Influence of Responsible Leadership on Inclusive Organizations: A Mixed-Method Study

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ABSTRACT

The ever-increasing diversity in organizations demands deliberate efforts to include the members in organizational activities. Responsible leadership, a blend of corporate social responsibility, ethics, and leadership, can generate willing cooperation and an urge to fully participate, which is pivotal to the success of the inclusive organization. This study explores the influence of responsible leadership on inclusive organization and uncovers its domains and pathways. Sequential mixed methods design has been adopted using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative data comprise 25 semi-structured in-depth interviews, and quantitative data 800 responses on questionnaires, collected from eight organizations, four each from the manufacturing and services sectors. It has been found that responsible leadership significantly influences the inclusive organization. The influence is exerted in social and ethical domains and follows five different pathways within each domain. It is also concluded that a responsible leadership style is better suited for inclusive organizations.

Modern organizations focus on inclusion to manage a diverse workforce for numerous business and social advantages. Inclusion offsets the negative consequences of diversity and brings

innovation, a variety of perspectives, and creativity to an organization for long-term sustainability (Gomez & Bernet, 2019). The degree to which employees are respected, valued, and supported to fully participate in organizational activities reflects inclusive policies and practices (Ramsay, 2019). In an inclusive organization, each employee is trusted and considered a faithful organizational member (Nishi, 2013). Mor Barak (2000) was one of the pioneers in defining an inclusive organization as an organization where all employees are accepted as valued members, recognized for their unique characteristics, and encouraged to fully participate in the workplace.

For leading inclusive organizations, a leadership cognizant of the sensitivities of diversity in the internal and external environment seems essential (Irfan et al., 2020; Mousa & Puhakka, 2019). Based on the idea that organizational leaders should meet relevant social, environmental, and futuristic responsibilities, responsible leadership will likely meet the multifarious requirements of inclusive organizations (Gomez & Bernet, 2019). Responsible leadership is a unique leadership style that emphasizes a positive contribution to society and goes beyond ordinary business affairs in making the world a better place. Voegtlin (2011) defines responsible leadership as having awareness and consideration of the consequences of its actions for all stakeholders and exerting its influence by engaging the affected stakeholders through an active dialogue.

Under responsible leadership, inclusion is a dynamic concept implemented in organizational policies, practices, and culture (Ashikali et al., 2021; Gomez & Bernet, 2019). A few studies have indicated the possibility of responsible leadership's influence on inclusive organizations (Doh & Quigley, 2014; Downey et al., 2015; Mousa, 2019). Responsible leadership and inclusion incite active involvement of organizations with stakeholders in nurturing righteousness and fulfillment of social obligations while doing good to humanity for a sustainable future (Maak, 2007; Zientara & Zamojska, 2018). The synergy of inclusive organization with responsible leadership as a solution to the complexities of modern organizations has not been adequately explored and needs to be studied (Chung et al., 2020). These complexities are created by negative aspects of diversity and a multitude of responsibilities to be fulfilled by responsible leaders. Diversity is embraced to benefit the organization, and leaders ought to be extra-ordinarily sensitive to their responsibilities to avoid the negative aspects of having a diverse workforce. Among myriad complexities, six seem to impact the organizations comparatively more. First, diversity adds to various perspectives, but it may also cause excluded groups and individuals to lower the overall performance. Second, discrimination against minorities and disadvantaged factions is likely to increase in a diverse workforce. Third, the level of job satisfaction becomes difficult to maintain as a diversity of individuals/groups demands a high degree of flexibility in handling them, which may not be easy. Fourth, modern organizations go for diversity for enhanced innovations; however, it may add additional social and ethical responsibilities to the already over-loaded leaders. Fifth, being open to all factions of society makes the organization vulnerable and under constant watch by external stakeholders (like NGOs, Government agencies, media etc.). Sixth, workplace spirituality and work meaningfulness may differ in meaning for people of different ethnicities and religions. All these complexities are challenges that demand the synergy of inclusive organization with responsible leadership.

The gap in the current literature on the link between responsible leadership and inclusive organization is a potentially significant area of research for modern organizations. The gap relates specifically nature and strength of the relationship between responsible leadership and inclusive organization, which researchers have not explored. Secondly, the most effective leadership style for leading inclusive organizations is still not known. Some research does exist that introduces inclusive leadership as a new leadership style for making organizations inclusive; however, more research is needed for its validation (Thompson & Matkin, 2020). Thirdly, the domains and pathways of influencing responsible leadership on inclusive organization need to be explored. Finally, the mechanism of the influence of responsible leaders on an inclusive organization is still being investigated by researchers.

Recent happenings at the global level also urge research on responsible leadership and inclusive organization. The emergence of COVID-19 in December 2019 has highlighted the need for responsible leadership for organizations that could stand with society against any crisis while fulfilling their responsibilities towards the community (Irfan et al., 2021). Similarly, the killing of a person of color (George Floyd) by US Police in 2020 brought the issue of discrimination and lack of inclusion of marginalized groups sparking worldwide protests and the "Black Lives Matter" Movement (Mays, 2020). It highlighted the importance of inclusion at the societal and organizational levels. Similar events are likely to replicate with accentuated intensity and enhanced social and organizational life consequences. Therefore, the influence of responsible leadership on inclusive organizations needs to be investigated to harmonize the triad of society, organization, and leadership. This study examines the influence of responsible leadership on an inclusive organization. It uncovers the domains and pathways through which responsible leaders can assert inclusion in organizations to reap the social and business advantages of inclusive organizations.

Literature Review

Diversity in the workforce cannot be avoided because even a homogenous workforce will have diversity in terms of individual differences (Tang et al., 2017). The business performance and internal environment of an organization is adversely affected by resentment of marginalized and excluded individuals/groups (Jaén et al., 2021). Diverse individuals, if appropriately included in organizational activities and enabled to fully participate, can be highly advantageous to organizations. One of the major advantages of inclusion is improved performance at all levels; while inclusive teams in organizations usually perform 17% higher, their decision-making is likely to be 20% superior in quality, and behavior within inclusive teams is 29% more collaborative (Ye et al., 2019). Similarly, for an ordinary employee, attendance improves by one day in a year (for each employee) with an increase of 10% in the feeling of inclusion (Bourke & Espedido, 2019).

Literature indicates that organizational commitment, creativity, well-being, innovation, and trust improve with enhanced inclusion of employees (Brimhall & Barak, 2018; Shore et al., 2011). Included employees feel and report a reduced intention to quit and enhanced job satisfaction (Brimhall et al., 2017). Positive outcomes of inclusion are further boosted by the reduction of negative aspects of diversity like conflict, isolation, stress, organizational turnover, and job withdrawal (Hopkins et al., 2010; Mor Barak, 2015; Nishi, 2013). Through appropriate leadership, people can go beyond their cultural and demographic differences and create

inclusive teams, organizations, and communities (Megheirkouni et al, 2022). These are a few advantages of inclusive organizations, whereas vital aspects of inclusion, like its antecedents and suitable leadership style for inclusive organizations, have not been adequately explored.

Inclusion is the feeling of belongingness, respect, and value of an organizational member granted by the organization (Shore et al., 2011). Diverse organizations value their members irrespective of their differences and encourage them to share their perspectives and backgrounds for innovations and out of the box solutions (Shore & Chung, 2022). Organizations that aim to increase workforce diversity need to foster an inclusive climate to facilitate due involvement and willing contributions by diverse members (Mor Barak et al., 2016). An inclusive climate offers equal opportunities for all and encourages minority employees to fully participate in organizational activities (Shore et al., 2011). The knowledge regarding concrete procedures to create an inclusive climate is largely unknown and not easy for an organization to realize. The inclusive behaviors of leaders as well as employees play a crucial role in generating inclusion in organizations with rising diversity (Nishii, 2013). By nurturing an inclusive climate organizations can minimize barriers for women and other minority employees and facilitate their full participation in workgroup and social activities.

Among the multitude of antecedents, leadership is considered a major antecedent in the creation and maintenance of inclusive organizations (Mousa & Puhakka, 2019). Responsible leaders who are emotionally intelligent to deal with diverse stakeholders are expected to impact inclusive organizations positively. Responsible leaders are more sensitive to their responsibilities; therefore, they are considered to possess an attitude of awareness and acceptance of both similarities and differences among people (Çivitci, 2020). Differences (diversity) are unique aspects among people due to cultural and individual factors, e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, national origin, and personality (Burhan et al., 2022). These factors impact the abilities of individuals to interact effectively within and across groups and shape their behaviors. In the workplace, effective management of diversity has to be based on the recognition of commonalities/similarities and awareness of differences, given the increased need for interactions with others from a variety of sociocultural backgrounds (Vu-Fulmer, 2022).

The influence of responsible leadership for the enhancement of inclusion in organizations makes a strong case for its study to guide scholars, practitioners, and the general public. Responsible leadership seems more likely to influence inclusive organizations than other leadership styles for numerous reasons. Other leadership styles mainly focus on the dyadic nature of relations between the leaders and followers (Trevino et al., 2003; Zhao & Zhou, 2019). In contrast, responsible leadership, with its stakeholder orientation, believes in the involvement of all groups and individuals in decision-making (Wang & Xu, 2019). Engagement with diverse people and the creation of consensus are prominent modus operandi for responsible leaders, and these are highly desirable for inclusive organizations.

Responsible leadership has to keep ethics and moral values as guiding principles while dealing with dilemmas and conflicts among diverse people (Cameron, 2011). Moral awareness, ethical reflection, and fair decision-making bring ethical and responsible leadership styles closer to each other, with a different stakeholder orientation (Maak, 2007). The commitment of responsible leaders to contribute towards a better world by benefitting all stakeholders makes them suitable for inclusive organizations (Waldman et al., 2020). When employees see them

doing good to humanity, they consider their contribution to the organization more meaningful, and willingly include themselves in organizational activities (Chung et al., 2020). Responsible leaders respect differences and try to capitalize on strengths while remaining aware of the sensitivities of every individual. Through their emotional intelligence, responsible leaders do not antagonize anyone and nurture pleasant relationships (Mousa & Puhakka, 2019). These characteristics make responsible leadership highly suitable for inclusive organizations.

At the organizational level, responsible leaders need to ensure workgroup as well as social inclusion of all members irrespective of their differences (Mousa & Puhakka, 2019). Workgroup inclusion encompasses the full participation of organizational members in work-related activities (Nishii, 2013). Workgroup inclusion is usually the focus of organizations because it is strongly related to the performance of the organization (Shore & Chung, 2022). Social inclusion involves all members in social activities and a network of social relations within an organization (Suciu et al., 2020). Social inclusion lays the foundations for workgroup inclusion and has to be recognized as equally essential for diverse organizations (Adams et al., 2020). It is expected that responsible leadership, due to its salient feature of involving all stakeholders in organizational affairs, can influence workgroup and social inclusion.

Modern communication means, if appropriately utilized, can enhance inclusion (Sánchez et al., 2019). Modern technology has provided numerous means of virtual interaction which does not require the physical presence of individuals. There is little research investigating the impact of virtual interaction on inclusive organizations (Durko & Martens, 2021). Actually, virtual interaction can be used by responsible leaders/organizational members to provide or seek support like emotional support, informational support, and social companionship (Hawdon & Ryan, 2012). These types of support depend on communication; virtual interaction can be at par with face-to-face interaction. In fact, virtual interaction is probably a better source of certain types of support as compared to face-to-face contact (Anggraini & Mustaqim, 2020). Emotional support makes a person feel valued and accepted and is likely to contribute towards inclusion.

If the literature is viewed critically, it becomes evident that little research exists linking responsible leadership with inclusive organization. It is still unclear which leadership style is more suitable for inclusive organizations and why? Similarly, the extent to which responsible leaders can influence inclusive organizations and what under-lying mechanisms can enhance this influence has not been adequately researched. The impact of modern communication means assistance to responsible leaders in stakeholder management, and the creation of inclusion in the organization gap. Additionally, which dimensions of an inclusive organization are more affected by responsible leadership? The domains and pathways of influence need to be uncovered to guide the leadership of diverse organizations.

Theoretical Framework

The linkage between responsible leadership and inclusive organization is expected based on Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory. LMX theory postulates that the relationship between a leader and follower (member) is mainly a relational exchange process (Graen & Scandura, 1987). The quality of the relationship is determined by the characteristics of the leader as well as the follower (Derindag et al., 2021; Dulebohn et al., 2012). It means that LMX Theory explains the influence of responsible leadership (relational dimension) on inclusive

organizations, which emphasizes the inclusion of a workforce with varied characteristics, i.e., diversity (Voegtlin, 2011).

Other similar theories like Social Exchange Theory and Optimal Distinctiveness Theory, can also illustrate the influence of responsible leadership on an inclusive organization. In light of these two theories, inclusion can be conceptualized as an exchange as well as a dynamic cognitive process (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Hirvi et al., 2020). Social Exchange Theory, similar to LMX Theory, postulates that the relations between people are social exchanges. The difference is that the parties involved in the exchange do not have a leader-member relationship as in LMX Theory (Dulebohn et al., 2012). The exchange in an inclusive organization constitutes the full participation of organizational members in return for responsible leaders' respect, recognition, and fair treatment.

Optimal Distinctiveness Theory elaborates on the inclusion of an organizational member as an outcome of a balance between uniqueness and belongingness (Brewer & Roccas, 2001; Buengeler et al., 2021). In fact, treatment at par with fellow members (belongingness), as well as special status due to peculiarities and contributions (uniqueness) of that member, are essential for the inclusion of an organizational member. Similarly, the influence of responsible leadership can also be partially explained by Stakeholder Theory which entails the establishment of mutually beneficial relations with all stakeholders (Parmar et al., 2010). The care manifested by responsible leaders for the benefit of organizational members generates the influence of responsible leaders on them, irrespective of their differences. Based on the review of literature, Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory, and other supporting theories, we expect an influence of responsible leadership on an inclusive organization. The literature on the influence of responsible leadership on an inclusive organization is scanty; particularly, in the context of Pakistan, it is negligible. The theoretical framework for this study is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Influence of Responsible Leadership on the Inclusive Organization (theoretical framework)
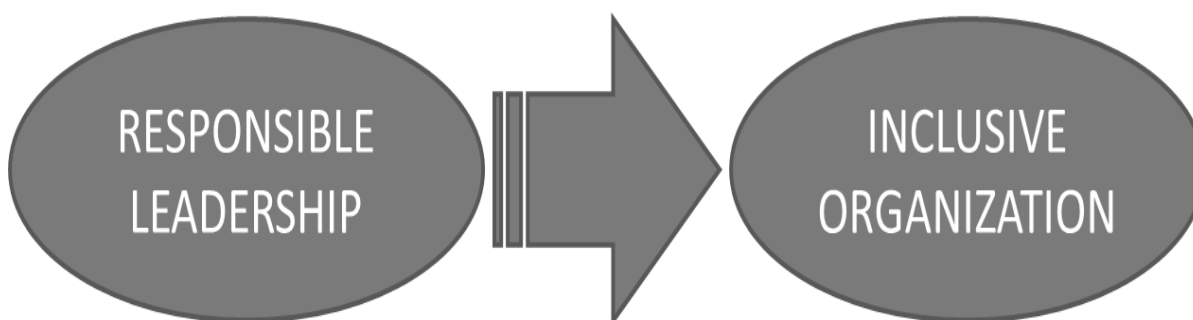
Methodology

This study follows the sequential exploratory design of mixed-method research in which the qualitative method is used first, followed by the quantitative method. As per Holstein (2014), the exploratory sequential design allows an in-depth understanding of the relevant variables qualitatively while its quantitative analysis further verifies and refines the understanding. The subjective assessment by 25 respondents given in their interviews has been verified through quantitative analysis of the response received from 800 organizational members from eight organizations. A qualitative interview coupled with a questionnaire is the most commonly

occurring mixed-methods combination for data collection (Guetterman et al., 2019; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2010) used by this study.

Instruments

Primary data for the qualitative part of the study was collected through an in-depth semi-structured interview guide and through questionnaires for the quantitative part. The interview guide was developed using the guidelines proposed by Tang et al. (2017) and MacNamara (2010). They suggest that the researcher first list the information necessary to meet the research objectives. This information is then converted into questions sufficiently general to cover a wide range of responses and narrow enough to extract specific details. Each question should be designed to penetrate the experiences and gain maximum data from the interviews. Wording should be open-ended and incite detailed responses, i.e., the answer should not end with yes/no. Questions should be as neutral as possible and avoid wording that might influence answers, e.g., evocative or judgmental wording. Questions should be asked one at a time, and the interviewee should be encouraged through probing questions. Questions should be worded clearly, and any jargon or unknown term should be avoided or appropriately explained. Care must be taken while asking "why" questions. Social desirability and cultural sensitivities should be kept in mind while framing the interview guide. Creswell et al. (2007) also suggests being flexible with research questions being constructed. The researcher must construct questions to keep participants on focus with their responses to the questions. In addition, the researcher must be prepared with follow-up questions or prompts in order to ensure that they obtain optimal responses from participants.

Interview questions were designed after an in-depth review of the literature and discussion with peers. The objective of the study was kept in view while designing the questions, and they were validated through a pilot study involving five respondents. Five experts, an academician, a senior manager, a manager in a manufacturing company, and a director and assistant director in a services firm, were consulted for review. The formulation of the interview guide and its refinement through the pilot study agreed with the suggestions of scholars (Bryman & Burgess, 2002; Silverman, 2015). The interview guide/protocol is initially designed based on the main constructs of interest. A key issue when refining the guide/protocol is to determine the adequacy of the questions. While refining, it is essential to determine if a particular respondent can answer the research questions and to ensure clarity of the meaning of the interview questions (Bryman & Burgess, 2002). To refine the interview guide, the suggested approach is to note the weaknesses of the interview guide as-you-go. It is also desired to note whether a brief statement is required before initial questions to paint a picture to facilitate interviewees (Silverman, 2015). It is also necessary to note that some participants requested rephrasing and reexplaining some questions before they were answered. The pilot study should allow determining if interview questions prompted the participants to provide the data essential to answering research questions.

For quantitative data collection, numerous scales were available to measure inclusion in an organization. However, this study adapted items from different scales instead of choosing one instrument to relate the study to the peculiar socio-cultural and economic environment of South Asia / Pakistan. The inclusion scale comprised 47 items considering the four dimensions of an inclusive organization. After purification through EFA, 35 items were retained, exhibiting

acceptable validity and reliability statistics (presented in Table 7 and 8). The scale comprising six responsibility-oriented dimensions developed by Irfan et al. (2021) was used to measure the influence of responsible leadership. The dimensions of responsible leadership and their relevant 59 items were extracted from the qualitative part of the study. The items were refined through EFA, and after deleting items with poor or cross-loading on multiple factors, 49 items were retained. CFA was carried out, and discriminant and convergent validity were checked along with reliability measures (presented in Table 5 and 6).

Sample

The qualitative part of the study comprised 25 in-depth interviews with experts/practitioners, while for the quantitative part, data from 800 respondents from 8 organizations were collected (four each organization from the manufacturing and services sectors). The number of employees in each organization was more than 1000. Responses from a few organizations are generally considered desirable to minimize organization-specific biases induced in data collected from one organization (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). There is no set rule for the number of organizations; however, eight organizations are considered sufficient considering the methodology of similar studies. In the qualitative study, a sample size of 25 interviews was considered adequate. Going beyond a certain number of interviews yields only repetitions without any new theme/perception/insight, called the "saturation point" that usually occurs after 20 interviews (Mason, 2010). The sample size for the quantitative study was 800 participants selected from eight organizations. This sample size was considered adequate because Hair et al. (2010) have recommended a sample size of 200 for studies using SEM for data analysis. Similarly, according to the tables formulated by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), for a population of more than 100,000, a sample size of 384 is appropriate (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Sample demographic details have been covered in respective result sections (Table 1 and 3).

Data Analysis

NVivo software was used for thematic analysis and interpreting qualitative data. The thematic analysis was carried out following the steps for qualitative analysis suggested by Creswell and Creswell (2017). For quantitative analysis, raw data were entered into spreadsheets of Excel for coding and cleaning. The data was then imported into SPSS and AMOS for descriptive and inferential quantitative statistical analysis.

Results

Qualitative Part of the Study

Sample Analysis - Profile of Respondents. Respondents were selected from different levels of the leadership hierarchy who had sufficient experience, exposure to dynamics of policy formulation, and an active role in the implementation of policies and practices. These aspects of an organizational member coupled with a leadership position were likely to make them a suitable choice for providing information on responsible leadership and inclusive organization (Waldman et al., 2020). The summary of the demographic profiles of respondents is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Respondent Profile

ID	Sector	Designation	Gender	Experience	Religion	Culture	Education
1.	Manufacturing	CEO	Male	35	Islam	Majority	MS
2.	Manufacturing	Director	Female	28	Islam	Majority	MS
3.	Manufacturing	Line Manager	Male	23	Islam	Minority	MBA
4.	Manufacturing	Managing Director	Male	36	Islam	Majority	MSc
5.	Manufacturing	Director	Male	30	Christian	Majority	MBA
6.	Manufacturing	Director	Male	29	Islam	Majority	MSc
7.	Manufacturing	CEO	Male	30	Islam	Majority	BSc Engr
8.	Manufacturing	Line Manager	Male	20	Sikh	Majority	MBA
9.	Manufacturing	Director	Female	24	Islam	Majority	MBA
10.	Services	CEO	Male	25	Islam	Majority	MSc
11.	Services	Director	Male	25	Islam	Minority	MSc
12.	Services	Director	Male	23	Hindu	Majority	MBA
13.	Services	CEO	Female	28	Islam	Majority	MSc
14.	Services	Senior Manager	Male	26	Islam	Majority	MS
15.	Services	Manager	Male	22	Christian	Majority	MSc
16.	Services	CEO	Male	26	Islam	Majority	BSc Engr
17.	Services	Director	Male	24	Islam	Majority	MSc
18.	Services	Senior Manager	Male	25	Islam	Minority	MSc
19.	Services	Managing Director	Female	27	Islam	Majority	MS
20.	Services	Senior Manager	Male	23	Islam	Majority	MBA
21.	Services	Manager	Male	28	Islam	Minority	MSc
22.	Manufacturing	Administrator	Male	29	Islam	Majority	MS
23.	Manufacturing	Director	Female	24	Islam	Majority	MBA
24.	Manufacturing	Secretory	Male	27	Islam	Minority	MSc
25.	Manufacturing	Director	Male	26	Islam	Majority	MSc

Note. Majority culture means the respondent belongs to the culture of the majority of employees in the organization, and Minority means the respondent does not belong to the culture of the majority of employees.

Thematic Analysis

Qualitative part of the study aimed at exploring respondents' opinions concerning the influence of responsible leadership on the inclusive organization. We tried to penetrate the deeply embedded thoughts of people to reach how responsible leaders radiated their influence and in which domains it impacted the inclusive behaviors of organizational members. The responses were classified into codes, categories, sub-themes, and themes. Major themes that emerged from the interviews are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Themes, Sub-themes and Related Codes/Nodes

	Themes	Sub-Themes	Codes/Nodes
1.	Influence of Responsible Leadership on Inclusive Organization	Internal Influence of Responsible Leadership on inclusive Organization	Affirmation of the internal influence of responsible leadership on inclusive organization
			Inclusion of diverse workforce by responsible leader
			Responsible leadership and inclusive organization interact in social and ethical domains
		External Influence of Responsible Leadership on inclusive Organization	Affirmation of the external influence of responsible leadership on inclusive organization
			Inclusion of relevant stakeholders
			Inclusion of organization in the society through social responsibility and ethical approach
2.	Domains of Interaction of Responsible Leadership and Inclusive Organization	Social Domain of Interaction	Social relations and networks as instruments of influence
			Leading through consensus building
			Conflict resolution through discursive interactions
			Influence by social inclusion of diverse workforce
			Doing good for others - a binding force for diverse people
			Social activities for climate of trust and respect
			Reflected in performance of social, leadership and environmental responsibilities

		Ethical Domain of Interaction	Elimination of unethical behavior and protection against discrimination by responsible leaders
			Creation of inclusive climate for full participation
			Responsible leadership showcases itself as role model
			Sense of protection against exploitation
			Performance of business, ethical and legal responsibilities
3.	Pathways of Influence of Responsible Leadership on Inclusive Organization	Pathway through stakeholder orientation	Consistent care for the benefits of stakeholders
			Involvement of stakeholders in decision making
			Employee interest safeguarded
			Psychological safety and security add to influence
			Accountability to multiple stakeholders
			Collaborative modus operandi of handling conflicts
		Pathway through nobility of cause	Followers willingly include themselves for doing good
			Reflected in performance of social, ethical and environmental responsibilities
			Work as contribution to social service - adds to spirituality
			Devotion to noble cause make people ignore differences
		Pathway through moral virtues	Followers unite under leader due to moral virtues
			Emanate from fulfilment of ethical, social, business, leadership, and legal responsibilities
			Virtues create image as impartial, fair, and unbiased
			Discrimination, nepotism, favoritism not expected from responsible leaders
			Honest and truthful leader could equitably include all
		Pathway through sense of belonging	Created by fulfilment of social and leadership responsibilities
			Employees identify themselves with the organization
			Employees' pride in the socially responsible and ethical behavior of leaders and the organization.
			Whole-hearted participation generate sense of belonging
			Cognizance of sensitivities by responsible leaders
			Sense of belonging rooted in social relations
		Pathway through respect for identity	Outcome of the respect for their specialties/perspectives
			Desire for preservation of identity and uniqueness
			Sensitivity to religious, cultural, racial, and linguistic identities
			Protection of identities against suppression and discrimination
			Respecting the uniqueness of members
			Intelligent handling by responsible leadership

Influence of Responsible Leadership on Inclusive Organization. Respondents were unanimous in their opinion that responsible leadership influenced the inclusive organization. Arguments supporting this point by Respondents 1, 7, 13, 18, and 24 declared that responsible leadership could create inclusion inside and outside the organization. Inside the organization, they included the diverse workforce, while outside the organization they included relevant stakeholders in the activities. Experience of Respondents 4, 9, 17, 18, 21, and 22 indicated another view of the influence of responsible leaders who argued responsible leaders included their organizations in society through their corporate social responsibility and ethical approach. In the opinion of Respondents, 3, 6, 8, 10, 11, and 25, responsible leadership and inclusive organization seemed to interact in social and ethical domains. Respondent 19 commented about the influence of responsible leadership by saying:

"Responsible leadership has to be consistently committed to social welfare. The visible and concrete actions for social welfare speak for themselves, and the organization musters goodwill greater than its investment in the long run. The influence of responsible leadership through their commitment to social welfare earns willing cooperation and full participation from internal and external stakeholders."

Domains of Interaction – Responsible Leadership and Inclusive Organization. Analysis of respondents' input indicated that responsible leadership influenced inclusive organization through social and ethical domains. Social domain was explained by Respondents 3, 6, 10, and 11 by saying that responsible leadership maintained close and friendly relations with all stakeholders. Social relations and networks were the main instruments for them for generation and exertion of influence, and they deliberately created wide social networks. Their desire to lead through consensus building and resolution of conflicts using active discourse guided them to emphasize social ties. From an organizational perspective, Respondents 3, 12, 16, and 19 stated, "In the social domain, responsible leadership influenced inclusive organization through social inclusion of diverse workforce in organizational activities." The pride of doing good for others creates a binding force among organizational members in an inclusive organization despite demographic and other differences.

According to Respondents 3, 8, 15, and 22, responsible leadership, through social activities, maintained a climate of trust, respect, and tolerance in the inclusive organization. In the opinion of Respondents 2, 7, 13, and 24, every member of the organization considered the virtuous deed of doing good to others a valuable cause for full participation. As per Respondent-4, "Social integration of people from different cultures, religions, gender, languages, etc., was the essence of the inclusive organization, that is positively influenced by responsible leadership for a noble cause."

The second domain in which responsible leadership influenced inclusive organization was ethics. Respondents 1, 8, 13, 15, and 16 said that responsible leaders tried to eliminate unethical behavior and gave confidence to their employees for protection against discrimination and unfair treatment. In an inclusive organization, responsible leaders were likely to create an inclusive climate for a diverse workforce to fully participate under the umbrella of justice. According to Respondents 6, 9, 20, and 25, responsible leadership showcased itself as an ethical role model to everyone inside and outside the organization. Their influence on inclusive organization was mainly founded on the sense of protection by their employees against discrimination, injustice, and unfair treatment.

Social and ethical domains provided suitable avenues for responsible leadership to influence the behavior of organizational members. The performance in the social domain was through the fulfillment of social, leadership, and environmental responsibilities. Similarly, the indirect influence of responsible leadership was observed by respondents through their performance in fulfillment of ethical, business, and legal responsibilities. The influence of responsible leadership through social and ethical domains is depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Domains and Pathways of Influence of Responsible Leadership on Inclusive Organization

Pathways of Influence of Responsible Leadership on Inclusive Organization. Within the social and ethical domains, the desired behavioral response (inclusion) of organizational members is stimulated by responsible leadership using five pathways. These pathways comprise stakeholder orientation, nobility of cause, moral virtues, a sense of belonging, and respect for identity. The first pathway is through stakeholder orientation, entailing consistent care for the benefit of each stakeholder by responsible leaders. They make every stakeholder feel included through involvement in decision-making and safeguarding their interests. Likewise, the interest of employees is also safeguarded, and they are given a due share in the benefits. Consequently, employees, irrespective of their differences, trust responsible leadership to get them the best from the organization. It adds to their psychological safety and physical security, that positively influences the inclusive organization. Respondents 2, 9, 17, 19, and 22 argued that responsible leadership operated through the creation of consensus among various stakeholders. Respondents 1, 5, 7, 10, and 23 supported the point that the consensus between diverse groups and individuals incited every member to participate fully. Respondent 21 emphasized stakeholder orientation and stated:

> *"Stakeholder orientation of responsible leadership forces them to strictly adhere to ethics and avoid discriminatory policies and practices. Diverse groups and individuals in organizations under responsible leadership live in harmony without fear of discrimination. This makes organizational members feel included and incites them to fully participate, expecting a fair, ethical, and unbiased treatment as well as reward for their wholehearted participation in organizational activities."*

Accountability to multiple stakeholders and a collaborative modus operandi of handling conflicts through consensus increased the ability of responsible leaders to influence the inclusive organization. As mentioned by Respondents 2, 5, 8, 11, 13, and 24, the second pathway is through the nobility of cause, where followers willingly include themselves in doing something good. This pathway is manifested by responsible leadership while fulfilling social, environmental, and ethical responsibilities. Supporting this point, Respondents 5, 11, 16, and 22 said that when employees saw their leaders doing good for humanity, work became more meaningful. The employees viewed their work as a contribution to social service that added an element of spirituality to their job. Noble causes at the individual level were enumerated by Respondents 1, 6, 9, and 21 to include fighting illiteracy, hunger, and disease, environmental protection, looking after worship places (mosques, churches, and temples, etc.), social services like water filtration plants, free dispensaries, and philanthropic donations, etc. Devotion to a noble cause made people ignore their differences and join their leaders in their noble efforts.

The third pathway is through moral virtues, in which followers unite under a responsible leader due to moral virtues like honesty, integrity, and trustworthiness. Respondents 2, 3, 6, 10, 19, and 22 stated that moral virtues acted like charisma and emanated from the observance of ethical, social, business, leadership, and legal responsibilities. Moral virtues create the image of responsible leaders as impartial, fair, and unbiased. According to Respondents 7, 15, 21, and 25, discrimination, nepotism, and favoritism are never expected from responsible leaders. Explaining the impact of moral virtues, Respondents 2, 10, 12, and 18 argued that an honest and truthful leader could equitably include all organizational members and win their trust. Respondent-16 emphasized honesty and truthfulness and said:

> *"Responsible leadership, with its overwhelming emphasis on ethics and moral values, is viewed as role models by employees. Treatment and handling of every member and group in the organization based on ethics and moral values create a feeling of being respectable members of their organization irrespective of their differences and organizational status. The perception of employees is that the responsible leaders will neither be dishonest nor tolerate anyone cheating others."*

The fourth pathway is through a sense of belonging created by responsible leaders during the performance of social and leadership responsibilities. In the opinion of Respondents 1, 4, 7, 12, 15, 16, and 21, due to a sense of belonging, the employees started to identify themselves with the organization and took pride in the socially responsible and ethical behavior of their leaders and the organization. Whole-hearted participation in organizational activities emanated from the sense of belonging of employees due to consistent cognizance of their sensitivities by responsible leaders, as highlighted by Respondents 2, 7, 12, and 20. Enhanced self-esteem due to recognition of contributions and appreciation by leaders was considered by Respondents 3, 8, 14, and 17 vital in creating a sense of belonging. From a social perspective, Respondents 1, 4, 9, and 15 indicated that the sense of belonging at the micro-level was deeply rooted in social relations among organizational members, i.e., peers, superiors, and subordinates. Respondents 5, 18, 23, and 24 emphasized that a sense of belonging enhanced the degree of inclusion felt by organizational members.

Lastly, the fifth pathway is through respect for identity, inciting inclusion of people in organizational activities as an outcome of the respect for their specialties (diverse perspectives like gender, ethnicity, religion, and language, etc.). Respondents 2, 4, 11, 14, 18, and 20 argued that individuals and groups desired to preserve their identity and uniqueness to augment their status within or among other groups in an inclusive organization. Particularly, people were sensitive to their religious, cultural, racial, and linguistic identities. Responsible leadership protects the identities of minority groups and individuals against suppression and discrimination as an obligatory part of its social and ethical responsibilities. In this regard, Respondents 6, 9, 13, and 16 argued that responsible leadership enhanced inclusion in an organization by respecting the uniqueness of all members. Respect for diversity was considered by respondents an essential dimension requiring intelligent handling by responsible leadership in inclusive organizations. The pathways have been diagrammatically shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Influence pathways of Responsible Leadership on Inclusive Organization
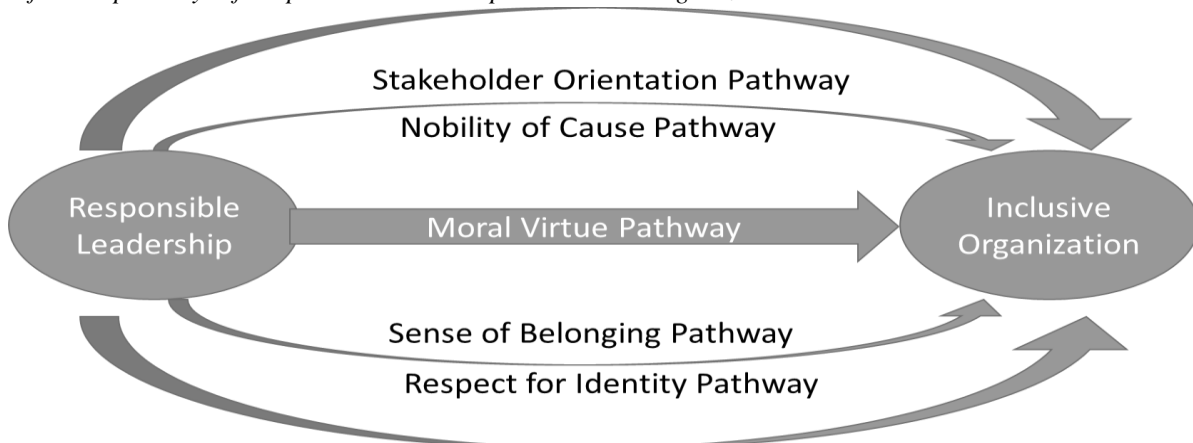
Quantitative Part of the Study

Sample Analysis – Profile of Respondents. The questionnaires were distributed to 2200 employees of eight organizations, while 842 questionnaires were received. Out of the received questionnaires, 42 were not usable being partially filled, while 800 responses were used in this study (response rate 36.3%). The researchers themselves administered the questionnaires to resolve any issues faced by participants. The list of payroll serial numbers of participants was maintained and checked for any repetitions of a person participating in the survey. Demographic details of respondents have been presented in Table 3. The details indicated that the majority (55%) of the respondents were employees, while respondents from senior managers/assistant directors were (17%) 136 and line managers/managers (28%) 224. A total of 67% of respondents had experienced between 10-30 years, while 19% had less than 10 years of experience. No respondent was recruited who had less than five years of experience.

Table 3

Demographic Data of the three collection efforts (N=800)

Demographics	Frequency / Percentage
Gender	
Male	512 / 64%
Female	288 / 36%
Age	
<25	96 / 12%
26–35	328 / 41%
36–45	176 / 22%
>45	200 / 25%
Level of Education	
Matriculate	88 / 11%
FA/FSc	288 / 36%
Graduate (BA/BSc)	248 / 31%
Masters (MA/MSc/MBA)	144 / 18%
MS/M. Phils/Ph.D.	32 / 4%
Position	
Directors / Assistant Directors	48 / 6%
Senior Managers / Managers	88 / 11%
Line Managers / Supervisors	224 / 28%
Employees	440 / 55%
Organizational Tenure	
Below10	152 / 19%
10–20	272 / 34%
21–30	264 / 33%
Above 30	112 / 14%
Religion	
Islam	624 / 78%
Christianity	64 / 8%
Hinduism	48 / 6%
Others	64 / 8%
Disability	
Disabled	32 / 4%
Not Disabled	768 / 96%
Ethnicity	
Pakistani	744 / 93%
Immigrant (Afghani, Bengali etc)	56 / 7%

Data Screening (missing values, illogical responses, and outliers)

Data screening is necessary to take care of missing values/responses and leveled responses resultant from carelessly filled questionnaires (Hair et al., 2010). For this study, the data has been analyzed using SEM (AMOS), which is sensitive to missing values. In line with guidelines by Sekaran and Bougie (2010), the questionnaires with even one missing value were discarded.

Illogical and leveled responses were treated like missing values, and the questionnaires having them were excluded from the analysis. Similarly, data was scrutinized for outliers in line with the method suggested by Byrne (2010). Extreme-values Table obtained through SPSS did not indicate any problem with outliers.

Tests for Assumptions of Multivariate Normality

Before multivariate analysis, it is necessary to test the data for normality, being a fundamental assumption for different analysis techniques (Hair et al., 2010). There are different tests for normality like Jarque Bera Test and working out Skewness and Kurtosis (Hair et al., 2010; Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Most of the studies use Skewness and Kurtosis for analyzing the normality of data. In this study, the AMOS program was used to obtain the Skewness and Kurtosis Table that indicated that the data was normally distributed.

Test for Multi-collinearity

The simplest procedure for testing multi-collinearity is applying the collinearity diagnosis provided by SPSS. The values of VIF (variance inflation factors) should not be greater than 10 and tolerance less than 0.2 for the absence of multi-collinearity (Hair et al., 1995; Kennedy, 1992). In this study, there is just one independent as well as dependent variable (responsible leadership), so the multi-collinearity issue is non-existent for the main purpose – the influence of responsible leadership on the inclusive organization. However, both responsible leadership and inclusive organization are multi-dimensional constructs, and multi-collinearity between their dimensions has also been checked. The results indicate that there is no multi-collinearity between the variables (dimensions) predicting the main constructs.

Factor Analysis – Responsible Leadership

Exploratory as well as confirmatory factor analysis were necessary to determine the suitability of the measurement instruments. Before factor analysis, data were tested for adequacy of sample size and sphericity (Table 4), which indicated that the sample size was adequate and data was suitable for Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). In addition, the correlation matrix was analyzed, revealing that most items had correlation coefficients of more than 0.5 indicating a strong correlation between them. EFA using SPSS software was done to obtain a preliminary indication of the factorial structure of responsible leadership with Principal Axis Factoring (PAF), which is one of the common factoring methods (Ford et al., 1986; Hinkin, 1998; Rummel, 1970).

Table 4

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.94
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	4.84
	Degrees of Freedom	1711
	Significance.	.000

EFA explained that all items loaded well on six factors, which accounted for 67.81% of the variance (factor loading values in Table 5). The scale was scrutinized for construct reliability using Cronbach's Alpha statistics (Table 6). Overall Cronbach's Alpha on the scale of 49 items was .96 (more than .7), and all constructs within the construct of responsible leadership were more than .7. The same was indicated by the average variance extracted and composite

reliability values listed in Table 6. The Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) again confirmed high loading values on six responsibility-oriented dimensions of responsible leadership.

Table 5

49 Items with Factor Loadings

Item No.	Social Responsibility (Factor 1)	Ethical Responsibility (Factor 2)	Leadership Responsibility (Factor 3)	Business Responsibility (Factor 4)	Legal Responsibility (Factor 5)	Environmental Responsibility (Factor 6)
1.	.877					
2.	.813					
3.	.696					
4.	.699					
5.	.811					
6.	.748					
7.	.634					
8.	.734					
9.		.785				
10.		.773				
11.		.881				
12.		.887				
13.		.852				
14.		.743				
15.		.851				
16.		.788				
17.		.864				
18.			.718			
19.			.777			
20.			.767			
21.			.726			
22.			.804			
23.			.797			
24.			.815			
25.			.874			
26.			.770			
27.			.752			
28.			.770			
29.				.804		
30.				.819		
31.				.805		
32.				.827		
33.				.754		
34.				.805		
35.				.885		
36.				.719		
37.				.818		
38.					.707	
39.					.711	
40.					.801	
41.					.815	
42.					.797	
43.					.815	
44.						.826
45.						.805
46.						.768
47.						.842
48.						.852
49.						.848
Eigen Values	11.28	8.32	6.82	6.35	4.45	4.18
Percentage Variance	23.02	16.98	13.92	12.96	9.09	8.59
KMO				.947		

Table 6
Reliability of Measurement of Constructs

Serial	Construct being measured	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE	CR
1	Social Responsibility	8	.95	.76	.96
2	Ethical Responsibility	9	.98	.82	.97
3	Leadership Responsibility	11	.98	.88	.98
4	Business Responsibility	9	.99	.90	.98
5	Legal Responsibility	6	.99	.73	.94
6	Environmental Responsibility	6	.98	.62	.91
	Total Items	49	.96	-	-

Factor Analysis –Inclusive Organization

For the measurement of inclusion in an organization, items from different scales were adapted and reworded to make them more understandable for the respondents. The initially listed 47 items were subjected to EFA, and then CFA was performed on the purified scale having 35 items. This was essential because the items had been reworded, inciting variation in response, and these were not used jointly in the context of Pakistan and required to be validated. EFA showed that the majority of items were loaded on four factors. Items poorly loaded (9 and 14) and loaded on multiple factors (2, 6,12, 17, 18, 25, 27, 34, 38, and 42) were dropped from further analysis. Resultantly, 35 items emerged that loaded on four factors well (Table 7). The finalized instrument was examined for reliability by working out Cronbach's Alpha which indicated that the instrument reliably measured each construct (Table 8). CFA was also carried out, confirming that the items loaded well on four factors determined through EFA.

Table 7
35 Items with Factor Loadings

Item No.	Workgroup Inclusion (Factor 1)	Inclusive Climate (Factor 2)	Social Inclusion (Factor 3)	Control on Exclusion (Factor 4)
1.	.80			
2.	.83			
3.	.81			
4.	.84			
5.	.85			
6.	.86			
7.	.86			
8.	.89			
9.	.82			
10.		.73		
11.		.78		
12.		.83		
13.		.81		
14.		.84		
15.		.77		
16.		.78		
17.		.72		
18.		.85		
19.			.86	
20.			.77	
21.			.79	
22.			.89	
23.			.84	
24.			.88	
25.			.87	
26.			.90	
27.			.90	
28.			.88	
29.				.89
30.				.88
31.				.89
32.				.83
33.				.90
34.				.90
35.				.92
Eigen Value	13.0	6.68	4.70	2.74
Percentage of Variance Explained	37.3	19.1	13.4	7.84
KMO		.96		

Table 8

Reliability of Items in the Measurement of Constructs/Dimensions

	Construct	Number of Items	Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)
1.	Workgroup Inclusion	9	.94
2.	Inclusive Climate	9	.95
3.	Social Inclusion	10	.95
4.	Controlling Exclusion / Ostracism	7	.94
5.	Inclusive Organization (Overall)	35	.89

Development and Specification of Measurement Models

This study proposed a simple conceptual model based on one independent (responsible leadership) and one dependent variable (inclusive organization). For the development of the measurement model, the present study adopted two-phase modeling as suggested by Hair et al. (2010), and Byrne (2010). In two-phased modeling, the measurement model is specified and fitted first before finally fitting the structural model. This approach was adopted because it was considered one of the best techniques of analysis that led to an accurate and best-fit structural model (Hair et al., 2010). The measurement models were evaluated based on "fit measures," as suggested by scholars (Byrne, 2010; Hair et al., 2010). In this regard, three to four fit indices were considered sufficient to determine the suitability of a model (Hair et al., 2010); however, all eight indices have been reported in this study. The process did not entail any deletion of items for fitment of measurement models; therefore, we moved on to hypothesis testing.

Hypothesis Testing

Influence of Responsible Leadership on Inclusive Organization

The main hypothesis was about the relationship between the two constructs of the study, i.e., responsible leadership and inclusive organization. Both constructs were measured using separate instruments to minimize common method bias (Hew & Kadir, 2016). The fitment of measurement models had already been performed for responsible leadership and inclusive organization. Both measurement models were linked to create a structural model by establishing the expected relation between them in AMOS, as shown in Figure 4. The model was run, and the results indicated a significant influence of responsible leadership on the inclusive organization (standardized regression coefficient +0.60, p-value 000 indicating significant influence). Model fit measures also revealed that the model provided an excellent fit of the data (x^2/df = 2.78, CFI = .97, SRMR = .07, RMSEA = .04, PClose = 1.000, GFI = .96, AGFI = .91, TLI = .91, *p* = .09). Based on the results, it was inferred that responsible leadership had a significant influence on the inclusive organization.

Figure 4

Structural Model – Influence of Responsible Leadership on Inclusive Organization
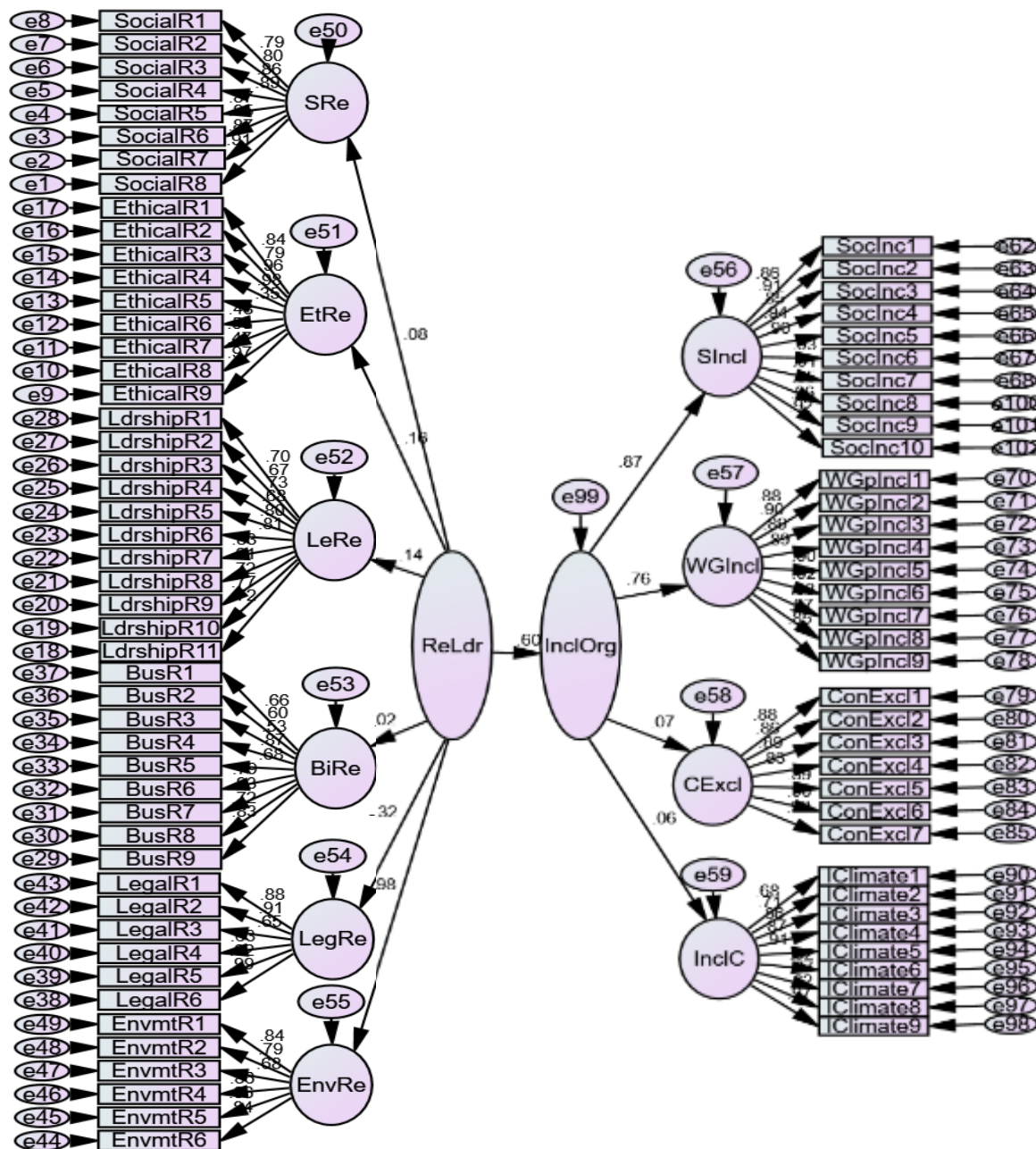
Influence of Responsible Leadership on the Dimensions of Inclusive Organization

To further confirm the influence of responsible leadership on inclusive organizations, it was deemed appropriate to analyze the influence of responsible leadership on each dimension of inclusive organization separately. This analysis also indicated the order of dimensions of inclusive organizations in which they were being affected by responsible leadership from most to least affected. This method of verification of influence by examining the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable and then on the dimensions of the dependent variable aligned with extant literature (Wahab et a., 2016).

A significant influence of responsible leadership was expected on the four dimensions of inclusive organization, i.e., workgroup inclusion, inclusive climate, social inclusion, and

control of exclusion. The model was formed by linking responsible leadership with each of the four dimensions of inclusive organization individually (Figure 5). The results revealed a significant influence of responsible leadership on the workgroup, $\beta = .45$, $p < .01$. Similarly, a significant influence on inclusive climate ($\beta = .11$, $p < .05$), social inclusion ($\beta = .50$, $p < .01$) and control on exclusion ($\beta = .23$, $p < .01$) was found. The model fit measures also verified that the model provided a good fit for the data in each case (Table 9).

Table 9

Fit Indices (Measures)

Relation	x^2/df	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA	PClose	GFI	AGFI	TLI
RL→IO	2.78	0.97	0.07	0.04	1.00	0.96	0.91	0.91
RL→WI	2.52	0.94	0.09	0.05	1.00	0.96	0.92	0.95
RL→IC	2.57	0.95	0.07	0.05	0.05	0.95	0.90	0.91
RL→SI	2.07	0.95	0.07	0.05	0.05	0.95	0.90	0.92
RL→CE	2.74	0.93	0.09	0.04	0.99	0.91	0.90	0.91

Note. RL – Responsible Leadership, IO – Inclusive Organization. WI – Workgroup Inclusion, IC – Inclusive Climate, SI – Social Inclusion, CE – Control on Exclusion

Figure 5

Models showing the Influence of Responsible Leadership on Dimensions of Inclusive Organization
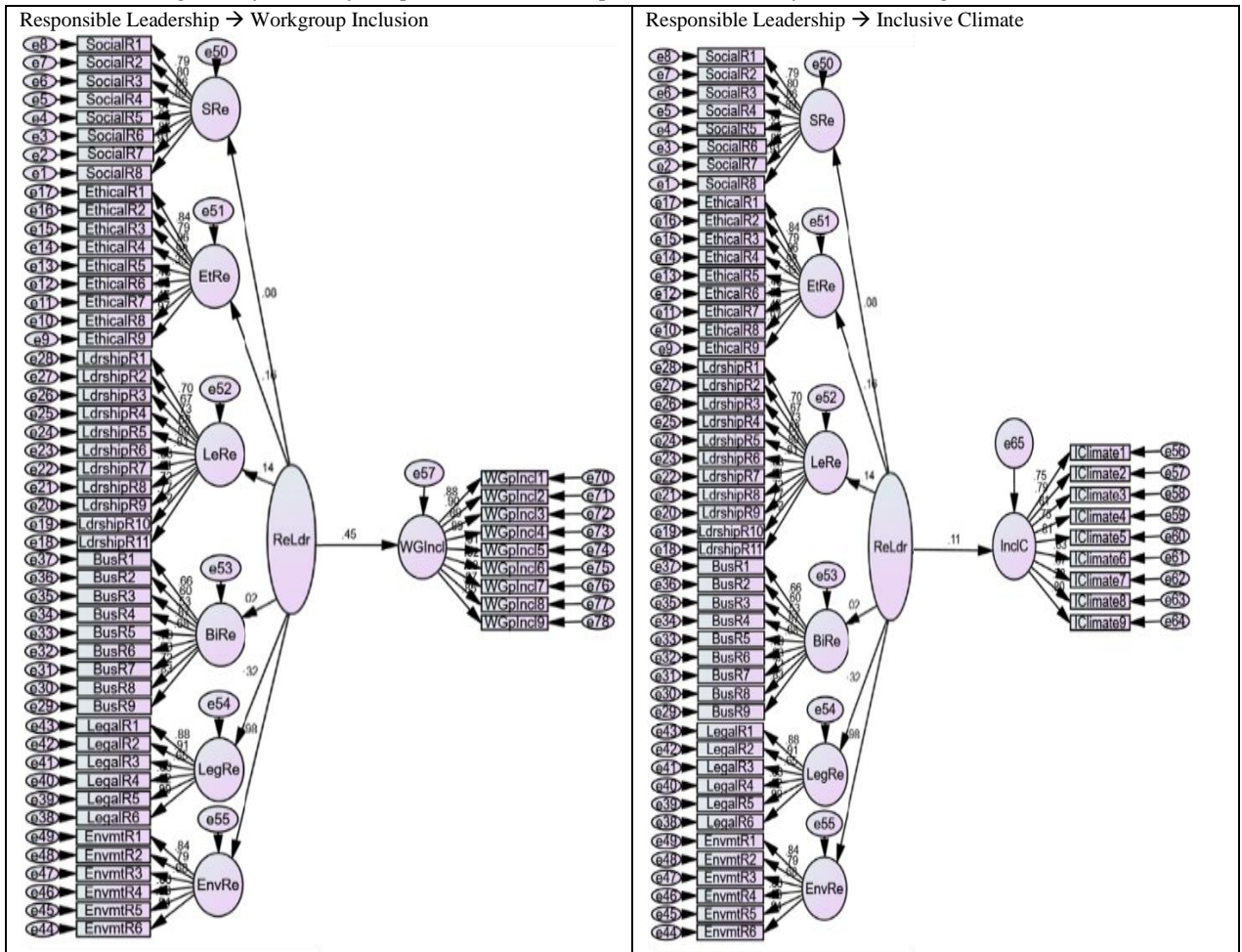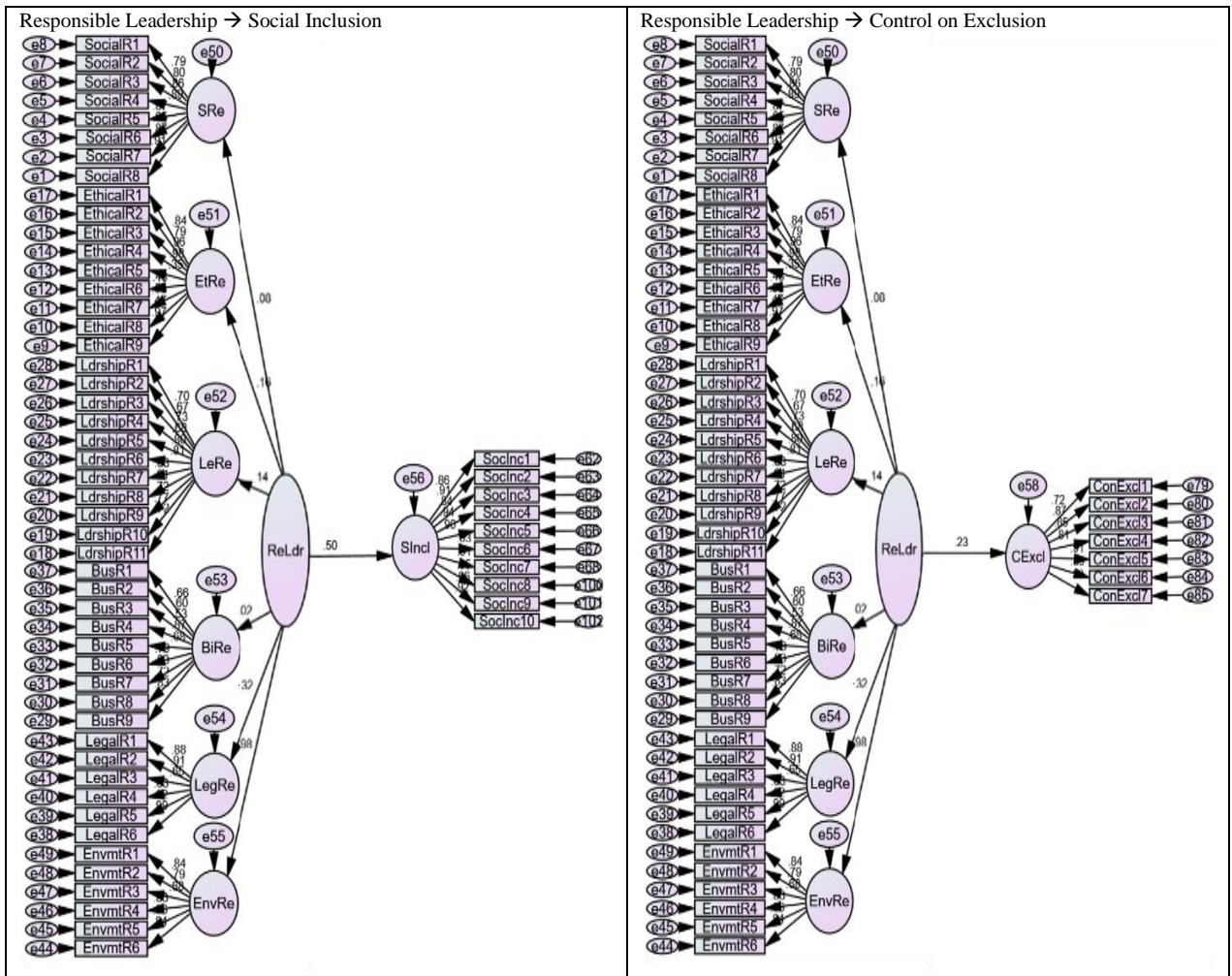
Discussion

Influence of Responsible Leadership on Inclusive Organization

Responsible leadership impacts the behaviors of organizational members in a variety of ways, but this study has focused on the influence of responsible leadership on the degree/feeling of inclusion in an organization. The most vital finding is the verification significant positive influence of responsible leadership on the inclusive organization in accordance with our initial inference. In the extant literature, the relation between responsible leadership and inclusive organization has not been adequately explored, except few indications of this influence (Mousa & Puhakka, 2019). The influence was expected in the form of an enhanced feeling of inclusion by diverse organizational members (McLeod, 2018). Similarly, it could also be reduced exclusion/ discrimination based on gender, age, culture, race, religion, sect, color, etc. (Tang et al., 2017). Responsible leaders feel more accountable to all internal and external stakeholders for taking care of their interests in organizational affairs (Hymavathi et al., 2015). This aspect is vital in building the confidence of stakeholders in responsible leadership that ultimately encourages them to participate willingly in decision-making and other organizational activities.

While being sensitive to workforce-related obligations as their prime responsibility, responsible leaders also desire to make the organization sustainable/profitable as per the expectations of shareholders (Ye et al., 2018). For this purpose, responsible leaders have to get the maximum from the workforce through full participation that necessitates the inclusion of

every organizational member (Zanoni et al., 2010). In simple words, responsible leadership nurtures an inclusive organization to meet the profitability requirements of the shareholders by hiring and fully utilizing a diverse workforce. The influence of responsible leadership on the inclusive organization can be viewed as a business requirement and ethical necessity for modern organizations (Mousa & Puhakka, 2019).

A diverse workforce is prone to conflicts, distractions, and the dissipation of resources (including attentional resources of leaders) for conflict resolution and inclusion of every organizational member (Nishii, 2013). Similarly, excluded groups and individuals hindered cooperation and adversely impacted the performance of organizational members bringing down the overall performance. Responsible leadership cannot minimize the negative consequences of diversity without the inclusion of diverse groups and individuals in the organization both socially and in job-related activities (Wijbenga, 2019). Business goals and social obligations compel responsible leaders to implement inclusive policies and practices (Wang & Xu, 2019). While fulfilling their responsibilities, responsible leaders are keenly and critically observed by organizational members. Based on their observation, members formulate their perceptions about responsible leaders that ultimately affected their behaviors (Zhao & Zhou, 2019). The perceived dynamics of the influence of responsible leadership on inclusive organizations have been presented in Figure 6.

Figure 6

Dynamics of Influence of Responsible Leadership on Inclusive Organization
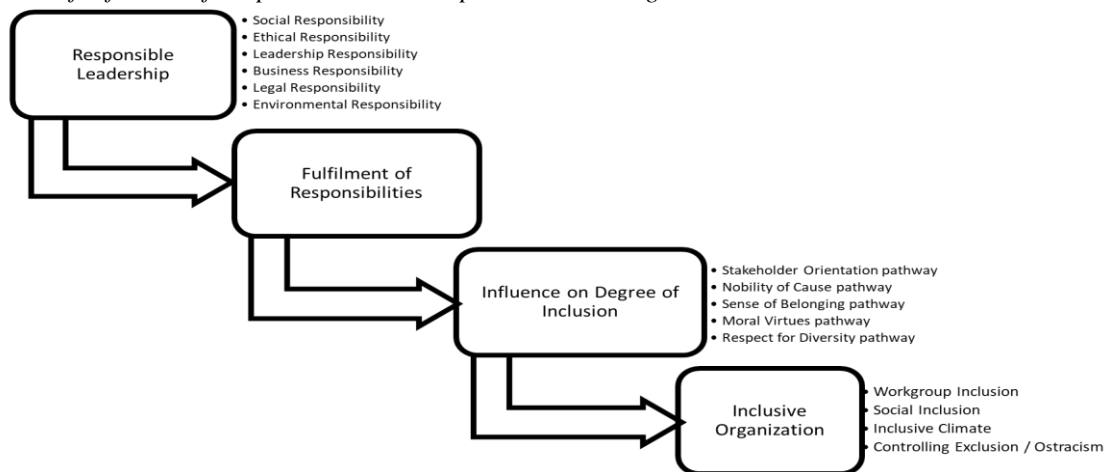
Pathways to Influence of Responsible Leadership on Inclusive Organization

This study has proposed that various roles played by responsible leadership in fulfilling various responsibilities interact with each other (Mustafa et al., 2020). This interaction of roles forms stimuli that positively influence the four dimensions of the inclusive organization following the five pathways, i.e., stakeholder orientation, nobility of cause, moral virtues, sense of belonging, and respect for identity pathways (Antunes & Franco, 2016).

The first pathway for the influence of responsible leadership on the inclusive organization is through stakeholder orientation. The organizational members, like other stakeholders, attach high expectations of responsible leadership for fair reward, respect, and recognition without discrimination (Carter et al., 2017). The stakeholder-oriented behaviors of responsible leaders

enhance the feeling of inclusion by organizational members. In light of Stakeholder Theory, close and cordial relations with organizational members must be maintained through the fulfillment of their rightful expectations (Doh & Quigley, 2014). Diverse individuals and groups in an inclusive organization fully participate in organizational activities because they are suitably enabled and encouraged by responsible leadership to do so (Chung et al., 2020).

The second pathway is through the nobility of the cause. Responsible leadership, through its involvement in social welfare, makes the work of organizational members more meaningful (Shulga, 2021). When employees see their leaders using organizational resources and working for the benefit of the community and common people, they consider themselves part of the good work (Ronkainen et al., 2020). Similarly, justice and equitable treatment of disadvantaged factions is a noble cause, and commitment to this cause by responsible leadership is highly helpful in creating an inclusive climate (Nishii, 2013). Organizational members support responsible leadership in the elimination of ostracism and exclusion based on any basis of discrimination.

The third pathway for influencing inclusive organization through responsible leadership is through moral virtues like honesty, integrity, and truthfulness (Khan & Jabeen, 2019). Moral virtues help responsible leaders influence workgroup and social inclusion in an inclusive climate (Zhao & Zhou, 2019). Moral virtues incite the trust of people in responsible leadership, and they willingly support them. Similarly, the fourth pathway for the influence of responsible leadership is creating a sense of belonging among members of the organization. In inclusive organizations, employees are supported and enabled to fully participate and use their talents to advance their careers without any hurdles (Chung et al., 2020). In the light of the Expectancy Theory, organizational members get their legitimate rights compatible with their hard work that strengthens their sense of belonging. Responsible leaders try to provide equal opportunities and access to information and resources to all, irrespective of their differences (Zhao & Zhou, 2019). Responsible leaders create a sense of belonging to eliminate exclusion and isolation of any group or individual (Younis et al., 2018).

The fifth pathway to exert influence on inclusion in an organization is through respect for the identity of each individual and group. It is closely linked with the sense of belonging but requires special and distinct consideration. Responsible leaders respect and value differences and accept organizational members as they are (Doh & Quigley, 2014). In the light of Social Identity Theory, people want to preserve and positively project their social identities (Tajfel & Tumer, 1985). Individuals identify with social categories to preserve their social identities partly to enhance self-esteem and sense of protection (Hogg & Tumer, 1985; Tajfel, 1978). Responsible leadership by recognizing and respecting the differences and identities of diverse individuals and groups creates an inclusive climate where organizational members willingly accept each other.

Influence of Responsible Leadership on each Dimension of Inclusive Organization

In this study, the instrument used to measure inclusion in an organization has been purposefully adapted from the extant literature. It articulates inclusion as an aggregate of four dimensions of inclusive organization, i.e., workgroup inclusion, inclusive climate, social inclusion, and control of exclusion (Irfan et al., 2021). The qualitative as well as quantitative results of this study indicated the positive influence of responsible leadership on each dimension of an

inclusive organization. However, the literature is scanty concerning this influence on the four dimensions. Workgroup inclusion, the first dimension, incites full participation and involvement of every organizational member in work-related activities (Sandhu, 2019). Ensuring sustainable/profitable and growth-oriented operations of the organization is a major business responsibility of responsible leadership that necessitates close attention to workgroup inclusion. Workgroup inclusion is the bottom line for an organizational member's involvement in the work in return for compensation received by them from the organization (Irfan et al., 2020). Responsible leaders influence inclusive organizations through work meaningfulness and united diverse followers by getting their full participation and involvement in organizational activities (Martinescu et al., 2021).

The linkage and alignment of the entire workforce with the policies, from the bottom to the top, is created by an inclusive climate that is the second dimension. The inclusive climate connects small workgroups in the departments and ultimately links various departments in the organization. It extends the influence of responsible leadership from the top to the bottom of the organizational hierarchy (Nishii, 2013). For aligning the behavior of supervisors and intermediary leaders, the inclusive climate has to be fostered by responsible leadership (Lips-Wiersma et al., 2020). An inclusive climate provides an overarching framework for altering and aligning the behavior of all leaders in the chain of command in accordance with the top leader's vision and aspiration.

The extant literature supports the finding that responsible leadership significantly influences social inclusion. Although literature is quite rare, some support can be found for this finding. Maak and Pless (2006) consider responsible leadership as creating and maintaining trusting relationships with internal and external stakeholders to fulfill a predetermined set of societal obligations. Gond et al. (2011) and Mousa (2019) define responsible leadership as "social, relational and ethical interaction, developed and maintained between those who affect and are affected by a particular organization's practices". According to these descriptions of responsible leadership, it is a relational interaction and a strategy that creates relations through social inclusion of all stakeholders.

Alongside inclusive policies and practices, controlling exclusion/ostracism is also essential for an inclusive organization. Ostracism, or the extent to which an individual is ignored or excluded by others (Williams et al., 2010), was seemingly a universal phenomenon, especially for minority groups. Responsible leadership being ethical and normative in behavior, considers itself accountable to all stakeholders for minimizing exclusion/ostracism (Li et al., 2021). Similarly, discrimination, nepotism, and favoritism that cause exclusion and ostracism are not tolerable for responsible leaders. According to Ylostola (2016), societies become friendly and culturally diverse if no social group faces workplace marginalization, exclusion, and ostracism. The social norms, ethics, and diversity friendliness of responsible leaders impact organizational behavior and play a vital role in the social inclusion of a diverse workforce.

Suitability of Responsible Leadership for inclusive Organization

A significant positive influence of responsible leadership on the inclusive organization as well as each of its dimensions, highlights the suitability of responsible leadership for inclusive organizations. Literature gives some indications for supporting this inference. The sensitivity of responsible leaders to diverse stakeholders makes them a suitable choice to lead inclusive

organizations with heterogeneous organizational members (Mousa & Puhakka, 2019). Recognition and respect for diversity and relational intelligence were considered vital attributes for responsible leaders handling people from diverse backgrounds (Nishii, 2013). LMX Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and Stakeholder Theory support the suitability of responsible leaders for the inclusive organization because of their perpetual endeavors to create and maintain mutually beneficial relations. Similarly, Optimal Distinctiveness Theory points towards the same because of the ability of responsible leaders to create a balance between the uniqueness and assimilation of organizational members.

Integration of Qualitative and Quantitative Results

In mixed-methods research, the integration of findings creates a wholesome picture of the phenomenon being explored (Grafton et al., 2011). In this study, at the interpretation level, the qualitative and quantitative data have been connected using a joint display technique (Table 10). A joint display allows findings to be visually brought together to "draw out new insights beyond the information gained from the separate quantitative and qualitative results" (Fetters, et al., 2013). Findings from the interviews have been compared with the results of the survey conducted through questionnaires (Table 10).

Table 10

Integration of Qualitative and Quantitative Findings

Qualitative Findings	Quantitative Finding	Integrated View
Responsible leadership influenced the inclusive organization (support from 92% of respondents who explicitly mentioned it in their responses).	Responsible leadership influenced the inclusive organization (Regression coefficient +0.60). The proposed model provided an acceptable fit of data.	Both qualitative and quantitative data indicated an influence of responsible leadership on the inclusive organization.
Responsible leadership influences all dimensions of an inclusive organization. The percentage of respondents who explicitly supported are also mentioned in brackets. • Workgroup inclusion (87%). • Inclusive climate (79%). • Social inclusion (89%). • Control on exclusion/ostracism (83%).	All dimensions of the inclusive organization were influenced by responsible leadership as indicated by standardized coefficients of regression mentioned with each. All p-values were less than 0.05 explicating their significance. • Workgroup inclusion (+0.45). • Inclusive climate (+0.11). • Social inclusion (+0.50). • Control on exclusion/ostracism (+0.23).	Responsible leadership significantly influences all dimensions of an inclusive organization.
Responsible leadership influenced dimensions of inclusive organization differently (85%).	The influence of responsible leadership on each dimension of the inclusive organization was different, as indicated by different regression coefficients.	Responsible leadership exerted its influence on each dimension of inclusive organization differently.
Responsible leadership was strongly supported as a suitable leadership style for an inclusive organization (100% of respondents agreed).	Responsible leadership influences the degree of inclusion in an organization (standardized regression coefficient +0.60).	For leading inclusive organizations, responsible leadership seemed a suitable leadership style.

In a qualitative study, almost all respondents (100%) mentioned its existence in their subjective responses during interviews. Similarly, in quantitative study, path analysis us, SEMso verified the influence of responsible leadership on the inclusive organization ($\beta = .60$, $p < .01$). Qualitative findings provided additional insight how responsible leadership influenced inclusive organization in the social and ethical domains. The influence was exerted by responsible leadership through five pathways – stakeholder orientation, nobility of cause, moral virtues, sense of belonging, and respect for identity.

During the qualitative part of the study, respondents highlighted the possibility of significant relationships between responsible leadership and the dimensions of the inclusive organization. Respondents firmly argued in support of the influence of responsible leadership on workgroup inclusion (87%), inclusive climate (79%), social inclusion (89%), and control on exclusion/ostracism (83%). The findings of the qualitative study were augmented by quantitative analysis through path analysis using SEM. Coefficients of regression of responsible leadership on each dimension of inclusive organization elucidated the influence (Workgroup inclusion, $\beta = .45$; Inclusive climate, $\beta = .23$; Social inclusion, $\beta = .50$; Control on exclusion/ostracism, $\beta = .11$). The p-value for each coefficient was below .05. These indicated a significant influence of responsible leadership on the four dimensions of the inclusive organization.

Contributions of the Study

This study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge by bridging the gap in the literature regarding the influence of responsible leadership on inclusive organizations. Researchers have been desperately searching for an appropriate leadership style that can match the peculiar requirements of modern diverse organizations (Fang et al., 2019; Mousa & Puhakka, 2019; Voegtlin, 2011). ThiThroughalysis of the influence of responsible leadership on inclusive organizations, hasthis study taken a step further in suggesting the responsible leadership style for meeting the challenges of inclusive organizations. The study will also significantly contribute towards enhancing the understanding of leaders, practitioners, and scholars about the synergy of responsible leadership and inclusive organization. Five pathways through which responsible leadership exerts its influence on inclusive organization are particularly vital for organizational leaders at all levels. Responsible leaders can embed relevant perceptual elements in the policies and practices and strengthen the pathways for enhancing inclusion and effectively handling a diverse workforce.

Direction for Future Research

This study indicates a few areas for further research and refinement of the drawn conclusions. Researchers in other contexts and perspectives for better generalizability of the results may verify the findings of this research. Further insight related to the findings of this study can be ascertained by replicating this research in the public sector, NGOs, non-profit organizations, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), and Multi-National Corporations (MNCs). Moreover, this research has been conducted in the manufacturing and services sectors, and replication in other sectors is also required. The role of demographic variables has been intentionally omitted in this research that may be included in the future. Responsible leadership and inclusive organization are likely to be potential areas of research. Researchers from various disciplines, such as HR management, public policy, public administration, humanities, and politics can collaborate and produce several interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary studies for applicability.

Limitations of the Study

Amongst numerous limitations of this study, the first is regarding the sampling technique, which was purposive sampling. This technique helped search for suitable respondents and organizations for the study while remaining within time and resource constraints. The climate

and culture of every organization differed from others, affecting respondents' responses. This posed another limitation because the time at which data was collected under a peculiar climate and culture of an organization was likely to induce some organization-specific bias. Also, during the qualitative study, almost half of the data was collected from senior leaders, the applicability of results may not be uniform for organizational members. Although senior leadership was selected being experts to give their assessment yet, respondents from lower levels of the hierarchy could enhance the richness of data. Time and resource constraints compelled the researcher to restrict data collection from eight organizations and two sectors of the economy, i.e., services and manufacturing.

Conclusion

It is opined that responsible leadership seemed to meet the peculiar requirements of inclusive organizations. ResInght of this study, couresponsible leadership ld help foster inclusion and enable the organization to reap the social and business benefits of diversity. Modern organizations are visualized as inclusive organizations led by responsible leadership with a wide spectrum of accountability and a bigger societal role. Responsible leaders radiated considerable influence through the performance of social, ethical, leadership, business, legal and environmental responsibilities. While on the receiving end, organizational members drew inspiration from responsible leadership. They formulated their perception based on the observable actions of leaders that guided their inclusive behaviors. Responsible leadership significantly influenced the behavior of organizational members in inclusive organizations; and it can be inferred that responsible leadership is a comparatively more suitable leadership style for inclusive organizations.

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