The Role of Inclusive Leadership Style in Fostering Employee Performance: A Mediating Role of Workplace Dignity

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Abstract

Purpose- The current research aims to inspect the impact of inclusive leadership on increasing employee performance in the Hail health cluster to inspect the part of workplace dignity as a arbitrator between employees' inclusive leadership style and performance. Design/Methodology/Approach- This study took a model of 364 workers in the Hail health cluster in Saudi Arabia. A well-structured questionnaire is developed on the base of previous literature for the collection of data. SmartPLS is used for extracting the results. Findings- This study establishes that the inclusive leadership style knowingly influences employee performance in the Hail health cluster. Inclusive leadership enhances workplace dignity; the highly dignified worker feels secure and performs work more efficiently to provide quality work. Research limitation/implication- This study is limited to the health cluster of Hail which is service sector and used workplace dignity as mediator, while future study can test same model for production sector and can use workplace dignity as moderator. The finding of current study has theoretical, practical and empirical implementation not only for the service sector but for manufacturing sector. Originality/Value- The current research is unique, and the combination of these variables has never been studied. This study explains that any sector's leadership increases workers' performance by providing dignity in the workplace. Further, this workplace dignity helps to increase the performance of employees.

Keywords: *Inclusive Leadership, Employee Performance, Workplace Dignity, Health Cluster, Saudi Arabia*

INTRODUCTION

Innovation exists a vital for organizations to make the organizational environment stronger. This modernization needs deviation to be engrossed in creating novel ideas and actively advocate and implement those ideas more creatively. A company needs to be more competitive by innovating in every aspect of its production or service provision (Pandey *et al.,* 2019).

Much significant advancement has been seen in the Saudi Arabian healthcare sector over the last few decades. These obstacles encompass a surge in demand driven by rapid population expansion, excessive expenditures of healthcare service, apprehensions regarding the care quality and safety, an escalating burden of chronic illnesses, an e-health system that falls short of effectiveness, deficient collaboration and synchronization among various healthcare sectors, and an excessively federal administrative structure (Asmri et al., 2020).

The Saudi government took a good step in the context of Vision 2030. The Saudi Vision 2030 recognizes the importance of improving employee performance in the health sector as a main role in achieving its goals or enhancing the capabilities and performance of healthcare professionals for providing high-quality healthcare services (Song et al., 2017). Further, the vision encourages research and innovation in the health sector to promote a culture of continuous improvement and evidence-based practices. For making the advanced healthcare sector, Saudi Arabia aims to foster collaboration among healthcare professionals within and internationally (Thapa et al., 2021). Furthermore, this vision focuses on partnerships with renowned healthcare institutions, knowledge exchange programs, and participation in conferences and seminars (Ononye, 2022)

A lot of studies inspected the link between various leadership styles or employees' performance. These leadership behaviours contain moral, transformational, reliable, magnetic, domestic, and transactional leadership (Zeng & Xu, 2020; Li et al., 2021). The objective of leaders in encouraging work activities have been constantly highlighted in revisions, focusing on the significance of their individual qualities, such as personality and atmosphere. Though, these studies have ignored the leader's crucial role in promoting employees' work

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performance by providing dignity in the workplace. Many studies, such as (Baker & Lucas 2017; Wang *et al.,* 2021; King et al., 2021), have explained self-worth of work by way of interpretative study and the importance of leadership style. Therefore, this study has described the experimental study to discover the connection between work self-respect, inclusive leadership and employee performance. However, earlier literature related to inclusive leadership emphasizes an altercation process among frontrunners and followers grounded on proficient status (Fagan et al., 2022; Shore & Chung, 2022)

The current study is a revolutionary observed work that describes and studies the link between inclusive leadership or employee performance, covering limited research that discovered the relation in work dignity and employee working activities (Ahmed *et al.,* 2022; Wang *et al.,* 2021). This study enhances the environments where Inclusive leadership and work dignity are likely to assist employees. Therefore, current research purposes to investigate the influence of inclusive leadership on employee performance in the Hail health cluster and to inspect the role of workplace dignity as an arbitrator between the inclusive leadership and worker's performance in health group.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Supporting Theories

This study underpins two theories in the context of variables used in this current article; overall, Leadership theory holds significant relevance for leaders as it underscores the vital role of harmonizing and uniting various life domains, encompassing work, community, and self, to achieve heightened levels of success, contentment, and whole charity (Friedman, 2014). This principle has four core principles: authenticity, wholeness, growth, and interconnectedness. It posits that incorporating and supporting diverse life facets can expand performance, safety, and holistic fulfilment (Kara et al., 2013).

Further, the Optimal Distinctiveness Theory also posits that within the workplace, individuals require a sense of acceptance, appreciation, and support from their associates and administrators. This requirement for a sense of going can significantly influence their willingness to part and generate innovative concepts (KP et al., 2019). When individuals observe that their innovative concepts may be met with struggle, reproach, or pessimism from their peers, they are less inclined to engage in innovative work performance (Luhgiatno & Santoso, 2021). Hence, the Optimal Distinctiveness Theory recommends that organizations can foster innovative work via establishing a atmosphere that equilibrium need for employees or a sense of affiliated.

Inclusive Leadership

Inclusive leadership represents a leadership methodology that places a premium on valuing team members, encouraging diverse viewpoints, and establishing an environment where individuals believe their work contributes to the company's overall well-being. Within workplace cultures, inclusive leadership is becoming increasingly prevalent and vital for organizational growth and positively impacts.

The Optimal Distinctiveness Theory pertains to leadership or offers guidance for frontrunners seeking to enhance their impact on their employees. This theory has also found application in leadership studies, providing valuable visions into how frontrunners can efficiently stability the double desires of fostering a sense of belonging and promoting individual distinctiveness in their leadership characters (Way et al., 2022). Furthermore, this model proposes that leaders may foster general atmosphere where their followers can have a profound intellect of owned by development teamwork, inspiring an unlatched statement, or placing significant value on various viewpoints (Moon & Christensen, 2022)

Employees Performance

Employee performance covers the actions and behaviours demonstrated by employees' abilities while carrying out their designated tasks or responsibilities (Darvishmotevali & Ali, 2020; Kalogiannidis, 2020; Meyers et al., 2020). It represents the tangible results employees achieve within an organization (Folorunso et al., 2014). In other words, The performance of employees is influenced by their competencies, exertion, and perceptions of their duties (Hee et al., 2016). It is pivotal in augmenting the organization's productivity by enhancing task

efficiency and effectiveness. Therefore, employee performance contributes to the delivery of high-quality work and an upsurge in the productivity of the organization (Buil et al., 2019

Workplace Dignity

Workplace dignity contains of the perception of the value of a person who is recognized through his engagement in working activities (Thomas & Lucas, 2019). Workplace dignity is a predictor and consequence of various psychological, work-related, and organizational factors. Further, workplace dignity, with indicators such as the quality of work, employee agency, and creativity, provides a sense of expressive effort, objectivity organizational performs, and accommodative statement outlines within the workplace (Thomas & Lucas, 2019). these five aspects describe the broad dimensions of workplace dignity. Further, these aspects contribute to the work realm that significantly contributes to theory development, research, practice, and systemic transformations.

The Optimal Distinctiveness Theory aligns with workplace dignity by promoting an atmosphere where employees feel protected in captivating dangers, expressing their viewpoints, or sharing advanced concepts without anxiety of negative repercussions or judgment (Héliot et al., 2020). The Total Leadership theory also advocates for workplace dignity as it enhances employee capabilities and elevates the quality of work.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

In current research employee performance is considered as a dependent variable that depends on a unique leadership style, which is inclusive leadership style. Further, to make a smooth relationship between independent and dependent workplaces, dignity is used as a mediator. The following diagram explains the structure of the study.
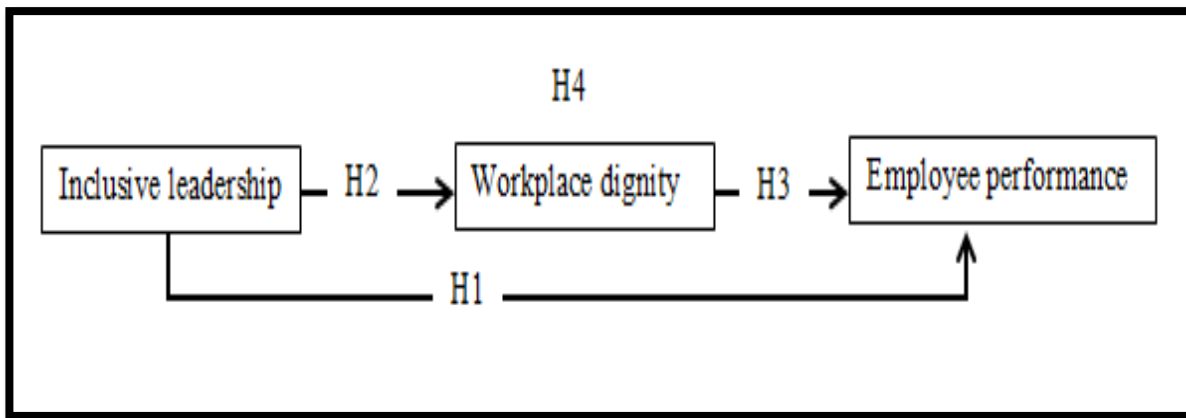

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Source: Developed by author

Inclusive Leadership and Employee Performance

Inclusive leadership can profoundly impact employee performance across various dimensions (Javed et al., 2019). Inclusive leaders create an atmosphere where employees feel valuable as well as respectful. The sense of belonging and psychological safety leads to advanced employee commitment. So, the involved employees are more loyal to their work, more expected to put in discretionary effort and are generally more productive. Leaders encourage collaboration among team members by fostering an atmosphere of trust and open communication (Lei et al., 2019; Cortellazzo et al., 2019; Mohsin et al, 2021). When employees work well together and share their diverse perspectives, they are likely to discover creative solutions to problems and achieve better results as a team (Yasin et al., 2022). Employees who work under inclusive leadership tend to have higher job satisfaction. When leaders sense that their contributions are recognized and valued, they are

likely to feel more gratified with their work, which positively influences their performance. Inclusive leaders encourage open dialogue and diverse perspectives when addressing challenges or making decisions (Nguyen et al., 2019; Rehman et al., 2021). Inclusive leadership sets an example for the entire organization. When leaders are committed to diversity and inclusion, they encourage others to do the same. This act of leaders leads to more effective problem-solving and decision-making processes, ultimately improving organizational performance. Current studies emphasizing the works elaborate that inclusive leadership is important or associated accompanied by employee performance (Nguyen et al., 2019; Cortellazzo et al., 2019). The resulting hypothesis is established depend on the above argument

H1: Inclusive leadership has an important or practical link with employee performance

Inclusive Leadership and Workplace Dignity

Inclusive leadership categorizes worth of non-identical insights or keenly inspires teamwork. Because of employees from distinct experiences, inclusive leaders produce chances for people to donate their limited concepts and thoughts(Patterson & Byrd, 2022). Respect is a central component of self-respect (Noronha *et al.*, 2020); alleviated with self-respect at work revenues that the value is perceived by others. (Tiwari & Sharma, 2019; Sarfarz et al., 2023)

Employees' inspiration to donate to the administration's initiatives and segment their concepts is just like to be extraordinary when they feel valued (Javed *et al.,* 2019; Sarfraz et al., 2022). This encouragement from a leader can result in improved output, modernization, or resourcefulness. Inclusive leadership help minimize disputes and misunderstandings among the employee, which are created due to cultural or other differences. Constructed on the given discussion, the following theory is developed.

H2: Inclusive leadership has an important and positive connection with workplace dignity.

Workplace Dignity and Employee's Performance

There's anticipation for people to show greater inventiveness in their behavior in organization's where workforce are regarded respectfully. It is a fact that an expressively strong workplace has a favourable impact on the well-being of people as well as their logic of devotion or fitting to the company (Grawitch and Ballard, 2016Naseen et al., 2020), healthy workplace is one of the key factor it will increase an employee's inventive behaviour. Göksoy (2021) statements that effective administrations show deference or encourage workers' well or strong features like as self-respect, elasticity, confidence, expectation, individual well-being, and emotional intellect. An appropriate business climate in the workplace is to increase human dignity. If the employees are delivered with the potential to expand their self-respect, they are not exposed to any misbehavior or expressive anxiety (Hussain et al., 2022;Naiwen et al.,2021; Lucas *et al.,* 2013). Improving dignity in the workplace could potentially result in the employee to work further creatively (Swanson and Kent, 2017). Depend upon the above perception, this study hypothesized that

H3: Workplace dignity has a important and positive connection with employee's performance

Mediating Role of Workplace Dignity

To safeguard human dignity and advanced employee welfare in the workplace the concept of dignity is necessity. Inclusive leadership style significantly impacts workplace capabilities, the link in employees, leaders, and employee devotion. This type of leadership expressively raises the advanced work capabilities of the employee by giving workplace dignity. Moreover, inclusive leadership styles prioritise guarding employees' dignity (Seçer and Yazc, 2018; Mohsin et al., 2019). Inclusive leadership raises workers' effectiveness of showing respect and recognizing self-worth encourages individuals to express their thoughts and ideas.. Dignity in the workplace is very important because providing self-esteem to the employees motivates them to cutting-edge work performs (Javed *et al.,* 2019; Mohsin et al., 2021; Sürücü *et al.,* 2023). Therefore, the resulting hypothesis is created, which indicates that

H4: Workplace dignity arbitrates the connection between inclusive leadership and employee's performance.

METHODOLOGY

Sampling and Data Collection

The preceding research described the link between inclusive leadership and employees' performance by utilizing the refereeing function of workplace dignity in the Hail health group of Saudi Arabia. The reason for selecting the health sector is its reliance on knowledge-intensive processes actions and its importance in this sector. The best performance of the staff in this sector is very important to get patient's satisfaction. Therefore, this study composed data from some public hospitals in Hail City to achieve the research objectives. The public hospitals include Hail General Hospital, King Khalid Hospital, King Salman Specialist Hospital, Maternity and Children Hospital, and Ashraf Hospital. A convenient sampling method was implemented for data collection. This method of sampling is usually used in social science, and accessibility sampling is more suitable for accessing the contributors, economical and straightforward to execute (Edgar and Manz, 2017).

Moreover, the questionnaire was developed by using items of variables and to confirm the strength of the survey forms, we asked specialist's thoughts from three seasoned researchers the term of professors of the university in Saudi Arabia, who reconfirmed the suitability of our research tool for current research no any changing was recommended. Before the data distribution of the questionnaire, we move toward the higher management and informed them about the study's neutral and the secrecy of the defendant was guaranteed. After getting approval, the survey was distributed. The survey was sent to members by electronic mail and personal visit. Contributors were trained to provide authentic info and return the questionnaire on time. 400 feedback forms were circulated with employees, of which 364 were refunded or legal for data analysis. The rate of response was 91 %, considered good for examination. Table 1 shows the features of the contributors.

Table 1: Features of the contributors ($N = 364$)

Factors	Classification	Repetition	Proportion
Gender	Male	300	82.41
	Female	64	15.5
Position	Top management	280	76.0
	Employee	84	24.0
Age (years)	< 40	69	18.9
	40 to 50	149	40.9
	60 to 60	114	31.3
	> 50	32	8.7
Qualification level	> Bachelor's	116	31.9
	Bachelor's	175	48.1
	Masters and more	73	20.0
	Less thsn 5 years	100	27.4
Experience (years)	5-10	57	15.6
	11-15	115	31.5
	16-20	87	23.9

Measures

A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 (where 1 indicates strong disagreement and 5 indicate strong agreement) was adopted to measure the constructs. Nine-item scale discoverd by (Carmeli *et al.* (2010) was used to measure the construct of inclusive leadership. A model of a 9-item question is: "The executive is open to reach new concepts." The concept of workplace dignity was valuated using the seventeen-item scales create by Thomas and Lucas (2019). "My workplace is a source of dignity for me." is an example seventeen-item question. In this study, the items for the employee's performance are adopted from a study developed by (Hee et al., 2019)

Data Analysis

SmartPLS software is used in current study to examine the current conceptual framework. This approach is employed in quantitative data analysis (Hair *et al.,* 2020). PLS-SEM is a forceful method suitable for addressing with small sample sizes, non-normal data, and theoretical development and delay (Hair *et al.,* 2020). In the current study, we ran SmartPLS 4.0.9 for extent framework calculation of the external model (constructs consistency and strength) and the structural model for the internal model.

RESULTS

Measurement Model

The coherence and robustness of the constructs are underscored by the metrics of Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), discriminant validity, and average variance extracted (AVE) as outlined by Hair et al. (2020). Table 2 provides insights into the convergent validity and consistency of the present study. Items with loadings falling between 0.5 and 0.7, which do not significantly affect Cronbach's alpha, CR, and AVE, may be reconsidered for further analysis, as suggested by Hair et al. (2016).

Table 2: Factor loading, AVE, CR, CA

Latent variable	Items	Loadings	Alpha	AVE	CR
Inclusive Leadership	I.L 1	0.811	0.846	0.813	0.892
	I.L 2	0.912			
	I.L 3	0.801			
	I.L 4	0.821			
	I.L 5	0.860			
	I.L 6	0.901			
	I.L 7	0.931			
	I.L 8	0.801			
Workplace Dignity	WD 1	0.691	0.890	0.602	0.813
	WD 2	0.682			
	WD 3	0.695			
	WD 4	0.721			
	WD 5	0.701			
	WD 6	0.692			
	WD 7	0.781			
	WD 8	0.698			
	WD 9	0.695			
	WD 10	0.738			
	WD 11	0.791			
	WD 12	0.821			
	WD 13	0.803			
Employee performance	EP 1	0.821	0.891	0.701	0.883
	EP 2	0.734			
	EP 3	0.759			
	EP 4	0.796			
	EP 5	0.826			
	EP 6	0.823			
	EP 7	0.825			
	EP 8	0.762			
	EP 9	0.782			
	EP 10	0.793			
	EP 11	0.812			
	EP 12	0.823			

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Note: I.L (Inclusive Leadership), EP (Employee performance), WD (workplace dignity), CR (composite reliability), AVE (average variance extracted)

The present approach also evaluated the distinct strength by using the Fornell-Larcker principle. Following table elaborates that data has met the threshold level of measures this criteria is developed by Fornell and Larcker (1981)

Table 3: Discriminant validity via (Fornell-Larcker criterion)

Variables	I.L	E.P	W.D
I.L	0.878		
E.P	0.381	0.818	
W.D	0.239	0.280	0.763

Note: I.L (Inclusive Leadership), EP (Employee performance), WD (workplace dignity)

Assessment of Structural Model

The framework is examined after the measurement model, in the subsequent phase, the structural framework analyses whether the latent variables are correlated or not. Table 5 shows the structural model. The finding explains that inclusive leadership absolutely relates to employee performance constructed on values such as $\beta = 0.313$ and $p = 0.000$). For the second hypothesis, inclusive leadership has a positive link between workplace dignity in the Hail health cluster the values are. Workplace dignity definitely affects innovative work behaviour ($\beta = 0.324$ and $p = 0.005$), so this hypothesis is accepted.

Further hypothesis H3 is also accepted based on values, which explains that workplace dignity has a favorable correlation with employee performance ($\beta = 0.291$ and $p = 0.006$). Regarding mediation analysis, workplace dignity creates an important positive association between inclusive leadership and employee performance ($\beta = 0.216$ and $p = 0.045$). All values are below the threshold level of 0.05.So, the entire hypothesis is accepted.

Table 5: Structural model

Hypothesis	Relationship	Beta	Standard error	T-Value	P-Value	Decision
H1	IL ≥ EP	0.313	0.044	4.343	0.000	Supported
H2	IL ≥ WD	0.324	0.049	4.556	0.000	Supported
H3	WD ≥ EP	0.291	0.051	3.013	0.006	Supported
H4	IL ≥ WD ≥ EP	0.216	0.019	2.341	0.045	Supported

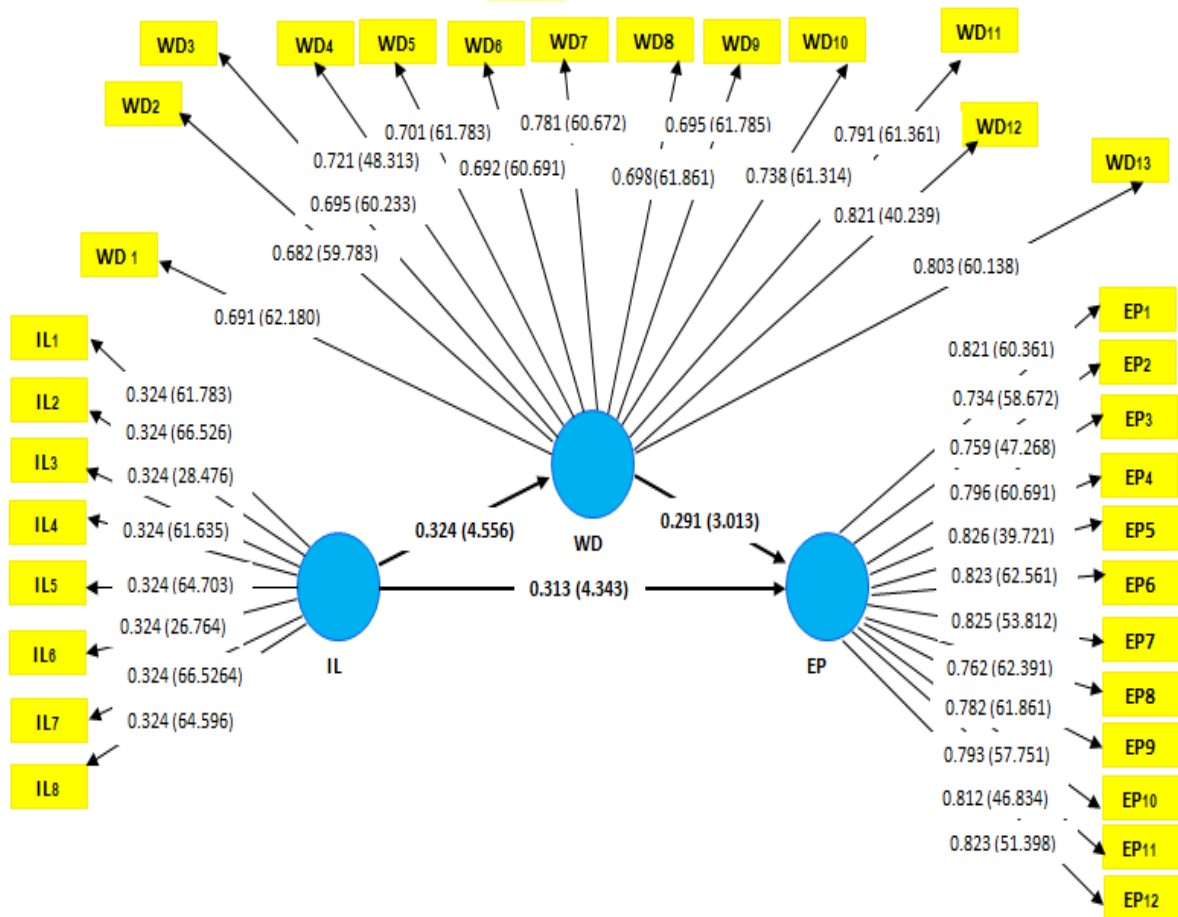**Note(s):** *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$*

Figure 2: Structural model

Source: Developed by author SmartPLS

DISCUSSION

The theory used in this study was established to observe how workplace dignity referees the link between employees' inclusive leadership work performance in the Hail health cluster.

In this research, H1 defined that inclusive leadership positively and significantly influences employee performance in the Hail Health cluster in Saudi Arabia. Additional, this recommends a resilient link between employees' thoughts of the importance of inclusive leadership and their observations of employee performance (Nguyen et al., 2019). Inclusive leadership motivates employees to work more efficiently (Javed et al., 2021: Li et al., 2021; Mohsin et al., 2024). This finding is in line with the preceding study.

This study's theory (H2) is also accepted, representing that inclusive leadership improves workplace dignity in the framework of the Hail health cluster. The result or current analysis is reliable with previous research showing beneficial influence of inclusive leadership on workplace dignity (Fang *et al.,* 2019). This study aligns with some empirical studies representative a favourable and important link between inclusive leadership and dignity in place of work.

This approach (H3) was accepted after the data analysis and discovered a favourable correlation in workplace dignity and employee performance (Tiwari or Sharma, 2019; Ahmed et al., 2023). This study offers vision into the improvement of work in administrations over the satisfaction of a highly imposing workplace that fully pleases the wants of individuals and their workplace. It provides opportunities for employees to promote and endure the workers' performance (Javed et al., 2019).

The hypothesis (H4) is accepted based on empirical findings. The results showed that workplace dignity intervenes the link in inclusive leadership or employee performance. The intervention impact may be defined as workplace dignity can result in enhanced cognitive, meditative skill or therefore aid in developing inclusive leadership, which can encourage beneficial observations in terms of innovation behaviour through workers. Workplace dignity supports employees attain inner tranquility, rise workplace inclusion, and make innovative work behaviour. Anything the organization's leadership does to advance workplace dignity for their employees will have the possible to improve work, donating to workers' charity. So, working workplace dignity is one of the tools for promoting work performance (Murat and Elçi, 2020; Yılmaz, 2020; Azam et al., 2023).

Theoretical Implementation of the Study

The earlier study has hypothetical, applied and experimental significance. Firstly, the current approach is the initial attempt to investigate the intervening function of workplace dignity in an inclusive leadership and employee work performance in the Hail health cluster.

Secondly, this study explained that inclusive leaders in the health sector can be having high incomes for their employees in the development innovative task behaviors or dignity in the workplace. In other words, inclusive leadership encourages high employee performance levels and is an essential instrument for cultivating a dignified workplace.

Thirdly this approach has defined the entire leadership model to explain the part of inclusive leadership in the health cluster of Hail. Most studies elaborate on the dignity or worker qualitatively. Though, this present approach offers the observed examination for inspecting the relationship between work dignity, inclusive leadership and employee performance in the health sector of Hail.

Practical Implementation

This theory has a useful role for the worker or management. The findings of the approach showed a positive association between inclusive leadership and innovative work behaviour, which is helpful to healthcare sector leaders. This study not only recommends to comprehensive leadership in healthcare but also to other sectors for providing the dignity to the workers, The dignity associated with one's work is a critical factor in elevating employee performance within the healthcare sector. When workers experience logic of dignity in their parts, it has an optimistic impact on their motivation, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. This is particularly significant in healthcare environments, where the demands and emotional intensity of the work are high. Acknowledging and valuing the dignity of employees becomes even more essential in such settings. From nurses to physicians, healthcare professionals participate an important role in donating to the comfort of individuals, and recognizing the significance of their contributions fosters a culture of respect within the workplace. As employees observe their work as imposing, they are more expected to fully invest themselves, leading to improved performance, decreased burnout, and an overall positive impact on the healthcare organization. Therefore, cultivating a workplace culture that respects the dignity of healthcare professionals not only enhances individual satisfaction but also contributes to the provision of outstanding healthcare services.

CONCLUSION

This approach is exclusive and creates the refereed moderating model. The outcomes show a favorable or important correlation between inclusive leadership and worker's performance. More, the findings expose that workplace dignity shows the connection between inclusive leadership and employee performance. Providing easy workplace environment and the leader's liberty of skill presentation improve. This approach strongly acclaims comprehensive leadership development initiatives in the health cluster. The training platforms for the leaders would improve the ability of inclusive leadership that ropes professional ethics for creating cooperative work environment.

This present approach suggests that the leader in the Hail health cluster should ensure that transparent policies and methodologies are established to handle problems correlated to workplace dignity. Leaders can grow

assortment, presence, anti-harassment policies, and duplicate opportunities. These policies should be linked efficiently and regularly protected.

Finally, this approach is exemplary masterwork for inclusive leadership, workplace dignity, and workplace inclusion to substitute original work behaviour in the service sector and provides a new dimension to research on this topic.

LIMITATIONS

This present approach has laid the foundation for upcoming research endeavours to increase the existing conceptual framework and gather more experiential sign. While this study possesses its exceptional characteristics, certain limitations suggest directions for upcoming approach linked to the present model.

Initially, the present study has concentrated on a specific leadership style, namely inclusive leadership. Upcoming studies could discover the influence of other leadership styles, like as digital leadership, transformational leadership, or inspiring leadership, for investigating whether different leadership styles exert changing effects on employees' creativity and revolution is of high significance. Secondly, the current study is conducted in the hail health cluster, primarily in the service sector. Upcoming research should apply the current theory to a wider array of deal and industrial sectors to improve the generalizability of the research findings.

Third is, the current approach employed a cross-sectional design for data collection. Upcoming research efforts could benefit from the implementation of longitudinal or experimental designs. Longitudinal studies will offer a deep understanding of inclusive leadership's long-term impact on employee performance.

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