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- Master of Science Thesis-

**Inclusive leadership and self-determination: A
study based on Basic Psychological Needs
Satisfaction**

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Additionally, I hope this thesis can contribute to further research in this field and the interest in how inclusive leadership affect employees at work.

Enjoy the reading!

Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to contribute to more literature on the influence managers have on their employees. Here, inclusive leadership has been highlighted, while self-determination theory has been used to understand employees' needs. The study is based on 113 respondents, consisting of 61.2% girls (N=69) and 38.9% boys (N=44).

The study shows that there are significant connections and correlations between two of the three basic psychological needs that have been presented in the thesis. Based on the theory, autonomy and competence are the two most important to satisfy to ensure that employees are satisfied. Furthermore, the analysis shows that there are connections that are important for employees' well-being at work, which is promoted in the thesis. The connections between the theories are not surprising as perceived support and the involvement of managers largely have a positive impact.

Overall, this master's thesis promotes how inclusive leadership affects employees at work. Furthermore, the thesis highlights that linking these theories together provides an important view of employee well-being in the workplace.

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1.0 Introduction

In recent years, the focus on inclusive leadership and interest in this field has increased. Research on inclusive climates and inclusion has exploded (Nishii & Leroy, 2022). To evaluate this, it is important to consider the workplace and how the employees experience everyday life at work. It has also become even more important to meet diversity in the workplace, something that several managing directors and company managers strategically prioritize. Furthermore, it is added that innovation and creativity are included in precisely this (Randel et al., 2018).

Today's working society consists of workplaces undergoing major development, as well as great diversity, which means that leadership is put to the test. With this, it is important that workplaces work for organizational success. In the past, clear hierarchies characterized the management culture in workplaces where authoritarianism and decision-making took place at the top of the hierarchy. More emphasis is now placed on innovation, collaboration and employee engagement, which requires inclusive leadership. Inclusive leadership is what we call a modern leadership concept where the focus is to create a working environment where everyone is seen and heard across positions. With this form of leadership, employees are seen and heard, and their input is valued.

Despite little insight into these two theories combined, it is even more important to shed light on the influence of well-being at work and what the management structure is like. The relationship between managers and employees is present in everything you do in the workplace. This is because you work together as a team, and thus the importance of understanding the needs of employees is just as important as looking at how the management works. Different forms of management are something that has been carefully evaluated and analysed for many hundreds of years, from which we have largely learned and over time developed more modern forms of management. By acquiring more knowledge about how employees feel at work, you will be able to strengthen and support management styles by understanding how to make arrangements for the individual employee. In the long term, this will also enable us to develop tools that can be used in the workplace, which can then result in better management, as well as more satisfied employees.

To understand the concept of inclusive leadership, it is interesting to look at the theoretical framework of self-determination theory developed by Deci and Ryan (1985). Deci and Ryan's (1985) motivational theory emphasises the importance of satisfying three basic psychological needs – autonomy, competence and relatedness. Meeting these three needs, it will contribute to optimizing human function and well-being.

To further research inclusive leadership and self-determination theory will be included in this research. Self-determination theory has for several decades been used in organizations to look at the connection between motivation, well-being, and performance (Deci et al., 2017). Furthermore, the self-determination theory emphasises that different kinds of motivation influence which work activities they have the motivation to do, and the consequences of this are different based on catalysers, concomitants, and consequences (Deci et al., 2017). Furthermore, self-determination theory points out that if managers plan to ensure that these three psychological needs are satisfied, it will increase employees' motivation, performance, and satisfaction at work, which then results in good working environments.

The purpose of this assignment is to look at the connection between inclusive leadership and self-determination theory and how it affects employees' basic psychological need satisfaction at work. To do this, a review of already existing literature on inclusive leadership and self-determination theory will be presented. Here, previous studies, scientific articles and relevant theories will be discussed to create a theoretical basis for the research in the thesis. The research in the thesis is based on a survey where the respondents have answered various statements using a 5-point Likert scale.

The survey is based on measurements of inclusive management and the basic psychological need satisfaction scale, where the theories have been analysed. By using the basic psychological need satisfaction at work scale in this research, one can analyse on a deeper level how employees thrive in the workplace, as well as gain a deeper insight into how the basic needs of employees are satisfied at work. This is because that scale maps the important psychological needs of people that must be considered and fulfilled to achieve well-being and motivation. The scale has been developed by considering the theory of self-determination which promotes the three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence and belonging (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Furthermore, the results

obtained from analyses after adopting this scale can give insight into how to be an inclusive leader, which in turn can facilitate understanding of how to work to cover the basic psychological needs of people.

There is little research that specifically sheds light on and combines inclusive leadership and self-determination theory, thus this research will be able to contribute both theoretically and practically where the connection between these two theories, as mentioned, is illuminated. Further, it will also help to understand the mechanisms that contribute to good leadership and how it affects employees at work. Subsequently, the study will also be relevant for organizations that wish to develop inclusive leadership skills, as well as cultivate inclusive working environments.

Furthermore, in the next chapters, a thorough literature review will be presented, followed by a careful review of the chosen assurance technique. Thus, the results will be presented, as well as an analysis where the findings are discussed.

1.1 Project description

The purpose of the assignment is to investigate whether there are any theoretical connections between inclusive leadership and self-determination theory, as well as to see how those theories influence each other. Quantitative surveys in the form of questionnaires have been used, as well as literature studies and previous research. In this research, I have collaborated with firms based in Norway to get respondents to my survey to get an understanding of how they experience inclusive leadership. I have also shared my survey on LinkedIn to get even more responses.

1.2 Study goal

The focus on leadership and the influence managers have on their employees is on the agenda, but little research has been done on combining the theories of inclusive leadership and self-determination theory. The commitment around inclusive leadership and the outcome self-determination theory, but not how those theories affect each other. Based on previous research and with the help of data collection, the purpose of the task is to look at inclusive leadership and the self-determination theory, and then find out what effect this has on the employees'

motivation, well-being, and performance in the workplace. Therefore, the goal of this thesis is to answer the following question:

How does inclusive leadership affect employees at work?

2.0 Theory

To understand already existing research, I have used organisational research that has already been done. This contributes to my research and helps to get an insight into the theory. Firstly, this chapter addresses the most important part of the theoretical framework for inclusive leadership. Secondly, this chapter contains the theoretical background of the self-determination theory where the focus is to understand and discuss the three different parameters, motivation, well-being, and performance. The last part of this chapter presents the three hypotheses for the study.

2.1 Theoretical framework

I have chosen to use self-determination theory and inclusive leadership to see the connection between leadership and employees' behaviour and well-being in the workplace. Some studies have been carried out on this, so it turns out that these theories fit well together in a process of deepening. The parameters used in research on these theories together are different from what I want to use in my thesis. More research has also been done on inclusive leadership in recent years, which is also positive for this research.

Several studies have been done on self-determination theory and inclusive leadership, but there is a lack of combining these studies in research. In a study by Lin (2018), the connection between procrastination and inclusive leadership, and intrinsic motivation and inclusive leadership was looked at, among other things. In this study, they wanted to look at procrastination behaviour in the workplace. Even though the survey was carried out in a limited area in China, they are left with findings that show that a need-supportive environment can be created through inclusive leadership (Lin, 2018). This can help to ensure that the basic psychological needs of the employees are satisfied.

2.2 Inclusive leadership

Today's work environments today consist of diversity and complexity, where the focus on creating a working climate for everyone has never been more important. According to Veli Korkmaz et al., (2022), the word inclusion is mentioned in all the world's businesses. The starting point for precisely this is shown through foresight, where to maintain a competitive advantage, the key is inclusion in workplaces. It also ensures that the well-being and health of the employees are taken care of (Veli Korkmaz et al., 2022). Shore et al. (2011), cited in Veli Korkmaz et al., (2022) illuminates how one can simultaneously satisfy the employees' needs and at the same time create a sense of belonging, which then leads to inclusion in the workplace.

Today, there is a much greater focus on modern management, so when talking about a modern leadership approach, it is often associated with inclusive leadership. This leadership approach focuses on the importance of building and creating inclusive work environments where all individuals feel valued and respected. Here, put background and experience aside, to focus fully and completely on the employees. The unique characteristics and perspectives of employees are valued and inclusive managers value diversity and work strategically to utilize resources. Through such an organizational culture, you create belonging and promote cooperation among your employees.

There are several understandings of inclusive leadership, but one of the most familiar is Nishii and Leroy's (2022) definition. They have defined inclusive leadership as “leadership processes that promote experiences of inclusion among followers” (p.686). It has been highlighted by the article authors that results of leadership should not be used to define leadership. As mentioned, this has also been made into an agreement among others, such as van Knippenberg & Sitkin (2013) cited in Nishii and Leroy (2022).

Through several different forms of management, it is proposed by Randel et al. (2018) that inclusive leadership helps to make different groups more efficient, whereas other types of leadership do not contribute as well to precisely this. The article's authors discover how different managers must evaluate the roles they have and precisely understand this to maximize work utilization, as well as understand diversity (Randel et al., 2018). It is also important to add that the inclusion of the members in the group is important to achieve these goals and this can happen through the behaviour of the leaders.

Organisational goals such as increased employee engagement and performance, as well as better decision-making and increased innovation, belong to inclusive leadership. Research refers to positive results linked to inclusive leadership. Furthermore, studies suggest that practising inclusive management is associated with increased employee satisfaction, commitment, and job performance (Carmeli et al., 2010; Nishii, 2013). According to Carmeli et al. (2010) cited in Nishii (2013) a greater degree of innovation and better team creativity at an organizational level is also a result of inclusive leadership.

In other words, there are several ways to define inclusive leadership, but the essence is relatively similar. An article published by Veli Korkmaz et al. (2022) summarizes inclusive leadership as a management style where diversity and inclusion are in focus. Furthermore, it is also added that the desire to create an arena where belonging is valued, as well as that arrangement are made for ideas and input from all levels. The study conducted by Korkmaz et al. (2022) aimed to map the main dimensions of what inclusive management consists of. So, five different dimensions were highlighted, justice, openness, empowerment, support, and accountability (Korkmaz et al., 2022). These dimensions show the importance of an inclusive working environment.

Further in the article, the way inclusive leadership can be developed and what lies behind this was explained in detail. In this article, it was thus highlighted what type of characteristics an inclusive leader should have. Self-awareness and cultural intelligence, as well as diversity and the ability to include, are some of the factors noted in the study (Korkmaz et al., 2022).

Finally, an analysis was made of how inclusive management affects the employees and to what extent it has an effect. It was shown, based on the studies done by Korkmaz et al. (2022) that inclusive management positively influences employee well-being and commitment in the workplace. Furthermore, the article also points to increased satisfaction and efficiency at the organizational level, as well as better team results.

2.3 Self-determination theory

Studies within human behaviour and motivation are increasingly illuminated, and based on this, the theoretical framework of self-determination theory has become a core theory when precisely discussing this. When you talk about what motivates people and what is important to people, you distinguish

between internal and external needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In the self-determination theory developed by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan, the starting point is the inherent need for people must search for new challenges and to acquire new knowledge. Self-determination theory is described as a psychological framework where human satisfaction and motivation are essential (Deci & Ryan, 2000). By applying this theory, you gain a comprehensive understanding of the factors that drive human behaviour across different phases.

Autonomy, competence, and relatedness describe the three basic needs on which self-determination theory is built and based. Autonomy is about the ability to influence decisions that are taken on behalf of oneself, as well as control over one's behaviour (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Furthermore, it is described that if the need for autonomy is satisfied, those who experience satisfaction from this will feel that they have greater choice in the way that they can make decisions that correspond to their own values and preferences. In this way, you gain control over your own actions, as well as a form of ownership of what you do. Satisfying the need for autonomy is important to ensure that the self-regulation and inner motivation of the person is maintained. Additionally, autonomy promotes self-control and co-determination promotes motivation to the extent that one works harder (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

The next need that is included among the basic psychological needs that have been presented is people's need to feel that they have the competence that can contribute to strengthening the workplace. Having the required competence, and the employee themselves believing that they are suitable for the job, can contribute to coping in the workplace. Furthermore, there are case studies that show that employees who can develop, as well as make use of already existing skills, contribute to their working more efficiently. Deci and Ryan (2000) highlight that internal motivation increases when this psychological need is satisfied, and that commitment and well-being are strengthened.

Of the three psychological needs that were presented, relatedness is the one that is often described as the least important. Gagné and Deci (2005) describe relatedness as the feeling of being part of a community where you work together towards a common goal, as well as feeling safe in the group. Furthermore, the social environment is an essential factor where the desire to fit in and be seen is focused on.

Furthermore, Stone et al. (2009) points out that autonomy is a human need and experiments have been carried out among students where they have looked at the academic achievements based on autonomy support. This resulted in greater motivation and better academic performance.

According to STD, it turns out that if the psychological needs to have a relationship with others, to be competent, and to be autonomous are satisfied, people will volunteer more, their well-being will be better, and their motivation will be of a higher quality (Gagné, 2014). Further, Gagné (2014) points out that if psychological needs are hindered, people's motivation will weaken, and this can eventually lead to illness. Gagné and Deci (2005) cited in Lin (2018) emphasize that the STD theory explains how the internal motivation of employees is strengthened and motivated by the need being met. As a result of this, employees will have reduced negative behaviour, as well as act in a more positive way.

When investigating self-determination theory, the theory is linked to scales for basic psychological needs to examine the extent to which the respondents feel that their basic psychological needs are met. By using BPN scales, it is possible to distinguish between individual level, group level or organizational level. The BPN scales have been developed so that you can study the results across different studies and compare the outcome.

2.4 Hypothesis

Based on my research question and the theory in the field, I have developed four hypotheses for this study. Based on the theories previously presented, the purpose of the assignment is to look at how inclusive management affects employees at work, and on that occasion, the study has decided to analyse the basic psychological needs. Thus, analyses have been made based on this, which deals precisely with inclusive management in relation to the three basic psychological needs that were presented earlier. Thus, the three hypotheses for the problem are as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Inclusive leadership is correlated with employees' autonomy.

Hypothesis 2: Inclusive leadership is correlated with employees' relatedness.

Hypothesis 3: Inclusive leadership is correlated with employees' competence.

3.0 Research methodology

This chapter will present the methodological part with the starting point in the theoretical framework mentioned above. The study's methodological choices will be presented, which measures are focused on, the design and how the data collection will take place. Further in this chapter, the validity, reliability, and ethical considerations will be discussed to evaluate the method used in the thesis.

3.1 Research design

This task aims to look at connections in a specific environment, and thus an *explanatory design* will be best suited to precisely investigate this. According to Saunders et al. (2019), an *explanatory design* aims to illustrate how different factors relate to one another. Statistical testing can be used to investigate this to explain a problem or a situation (Saunders et al., 2019).

When choosing a research approach, Saunders et al. (2019) describe that choosing the right research approach depends on what already exists and existing research on the topic, as well as the type of research. In this research, I will look closer into the already existing theories to develop the goal of the study, the *deductive approach* suits this research best. In this project, the data is collected and analysed before the theory is developed. Thus, this approach differs from the inductive approach, which is more data-driven than theory-driven (Saunders et al., 2019).

Bryman and Bell (2015) explain that the *quantitative research method* is often used when using a deductive strategy. When using this strategy, testing the theories and hypothesis is evaluated by behaviour, opinions, and quantifying attitudes (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

3.2 Data collection and distribution

When collecting data for quantitative research, questionnaires are often used to get a wide collection of data (Saunders et al., 2019). A questionnaire fits this research well because it is a good way collection data when having an explanatory research design and a quantitative strategy (Saunders et al., 2019).

To develop and share the questionnaire, I used Qualtrics, a web-based tool, as a platform for my data collection. Through Bi Norwegian Business School, we have access to this platform, which makes it possible to collect data while ensuring privacy.

When designing research, an important question is to decide if the research is going to extend over a short or long period. Saunders et al. (2019) explain this as choosing a time horizon, and when deciding this you are choosing between two main research methods, either cross-sectional or longitudinal. The cross-sectional is often called a “snapshot” and the longitudinal is called a “diary” (Saunders et al., 2019).

3.2 Sample

When investigating a particular phenomenon, you often select a group from the population to survey what you want to study. According to Fowler (2013), if you choose a sample of people, it is practically impossible to carry out studies based on an entire population. Furthermore, Fowler (2013) emphasizes that limiting factors such as the availability of participants, as well as time and resources come into play when conducting a study. Furthermore, it is important to choose a sample of the population that can represent larger parts of the population. In this way, the findings in the study can be generalized and thus one can draw overarching conclusions based on the findings (Gelman & Hill, 2007).

To test my hypotheses, I collected data using an online survey that I shared with three different groups to get a wider response group. The first group, called “Group 1”, of respondents consist of people working in real estate in Norway. The second group of respondents called “Group 2”, consist of people working in the shipping industry, mainly in Norway, but also some international employees. Lastly, the third group of respondents, called “Group 3” consist of people with different educations and people working in different industries. That's because the last survey was shared via platforms like LinkedIn and Facebook. To differentiate the three groups in the best possible way, three different copies of the survey were made so that the data for each of the groups were kept separately.

This part is an important part of the research process to make sure to investigate the research question. An important consideration to highlight is the validity of the findings using a questionnaire. Several different aspects can influence the respondent's answer, and this can affect the data collection (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

3.3 Research ethics

Several ethical considerations are raised that must be considered when carrying out research. Johannessen et al. (2021) present several essential questions that must be assessed both before, during and after a research process. They present the importance of showing respect for the respondents by ensuring anonymity and safeguarding their rights. Furthermore, Johannessen et al. (2021) the importance of the researchers in the study having an objective attitude to the project, as well as ensuring accuracy when reporting the data collected. Next, emphasis is also placed on the fact that the research design and the methodology used to ensure that the research questions are answered in an ethically correct way, as well as that they are both reliable and relevant to the study.

When conducting research, it is important to evaluate some ethical considerations, both before, during and after conducting research. This is because we want to make sure that the ethical standards are taken care of before the data acquisition starts. Jacobsen (2015) explains the importance of developing clear information about the research. Further, is it important to ensure that the participants clearly understand the purpose of the study. To ensure that the ethical considerations are taken care of in this study, several aspects have been evaluated and considered carefully.

All the respondents answered the survey voluntarily and accepted to join the survey. Obtaining informed consent is considered a crucial aspect of conducting research that upholds ethical standards (Crow et al., 2006). This involves providing participants with adequate information about the project and empowering them to decide whether to participate. I ensured to keep every answer anonymous so that all personal information cannot be obtained at any time.

The respondents had the opportunity to quit the survey at any time. The data of those who chose not to complete was deleted. I will return to this in the section on data cleaning. Furthermore, it was only education, industry and age that said something about the various respondents. Names and contact information were not requested, to maintain anonymity.

3.4 Measurement items

This study utilised a combination of established measures from prior research and measures from an ongoing project on inclusive leadership by Tilburg University (Korkmaz et al., 2022). To record responses, my questionnaire is

structured around the 5-factor Likert scale. When using already existing and well-known measures, has a positive effect on the quality of validity and reliability in my research. Further, the measures from Korkmaz et al. (2022) are not tested and well-established yet, but they are based on credible data.

3.4.1 Inclusive leadership

In 2006, Nembhard and Edmondson (2006) developed the definition of inclusive leadership which reads as follows "words and deeds by a leader or leaders that indicate an invitation and appreciation for others' contributions" (p.927). At the same time as that definition was developed, there was a focus on operationalizing the concept by several theoreticians in the field. According to Korkmaz et al. (2022), the concept was not fully operationalised, which means that inclusive leadership as a theory lacks a measurement tool that can contribute to more studies on the topic. Thus, Korkmaz et al. (2022) now developed a measurement tool based on known theory from the field. Thus, in this thesis I have used measures from ongoing research by Korkmaz et al. (2022) to investigate inclusive leadership among the respondents. There are several studies where inclusive leadership are highlighted, but no research measures fully represent the field, according to Korkmaz et al. (2022). This ongoing research is based on already existing knowledge in the field.

3.4.2 Self-determination theory

To study self-determination theory, the concept of basic psychological needs is central. Deci and Ryan (2000) describe how the three needs of competence, autonomy and relatedness must be continuously satisfied. So, to study STD I have used already established measures that often are used when studying this field, namely the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale (Deci, Ryan, Gagné, Leone, Usunov, & Kornazheva, 2001; Ilardi, Leone, Kasser, & Ryan, 1993; Kasser, Davey, & Ryan, 1992).

Deci et al. (2001) present the Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale to investigate "When I am at work". This scale contains 21 items to get an understanding of the feelings related to work the last year.

3.4.3 Control variables

Before the respondents started the theoretical part of the survey, they had to answer some questions regarding their demographic and some about their education and job situation. The demographic questions included questions about their age and gender. Further, questions about their education level were asked, such as what kind of education they had.

So on, questions about their work status consisted of: “How many years have you worked in your current organization?” and “How many years have you worked with your current supervisor?”. A single line to fill in was used to answer the question regarding the respondent’s age. Lastly, to categorize different industries, fourteen different industries are listed, such as a choice to choose “other” if none of the alternatives fits their industry.

3.5 Data cleaning

After the data collection process was finished, all the data was reviewed to remove invalid data. This is to make sure that the data set is useable, and that the analysis will be done correctly. Before the data cleaning, I started with 211 responses from my survey in Qualtrics, but after some data cleaning, I was left with a total of 113 respondents. All these were exported to SPSS.

Based on a list of set criteria, the data cleaning started with removing all the respondents who had only answered parts of the survey and chose not to answer all the questions. They were removed to avoid problems with missing values. Then I went through all the answers to make sure that the respondents answered the questionnaire in a reasonable time.

At last, reversed-scored items had to be re-coded to ensure that they had the same values in the analysis. Using the 5-point scale to change the old values (Old value 5 = new value 1, old value 4 = new value 2, old value 2 = new value 4 and old value 1 = new value 5). After finishing the data cleaning and recoding, the data set was done and ready to start with the analysis.

3.6 Demographics

According to my sampling method, the age intervals are expected, which are presented in Table 1. This is because most of my connections on LinkedIn are my age and I have used my network to get responses. Additionally, my experience

is that students and newly graduated people are more likely to answer surveys because they are in the same position or have nearly been.

Among the respondents, my survey recruited more females than males, with 61,1% versus 38,9% males. Overall, most of the respondents were between 20-27 (N=44, 39.1%). The second largest of respondents was between 49-56 (N=32, 28.6%). Furthermore, smaller groups of respondents were between 28-35 (N=10, 9%), 36-48 (N=15, 13.4%) and 57-67 (N=12, 10.7%).

Essentially, 49.6% of the respondents have a bachelor's degree and 34.5% have a master's degree. 14.2% does only have education from High School, and the last 1.8% have a PhD or higher education.

Further, when it comes to the industry the respondents work in, 17.7% (N=20), work in another industry than the examples from the list. The second largest group works in Financial Services, 12.4% (N=14). Further, industries such as Media, Creative Industries and Professional Services (Law, Consulting, etc.) represent 11.5 (N=13%).

Table 1. Demographics

Gender		
	Frequency	Percent
Male	44	38.9
Female	69	61.1
Total	113	100
Age		
	Frequency	Percent
20-27	44	39.1
28-35	10	9
36-48	15	13.4
49-56	32	28.6
57-67	12	10.7
Total	113	100

3.7 Data credibility: Validity and reliability

When you carry out a study where you must extract data to use in a research process and potentially contribute to further research, you must ensure that the data collection method you use provides concise findings. Two aspects

must be evaluated to ensure that credibility and accuracy are considered when doing a research project. An important part of the data collection is to evaluate if you can trust the data you have received and consider if it is valid and reliable. Saunders et al., (2009) explain how reliability and validity can be used to evaluate the data's credibility.

When you want to see whether the measurement accurately measures what you want to measure to assess the concept, you refer to validity (Saunders et al., 2009). When carrying out a study, it is essential that you measure what you want to measure. To ensure the credibility of the findings, several forms of validity must be considered Saunders et al. (2009) state that the measuring instrument used in the study represents all or part of the spectrum to be examined. Criterion validity is also highlighted, which describes how the correlation between the measurements is evaluated. Furthermore, the findings in the measurement are validated together with other theoretical concepts, to establish a theoretical connection (Saunders et al., 2009).

Saunders et al. (2009) present on the other hand reliability which focuses on measurements over time where it is examined how stable the measurements are over time or the various observers who carry out the measurements. Reliability is also divided into several phases where one phase is about test-retest reliability where it is assessed whether the outcome when using a measuring instrument is consistent if the measuring instrument is used on several occasions with the same respondents (Saunders et al., 2009). You can then examine inter-rater reliability where different test groups use the same measuring instrument. Here you want to be able to trust the measuring instrument to gather data. Furthermore, Saunders et al describe (2009) consistency reliability, where one examines whether the various parts of the measuring instrument provide consistent measurements of the same construction.

To ensure that both the reliability and the validity of this research have been taken care of, I have used already existing measures that have been used in several studies. One of the measures I have used for inclusive leadership is not established yet, but Korkmaz et al. (2022) have worked out a set of measures for research. Korkmaz et al. (2022) measures are developed by using credible literature.

4.0 Data analysis

In this section, the data collected will be explained, as well as that an analysis will be presented. I used IBM SPSS 29.0 software to extract some data. I then used R-Studio to run further analyses of the data set.

First, I extracted the descriptive statistics using IBM SPSS 29.0 software. The data I was left with then were gender, age, education, industry, and number of years with the same boss. After doing the descriptive analysis in SPSS, I transferred the data to R-Studio to run more tests regarding my goal for the research.

I had to do some changes to my dataset to make it suitable for the test I ran. The data I received initially did not match the standards, so some changes had to be made. These changes included converting the file and removing data as mentioned in the data cleaning section.

First, I ran a reliability test by applying Cronbach's alpha. For the measurements to be reliable, it is said that Cronbach's alpha should be above .70 and .80. In this data set, the values range from .83 to .93, which suggests that the data set has good reliability. One can also analyse the internal consistency reliability of the data set. Here you also look for higher values. The values of omega (ω) in this data set range from .83 to .93, which shows that it agrees well with the alpha coefficients and thus indicates good reliability.

After carrying out the reliability tests to ensure that the data set maintains good reliability, I further wanted to see if the data set had a good fit. To ensure that the data set had a good fit, I ran a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and a Multiple Linear Model (MLM). To run a CFA with this data set, I had to implement an MLM to get a better model fit. By using MLM in an analysis where a CFA is run, the MLM analysis can contribute to a better estimation of the CFA model's parameters, as well as to the correction of the variations in the model being considered. To see that the data set has a good fit, one wants an RMSEA between 0-1. In this data set, the RMSEA is .58, indicating a good fit. Furthermore, we see that the lowest level of RMSEA is .52 and the highest is .63.

So on, the examining the factor loadings for all the items was carried out. Based on the factor loadings, I got an indication of how the different items worked out in the analysis. By that, I mean that I could see how well the items measured what it was supposed to measure.

Then to further investigate whether there is any connection between the theories, I have run a Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to analyse it. It turned out that some of the items measure the same thing, so some items have been deleted to get a better data set.

Then a linear regression analysis was used to test my hypothesis. I looked at the relationship between the independent and dependent variables by investigating the linear relationship. According to Montgomery et al., (2012), linear regression is used to look at associations between variables, as well as understand the connection between what we are investigating. Furthermore, such a model is also used to make assumptions that can be used for further research. Then a linear regression will also say something about the variation in the variable we are investigating. As a result, one can see connections and give an understanding of what we want to investigate. When you use linear regression to test hypotheses, you can examine whether there is a statistically significant relationship. You can then assess whether it is true or whether the results from the measurement are just a random outcome (Montgomery et al., 2012).

5.0 Results

In this thesis, I have investigated how inclusive leadership affects employees at work. In this way, the findings will be summarized in part, as well as clarifying the connection to the theory.

First, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was run of all the factors with the various items to extract data to test the various items. A CFA is used to check the factor structure of the observed variables where you can see the connection between the variables you want to observe and the latent constructs. The main purpose of using a CFA is to check whether the observed variables measure what they are supposed to measure and to see whether there is any agreement with the theoretical model (Henson and Roberts 2006). Furthermore, the result from the analysis can assist in assessing whether the model's fit is good for what is being investigated, as well as whether there is a connection with the theoretical expectation. If the model fit is not good enough, the model will further help to suggest adaptations and extensions obtain a better model fit.

Then possible removals of items will be suggested (Henson and Roberts 2006). After carrying out the analysis itself, the first step is to analyse with CFA to investigate whether the criteria underlying a stable factor structure are met (Ferguson and Cox 1993). One of the main factors in such an analysis is that the number of sizes is large enough in relation to the number of items being analysed. Initially, a minimum number of between 100 and 300 subjects is desired. According to Guadagnoli and Velicer (1988), 100 subjects can be accepted, but this is close to the minimum. Even though there are only 113 subjects in this research, I consider it acceptable based on Guadagnoli and Velicer (1988). Furthermore, the Chi-square analysis showed a test statistic of 2326.202 (standard) and 1882.536 (robust), with 1375 degrees of freedom, and p-values of 0.000 (Chi-square).

Furthermore, I have analysed the reliability of the data set. Alpha is the most common measurement for realism and a good indicator of it. The alpha values range from 0 to 1 and the higher the values, the better the reliability. As can be seen from the measurements, the alpha measurements in this study range from .8238 to .0973, which indicates good reliability in the data set. You can also look at omega and omega 2, which consider the structure of the model and here it is also assumed that certain factors may be correlated. In this data set, you can see

that omega and omega 2 are relatively similar. The measurements here vary from .8249 to .9282, which further indicates high reliability.

Table 2. The outcome of the reliability test

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F9	F10	F11
Alpha	0.8238	0.8832	0.9039	0.8315	0.8620	0.8636	0.8995	0.9273	0.8819	0.8319	0.8974
Omega	0.8249	0.8819	0.9032	0.8275	0.8696	0.8655	0.9087	0.9282	0.8831	0.8416	0.9015
Omega2	0.8249	0.8819	0.9032	0.8275	0.8696	0.8655	0.9087	0.9282	0.8831	0.8416	0.9015
Omega3	0.8119	0.8785	0.9008	0.8105	0.8706	0.8613	0.9094	0.9283	0.8838	0.8431	0.9068
Avevar	0.2004	0.7139	0.7003	0.5510	0.6929	0.6202	0.7717	0.7640	0.7160	0.6437	0.7532

To further examine the relationship between the dependent variables and the independent ones, I have run a regression analysis. Thus, I have run three different regressions to look at the connection between the three main parameters of self-determination theory and inclusive leadership. The regressions are thus set up to test well-being, motivation, and performance against the items for inclusive leadership. Autonomy is defined as A1, Competence as A2 and Relatedness as A3. Based on the regression done, F6 has a negative influence on A1 and F9 has a positive influence on A1. Furthermore, one can look at the significance level of F6 which shows that the p-value is .072 and the p-value of F9 is .011. This means that there are significant connections between A1 and the two items as described. Furthermore, the analysis shows that R. sq. for A1 is 54%. Furthermore, food sees that F7, F8 and F9 have an influence on A2, and these are significant. The p-value of F7 is .071, the p-value of F8 is .071 and the p-value of F9 is .053. Then you see that R. sq. for A2 is at .627. This shows that there are significant correlations of 10% and 5%. Further, the R. sq. for A3 is .375. Despite that, based on the data in this data set, no significant relationships have been found between A3, relatedness, and the independent variables tested. This means that sufficient evidence has not been found to see whether there are actual relationships between the dependent and the independent variable.

Table 2. Linear regression analysis

	Estimate	Std.Err	z-value	P(> z)	Std.lv	Std.all
A1~						
F6	-1.407	0.783	-1.797	0.072	-1.417	-1.417
F7	0.131	0.288	0.453	0.651	0.192	0.192
F8	0.020	0.264	0.074	0.941	0.031	0.031
F9	2.272	0.896	2.535	0.011	2.424	2.424
F10	-0.138	0.237	-0.583	0.560	-0.189	-0.189
F11	-0.275	0.175	-1.574	0.115	-0.353	-0.353
A2~						
F6	-0.575	0.445	-1.292	0.196	-0.935	-0.935
F7	-0.332	0.184	-1.803	0.071	-0.788	-0.788
F8	0.375	0.177	2.123	0.034	0.953	0.953
F9	1.033	0.534	1.933	0.053	1.779	1.779
F10	0.056	0.133	0.421	0.674	0.123	0.123
F11	-0.165	0.104	-1.595	0.111	-0.342	-0.342
A3~						
F6	-0.199	0.378	-0.525	0.599	-0.294	-0.294
F7	-0.067	0.147	-0.453	0.651	-0.143	-0.143
F8	0.088	0.135	0.654	0.513	0.204	0.204
F9	0.551	0.431	1.281	0.200	0.864	0.864
F10	0.082	0.119	0.694	0.488	0.165	0.165
F11	-0.063	0.086	-0.736	0.462	-0.119	-0.119

6.0 Discussion

In the preceding sections, I have outlined the results obtained from a survey in which 113 participants provided their feedback regarding the impact of inclusive management on employees within the workplace. During the research, I have researched in more detail the connection between the three basic psychological needs and inclusive leadership using data obtained through surveys. Based on the theory of self-determination theory, it turns out that if basic psychological needs are satisfied, the employee wants to perform more in the workplace. It can be seen in the context of inclusive leadership as this supports the distribution of work tasks and the opportunity to help make decisions. Further in this chapter, the findings will be discussed on a more thorough level and linked to theory. Previous research will also be included to support the findings in the thesis.

As previously mentioned, interest in inclusive management and employees in the workplace has become a greater focus area today. Despite this, research on this, using inclusive leadership and self-determination theory to gain a better understanding, is not two theories that have been used widely together in previous research. As a starting point for this research process, the aim has been to map how inclusive leadership affects employees at work, where the three factors associated with basic psychological needs, autonomy, competence, and relatedness have been assessed. To study this, I developed three hypotheses based on already existing theories and the purpose of the study.

In the previous section, several findings from the data analyses carried out in SPSS and R-Studio were presented. Based on the regressions that were carried out, as mentioned, significant relationships are seen on two of the three factors that describe basic psychological needs.

Based on the regressions carried out in R-Studio, it appears from the analysis that A1, autonomy, has both a negative and a positive correlation with autonomy, which is the dependent variable in the regression equation. The negative coefficient F6 (-1.407) shows the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Based on the analyses, what we call "Empower" is where the focus is on how the manager contributes to the employees being able to take initiative, show their own authority, make their own choices, and make work-related choices. According to the theory of how to satisfy autonomy, the desire is that one should make one's own personal choices. Furthermore, the purpose of this

is that one should feel independent and base one's own choices on one's own interests and goals (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Thus, the theory shows support in the findings made by seeing that in those cases where the employees are encouraged by their boss to make choices based on their interests and wishes, the employees experience higher autonomy in the workplace. The analyses also show that the confidence to solve problems on your own has a positive effect on perceived autonomy. Furthermore, the analyses show that if the employees are told what to do, their experience of autonomy in the workplace decreases.

Furthermore, it appears from the analysis that F9 (2.272) is positively correlated with autonomy. Furthermore, you also look at the p-value, and if $p < 0.05$, you say that there is a significant effect. In this analysis, the p-value of F9 is .011, which is below the significant limit which makes the analysis in this case significant. In the case of a significant correlation, an analysis is seen as statistically relevant, and it has a good significance for the study itself. The significant effect between the independent and dependent variables shows a strong connection between the experience of the opportunity to be encouraged to create good and close relationships at work, as well as creating a workplace where the focus on working together for a good working environment contributes to the employees feel that autonomy in the workplace is being focused on.

Based on the analyses carried out on autonomy, it can thus be seen that inclusive leadership skills have a positive effect on employees at work (Korkmaz et al., 2022). By supporting and facilitating autonomy, inclusive leaders will positively influence their employees.

Then you also see both negative and positive correlations between A2, which in this analysis is the dependent factor competence and the independent variables. By looking at the outcome of the analysis, one sees that F7, Contribute to Employees' L&D (-.332), is negatively correlated with competence. As mentioned, you want a $p < 0.05$ to analyse whether the relationship is significant. In this case, you see that the p-value is .071, which shows that it is close to the significance level, but not completely valid. Based on this, the results in this regression show a negative relationship, which means that in situations where the managers guide the employees with the goal of learning from their own mistakes, it has a negative effect on the perceptive competence of the employees. This is in conjunction with guidance for further development. The theory behind competence when one uses basic psychological needs as a theoretical basis refers

to how the individual himself perceives his own characteristics and knowledge in relation to mastering things in the workplace (Deci & Ryan, 1985). By satisfying this need, the employees will feel that they are competent for the work tasks, which can further contribute to achieving efficiency and control.

The regression analysis then shows that autonomy and "Equity" are positively correlated. The items that describe equity describe various claims that look at how the manager motivates and treats the team at work. Furthermore, the focus is on how the manager ensures that no one is excluded from the team. Based on the analysis, F8 (.375) has a positive correlation to competence. You then see that the p-value of F8 falls below the significant limit of $p < 0.05$ with a p-value of .034. Based on these analyses, if employees experience honesty in the workplace, as well as experience being treated with fairness and equality, it will have a positive impact on the employee's perception of competence in the workplace. It can also be added that the more positive reinforcement experienced by the employees, the better the effect of the perceived competence in the workplace.

Lastly, one sees that F9 (.033), Build relationships, shows a positive connection to competence. In this case, it appears from the analysis that the p-value is .053, which is slightly above the desired standard significance level of the p-value, it indicates a connection between the variables. These data thus show that employees' perceived competence wants in accordance with that the manager in the workplace encourages relationship building and cooperation, as well as how the managers facilitate the creation of a good team spirit. If emphasis is placed on commitment and positivity around relationship building and collaboration in the workplace, in the long term it can contribute to the employees experiencing a greater degree of competence.

Here is also the theory presented by Korkmaz et al. (2022) supported in the analyses. The theory highlights how an inclusive leader should act towards his employees and how a good relationship in the workplace is important. As an inclusive manager, there must be room for mistakes and constructive feedback must be provided.

Based on the regression analyses carried out on A3, relatedness, no significant relationships are seen between the dependent and the independent variables. This means that hypothesis 3 is not supported in this research.

The results from the analyses and the findings presented above, we see that two out of three of the hypotheses that were presented are supported based on the

findings in this research. As previously mentioned, the theory of SDT highlights the importance of ensuring that basic psychological needs are satisfied, and the two most important are autonomy and relatedness.

Based on hypothesis 1, it is claimed to find a connection between inclusive leadership skills and autonomy, which is supported by the analysis in the research carried out in this article. This means that by having an inclusive leader who focuses on giving employees the opportunity to make their own decisions and choices based on their own experiences and opinions, employees' degrees of autonomy will be developed. Furthermore, an inclusive manager who supports the importance of autonomy for employees will support employees to have control over their own work. The theory of self-determination theory, as well as the analyses, help to support hypothesis 1. The result of an inclusive leader in line with the focus on the ability to control one's own work, can further contribute to creating a safe working environment.

The analyses above also show that hypothesis 2, which points out that there is a connection between inclusive leadership and employees' relatedness, is supported. The analyses thus show that inclusive management correlates with the relationships between employees in the workplace. This means that inclusive management focuses on creating an inclusive working environment that facilitates employees to create good and close relationships with their employees. This further contributes to creating a sense of belonging in the workplace, which provides room for the development of close relationships that create psychological security.

Thus, the analyses show that inclusive management is particularly important to satisfy two of the basic psychological needs that people have, where the emphasis is placed on employees' autonomy and relationships in the workplace.

7.0 Practical implications

Based on the results I am left with after the data collection, you can see clear connections between how inclusive leadership helps to influence employees' three basic psychological needs. It is important to emphasize the positive effect inclusive leadership has on employees' well-being and well-being in the workplace.

First, an important point to make is the importance of ensuring inclusive leadership, as well as ensuring that the skills within inclusive leadership are developed. The development of inclusive leadership must be done through management programmes, as well as frequent feedback from employees. As mentioned, autonomy is important for employees' well-being in the workplace, so managers should work actively to promote a workplace that facilitates employees to make their own choices and develop. Ensuring that work tasks are evenly distributed, having great transparency and letting employees take responsibility, can it contribute to employees experiencing a greater degree of autonomy.

Furthermore, inclusive managers must constantly ensure the development of the culture among the employees and facilitate the creation of good and secure relationships. This can be done by arranging social gatherings, team building or workshops. Inclusive managers should also ensure that communication is open and that mutual respect is shown at all levels.

For inclusive leadership to work, it is also important to have good and open communication between all levels. Setting a system where you can easily communicate, can make it easier for employees to offer constructive criticism and feedback if necessary. To adopt this type of channel, it is important to ensure that all title feedback is considered, because this can further lead to feeling valued and that what you communicate is important. Again, it creates a relationship of trust between employer and employee.

8.0 Limitations and future research

Like other studies, some limitations to this study are important to highlight. I highlight limiting factors for the study, then I put forward proposals for further research into the theories.

The biggest limitation of this research is that I had too much data to investigate, something that made the data analysis part hard. After the data collection, I had 14 different factors and 88 different items. Considering that the study consists of 113 respondents after completing data cleaning, one understands that the amount of data for the task is far too large. A lot of the data I collected can be used for future research, but the number of respondents should be higher. This is because the study is complex, and my research now is not big enough to carry out all the findings. For further research, my dataset can be used to get an introduction to further studies because the reliability of the data is good.

At first, I planned to divide the outcome of the surveys into the three different groups I already mentioned in the sampling chapter. Because of the low numbers of respondents in Group 1 and Group 2, I had to merge all the groups. If it had been possible to run three parallel analyses with the three groups, I would have had the opportunity to see if there are any actual differences based on occupation. Furthermore, it would also have been interesting to see whether the educational background of the respondents has an impact on the perception of leadership in the workplace. Finally, it is worth mentioning that a more thorough analysis where age is analysed about perceptions of the various statements in the survey. With this, one can further see whether there is a connection between age and what type of education the respondents have.

Another limitation of the study is that the measurements for inclusive leadership have not been fully developed nor have they been tested over a long period. While this is a limitation, my study contributes to the measurement variables being tested, which can have a positive impact on further research. When it comes to the theories of inclusive leadership and self-determination theory, these theories have been considered together, with little previous research to show for it, which sets a limitation that the research should have been more accurate. The thesis has a limited time perspective, which means that the data was collected over a short time interval. Another thing to add is that the limited time and resources meant that the survey was only shared with a convenience sample, making the study unrepresentative.

In my survey, I have included measures that measure work performance. Due to the lack of time, I chose not to include those items in the assignment as the scope had become too large. For further research, it may be relevant to use the findings from work performance and further link it to the theories of inclusive leadership and self-determination theory.

For further research, collecting data over a longer period with the same respondents would be interesting. This means that you could see connections over a longer period. A more in-depth understanding of employees' roles and skills can also be an interesting factor to shed light on for further research.

Even though the study has its limitations, it can contribute to new research and the study helps to shed light on a current topic in working life.

9.0 Conclusion

The aim of the study I have carried out was to look at the connections between inclusive leadership and how employees feel comfortable at work. In the past, studies have looked at inclusive leadership and self-determination theory separately, but there is little research on these theories together. The study mainly promotes two of the three basic psychological needs, namely autonomy and competence. The literature also promotes these two as the most important when it comes to employee well-being at work. According to the study objective of this study, "How does inclusive leadership affect employees at work?", some significant relationships are seen.

Due to the implementation time, the number of respondents and the extensive data handling, the study has weak points, which means that the findings in this research are moderate. The validity and reliability of the research is also an important part of further research. But despite this, the study promotes interesting implications that can raise interest in the theory in this field. Furthermore, further research, with this study as a start, can contribute to a wider understanding of the importance of inclusive leadership and basic psychological needs.

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11.0 Appendix

Appendix 1.0: Information letter about the survey



Thank you for participating in this survey on **leadership and inclusion at work** that is part of my master's thesis in leadership and organizational psychology at BI Norwegian Business School (Handelshøyskolen BI) Oslo.

In this survey, you will be asked to respond to a number of statements about your experiences of at work and perceptions about different qualities of your supervisor. There are no right or wrong answers. You are just asked to choose the option from the response scale that you feel best fits your experience. I'll also ask you a couple general questions about yourself, so that I can analyze responses in a good way. The survey should take about 8 minutes to complete. Your progress is indicated with a bar at the bottom of the screen.

Please know that your responses to this survey are fully anonymous. They will be used in preparing my master's thesis and, possibly, in further publications building on this work.

If you should have any questions about the survey or the use of data collected, just get in touch.

Sophie Graf Stenberg
 Master of Science in Leadership and Organisational Psychology
 at Handelshøyskolen BI Oslo
 sophie-stenberg@hotmail.com

Before proceeding to the survey, please confirm that you have received and understood the nature of the study and how data that you provide will be used.

Yes, I agree.



Appendix 2.0: Inclusive leadership measurement

Dimensions	Themes	Final item
Facilitate Individuals' Uniqueness (A)	Support employees as individuals (1A)	My supervisor supports each one of us both at personal and work level. My supervisor encourages each one of us to approach him/her on personal issues. My supervisor encourages each one of us to approach him/her for support
	Foster diversity (2A)	My supervisor encourages each one of us to share our ideas openly. My supervisor encourages everyone to make use of each other's unique backgrounds during problem-solving. My supervisor fosters unique contributions of each one of us. My supervisor makes sure that each one of us is invited to express different viewpoints.
	Empower employees (3A)	My supervisor encourages each one of us to take initiative. My supervisor gives each one of us personal authority to make decisions on how to accomplish tasks on our own. My supervisor encourages each one of us to solve problems ourselves instead of just telling us what to do. My supervisor empowers each one of us to make work-related decisions.
	Contribute to employees' L&D (4A)	My supervisor helps each one of us to learn from mistakes to develop ourselves. My supervisor gives attention to learning and development opportunities for each one of us. My supervisor helps each one of us to further develop ourselves.
Foster Belongingness in a Team (B)	Ensure equity (1B)	My supervisor encourages honesty as a virtue within the team. My supervisor treats team members fairly. My supervisor treats team members equally. My supervisor makes sure that nobody is left out in the team.
	Build relationships (2B)	My supervisor encourages team members to build closer connections with one another. My supervisor encourages collaboration within the team.

Appendix 3.0: Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale

1. I feel like I can make a lot of inputs to deciding how my job gets done.
2. I really like the people I work with.
3. I do not feel very competent when I am at work.
4. People at work tell me I am good at what I do.
5. I feel pressured at work.
6. I get along with people at work.
7. I pretty much keep to myself when I am at work.
8. I am free to express my ideas and opinions on the job.
9. I consider the people I work with to be my friends.
10. I have been able to learn interesting new skills on my job.
11. When I am at work, I have to do what I am told.
12. Most days I feel a sense of accomplishment from working.
13. My feelings are taken into consideration at work.
14. On my job I do not get much of a chance to show how capable I am.
15. People at work care about me.
16. There are not many people at work that I am close to.
17. I feel like I can pretty much be myself at work.
18. The people I work with do not seem to like me much.
19. When I am working I often do not feel very capable.
20. There is not much opportunity for me to decide for myself how to go about my work.
21. People at work are pretty friendly towards me.

Scoring Information. Form three subscale scores by averaging item responses for each subscale after reverse scoring the items that were worded in the negative direction. Specifically, any item that has (R) after it in the code below should be reverse scored by subtracting the person's response from 8. The subscales are:

Autonomy: 1, 5(R), 8, 11(R), 13, 17, 20(R)

Competence: 3(R), 4, 10, 12, 14(R), 19(R)

Relatedness: 2, 6, 7(R), 9, 15, 16(R), 18(R), 21

Appendix 4.0: CFA Plot

