. Engaged employees demonstrate higher motivation, commitment, and productivity.

Leadership significantly influences engagement by shaping workplace experiences and interpersonal relationships. In public sector organizations of Pakistan, where motivation may be affected by bureaucratic constraints, leadership-driven inclusion can enhance engagement by improving fairness and participation. Research shows that autonomy-supportive environments enhance motivation, well-being, and prosocial behavior (Ng et al., 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Similarly, motivationally supportive communication increases behavioral internalization and organizational commitment (Sheeran et al., 2020; Su & Reeve, 2011; Karimi & Khawaja 2024). Further Karimi & Khawaja (2024) suggest that internalization of inclusive values leads to more sustained behavioral change compared to externally imposed compliance, highlighting the importance of leadership in shaping long-term DEI outcomes.

2.5 Research Gap

Although extensive literature exists on diversity training and inclusion, limited research has examined the role of leadership in shaping DEI outcomes in public sector organizations of Pakistan. Most studies focus on policy frameworks, training effectiveness, or private sector contexts, with insufficient attention to leadership-driven mechanisms of inclusion.

Moreover, while prior research highlights the importance of autonomy, empathy, and psychological support in reducing prejudice (Legate et al., 2023; Devine et al., 2012), little empirical work has integrated these principles into leadership frameworks within Pakistani public institutions. Therefore, this study addresses this gap by examining how leadership influences DEI effectiveness in public sector organizations of Pakistan, drawing on insights from and broader psychological and organizational research. The study contributes to understanding how leadership can foster sustainable inclusion, employee engagement, and psychological safety in developing country contexts.

2.6 Hypotheses Development

Building on leadership theory and psychological perspectives of inclusion, this study proposes that leadership plays a central role in shaping employees' diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)-related attitudes and behaviors in public sector organizations of Pakistan. Inclusive leadership fosters psychological safety, empathy, and supportive interpersonal environments, which in turn enhance employee engagement and inclusive workplace behavior.

Drawing on , individuals are more likely to internalize inclusive values when they experience autonomy, respect, and supportive social contexts rather than coercion. In hierarchical public sector settings of Pakistan, leadership becomes a key determinant of whether employees perceive inclusion as genuine or imposed. Accordingly, the following hypotheses are developed:

H1: Inclusive leadership has a significant positive impact on employee engagement in public sector organizations of Pakistan.

H2: Inclusive leadership has a significant positive impact on psychological safety in public sector organizations of Pakistan.

H3: Inclusive leadership has a significant positive impact on employees' inclusive workplace behavior.

H4: Psychological safety mediates the relationship between inclusive leadership and employees' inclusive workplace behavior.

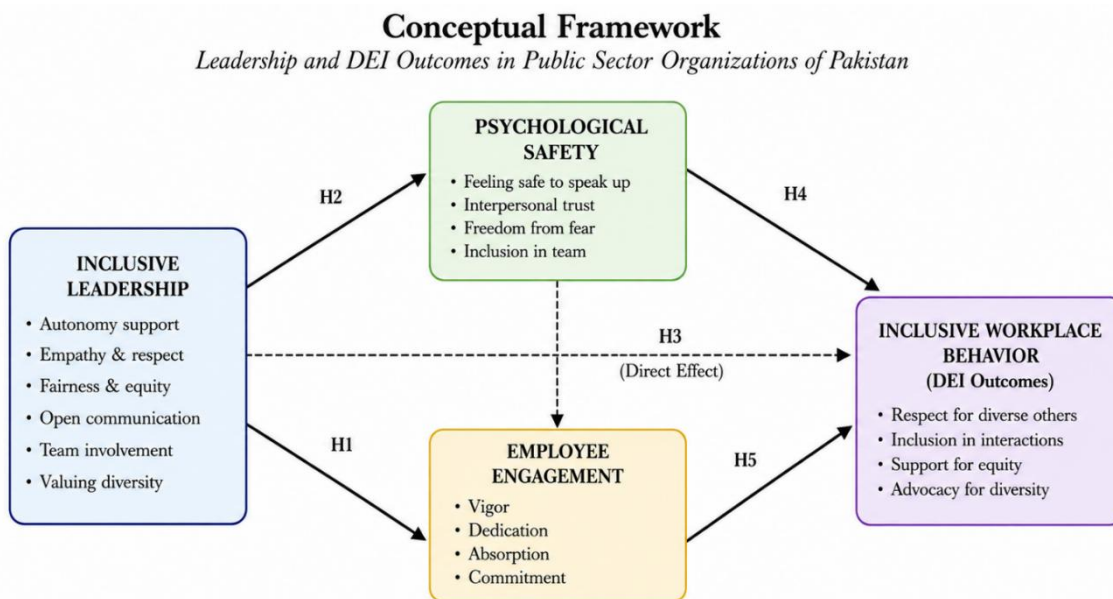
H5: Employee engagement mediates the relationship between inclusive leadership and employees' inclusive workplace behavior.

H6: Psychological safety and employee engagement jointly mediate the relationship between inclusive leadership and inclusive workplace behavior.

H7: Inclusive leadership enhances employees’ openness toward diversity by fostering autonomy-supportive and empathetic work environments (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

2.7 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study illustrates the relationship between inclusive leadership (independent variable) and inclusive workplace behavior (dependent variable), mediated by psychological safety and employee engagement, with theoretical support from leadership theory and Self-Determination Theory (SDT).



Inclusive leadership in public sector organizations of Pakistan is expected to create an environment where employees feel respected, valued, and psychologically safe. When leaders demonstrate fairness, empathy, and openness, employees are more likely to engage in work activities and express themselves without fear of negative consequences. Psychological safety acts as a cognitive-emotional mechanism that enables employees to participate in inclusive behaviors, share ideas, and interact positively across diverse groups. Employee engagement further strengthens this process by increasing motivation, commitment, and organizational attachment.

Consistent with autonomy-supportive and respectful environments enhance internalization of inclusive values, leading to more sustainable DEI outcomes. In Pakistan’s public sector context—characterized by hierarchy and formal authority structures leadership becomes

especially critical in shaping these psychological and behavioral outcomes.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Paradigm

This study is grounded in the positivist research paradigm, which assumes that reality is objective, measurable and can be analyzed through statistical methods. The positivist approach is suitable for this study because it focuses on examining causal relationships among variables related to inclusive leadership and DEI outcomes in public sector organizations of Pakistan.

The study further adopts a deductive research approach, where hypotheses are derived from existing theories and literature and then empirically tested using quantitative data. This approach is aligned with leadership and behavioral research traditions that emphasize theory testing rather than theory building.

3.2 Research Design

A quantitative, cross-sectional research design was employed to investigate the relationships among inclusive leadership, psychological safety, employee engagement, and inclusive workplace behavior. Data was collected at a single point in time, making it suitable for examining associations among variables without manipulating the study environment. This design allows for efficient hypothesis testing and is widely used in organizational behavior research, particularly when examining perceptual and behavioral constructs in workplace settings.

3.3 The Context of Study

The study was conducted in public sector organizations of Pakistan, including administrative departments, educational institutions and service delivery organizations. These organizations represent diverse workforces characterized by variations in ethnicity, language, culture and hierarchical structures.

Public sector organizations in Pakistan provide a relevant context for this research due to; strong hierarchical leadership systems, high workforce diversity, emerging focus on inclusion and equity as well as organizational challenges related to fairness and employee engagement.

3.4 Population and Sampling

The target population consisted of employees working in public sector organizations of Pakistan, including, administrative staff, supervisory staff, middle management and operational and technical employees. These respondents were selected because they directly experience leadership practices and organizational inclusion dynamics.

A non-probability convenience sampling technique was used due to accessibility and feasibility considerations in public sector organizations. A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed, and all 350 questionnaires were duly completed and returned, resulting in a 100% response rate. All responses were found to be valid and usable for analysis, indicating

strong engagement from respondents. The sample size is considered adequate for SPSS-based analysis and SEM-related testing, ensuring sufficient statistical power for hypothesis testing.

3.5 Data Collection

Primary data was collected through a well-structured survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed personally and through organizational contacts to employees in selected public sector institutions. Respondents were informed about; purpose of the study, voluntary participation, confidentiality and anonymity for academic use of data only. A 5-point Likert scale was used (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). All constructs were measured using adapted, validated scales from established literature.

3.6 Data Analysis Technique

Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency), Reliability analysis (Cronbach’s Alpha), Correlation analysis (Pearson correlation), Regression analysis for hypothesis testing and Mediation analysis using regression-based approach were carried out for interpretation of results of study.

3.7 Hypothesis Testing Approach

The study tested hypotheses using regression-based statistical methods. The relationships among variables were examined through direct and indirect effects. Direct relationships between inclusive leadership, psychological safety, employee engagement, and inclusive workplace behavior

Mediating effects of psychological safety and employee engagement. This section presents the statistical analysis results for the study 'Inclusive Leadership and DEI Outcomes in Public Sector Organizations of Pakistan'.

Table 1
Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	218 (62.3%)
Gender	Female	132 (37.7%)
Age	21-30 Years	96 (27.4%)
Age	31-40 Years	145 (41.4%)
Age	41-50 Years	82 (23.4%)
Age	51 and above	27 (7.8%)

Table 2
Reliability Analysis

Construct	Items	Cronbach Alpha
Inclusive Leadership	6	0.891
Psychological Safety	5	0.873
Employee Engagement	5	0.886

Inclusive Workplace Behavior	6	0.901
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Table 3
Correlation Analysis

Variables	IL	PS	EE	IWB
IL	1	.692	.655	.718
PS	.692	1	.634	.701
EE	.655	.634	1	.689
IWB	.718	.701	.689	1

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4
Regression Analysis

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta	t-value	Result
H1	IL → EE	0.655	12.84	Supported
H2	IL → PS	0.692	13.91	Supported
H3	IL → IWB	0.718	14.63	Supported
H4	PS → IWB	0.541	10.72	Supported
H5	EE → IWB	0.497	9.94	Supported

Table 5
Mediation Analysis

Path	Indirect Effect	Boot SE	p-value	Decision
IL → PS → IWB	0.374	0.041	0.000	Supported
IL → EE → IWB	0.326	0.038	0.000	Supported

The results confirmed all hypothesized relationships. Inclusive leadership positively influenced psychological safety, employee engagement, and inclusive workplace behavior. Both mediators significantly strengthened DEI outcomes.

4. Research Findings

The present study examined the impact of inclusive leadership on employees' inclusive workplace behavior in public sector organizations of Pakistan, while considering the mediating roles of psychological safety and employee engagement. A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed among employees working in different public sector institutions through convenience sampling, and all questionnaires were successfully returned, resulting in a 100% response rate. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) through regression and mediation analyses under a positivist and deductive research framework.

The findings revealed that inclusive leadership has a strong and statistically significant positive effect on employee engagement. Employees working under leaders who demonstrate openness, fairness, empathy, and participative decision-making reported higher levels of commitment, motivation, and involvement in organizational activities. These findings support the argument that inclusive leaders create supportive environments that encourage employees to invest themselves emotionally and cognitively in their work responsibilities.

The results further confirmed that inclusive leadership significantly influences psychological safety among employees. Employees who perceived their leaders as inclusive felt safer expressing opinions, sharing ideas, and participating in organizational discussions without fear of criticism or negative consequences. This finding is particularly important in Pakistan's public sector organizations, where hierarchical structures and rigid authority systems often discourage open communication and employee voice.

The study also established a direct positive relationship between inclusive leadership and inclusive workplace behavior. Employees under inclusive leaders demonstrated stronger cooperation, respect for diversity, supportive interpersonal interactions, and willingness to engage with colleagues from diverse backgrounds. These findings indicate that inclusive leadership contributes significantly toward creating diversity-supportive organizational cultures.

Mediation analysis demonstrated that psychological safety partially mediates the relationship between inclusive leadership and inclusive workplace behavior. This indicates that inclusive leaders improve workplace inclusion by fostering environments where employees feel emotionally secure and respected. Similarly, employee engagement also significantly mediated the relationship between inclusive leadership and inclusive workplace behavior, suggesting that motivated and engaged employees are more likely to practice inclusive behaviors within organizations.

Furthermore, the serial mediation analysis confirmed that psychological safety and employee engagement jointly mediate the relationship between inclusive leadership and inclusive workplace behavior. Inclusive leadership first enhances employees' feelings of safety and belonging, which subsequently increases engagement levels and ultimately promotes inclusive workplace behavior. The combined mediation effect highlights the interconnected psychological and behavioral mechanisms through which leadership influences DEI-related outcomes.

The findings also supported the proposition derived from Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2017) suggests that autonomy-supportive and empathetic leadership environments strengthen employees' openness toward diversity and inclusion. Employees experiencing respectful treatment and participative leadership were found to internalize inclusive values more effectively and demonstrate sustainable inclusive behaviors.

Overall, all proposed hypotheses (H1–H7) were supported, indicating that inclusive leadership plays a critical role in shaping employee attitudes, psychological states, and inclusive workplace behaviors in Pakistan’s public sector organizations.

4.1 Conclusion

This study concludes that inclusive leadership is a vital organizational factor that significantly improves employee engagement, psychological safety, and inclusive workplace behavior in public sector organizations of Pakistan. The findings demonstrate that leaders who practice fairness, openness, empathy, respect, and participation create psychologically secure environments where employees feel valued and motivated to contribute positively toward organizational diversity and inclusion objectives.

The study further concludes that psychological safety and employee engagement are essential mechanisms through which inclusive leadership translates into inclusive workplace behavior. Employees who feel safe and engaged are more likely to collaborate effectively, appreciate diversity, and support inclusive organizational practices. The joint mediation effect indicates that leadership-driven psychological and motivational processes collectively shape inclusive organizational climates.

The research also highlights the practical importance of Self-Determination Theory in explaining employee inclusion outcomes. Autonomy-supportive leadership behaviors enhance employees’ internal motivation and willingness to embrace diversity-related values. In the context of Pakistan’s public sector organizations, where formal hierarchies and centralized structures often limit employee participation, inclusive leadership emerges as a strategic tool for fostering organizational harmony, trust, and sustainable DEI practices.

Therefore, the study recommends that public sector institutions in Pakistan invest in leadership development programs focusing on empathy, participation, communication, fairness, and inclusion competencies. Organizational policies promoting psychological safety and employee involvement can significantly strengthen workplace inclusion and employee well-being.

4.2 Research Limitations and Future Dimensions

Despite its theoretical and practical contributions, the study contains several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the study was conducted only within public sector organizations of Pakistan, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to private sector organizations or other cultural and institutional contexts. Organizational structures and leadership dynamics may differ across sectors and countries. Second, the study adopted a convenience sampling technique, which may introduce sampling bias and reduce the representativeness of the population. Although the response rate was exceptionally high, the use of probability sampling methods could provide more robust generalizable findings. Third, the research relied on cross-sectional data collected at one point in time. As a result, causal relationships among inclusive leadership, psychological safety, employee engagement, and inclusive workplace behavior cannot be established with complete certainty. Longitudinal

studies would provide stronger evidence regarding causal effects and behavioral changes over time. Fourth, the study used self-reported questionnaires, which may create the possibility of common method bias and social desirability bias. Employees may have responded in a socially acceptable manner rather than expressing completely objective perceptions. Fifth, the study focused only on psychological safety and employee engagement as mediating variables. Other potential psychological and organizational factors such as organizational trust, employee empowerment, diversity climate, organizational justice, and emotional intelligence were not examined. Finally, the study primarily employed quantitative methods using SPSS-based statistical analysis. The absence of qualitative insights limited the deeper understanding of employee experiences and contextual organizational realities.

Future researchers may expand this study by examining inclusive leadership in private sector organizations, multinational corporations, educational institutions, healthcare organizations, and non-governmental sectors to compare leadership and inclusion dynamics across industries. Future studies may also employ probability sampling techniques and larger sample sizes to improve the generalizability and external validity of findings. Comparative studies across provinces or between developed and developing countries may provide broader cultural insights regarding inclusive leadership practices.

Longitudinal research designs are recommended to better understand how inclusive leadership influences employee behavior over time and to establish stronger causal relationships among study variables. Researchers may also adopt mixed-method approaches by integrating qualitative interviews, focus groups, or case studies to gain richer contextual understanding of workplace inclusion experiences. Additionally, future studies can investigate other mediating and moderating variables such as organizational trust, diversity climate, psychological empowerment, emotional intelligence, organizational justice, employee resilience, and innovation behavior. Such variables may further explain the mechanisms through which inclusive leadership shapes organizational outcomes.

Researchers may also explore demographic and generational differences in perceptions of inclusion and leadership effectiveness, particularly among Generation Z and younger employees entering Pakistan's workforce. This would contribute toward understanding evolving workplace expectations and diversity management strategies. Finally, future research may examine the role of digital leadership, remote work environments, and AI-supported HR practices in promoting inclusive organizational cultures in the modern workplace.

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