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Master thesis

Barriers and facilitators to inclusive leadership

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Preface

What a time to write a thesis! When I first began to brainstorm about possible subjects for this thesis, the outbreak of COVID-19 was still far away. How little did I know about the surreal months that were ahead of me. The first couple of thesis meetings were still at campus, and so was my first meeting at Wageningen University and Research (WUR). However, this changed when COVID-19 emerged in the Netherlands and the university shut down. Not only was I not able to go to Radboud University for my thesis meetings, but also WUR closed down. With the help of my contact persons at WUR, who were very flexible and enthusiastic, I could still continue to do my interviews and write my thesis from home, even though it was lonely sometimes and not what one expects from writing a master thesis.

First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor Yvonne Benschop, for guiding me through this uncertain period. Not only did she provide me valuable feedback, but she was also there for emotional support at distance, through e-mail and Skype. You are an inspiration on gender, diversity and inclusion and your enthusiasm and kind words always helped me to regain my motivation. Every Master student needs a guru like you. Second, I would like to thank the WUR for the opportunity to do this research, even though the interviews had to be conducted through Skype. In particular, I would like to thank Eva, who was my contact person at WUR, but also Joyce and Myrthe who helped me to conduct this thesis. Of course, I would not have been able to write this thesis without the respondents, so I want to thank the managers I interviewed for their valuable time and information they have shared with me. Furthermore, I want to thank my peer students, Cathrin and Mila, for their emotional support and their feedback on my work and for keeping me (more or less) sane during these five months, by listening and responding to my endless voice messages. *“Killing my darlings”* was less painful because you both got my back when I had to reduce my amount of text. Finally, thanks to my friend Yasmin and my sister Nikki for their feedback and support and for cheering for my work, even though I felt amateurish at my insecure moments. I appreciate both of you for spending your time and energy to help me finish this master thesis.

I hope you enjoy reading this “master”-piece of mine.

Romy Gerritsen

Apeldoorn, June 2020

When the world comes crashing at your feet

It's okay to let others

Help pick up the pieces

- community by Rupi Kaur

Abstract

The concept of inclusion recently gained interest and since those in formal leadership positions are crucial to creating inclusion (Randel et al., 2018), inclusive leadership is of importance too. Inclusive leadership is sometimes mentioned as the new holy grail in the research field of diversity and inclusion, but little is known about barriers and facilitators that are perceived by managers in working towards inclusion. The perceptions of managers seem to be underexposed in the literature on inclusive leadership, even though managers are having a great impact on inclusion and can be seen as change-agents. The aim of this study is to gain more insight into inclusive leadership, by interviewing managers about their perspectives on the barriers to and facilitators of inclusive leadership, guided by the following research question: *“How do managers see their own inclusive leadership behaviors and what do they perceive as the barriers to and facilitators of inclusive leadership?”*. The answer to this question is acquired by conducting qualitative interviews with thirteen managers from Wageningen University and Research. The findings provide insights into how managers perceive their own style of leadership in relation to diversity and inclusion and what barriers and facilitators they come across in working towards inclusive leadership. In this research, five categories are used to talk about inclusive leadership behaviors: self-awareness, social awareness, relational agility, fair treatment and courage. One does not have to tick all the boxes to be an inclusive leader, but it is important to relate leadership behaviors to issues of diversity, inclusion and inequalities. Even though there are some similarities between the behaviors that were mentioned by the respondents and the inclusive leadership behaviors from the literature, the given examples are too generic to say that these are inclusive leadership behaviors rather than behaviors that fit to leadership in general. Having attention for differences between individuals is something else than having attention for differences between social categories and the inequalities that are related to these. This latter type of differences, between social categories, is barely mentioned during the interviews. This level of abstraction might be due to a lack of knowledge, which can therefore be seen as a barrier to inclusive leadership. Other barriers that probably prevents managers from being inclusive are the lack of a shared vision on inclusive leadership, an external locus of control and policies and procedures that are not aligned with inclusive leadership. Facilitators that were identified are, among other things, having role models, provide more tools and trainings on inclusive leadership and the use of pressure and extrinsic motivation to create more awareness. However, lowering organizational barriers or providing facilitators can help managers in performing inclusive leadership behaviors, but this is not everything. Managers themselves are required take their responsibility and need some internal locus of control. Having the right tools is supportive, but not comprehensive. Managers should take their own responsibility to educate themselves as well, instead of waiting for the perfect conditions for inclusion.

Keywords: inclusive leadership | barriers | facilitators | managers | qualitative research

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Problem context

Dealing with diversity issues in the workplace has played a prominent role in recent years (Pless & Maak, 2004). Many business leaders see diversity as a strategic move to increase levels of creativity and innovation and to stay in touch with the increasingly heterogeneous customer base (Groysberg & Connolly, 2013). However, after promoting and implementing diversity initiatives for several years, they realize that merely focusing on diversity does not ensure the benefits they expected, nor does it ensure the retention and promotion of minority groups to influential positions in the organization. Managers start to question why they bother to achieve diversity when they do not see any improvements (Randel et al., 2018). Organizations are disappointed with the results they have achieved regarding diversity challenges (Pless & Maak, 2004).

There have been quite some shifts in the research field of diversity and inclusion. For a long time, diversity research has been dominated by a focus on the more negative connotations of diversity, like bias and discrimination. When the research field changed, this way of looking at diversity shifted to a focus on the potential value of diversity and the positive outcomes on work processes. Only since recently, there is more attention to the concept of inclusion (Shore et al., 2011).

Randel et al. (2018) believe that inclusion is needed to support the advantages of diversity. Simply putting individuals who differ from one another together in a team or promoting minorities in leadership positions does not ensure positive outcomes, such as employee well-being and innovative behavior (Choi, Tran & Kang, 2017). Pless and Maak (2004) agree on this by arguing that the potential of workforce diversity can only be unleashed by a culture of inclusion. Shore et al. (2011) define inclusion as follows: “the degree to which an employee perceives that he or she is an esteemed member of the work group through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness” (p. 1265).

Those in formal leadership positions are crucial to creating inclusion, because team members form their perceptions of inclusion based on how they are treated at work. Managers are responsible for making decisions that impact employees and are influencing the organizational environment in which inclusive treatment by others may occur. Randel et al. (2018) believe inclusive leadership enables this in ways that are not sufficiently addressed by other types of leadership. Inclusive leadership can help to build the capabilities of team members to work successfully together, by contributing to inclusive environments and group performance. Jin, Lee and Lee (2017) agree on this by noticing how scholars previously have focused on diversity practices, without delineating the contributions of those who carry out such practices. Their findings point to the importance of the role of managers. Randel et al. (2018) use the following definition of inclusive leadership: “a set of leader behaviors that are focused on facilitating group members feeling part of the group (belongingness) and retaining their sense of individuality (uniqueness) while contributing to group processes and

outcomes” (p. 191). There are several studies that have focused on inclusive leadership behaviors and practices (Choi, Tran & Kang, 2017; Randel et al., 2018; Workman-Stark, 2017), but organizations are still searching for the best way to achieve an inclusive climate with inclusive managers.

The literature on inclusion and inclusive leadership is expanding, but recent studies have predominantly focused on the (positive) quantitative relationship between inclusive leadership and organizational outcomes, such as creativity, job performance, reduced turnover (Randel et al., 2018), employee well-being, innovative behavior (Choi et al., 2017) and team voice (Ye, Wang & Guo, 2019). Other studies use more qualitative methods, but they focus solely on the perceptions of employees (Van Laer & Janssens, 2011). There seems to be limited attention for the perceptions of the managers regarding inclusive leadership, which is remarkable, since managers seem to be critical for inclusiveness (Jin et al., 2017; Randel et al., 2018; Shore et al., 2011). Castilla (2011) acknowledges that little is known about how managers are influencing workplace inequality and that certain mechanisms regarding this influence have been invisible to scholars.

Furthermore, inclusive leadership is seen as the new holy grail in the research field of diversity and inclusion, whilst there is little awareness of the possible barriers to inclusive leadership, such as lack of time or bias (Romani, Holck & Risberg, 2019), thereby keeping inequalities maintained or even reinforcing them. Critical diversity management literature has already exposed how diversity initiatives can lead to re-marginalization. This is partly due to societal discourses that are unreflexively reproduced in workplace practices, thereby reproducing discrimination. However, in most studies this is not mentioned (Romani et al., 2019). Besides having more insight into the barriers to inclusive leadership, it would be useful to know the facilitators of inclusive leadership as well, such as individual characteristics that enhance inclusive leadership (Randel et al., 2018) or an inclusive environment (Workman-Stark, 2017).

1.2 Aim of the research and research question

This study aims to contribute both to existing theory and to practice. There seems to be a gap in the literature on the perceptions of managers regarding barriers to and facilitators of inclusive leadership. There are already some qualitative studies on the perspectives of the employees, but the point of view of the managers seems to be underexposed in the literature on inclusive leadership. This appears to be a bit odd, since they are the ones that have the impact and should be change-agents. Leadership is the center of inclusiveness and the knowledge and behavior of managers are, among other things, determining whether the climate will be inclusive. When the focus is only the perceptions of employees, we still do not know what is obstructing or enabling managers to be inclusive leaders and therefore we do not know how to change the situation. When there is no awareness of the potential barriers and facilitators, implementing inclusive practices will not make the difference to really make a change and is possibly even contributing to the inequality in the workplace.

Furthermore, most studies conceptualize inclusive leadership as being positive and there seems to be no attention for the possible barriers or negative side-effects of inclusive leadership. To what extent do good intentions actually lead to diversity and inclusion instead of reinforcing inequality even more and what are possible (unconscious) limitations that should be taken into account? The aim of this study is to provide practical advice for organizations regarding inclusive leadership, by interviewing managers about their perspective on the barriers to and facilitators of inclusive leadership. The following research question will be central to this study:

“How do managers see their own inclusive leadership behaviors and what do they perceive as the barriers to and facilitators of inclusive leadership?”

In order to answer this research question, a qualitative study will be conducted at Wageningen University and Research (WUR), where they have a department for diversity and inclusion. Many steps have been taken the last few years, but they are not there yet. In 2020, their focus will be on inclusion, but there is no clear plan on how to achieve this.

1.3 Academic relevance

First of all, this study will contribute to existing literature on diversity and inclusion literature by providing new insights on the barriers to and facilitators of inclusive leadership through qualitative research. Furthermore, this research contributes to the literature on the perspective of managers. As mentioned earlier, there has been little attention for their point of view (Castilla, 2011), even though managers are seen as essential to change inequalities in the workplace (Jin et al., 2017; Randel et al., 2018; Shore et al., 2011). Pless and Maak (2004) conclude their study by saying that management within an organization plays a crucial role in changing towards a culture of inclusion. In this research there is also attention for possible limitations or negative side-effects of inclusive leadership, which has not received much attention until now. Taking limitations into account means taking a more critical stance towards inclusive leadership as the holy grail, which will contribute to a broader understanding of inclusive leadership. Finally, the research will contribute to the knowledge about facilitators of inclusive leadership, thereby enabling organizations to grow towards inclusion.

1.4 Societal relevance

The societal relevance of this study is twofold. First, by gaining more insight into the barriers to and facilitators of inclusive leadership, organizations will have more guidelines on how to achieve an inclusive climate in their organizations. When they have knowledge on what is impeding or enabling inclusive leadership practices, they can use these insights in creating a fruitful ground for inclusive leadership. Second, this enhanced understanding of inclusive leadership will eventually lead to a more

inclusive climate and through that, to more positive outcomes for both the organization and their employees (Choi et al., 2017; Randel et al., 2018; Ye et al., 2019).

1.5 Outline research report

The outline of this research report is as follows: after this introduction, the theoretical framework will follow in the second chapter. This chapter is an outline of the relevant literature on inclusion, inclusive leadership, inclusive leadership behaviors, barriers to inclusive leadership and facilitators of inclusive leadership. Chapter three, the methodology section, consists of a detailed description of the research design, methods used for data collection and data analysis. In this chapter there is also an elaboration on limitations of this research and research ethics. Next is chapter four, where the results of this study will be presented. Chapter five provides a discussion and conclusion, accompanied by the practical recommendations and suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

This chapter provides an overview of the relevant existing literature on inclusion, inclusive leadership, inclusive leadership behaviors, barriers to inclusive leadership and facilitators of inclusive leadership

2.1 Inclusion

To understand inclusive leadership, it is important to take a look at the definition of inclusion and to see why inclusion can be beneficial for both organizations and employees. Recently, the concept of inclusion has gained more attention in literature on diversity and inclusion (Jansen, Otten, Van der Zee & Jans, 2014). Inclusion within organizations means allowing people with multiple backgrounds, mindsets and ways of thinking to work together and to achieve organizational goals. Different voices and perspectives are heard and valued, and every member is encouraged to contribute in a meaningful way (Pless & Maak, 2004). Inclusion can be defined as “the degree to which an employee perceives that he or she is an esteemed member of the work group through experiencing treatment that satisfies his or her needs for belongingness and uniqueness” (Shore et al., 2011, p. 1265). This definition is also used by Randel et al. (2018) and is built upon Optimal Distinctiveness Theory (Brewer, 1991), which states that individuals have the need to be both similar and different from others simultaneously.

2.1.1 Outcomes related to inclusion

Much has been written in the literature on organizational outcomes of inclusion. Inclusion is claimed to have several positive outcomes, such as better job opportunities and career advancement, increased job satisfaction, an increased sense of well-being and more trust and engagement (Workman-Stark, 2017). Cottrill, Lopez & Hoffman (2014) argue that inclusion leads to employees feeling valued, trusted and experiencing self-worth. Inclusion also has positive effects on the willingness to help co-workers, showing up on time and being pro-active (Cottrill et al., 2014). Randel et al. (2018) bring up positive outcomes such as creativity, job performance and a reduced turnover.

These positive outcomes can explain why organizations are getting more interested in inclusion, seeing it as the new holy grail to organizational success. However, there is no easy recipe to get to inclusion. An important aspect that organizations should look into is inclusive leadership.

2.2 Inclusive leadership

Several authors point out the importance of leadership when talking about inclusion (Cottrill et al., 2014; Jin et al., 2017; Randel et al., 2018; Shore et al., 2011). Because of their formal positions, managers can either reinforce or challenge patterns of inequality in organizations (Kirton & Greene, 2015). Managers play a crucial role in setting the stage for change by recognizing the importance and value of a culture of inclusion (Pless & Maak, 2004). They can have a strong impact on the experiences of employees, especially when the team is diverse (Shore et al., 2011). The key role of managers is to shape the system, to formulate a vision that mobilizes groups and individuals and to create conditions to turn that vision into an organizational reality (Wasserman, Gallegos & Ferdman,

2008). Managers are not only implementing a climate of inclusion by telling employees to be inclusive, but also by being a role model in this (Spijkerman, Benschop & Bücken, 2018). When managers are open, accessible and available to talk about new ideas with their employees, they create a social context in which employees feel psychologically safe to voice, speak up and to come up with new and useful ideas (Carmeli, Reiter-Palmon & Ziv, 2010). Inclusive leadership also leads to team voice (Ye et al., 2019), creativity, high quality relationships (Carmeli et al., 2010), employee well-being and innovation (Choi et al., 2017).

Inclusive leadership is a relational and interactive task instead of a solitary role, aiming to involve all people within the organization (Pless & Maak, 2004). Changing economic conditions require managers to be more devoted to relationship building, in order to keep their employees motivated (Choi et al., 2017). In their relational role as coach, mentor or facilitator, the inclusive leader is no longer a sole author of an organizational reality, but rather becomes a co-author (Pless & Maak, 2004). Inclusive leadership can be seen as a type of relational leadership, which is an approach that is focused not only on the leadership style, but mostly on the social process that takes place (Carmeli et al., 2010). Inclusive leadership leads to effectiveness of teams in ways that are not sufficiently addressed by other types of leadership (Randel et al., 2018). This leadership approach is about the shift from judging people to joining people, taking care of some people to taking care of all people and from an environment of competition to an environment of collaboration (Workman-Stark, 2017). Inclusive leadership is about mutual benefits, about doing things with employees, rather than for employees (Hollander, 2008).

Inclusive leadership can be defined as specific actions of leaders that invite and appreciate the contributions of others (Workman-Stark, 2017), and refers to leaders who show openness, accessibility and availability in their interactions with employees (Carmeli et al., 2010). Leader attention to the interests and needs of employees is essential to inclusive leadership (Hollander, 2008). This argument is supported by Carmeli et al. (2010), who say inclusive leadership is about whether employees feel that leaders are available to them, whether the leader listens and pays attention to the needs of the employees. Managers should create an environment that values and respects the diverse perspectives, talents and skills that individuals bring to the workplace (Workman-Stark, 2017).

This description of inclusive leadership seems to describe some non-existing ideal type of leadership and does not pay attention to the barriers and facilitators to achieve this. Therefore, in this study, the inclusive leadership behaviors that are discussed in the next section will be used as a reference to see which ones are carried out by leaders in practice and what inclusive leadership entails for them.

2.3 Inclusive leadership behaviors

In order to work towards being an inclusive leader, certain qualities are helpful, called competencies of inclusion, which in turn can be translated into observable leadership behaviors (Pless & Maak, 2004).

These inclusive leadership behaviors again describe the perfect image of an inclusive leader, but one does not have to tick all the boxes to be seen as an inclusive leader. Managers can be more or less inclusive. The behaviors can thus be seen as guidelines or reference points for inclusive leadership.

There are many inclusive leadership behaviors presented within the literature on inclusive leadership, all categorized in different ways. Randel et al. (2018), for example, have proposed five categories of inclusive leadership behavior: three for belongingness and two for uniqueness. Another categorization is the one from Hollander (2008), who argues that there are four Rs of inclusive leadership that are needed for success: Respect, Recognition, Responsiveness and Responsibility. These categories are not sufficient to cover the long list of inclusive leadership behaviors in the literature which is why, in this research, a new list of categories is developed.

The categories that I have adopted in this study, are based on the most commonly used inclusive leadership behaviors in the literature I reviewed. I wrote down all common inclusive leadership behaviors and listed them to discover overarching themes and label these. This leads to the following new list of categories being used: self-awareness, social awareness, relational agility, fair treatment and courage. These categories are described in more detail below.

2.3.1 Self-awareness

The first category is called *self-awareness*. Creating and maintaining inclusion in organizations is a complex and ongoing process that calls for self-awareness and reflection by leaders (Wasserman et al., 2008). Inclusive leaders should be vulnerable and humble, admit their mistakes, learn from feedback and they should be aware of their own strengths and weaknesses (Workman-Stark, 2017). Being an inclusive leader requires the ability to critically reflect on one's own taken-for-granted assumptions (Ferdman & Deane, 2013) and knowing one's own biases and stereotypes (Workman-Stark, 2017). Self-awareness enables the inclusive leader to feel fulfilled in his or her own right without being intimidated by others successes. Others are allowed and encouraged to take credit for success (Pinos, Twigg, Parayitam & Olson, 2006).

These behaviors are often mentioned in several articles on inclusive leadership and are therefore seen as important. However, being self-aware may be not as easy as it seems. First of all, it takes courage to be vulnerable and admit one's own mistakes. People often tend to escape self-awareness to avoid negative feelings, caused by emotional pressure (Romanowska, Larsson & Theorell, 2014). Secondly, self-awareness requires training (Wasserman et al., 2008). Third, a paradox occurs when talking about self-awareness. Our own biases can distort our self-perceptions, which makes our self-knowledge less accurate. Being aware of our biases might be impossible, *because* of our own unconscious biases (Vazire & Carlson, 2010). Finally, our self-perceptions are often far from perfectly accurate (Vazire & Carlson, 2010). Self-awareness may lead to overestimation of one's own capabilities, especially when that person is in a position of power. This, in turn, lowers performance

and leader effectiveness (Romanowska et al., 2014). Being self-aware thus has its limits and should be approached with caution.

2.3.2 Social-awareness

The second category that will be used within this research, is *social-awareness*. Central to social awareness is empathy, which in this case refers to the ability to empathize with employees. The socially aware leader is able to recognize the needs of others and respond accordingly (Pinos et al., 2006). Inclusive leaders invite employees to give their opinion and listen to their ideas (Ye et al., 2019). Diverse perspectives are valued (Workman-Stark, 2017), respected (Ye et al., 2019) and encouraged (Randel et al., 2018). An inclusive leader also encourages employees to do their best work (Workman-Stark, 2017) and to try different things without worrying to be punished for that (Ye et al., 2019). Inclusive leadership entails the capacity to acknowledge others and to see the perspective of others without letting go of one's own perspective (Ferdman & Deane, 2013). Another characteristic of inclusive leadership that fits the concept of social awareness, is openness (Ye et al., 2019). Inclusive leaders should be open, willing to listen to employees, to discuss new ideas on how to achieve work goals and to invite employees to contribute to the decision-making process (Choi et al., 2017). Shared decision-making can be reached by ensuring participation or by discussing how perspectives can be combined (Randel et al., 2018), but also by seeking for input among employees (Workman-Stark, 2017).

No one is perfect and this also goes for managers. These inclusive leadership behaviors are again just an indication of what inclusive leadership might entail. Furthermore, social awareness has its limits as well. A manager might be able to recognize the needs of employees, but not be able to respond to it, due to a lack of, for example, financial or material resources. Responding to the needs of an employee can also lead to unfair treatment when a manager recognizes the needs of one employee better than the needs of another. Moreover, encouraging and valuing different perspectives can be quite hard when these perspectives are unfamiliar or even incompatible (Ferdman, 2017). To withhold from judging can also be difficult for the manager, as judging employees is part of a manager's job (Spijkerman et al., 2018). Valuing different perspectives sounds very inclusive, but might actually lead to mutual adaptation (Ferdman, 2017). Fostering inclusion means facilitating employees to express their uniqueness, but on the other hand, it requires everyone to be more attentive to others needs and to think about the impact of their approaches to others, with means more mutual adaptation (Ferdman, 2017). Finally, shared decision making has been praised within literature on inclusion, but it also comes with difficulties, such as the incompatible perspectives that were just mentioned. This is called consensus theory: finding a reasonable way to reach consensus when opinions differ (Bacharach, 1975). Other potential obstacles to shared decision making are individual career goals, the organizational culture, team attitudes and time. It might be more time efficient for managers to make

the decisions themselves, because moving towards a shared decision-making process can be a slow process (Jackson, 2000).

2.3.3 Relational agility

The third category is *relational agility*. Changing our frames of reference, especially in relationships with those who are different from ourselves, requires relational agility, which is the capacity to move from talking to someone towards engaging with someone (Ferdman & Deane, 2013). Being an inclusive leader means being collaborative (Workman-Stark, 2017). This also means seeing someone as different but equal, to appreciate different voices by listening actively to them and trying to understand them (Pless & Maak, 2004). Inclusive leaders should encourage and facilitate dialogue in their teams, instead of making decisions and moving forward (Wasserman et al., 2008). They aim to integrate diverse voices, getting team members involved in the dialogue and providing opportunities for partnership (Pless & Maak, 2004).

One example of how to create trust and respect among employees is to work towards a connection, such as a common goal. The intention of this is not to minimize differences, but to leverage differences in pursuit of the shared, overarching goal. This leads to increased trust, group cohesion and high performance. Specific activities to work towards a shared goal can be to emphasize common interests and values, using ceremonies, rituals and symbols to create group identification and encouraging interactions among group members (Workman-Stark, 2017). Communication is also part of relational agility. Inclusive leaders should encourage open communication among employees (Pless & Maak, 2004) and should also communicate clearly themselves (Workman-Stark, 2017).

This third category of inclusive leadership behaviors has some common grounds with the first and second category, but is about the process of moving towards collaboration and partnership. This again takes time and does not happen overnight. Effort is required and it can be quite hard to formulate some overarching goal when interests are conflicting. An extreme focus on distinctiveness can lead to the inability to develop a collective overarching identity and common goals (Ferdman, 2017).

2.3.4 Fair treatment

Being an inclusive leader means treating people fairly across all situations (Workman-Stark, 2017) and striving for justice. This also entails considering how decisions unintentionally can lead to inequalities across group members (Randel et al., 2018). It is important to make consistent decisions, based on facts and to explain the rationale behind decisions (Workman-Stark, 2017). Fair treatment has far-reaching psychological effects on employees, such as uncertainty reduction, self-enhancement, respect and belongingness (Sedikides, Hart & De Cremer, 2008).

These leadership behaviors require self-awareness, as well as social-awareness, but should also be aligned with organizational systems and procedures. When these do not support fair treatment, this will prevent an organization from being inclusive (Workman-Stark, 2017). Moreover, fair treatment might be undermined by unconscious biases, such as the similarity-attraction bias.

Similarity-attraction bias refers to the tendency people have to select others based on attributes that are similar to their own, such as age, gender, ethnicity or status (Workman-Stark, 2017). This is also called favoritism (DiTomaso, 2015) which can be defined as the extent to which a manager favors a specific subordinate compared to other subordinates (Chang & Cheng, 2018).

2.3.5 Courage

Finally, an important inclusive leadership behavior is courage (Wasserman et al., 2008). Inclusive leaders should be not only caring and compassionate but also have to be brave enough to make tough decisions and to question the status quo when this is breaching inclusion, instead of just following orders (Workman-Stark, 2017). Making tough decisions might be necessary within shared decision-making when consensus cannot be reached. Again, self-awareness is needed to be courageous and to question the status quo. Being an inclusive leader can be quite hard when the organization is not supportive and one might fear consequences for their own position. Courage can also appear in small things, such as speaking up against someone who is not inclusive or taking risks by using new perspectives.

To conclude, there are five categories of inclusive leadership behaviors being used in this study: self-awareness, social awareness, relational agility, fair treatment and courage. These inclusive leadership behaviors all have their limits and pitfalls and are sometimes even contrasting each other. One example of this is social awareness versus fair treatment. Being responsive to the needs of your subordinates can lead to unfair treatment, for example when some employees demand more than others. However, the inclusive leadership behaviors that were described can be helpful in working towards inclusion, serving as inspiration, guidelines or reference points when talking about being an inclusive leader. I will use these categories to analyze the data in this research. As mentioned before, managers can be more or less inclusive and do not need to tick all the boxes. Being inclusive is something that is not solely determined by a set of objective facts, because it is constructed through the experience of those who are involved. The definition of inclusion can vary from person to person and situation to situation (Ferdman & Deane, 2013). How inclusion looks and feels depends on its context and on who defines it, leading to differential emphasis on its elements (Ferdman, 2017). It is therefore important to pay attention to how one defines inclusion and inclusive leadership. In this research, interview questions will be used to construct inclusive leadership and to see how the meaning of inclusive leadership differs among individuals.

2.4 Barriers to inclusive leadership

Working towards inclusion presents challenges and tensions. In fact, inclusion is inherently paradoxical in nature (Ferdman, 2017). There are examples of people who have a sense of belonging, have opportunities for advancement and are supported in their development, but who still feel like they are not fully included in the workplaces. They are prevented from inclusion by numerous barriers,

such as conscious and unconscious biases and stereotypes and organizational policies and practices. Understanding the barriers to inclusion can help managers to make the necessary changes towards real inclusion for all (Workman-Stark, 2017). The barriers mentioned in this paragraph can, in this study, be used as reference points when analyzing the perceptions that managers have towards barriers to inclusive leadership. They give an overall image of what might obstruct managers from being inclusive and can be a starting point towards change.

2.4.1 Organizational policies and practices

To start with, organizational policies and practices such as work arrangements, traditional career paths and promotion practices can be barriers to inclusion when they do not fit with inclusion strategies (Workman-Stark, 2017; Kirton & Greene, 2019). Systems are often made at the top of an organization and bias within these systems will prevent the organization from being inclusive. An internal environment that does not support the inclusion and fair treatment of employees is preventing an organization from reaching inclusion, as was mentioned before (Workman-Stark, 2017). When working towards inclusion for all, we must acknowledge that institutions are not neutral settings: they have been historically and culturally designed to fit and favor dominant groups (Brannon, Carter, Murdock-Perriera & Higginbotham, 2018). It is important to embed competencies of inclusion into systems in order to make a long-term impact and foster change. If performance evaluation systems still value results more than actual inclusive behavior, it is likely that managers will not change their behavior towards inclusion (Pless & Maak, 2004). HR policies and practices, such as training, performance systems and rewards, have to be aligned with inclusive leadership to reinforce the positive effects of inclusion (Choi et al., 2017). Managers can only be successful change-agents when the climate also changes (Workman-Stark, 2017).

2.4.2 Lack of managerial commitment

A second barrier to inclusive leadership could be a lack of commitment to diversity and inclusion with managers. Kirton and Greene (2015) mention examples, such as: a lack of understanding of what the concepts of equality and diversity mean, inadequate training, a lack of involvement in the development of diversity policies, managers not being held accountable for diversity practices and finally, managers not seeing diversity issues as a priority along their other competing tasks. Managers can resist or disengage, obstructing change (Kirton & Greene, 2019). Discursive practices of managers often depict diversity as problematic, because they see it as incompatible with meeting their targets and objectives (Zanoni & Janssens, 2015). It is therefore important to know how managers perceive diversity and inclusion.

2.4.3 Bias

A final barrier is bias. Everyone has a certain perspective on the world and a way of seeing themselves and others, which also includes blind spots. A starting point for managers is to recognize that everyone

has biases, including themselves. These biases can be seen as barriers to inclusive leadership. Self-reflection and awareness about personal biases can help managers to be more inclusive (Workman-Stark, 2017). A common bias is similarity-attraction bias, which is mentioned earlier. Another bias is process bias, which can refer to confirmation bias, where people are inclined to seek information that confirms their point of view, or it can refer to consensus bias, where people tend to perceive their own ideas and perspective as common or right. Not being aware of the fact that their worldview is not neutral, but rather based on historical and geopolitical background, can lead to a reinforcement of structural existing inequalities (Romani et al., 2019), called inequality regimes (Acker, 2006). Finally, there is also *bias for* or *favoritism*, which is often unnoticed, due to it being seen as non-discriminatory. *Bias against* minority groups is seen as discriminatory and many organizations have made up policies to prevent from *bias against*. Inequality is still reproduced by *bias for*, which is when people have a preference for people like themselves, such as white people helping other white people. Those in majority groups are passing on their privilege to those who they identify with, instead of welcoming minorities into their positions of power (DiTomaso, 2015).

To conclude, I have identified three categories of barriers to inclusive leadership: organizational policies and practices, lack of managerial commitment and bias and stereotypes. These barriers can obstruct change towards inclusion, especially when they are unseen and unconscious. Making these barriers more visible can provide opportunities for change towards inclusive leadership. In this study, these barriers will be used as a basis for the semi-structured interviews and as categories for the initial template during data analysis.

2.5 Facilitators of inclusive leadership

Besides defining the barriers to inclusive leadership, it can be of importance to identify facilitators of inclusive leadership as well. Being aware of facilitators might enhance change towards inclusion. The facilitators mentioned in this paragraph can be used as reference points when analyzing the perceptions that managers have towards facilitators of inclusive leadership, just as with the barriers to inclusive leadership.

2.5.1 Shared vision for change

Developing a common understanding and shared vision for change among the organization will serve as a facilitator towards inclusive leadership (Burstein, Sears, Wilcoxon, Cabello & Spagna, 2004). An organization cannot become inclusive overnight. There is no ready-made recipe that can be applied. In order to be an inclusive leader, there has to be a clear understanding of what inclusive leadership entails and what behaviors are expected (Workman-Stark, 2017). The crucial first step towards inclusive leadership is to explain why this shift in leadership is necessary, what inclusive leadership will bring about and what this means for people that are in leadership positions (Workman-Stark, 2017). The people who will serve as change-agents must be convinced that this change towards

inclusion is worthwhile and they need to understand the reasons for it (Burstein et al., 2004). It can be quite hard for managers to give up on their power and to be more vulnerable and self-aware, which is why it should not be imposed on them, but rather be initiated at top level. The organization can also identify managers who are already demonstrating inclusive leadership behaviors and engage them to influence others. This so called ‘showcasing’ helps in acknowledging and valuing inclusive behaviors, stimulating others to do the same (Workman-Stark, 2017).

2.5.2 Organizational processes

To create a more inclusive environment, managers can only be successful change-agents when the organizational processes also change (Workman-Stark, 2017). This means changing how people work together, share their information and trust each other, changing how decisions are made and change the focus of support and rewards, to show what behaviors are appreciated and valued the most and which results are seen as important (Workman-Stark, 2017). However, it is not easy to change organizational processes. Change in organizations is not a linear process and it often heavily influenced by power and politics (Achterbergh & Vriens, 2019).

2.5.3 Individual facilitators

Besides organizational effort, there are some individual facilitators that can increase inclusive leadership behavior as well, such as pro-diversity beliefs, humility and cognitive complexity. These traits increase the chance that managers will engage in inclusive leadership (Randel et al., 2018). Pro-diversity beliefs are positive ideas of diversity, seeing how diversity can create value through alternative insights and competencies, instead of seeing diversity as a source of conflict, complexity and challenging. Humility can be seen as a high level of self-awareness, seeing that one is not the center of the universe. It entails low self-focus, empathy and an openness and appreciation for others. Humility can lead to an appreciation of the unique strengths of members instead of feeling threatened by these strengths. Finally, cognitive complexity refers to the ability to perceive behavior and information of others in a multidimensional way. Managers who have high levels of cognitive complexity can see both strengths and limitations of employees, instead of putting labels onto them and being short-sided (Randel et al., 2018).

In short, identifying facilitators of inclusive leadership might help to create opportunities for inclusion as well. Being aware of what is helping managers to be more inclusive can reinforce inclusive leadership behaviors or mitigate barriers. In this study, these facilitators will be used as a base for the semi-structured interviews and as categories for the initial template during data analysis.

2.6 In conclusion

In conclusion, being an inclusive leader can be beneficial for both organizations and employees, but there should be more attention to what inclusive leadership entails and how inclusive leadership can be

enabled. Lowering barriers or providing facilitators can help managers in performing inclusive leadership behaviors. Inclusive leadership is often portrayed as the new holy grail, but inclusive leadership behaviors seem to have their difficulties and can be self-contradictory as well. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that inclusive leadership can mean different things for different people and so do barriers and facilitators. Gaining more insight into perceptions of managers will guide the organization in making actual changes and will contribute to knowledge on how managers construct inclusive leadership. The interview-guide in this study will be based on the categories of inclusive leadership behavior, the barriers and the facilitators (*Appendices 1 and 2*).

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Research paradigm

Philosophical assumptions have important implications for research design in terms of the topic, focus, methods of data collection and data analysis and the way of theorizing. It is therefore important to start with the epistemological and ontological approaches of me as a researcher, before heading to the research design and research methods. Epistemology is the study of criteria by which we can know what constitutes scientific knowledge and what is seen to be the truth. In this study, a subjectivist epistemological stance is taken, meaning the reality is socially constructed. Ontology is focused on the question whether phenomena exist independent of our knowing. Here too, a subjectivist stance is taken, entailing the idea that social reality is a creation of our discourse and cognition (Symon & Cassell, 2012).

Constructivism favors both this subjectivist epistemology and subjectivist ontology. Multiple interpretations of reality co-exist and these realities are actively constructed (Evers & De Boer, 2012). In this research, there are multiple interpretations of inclusive leadership and the behaviors that are part of this style of leadership. Managers also might perceive different barriers and facilitators to inclusive leadership. All knowledge is indeterminate: everything is relative to the eye of the beholder. The focus is on how individuals make sense of situations, it is therefore important to investigate the perceptions of managers and what their experiences entail. Constructivism is about how our understandings and knowledge are socially constructed, through social interactions, relationships and experiences (Leavy, 2015). Inclusive leadership is a construct that is socially agreed upon, but that does not mean that everyone defines it the same way. From the ontological perspective, reality is context-dependent, which means many realities can exist simultaneously. From the epistemological perspective, knowledge and meanings are derived from interactions as well and are therefore constantly negotiated (Leavy, 2015).

Taking this stance, inclusive leadership is not a given definition with fixed inclusive leadership behaviors, but is instead co-constructed by the perceptions of the ones who carry it out: the managers. Furthermore, barriers and facilitators can also differ among individuals. Some might experience barriers that others have never encountered and the other way around.

3.2 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is needed to know how these philosophical assumptions affect this study. Reflexivity refers to self-awareness of the researcher's role in research and acknowledging the way in which the researcher has an influence on the research process and findings and vice versa. The researcher and subject of study affect each other mutually throughout the research process (Symon & Cassell, 2012). Research is an interpretive activity and is subject to many influences that impact the interpretations that are generated (Nadin & Cassell, 2006). Interpretation is influenced by assumptions, values and

experience of the researcher (Symon & Cassell, 2012) and reflexivity is needed in order to understand what these influences are (Nadin & Cassell, 2006). Within the subjectivist stance, reflexivity is used to question knowledge claims. Being aware of how my own positioning affects, for example, the choices I have made about the research question, approach, methods and findings help in being reflexive. Second, I also bring my own assumptions to the interview, such as knowledge and ideas about inclusive leadership and managers, but also my personal interest in inclusive organizations. Furthermore, I might be biased because of my work experience as an HR employee. I probably have certain ideas about managers and I have constructed my own definition of inclusive leadership and these presuppositions can affect my way of theorizing and interpreting. The research question is based on second hand information by the HR advisor who served as my gatekeeper for the research at WUR. This means it is influenced by her perception of the organization. These critical thoughts and other prior assumptions are taken into account in this study.

A tool for reflexivity is the use of a research diary. Reflections on the interviews can be written down, both focused on practical issues and feelings or thoughts that were involved during the interview. These notes can lead to a consideration of what it is saying about assumptions, values and beliefs and how this affected the findings or the interview itself (Nadin & Cassell, 2006). Therefore, a research diary is kept from the start, including thoughts on the research aim, research question, feelings of confusion, stress and anxiety and reflections on the changes made during the process. This research diary can be found in the appendices (*Appendix 5*).

3.3 Research design

This study concerns a qualitative research. Qualitative research refers to the systematic collection, description and interpretation of textual data. Its goal is to explore the behavior, meanings, values and experiences of individuals in their context (Kitto, Chesters & Grbich, 2008). This fits the subjectivist stance regarding epistemology (Boeije, 2005). Qualitative research helps to understand how people give meaning to their world (Evers & De Boer, 2012), which relates to the constructivism stance. In this study this refers to giving meaning to inclusive leadership and the barriers and facilitators associated with it. Qualitative research is suitable for explaining topics from the perspectives of respondents, in this case explaining inclusive leadership from the perspectives of managers.

3.4 Case selection and description

This study will be conducted at Wageningen University and Research (WUR), at science group *ASG (Animal Sciences Group)* and science group *WFSR (Wageningen Food Safety Research)*. This will be done by interviewing managers during April and May 2020. Research participants are selected based on their position as manager, which is a necessary condition to be able to answer the research question. Participation is voluntary and all respondents signed up to be interviewed, after being asked and informed by their HR advisor. This way of approaching respondents creates a certain bias, because

those who are interested in diversity and inclusion are more likely to volunteer for this study. This could mean that the sample is not representative for the whole population of managers. For the science group *ASG*, ten managers were approached and seven managers responded to volunteer. For the science group *WFSR* thirteen managers were approached and six of them volunteered. This means a total amount of thirteen respondents participated in this research, seven male respondents and six female respondents. All respondents have a Dutch nationality and are Dutch-speaking. Department *ASG* is a biology-related discipline, where *WFSR* is can be associated with food quality, testing and quality procedures. The respondents have a span of control between 9 and 250 employees, which are in some cases direct reports, but most of the time there is a layer of middle managers in between. The daily tasks of the respondents can be described as being both strategic and operational. A large part of their job is managing their team, by carrying out HR tasks, such as training and development, coaching and having regular conversations. Strategic tasks are for example finance and control, strategic planning, networking and strategic decision making. Operational tasks involve hands-on work, but also projects of interest that are carried out organization-wide at WUR.

3.5 Data collection method

The data collection method that will be used in this study is individual semi-structured interviews. Interviewing has become a widespread method to gather information, on topics such as how leadership is conducted or what values people hold (Symon & Cassell, 2012). It is the most commonly used method of data collection in qualitative research (Evers & De Boer, 2012). Furthermore, research within a constructivist paradigm often relies on interview data, used to reveal beliefs held by the interviewee or to expose conceptions (Halldén, Haglund & Strömdahl, 2007). In this study, individual interviews are conducted, which means one person will be interviewed at a time. This choice is made to hear in-depth personal stories (Evers & De Boer, 2012), which fits into the constructivist paradigm. Interviews are allowing for detailed descriptions and give insight into complexity (Van Laer & Janssens, 2011). Interviews can range from highly-structured with detailed interview guides to fully unstructured interviews. One's epistemological position and the research aim will determine the extent to which an interview is structured (Symon & Cassell, 2012), in this case semi-structured.

3.5.1 Semi-structured interviews

In this study, guided by the constructivism paradigm, the interviews will be semi-structured. As open as possible, but guided by some topics and themes within the scope of the research question. Semi-structured interviews allow for following up on the angles that deem important by the respondent, as well as using questions that are deemed important for the research aim, by the researcher (Leavy, 2015). These types of interviews contain both open-ended and more theoretically driven questions, thereby balancing the experience of the participant with existing constructs (Galletta & Cross, 2013). An interview guide is used during the interviews (*Appendices 1 and 2*). The questions within this guide are based on the theory as presented in chapter two. It is fundamental to reflect upon the

interaction between researcher and respondent, because the researcher is an instrument during an interview. Interviews are not neutral tools to collect data, but are active interactions between two or more people, leading to context-dependent, negotiated results (Halldén et al., 2007). Through reflexivity, the researcher can locate interference (Galletta & Cross, 2013). The interviews will be recorded, so they can be transcribed afterwards. For this, permission of the respondent is needed.

3.5.2 Skype interviewing

Due to the COVID-19, face-to-face interviews are no longer allowed. This means the data has to be collected while maintaining physical distance, through Skype. There are both benefits and pitfalls to online interviewing, which will be discussed in this paragraph. For a long time, online interviews were seen as an alternative or less worthy method of data collection compared to face-to-face interviews. This changed, as the quality of responses gained through online interviews seems to be on the same level as with the use of traditional methods (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014). At first glance, there seem to be many constraints to online interviews, such as the lack of subtle non-verbal communication, ethical problems or feeling uncomfortable while being filmed (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014). However, there are also benefits in using Skype, as it allows for more flexibility regarding time and planning (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014), because there is no need to travel for example. It is therefore also more time effective. This is especially the case since most employees from WUR work from home, since the outbreak of COVID-19. Besides the possibility to interview anyone, anywhere and anytime, there is also the benefit of the comfort of one's own private space (Seitz, 2016; Weller, 2016).

A first drawback of online interviewing could be the lack of non-verbal communication. Face expressions are visible through video-calling, but body language cannot be observed through a webcam (Janghorban, Roudsari & Taghipour, 2014; Seitz, 2016). It is therefore even more important to listen to the tone of voice and to look at facial expressions (Seitz, 2016). Another pitfall of Skype interviews might be the distractions that come with working from home. Distraction can disrupt the interview and may affect concentration. This means the gathered data can be affected by this as well (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Seitz, 2016). Technological problems can also affect research quality, for example by pauses, an unstable internet connection or inaudible segments because of background noises (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014). However, these audio problems can largely be overcome by speaking clearly and slow, asking follow-up questions and repeating what the interviewee said (Seitz, 2016). A final limitation, mentioned by Seitz (2016), could be the possible lack of personal connection and intimacy. Skype can be seen as an emotional barrier, due to the physical distance. A valuable addition to the interview could be an evaluation by asking how the participants feel after being interviewed through Skype (Seitz, 2016), which will be done in this research as well.

Furthermore, research ethics are important in both face-to-face and online interviews. Ethical issues are mostly the same as in face-to-face interviews, as consent can be obtained on beforehand through e-mail or chat and participants have to give their permission for recording (Janghorban et al.,

2014). However, it might be less clear because the interviewee does not see the recording device through Skype. Therefore, it is even more important to make sure the participant is aware of this (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014).

In short, when there are no technological problems and the quality of Skype is sufficient, the method of online interviewing can also offer flexibility and informality that is not always present in face-to-face interviews (Weller, 2015).

3.6 Data analysis method

Once the interviews are transcribed, the data analysis can be conducted. The method of data analysis used in this study is template analysis, which is a thematic analysis that is mostly used to analyze data from individual interviews (Symon & Cassell, 2012). This methodology can be used within a range of philosophical paradigms, among which the constructivist paradigm. It is hereby important to avoid claims about what actually happened, because there are multiple potential perspectives (King & Brooks, 2016). One of the main advantages of template analysis is the possibility to use as many levels of coding as preferred. This helps in developing themes more extensively, so the richest data can be discovered (Symon & Cassell, 2012). Template analysis is basically a process of defining themes and sub-themes through coding. The initial template (*Appendix 3*) is based on the themes from theory, in this case inclusive leadership behaviors, barriers to inclusive leadership and facilitators of inclusive leadership. This method of analysis is both deductive and inductive. Starting the initial template is deductive, as the theory is used as a basis for coding. However, there remains enough space to work inductively by leaving room for new themes and to use empirical data to modify the template. The adaptability and flexibility of template analysis is one of the main advantages of this method (Symon & Cassell, 2012).

After developing the template with codes, the data still has to be interpreted. Themes can be prioritized based on frequency, but this does not fit the constructivist paradigm. It seems more important to consider how each theme is connected to the topic of interest and the research aim. Finally, the information should be presented. This will be done by presenting an account structured around the core themes, using examples from transcripts. Quotes can be used to aid the understanding (Symon & Cassell, 2012).

3.7 Research quality

Qualitative research cannot be assessed by the conventional criteria that are used in quantitative research (Symon & Cassell, 2012), because of the different frameworks, sampling approaches, sample size and goals of qualitative research (Kitto et al., 2008). A well-known list of universal criteria to assess qualitative research is that of Tracy (2010). She uses *eight* criteria that can be used for various paradigms: a worthy topic, rich rigor, sincerity, credibility, resonance, a significant contribution, ethical and meaningful coherence (Tracy, 2010).

A worthy topic should be of theoretical, societal or personal interest. It should be relevant, timely and significant. Studies that are counterintuitive or questioning taken-for-granted assumptions are worthwhile (Tracy, 2010). By looking into the perceptions of managers towards the barriers to and facilitators of inclusive leadership, this study questions the assumption of inclusive leadership as the new holy grail.

Rich rigor refers to the use of appropriate and complex theoretical constructs, samples, contexts and processes for data collection and analysis. A researcher that is familiar with a variety of theories is best prepared to see complexity and nuance. Other ways to meet this criterion are through transparency in data collection and analysis and providing the reader with details about the process (Tracy, 2010). In this study, this will be done by providing a rich description of the methods for data collection and analysis and by keeping track of changes within the process.

Sincerity means the study is characterized by self-reflexivity about values and biases and how these affected the methods and mistakes in the research. Reflexivity is about being aware of one's own biases, motivations and impact on the research situation or participants. Before entering the research setting, prior knowledge, experiences and philosophical stance are written down and critically reflected on. This is a continuous process of critically reflecting on the knowledge produced by this study and keeping in mind the biases and assumptions that co-construct this knowledge. Transparency also helps to meet the criteria of sincerity, for example by keeping notes and document all decisions made during the research process (Tracy, 2010). From the beginning of the research process, notes were kept.

Credibility is about trying to find a good fit between the realities of the respondents and the reconstructions that are attributed to them (Symon & Cassell, 2012). Methodological means to meet this criteria are for example using thick descriptions, concrete details, showing rather than telling and triangulation. It might help to unravel tacit knowledge by not only taking note of who is talking and what they are telling, but also who is *not* talking and what is *not* being said (Tracy, 2010). Also part of credibility is triangulation, which is done in this research by having multiple respondents. Using a constructivism paradigm, multiple views and methods will allow for different perceptions to be explored and to deepen understanding, instead of necessarily summarizing data towards one conclusion. Tracy (2010) uses the concept *crystallization* for this, which assumes that researchers are not trying to find a singular truth, but rather open up a more complex, in-depth understanding of the issue.

Resonance refers to the influence the research has on a variety of audiences, which can also be defined as empathic validity (Tracy, 2010). Resonance can be achieved through, for example, transferability, which is a process that is performed by the readers of the findings. Transferability has to do with how well the findings inform contexts that differ from that in which the original study was undertaken (Kitto et al., 2008), which can be done by providing enough detail about the specific case

so that the reader can judge whether other situations can use these insights (Symon & Cassell, 2012). Tracy (2010) mentions rich descriptions and accessible writing.

The research should also provide a significance contribution to both theory and practice. It should extend knowledge and/or improve practice. By getting more insights into perceptions of managers at WUR, their policies and practices on inclusive leadership can be improved and barriers might be taken away.

Ethics have to be considered, such as procedural ethics, situational ethics, relational ethics and exiting ethics. Procedural ethics refer to avoiding fraud, being transparent to participants, making their participation voluntary and securing sensitive data. Situational ethics often revolve around the question whether the means justify the ends, which differs per situation. Relational ethics are related to respect and connectedness between researcher and participant. Finally, existing ethics have to do with the considerations after the data collection, such as sharing the results (Tracy, 2010). Research ethics will be discussed more elaborate in the next section of this chapter.

Meaningful coherence means the study achieves its aim, uses methods that fit this aim and is able to make a meaningful interconnection between theory, the research question and the findings (Tracy, 2010). This does not mean that results should be coherent: with the constructivism paradigm it makes sense there are inconsistencies and different constructions of reality. In this view, coherence refers to the consistency of theory, the research question, the paradigm and the findings.

3.8 Research ethics

The American Psychological Association (2017) has developed five general principles for ethics, which are intended to guide researchers towards the highest ethical ideals. The first principle is beneficence and nonmaleficence. This is about minimizing harm and taking care of the people who the researcher works with. Second is fidelity and responsibility, which means being aware of professional responsibilities and clarifying roles and obligations. The third principle is integrity. This refers to accuracy, honesty and truthfulness. Keeping promises, avoiding unclear commitments and fraud are part of this. Fourth is justice, which has to do with fairness and equality in processes and procedures. Finally, the last principle is having respect for people's rights and dignity. This is about privacy and confidentiality, such as discussing the limits of confidentiality, obtaining permission for recording and disguising the names of the respondents in sharing data (American Psychological Association, 2017).

These ethical norms are taken into account in this study in several ways. First of all, there will be transparency with regards to the research aim and the use of information. Before the interview, the respondent will be informed about the aim of the research and the ways confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed. Participation is voluntarily and respondents have the possibility to withdraw from the research at any time. Permission for recording will be obtained through this informed-consent. After the interview, respondents will be reminded of what will happen with the results and how they will be informed of these. By keeping notes in a research diary and being reflexive during the whole process,

the researcher will be more aware of biases that might affect the research. After the interviews are finished, the data will be restored in a safe place with limited access and identities will be disguised. This way, anonymity will be guaranteed.

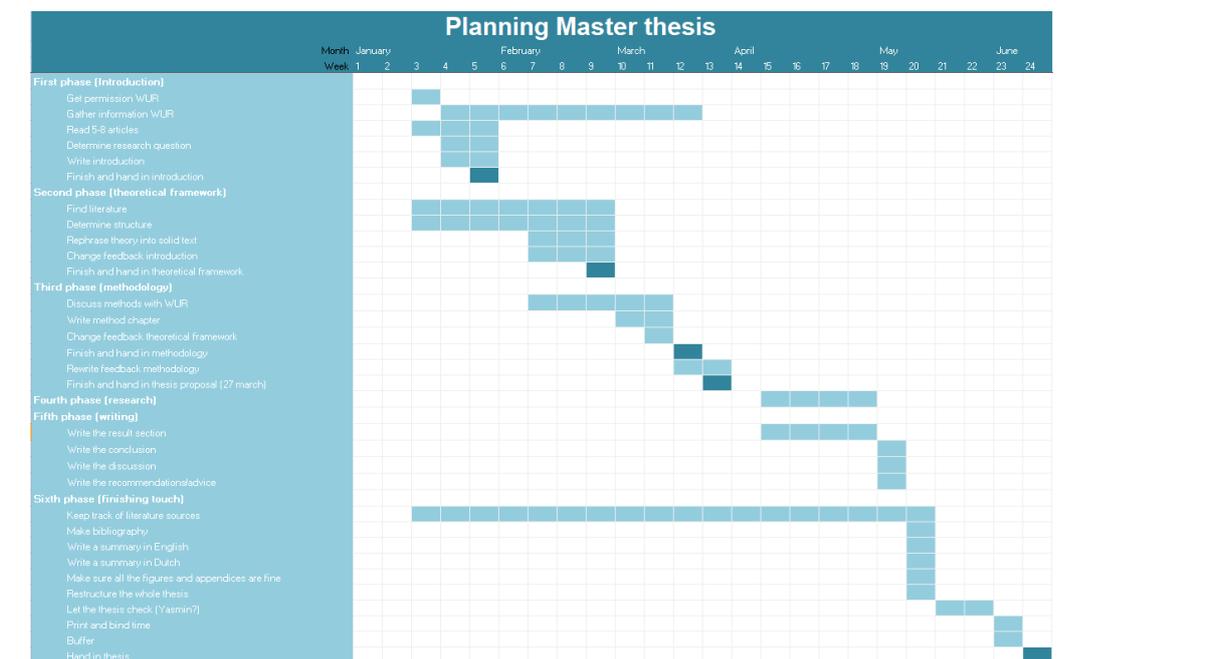
3.9 Limitations of the research

First of all, as mentioned, it is important to keep in mind the possible drawbacks of online interviewing compared to face-to-face interviews. When these drawbacks can be overcome, there should not be a problem, but it is important to be aware of them. Other possible limitations of the research could be socially desirable answers during the interviews and the duration of the study, which is quite short to elaborate on the topic of inclusive leadership. The same goes for the limited amount of respondents.

Furthermore, the study focuses only on two departments of WUR and as perspectives are context-related, it might be hard to use the results for the total organization of WUR or even outside WUR. Therefore, rich descriptions are needed, so readers can decide for themselves whether the case can be translated to their own situations (Tracy, 2010). This also means the recommendations or management advice to WUR should be approached with caution and take into account this criteria of transferability.

3.10 Planning

This study contains six phases: introduction, theoretical framework, methodology, field research, writing phase and the finishing touch. The study starts at the end of January and is expected to be completed at the end of June. The first three phases result in a research proposal and approval of this will mark the start of the field research at WUR. Interviews will take place from April 20th to May 13th 2020. The fifth phase entails writing up the results, conclusion, discussion and recommendations.



Chapter 4: Results

Chapter four provides an overview of the results from the data analysis. This section is structured around three main themes: inclusive leadership, barriers and facilitators. The analysis was guided by the final template (*Appendix 4*) and examples from the transcripts are used to illustrate the findings.

4.1 Inclusive leadership

This first section starts with an analysis of the concepts of inclusive leadership that are being used by the respondents, followed by a comparison of the inclusive leadership behaviors from literature with those that were, or were not identified during the interviews.

4.1.1 Inclusive leadership concept

First of all, there is no agreement on the definition of inclusive leadership among the respondents. Five out of thirteen respondents were not familiar with the concept or thought it was hard to define. Besides not knowing how to define the concept, there were two types of definitions. One definition can be described as *“treating people, issues and topics equally regardless of background and differences”*, whilst the other definition is saying *“treating people different dependent on what they need”* and *“make people contribute from their own background and knowledge”*. In the first definition, the emphasis is on acceptance and equality in a sense that everyone is treated the same. This is about equality, and not about inclusion or inclusive leadership and is therefore not a solid definition of inclusive leadership. The second definition focuses on the unique contribution people can make *because of* their background. This definition is more similar to what is being said in the literature by Shore et al. (2011). However, only four out of thirteen respondents had a definition in mind that corresponds with what is being said about inclusive leadership in the literature. Four respondents focused on equality, instead of inclusion and were thinking of the first definition. The other five respondents were not familiar with the concept of inclusive leadership or did not know how to define it. Given the differences in how managers perceive the concept of inclusive leadership, there is no shared language on inclusive leadership at WUR. Furthermore, there are misconceptions when respondents are talking about inclusive leadership, such as confusing equality and diversity with the concept of inclusion. It is questionable whether someone can be an inclusive leader when the concept of inclusion is being confused with treating people equally instead of treating people different dependent on their unique needs. This has some similarities with the idea of ‘color-blindness’ from a study conducted by Marvasti and McKinney (2011). Color-blindness can be described as a tendency to not see differences, a ‘noble trait’ that is often claimed to be possessed by white people who argue that everyone is the same. However, not seeing differences can contribute to more inequalities by not recognizing the status quo of inequality and the need for social change (Marvasti & McKinney, 2011).

Although there is no shared definition of inclusive leadership, there are some similarities when the respondents talk about examples of inclusive leadership behavior. They use terms such as

empathy, informality, being involved, motivating your employees, setting boundaries, being open-minded and giving opportunities to minority groups. Some examples of non-inclusive leadership behavior that were mentioned are: being dominant, turning business into something personal and not seeing the worth in people. However, the examples that were given by the respondents about inclusive leadership behavior are very general and can also be seen as leadership behaviors in a broader sense. They are not specifically focused on inclusive leadership and examples that were given are not applied to issues of inequalities, diversity and inclusion. Even though there are some similarities between the behaviors that were mentioned by the respondents and the inclusive leadership behaviors from the literature, they are too generic to say that these are inclusive leadership behaviors rather than behaviors that fit to leadership in general.

4.1.2 Inclusive leadership behaviors

During the interviews the respondents have been asked to describe their own style of leadership, including some examples. To analyze this, these leadership behaviors are divided into the five categories of inclusive leadership behaviors that I came up with in the theoretical framework: self-awareness, social awareness, relational agility, fair treatment and courage.

4.1.2.1 Self-awareness

The first category of inclusive leadership behavior is self-awareness, consisting of things such as being reflective, being vulnerable, being aware of strengths and weaknesses and being able to admit mistakes. These behaviors are also described by the respondents as part of their style of leadership. Reflection was mentioned during the interviews, but was also shown when respondents reflected on situations that had happened and how they could have acted differently. Most of the respondents were able to reflect on their own behavior when talking about situations that happened earlier, but only three respondents explicitly mentioned self-reflection as being an important aspect of inclusive leadership. In addition, one of these respondents mentioned that it is important to be aware of the impact and power you have as a leader, which is also showing self-reflection. Other aspects within the category of self-awareness according to literature, are: showing you are human and thereby being vulnerable, being able to change your opinion and thereby admit mistakes, and trying to surround yourself with people who are complementary to you. This last type of behavior was mentioned very often. Managers say they have been trying to put a team together that keeps them sharp and focused, by having team members that are standing up against them, slowing them down or putting things in perspective. The danger with asking managers about their own inclusive leadership behaviors, such as self-awareness, lies in socially desirable answers. Interpreting these answers should be done with caution, because we only see their perception or their truth, which is presumably in their favor. Furthermore, as already mentioned in the theoretical framework, self-perception gets distorted by our biases, making our self-awareness less accurate (Vazire & Carlson, 2010).

4.1.2.2 Social awareness

Regarding social awareness, empathy is an important aspect according to literature (Pinos et al., 2006). Respondents mention how they consider it important to find out what is underneath certain arguments and opinions. They say they put in effort in trying to understand their employees, finding out why they react the way they do. Being open to ideas and listening to people genuinely is part of this as well. Another important part is to value and to encourage diverse perspectives of employees and to empower them. Several managers talked about using their employees' qualities, coaching them and challenging them to grow and develop themselves. Looking at the unique contribution or talents of employees is also a part of this: *"I believe in focusing on someone's talent, instead of someone's weaknesses. Give attention to those things that are going well and make those even better"*. This is again about leadership in general and is not specifically focused on issues of diversity and inclusion. No examples were mentioned where unique contributions, perspectives and qualities of employees are linked to social categories. One exception is age: a balanced age composition is seen as valuable by respondents, because of the different skills and perspectives that a variety of age groups bring to the work floor. However, this is probably based on stereotypes: young people are thought of as refreshing and renewing, bringing in new insights, where older people are seen as experienced. Besides this being based on assumptions, it is also very generic, as there are no examples of inequalities that arise due to age, such as age discrimination within teams. Being open to ideas and listening to employees is part of leadership in general and as this is not tied to diversity or inclusion by the respondents during the interviews. It shows leadership, but not inclusive leadership per se. Having attention for differences between individuals is something else than having attention for differences between social categories and the inequalities that are related to these. This latter type of differences, between social categories, is barely mentioned during the interviews. Only two respondents mentioned explicit examples of different perspectives related to social categories, in this case the category of religion. Both respondents pointed out how certain aspects of religions can be incompatible with inclusion or with gender equality. Examples that were given by them were about radical Muslims and strictly reformed employees. These religions are characterized by thinking patterns that are in contrast with equality, making it harder to include others with these religious beliefs. This is in accordance to what is being said in literature: it can be hard to value different perspectives when these perspectives are contrasting or even incompatible (Ferdman, 2017).

Another aspect that is tied to social awareness within the literature, is shared decision-making. Allowing people to give their opinion and being able to take different perspectives into account is seen as essential to function well as a team (Choi et al., 2017). At WUR, the managers that were interviewed perceive their decision-making processes as being shared with all employees. They say they collect input from their employees and try to set the rules and boundaries together as a team. However, the final responsibility lies with the manager and most respondents argue how it is important to be decisive when needed. This is the case when decisions have to be made within a short time or

when there is no consensus. In literature, the latter is called consensus theory: reaching consensus when opinions and perspectives differ (Bacharach, 1975). Time efficiency in decision-making is also mentioned in the literature as a reason for managers to make decisions themselves (Jackson, 2000). Therefore, the reasons that are mentioned by the managers to make decisions themselves seem to match with what is being said in theory. Again, shared decision-making and taking different perspectives into account are indicating leadership in general when they are not tied to issues of diversity. Differences between employees related to social categories are not mentioned and the differences between employees or their perspectives are rather abstract. Besides shared decision-making, smaller decisions lay with the teams themselves, as the responsibility has been put low in the organization. Ten respondents pointed out the importance of providing their employees with the space and freedom to discover things on their own and make their own decisions. Putting together small teams of employees who are responsible for a certain topic is very common with the respondents that were interviewed. Employees at WUR are seen as professionals who are perfectly capable of doing their job without being told what to do. There are some exceptions, as two respondents notice their employees have a need for a more directive style of leadership, even though the managers themselves preferred to be more democratic or facilitative. The preference of these employees could be caused by the hierarchical structure that is present at WUR, or could be related to the type of work of these particular employees, but this was not discussed in depth during the interviews.

Lastly, another leadership behavior that is not explicitly mentioned in the literature on inclusive leadership, but that would fit with social awareness in my opinion, is being involved content-wise. This means being involved with the specialization and having specific knowledge and experience in the domain that is being managed. There is a clear division between managers who are involved content-wise and managers who are not. One of the respondents said: *“It is always a point of discussion whether it is an advantage or not if you have affinity with the content. I would say it is an advantage”*. The managers who have affinity with the content say it helps in supporting your employees and knowing what they need, but also that it helps in making their own work more fun. I think having affinity with the content can definitely help in feeling more involved with your employees, but I also think being an expert on content can be a risk, when a manager gets too hands-on for example, and loses objectivity and the relational focus that is needed for a manager. This leadership behavior might indicate good leadership, but is not about inclusion or diversity in any sense. Knowing what your employees need in terms of content-related requirements is not the same as knowing what your employees need to feel part of the group and make their unique contribution to the group process based on their background. I would say being involved content-wise can help in being a good leader, but does not necessarily contribute to inclusive leadership.

4.1.2.3 Relational agility

Relational agility is about the process of working together. According to the literature on inclusive leadership, team collaboration is important in this (Workman-Stark, 2017). The majority of the respondents perceive themselves as part of the team and they think it is important to cooperate, to make decisions together and to build relations with their employees. They say a foundation of trust is key to this, but also being accessible, having an open door policy, being approachable, being visible and having a laugh together are deemed important. Having a common goal and finding solutions together are seen as valuable, especially when goals are created together as a group. According to the literature, a shared goal can lead to increased levels of trust, group cohesion and better performance (Workman-Stark, 2017). Again, these are all generic leadership behaviors and examples were not related to issues of inequalities during the interviews. Cooperation is related to inclusive leadership through the feeling of belongingness, but this is not brought up during the interviews. Furthermore, even though managers see themselves as approachable and accessible, this does not necessarily mean that employees experience this the same way. Overestimation of one's own capabilities is not ruled out and is very common with people who are in positions of power (Romanowska et al., 2014).

Something not mentioned in the literature as a part of inclusive leadership, but often referred to during interviews, is setting boundaries. Seven respondents mentioned having clear boundaries, rules or a shared framework as a very important part of their style of leadership. They say they give their employees freedom to have their own way of working and to be creative, but always within the given boundaries. These boundaries are related to content or procedures and are, again, quite generic. Boundaries regarding inequalities and social categories, such as racist or sexist jokes or discrimination within teams, are not mentioned by the respondents. When setting boundaries is not tied to issues of diversity and inclusion, it is questionable whether we can talk about inclusive leadership rather than just leadership in general.

Finally, communication is an important part of relational agility. Having regular conversations with employees and making time for them is an essential part of inclusive leadership (Pless & Maak, 2004; Workman-Stark, 2017). All respondents mention having regular conversations with their employees as being a large part of their daily work. However, this is again only from the point of view of the manager and it could be the case that this is experienced differently by employees. Furthermore, having conversations does not necessarily imply inclusiveness, because this also has to do with the nature of the conversation. Having formal conversations about the content of the work can be very different from actively listening to what an employee has to say and trying to understand this.

4.1.2.4 Fair treatment

The fourth category that I came up with in the theoretical framework is *fair treatment*. During the interviews, fair treatment is not explicitly mentioned. Equal treatment, on the other hand, is used by several respondents, as was already mentioned when talking about the definition of inclusive

leadership. Fair and equal treatment are not the same and it can be questioned whether equal treatment leads to inclusion. Treating people the same, regardless of their background and differences can lead to even more inequalities, as procedures are often favoring dominant groups instead of minorities (Brannon et al., 2018). Fair treatment means making sure people get the same opportunities, which could mean that people are not to be treated equally: *“treating people different dependent on what they need”*. Fair treatment is also about being aware how certain decisions can lead to inequalities across team members (Randel et al., 2018), but this awareness was not present with the respondents, as this was not mentioned at the interviews at all. Something else that is related to fair treatment is to explain the rationale behind decisions (Workman-Stark, 2017). This is mentioned more often during interviews: being clear about the direction, boundaries and rules within the department for example, but also explaining why things are done the way they are. Nonetheless, explaining why certain decisions are being made might also be used to convince people or to enhance accountability, and is not necessarily used to improve fair treatment. Finally, facilitating employees is not explicitly mentioned as an inclusive leadership behavior in the literature, but it is a behavior that fits to almost every style of leadership and can also be related to fair treatment. Facilitating employees in their needs and help them to do their jobs is an important part of being a manager.

4.1.2.5 Courage

The last category of inclusive leadership behavior is courage. Courage is about being brave, having the courage to have difficult conversations, to call others into account and to stand up for your employees. Moreover, it is about the broader context, about questioning the status quo, speaking up against other leaders, bringing diversity to the agenda and raising questions, thereby bringing issues to light (Wasserman et al., 2008; Workman-Stark, 2017). Eight out of thirteen respondents mentioned this explicitly as a part of their leadership style, for example by speaking up against colleagues who were discriminative or by putting gender equality on the agenda. Related to courage is making tough decisions. Most of the respondents have the final responsibility and are the ones to cut the knot, which can be quite hard sometimes: *“In the end, the final decision is my responsibility and I have to make a choice”*. Respondents did not use any examples of decisions related to diversity, inclusion and equality, but illustrated this by cases of firing people who did not perform well. One example was about promotion, but there was again nothing mentioned about social categories in relation to this.

4.2 Barriers to inclusive leadership

As described in the theoretical framework, I have identified three categories of barriers to inclusive leadership, based on literature. These categories are: organizational policies and practices, lack of managerial commitment and bias and stereotypes. Furthermore, based on the coded transcripts of the interviews, I added two categories, which are: context and employees. This total of five categories will be described in more detail below.

4.2.1 Organizational policies and practices

The first category contains organizational policies and practices, which can be barriers to inclusive leadership when they do not fit with diversity- and inclusion strategies. As being said in the theoretical framework, it is important to embed inclusive leadership into systems, to work towards inclusion. Several barriers related to policies and procedures were mentioned during the interviews. To start with, the majority of the respondents argue that WUR is too careful in demonstrating the importance of inclusive leadership. Eight out of thirteen respondents were saying that pressure from top management and creating more awareness in general is still missing and WUR could be more courageous in this. They say communication on inclusive leadership is hardly present and inclusive leadership is, in their perception, not part of the formal vision of WUR. Pressure is also mentioned as a facilitator, which will be discussed in paragraph 4.3.1. Of course, policies and practices should be aligned with inclusive leadership, so they can support and facilitate leaders, but managers also have a role to play themselves. Communication and a formal vision by WUR can be helpful, but it is also of importance that managers educate themselves on topics like racism, intersectionality, sexism, heteronormativity and everything else that is linked to diversity and inclusion. Responsibility should not lie with WUR solely, as managers are responsible for their own leadership in the first place.

Besides being too careful, respondents also showed not being equally inclusive to all social categories. During my interviews I used six categories of diversity: gender, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation and distance to the labor market. It is remarkable that there is a different way of dealing with these categories. During the interviews, respondents made clear that it is accepted to have policies for gender, ethnicity, age and people with a distance to the labor market, but religion and sexual orientation are seen as private businesses by the respondents. They think categories such as religion and sexual orientation cannot be quantified and should not be a part of policies and procedures, except for preventing from discrimination. Religion and sexual orientation are described as “*not an issue*” or “*not relevant*”, meaning people are accepted regardless of their differences, but these categories are not seen as making valuable contributions, making them different from the other four categories, according to the respondents. This is mentioned in literature as well. Categories like race and gender receive more attention than other categories, partly due to these things being more visible (Kirton & Greene, 2015). Visible attributes are seen as easier to use in decision-making, stereotyping and categorizing in work situations (Bell, Özbilgin, Beauregard & Sürgevil, 2011). We can ask ourselves to what extent managers can be seen as truly inclusive when certain categories are valued more than others. Religion and sexual orientation are placed outside the organization, by calling them private issues. This is striking, since literature shows how these categories are not private issues, but are in fact very relevant in the workplace too. Both Pless and Maak (2004) and Bell et al. (2011) mention how in inclusive organizations employees can be their true selves. Sexual orientation may be invisible, but is at the core of the identity of employees. According to Bell et al. (2011), gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) employees are silenced by what is perceived as the norm in

organizations. When GLBT employees feel like their personal identity is not fully accepted at work, they might not share their experiences or speak up. Managing diversity should consider aspects of inclusion and address unique concerns related to social categories, leading to higher levels of satisfaction, commitment and a positive work attitude (Bell et al., 2011).

The respondents say they are aware of the presence of diversity measures at WUR, such as the international orientation, active policies for people with a distance to the labor market, including facilities, and the attention they see there is for gender. Gender equality is seen as part of policies and one respondent knew there is a gender project group. Also, workshops about gender are perceived as positive. A well-known measure regarding gender concerns the recruitment process, where there is an informal rule to choose women when there is equal suitability. Nonetheless, there are no quota for gender balance, nor for other categories of diversity. Regarding religion and sexual orientation, there are no policies at all, except for that it is not allowed to discriminate. Both are seen as private, non work-related categories that do not have anything to do with work and are not relevant to inclusion. However, I think this has everything to do with inclusion, or with the lack of inclusion in this case. The language that is being used around religion as a diversity category is that it is “*not an issue*”, framing it as not being a problem as if it could have been a problem. This is different from, for example, gender and age, where diversity in the categories is explicitly mentioned as something positive. There is only one respondent who would like to see more attention for the different religions, for example more communication about the Ramadan.

The lack of attention for sexual orientation and religion is in sharp contrast with the explicit attention for gender and age. A lot has been said about gender in the interviews. Gender balance is seen as refreshing for teams, but respondents say this balance can be hard to achieve when looking for the right person for the job. A common procedure in recruitment processes at WUR is to choose women when there is equal suitability, but this is hard when there is no equal suitability. This is mentioned by several respondents. Regarding age, a balanced age composition is referred to as something valuable, because managers link this to different, complementary skills and perspectives. However, this is based on stereotypes: young people are thought of as refreshing and renewing, bringing in new insights, where older people are seen as experienced. Finally, internal mobility is seen as an advantage of a balanced age composition: when older people retire, it is good to have internal mobility and retention is compensated by the inflow of younger people in the team. Furthermore, several respondents think that WUR is not inclusive for younger generations and procedures are organized around the idea of working fulltime, which is perceived as the norm. One example of this, is the lack of work-life balance. WUR is still equipped for those who work fulltime and this fulltime working is associated with the competitiveness of the research field. This might also be related to the historical influences, as WUR is seen as still hierarchical. This was also mentioned in literature, where is stated that institutions are not neutral settings, but are historically designed to favor dominant groups (Brannon et al., 2018).

Regarding ethnicity, the definitions of internationality and ethnicity are getting mixed up by respondents. Internationality is valued: the international orientation of the university is seen as a facilitator to attract internationals and there is a lot of international research. The value of a diverse team with internationals is, according to most respondents, to have diverse perspectives and bringing in some other energy. This value, however, differs per function for some respondents: “*International diversity is less present in support functions, but is also less relevant in those functions*”. The reason for this is the need for innovation in research, which apparently is connected to international input and is less relevant in support functions, according to one of the respondents. Besides seeing the value of diversity regarding nationalities, there are also some respondents who say the country of origin is not of importance, because everyone is seen as equal. This relates back to the difference between equal treatment and fair treatment and so called “color-blindness” (Marvasti & McKinney, 2011). Ethnicity was not mentioned, because the focus of the respondents lied with internationality. It is important to notice there is a different discourse regarding ethnicity, compared to internationality. Ethnicity is often seen as something of ‘the other’ by dominant ethnics, thereby again seeing this as a deviation of the hegemonic norm, which is often ascribed a position of inferiority, instead of being unique or exotic (Ossenkop, Vinkenburg, Jansen & Ghorashi, 2015). The dominant discourse in the Netherlands at present constructs the culture of migrants as a source for societal problems and this dichotomy is very persistent (Ghorashi & Ponzoni, 2014). These are negative associations with the term ethnicity, whilst internationality does not have these associations per se, although one respondent also made a dichotomy of Dutch versus ‘others’, by dividing them into two categories: internationals and non-internationals. By doing this, the respondent meant to say that it does not matter where one comes from and that every international has a unique contribution to make. However, this discourse is also indicating categorical thinking, making categories dichotomies where Dutch equals the in-group or the norm, and non-Dutch as deviating from this norm. Finally, another term that was used during the interviews was cultural diversity, which differs from both internationality and ethnicity. Cultural diversity was framed in a negative way during an interview in this study, as a cause of miscommunication and a possible obstruction of work processes. It is important to take into account the effect of a certain discourse and to acknowledge how discursive practices can unconsciously contribute to inequalities as well, such as the dichotomy of Dutch versus non-Dutch.

For people with a distance to the labor market, there are active policies present. Most managers say they have the intention to hire someone with a distance to the labor market, but find it hard to do so, due to several barriers. Often mentioned is the required level of education or certain qualities. Working in the research field involves dangerous material or concerns specialized work, and it can have disastrous consequences when something goes wrong. According to Kirton and Greene (2015), employees with a distance to the labor market are often regarded as hard to employ because they are seen as a risk in health and safety to themselves, other employees or customers and to be less productive. However, there is no evidence for a relation between disability and a lower productivity or

performance. Attitudes and stereotypes surrounding those with a distance to the labor market are leading to exclusion from the workplace (Kirton & Greene, 2015). Besides using quality as a reason for not hiring people with a distance to the labor market, respondents also argue there are not enough functions available to give people the opportunity to work at WUR. In addition to this, supporting and guiding someone in their work is seen as time-consuming, possibly obstructing daily tasks or not fitting the way of working in the team. In one interview a manager said: *"I think it is difficult in my work and the teams, but also towards our clients, we have to be able to still do our job and they expect a certain quality and role from us"*. This fits another argument mentioned by Kirton and Greene (2015): the idea that disabled workers would not fit in with colleagues, often used as a reason for exclusion (Kirton & Greene, 2015). These arguments are not indicating inclusive leadership, as the work is passed on to others, such as those with a distance to the labor market, or putting the responsibility for creating suitable functions with the organization. Managers can be more critical towards their own effort and taking the lead in this as well. Finally, an initiative that was mentioned several times is Jops, which is a specialized agency within WUR that supports managers when they are hiring someone with a distance to the labor market. Jops mediates during recruitment and selection, creates awareness and facilitates the manager once the employee is hired. Although the work is still not fully with the manager, this is a good first step towards inclusion by making working at WUR more accessible for people with a distance to the labor market.

Another thing that managers see as obstructing them from being inclusive is the lack of good training opportunities for inclusive leadership or related topics such as bias training. According to the respondents, training is not offered often and when it is offered, the time is not suitable for some managers. This could be solved by offering it more often and at different times. The desire for more training is possibly demonstrating some degree of conscious incompetency with the managers. However, there are also managers who do not mention training or (self-)development at all, which might imply they are unconscious incompetent when referring to inclusive leadership. Furthermore, there is a need for leadership training at all levels. This will be addressed in paragraph 4.3, on facilitators as well.

Finally, performance evaluation systems are currently not suited to reward inclusive leadership. Inclusive leadership is not part of the evaluation processes, meaning that inclusive leader behaviors are not used as criteria in performance appraisals. Sometimes diversity and inclusion are topics of conversation, or inclusive leadership gets valued with words, but there is nothing formal yet. Respondents do see this as something that could be developed and integrated into formal evaluation procedures, to create more awareness. Of course, procedures and processes should be aligned with inclusive leadership, but it cannot be the case that managers depend on these formal policies to be inclusive. This points to extrinsic motivation, where inclusive leadership should also be intrinsic. Managers can educate themselves and take their own responsibility in learning and self-development instead of putting the full responsibility with the organization. Even though systems are not arranged

in a way that facilitate managers to be inclusive, there are still things that can be done within the existing frameworks. Policies and procedures should be supportive, but should not be seen as the main condition for inclusion and inclusive leadership.

4.2.2 Lack of managerial commitment

As mentioned earlier, there is no clear shared vision on what inclusion or inclusive leadership entails. In fact, there are only four respondents that have a vision on inclusive leadership that corresponds with the literature on inclusion. According to the literature, this could be a barrier to inclusive leadership as well, as it may lead to a lack of commitment to diversity and inclusion (Kirton & Greene, 2015). In addition to this, managers are not being held accountable for not being an inclusive leader. Respondents think that the use of targets would help to hold them and their colleagues accountable and to make inclusive leadership a more structural part of their jobs. This indicates how extrinsic motivation apparently is required to be an inclusive leader. Inclusive leadership is seen as important, but is not always a top priority, according to the respondents in this study. Lack of time is one reason that is mentioned and this matches what is being said in the literature, by Zanoni and Janssens (2015), who argue how managers sometimes see diversity as incompatible with meeting their targets and objectives. Furthermore, a lack of time for self-reflection was mentioned in two interviews. Managers say they get dragged along by daily issues instead of having time for reflection on diversity and inclusion. Finally, several respondents think of the top management as being less diverse, therefore not being a role model and being stuck in their own thinking patterns. Management consists mostly of white Dutch middle-aged males and respondents argue that there are not enough nationalities in these higher positions. One of the respondents said: *“If you take a look at the management, the ones who determine the direction of this organization, are white people and often also middle-aged males”*. Because those in higher positions are somewhat similar to each other, there are less diverse perspectives and there is less self-reflection, affecting the lower positions indirectly. Respondents think there should be more examples in top management on how to be diverse and inclusive. This sounds reasonable, but also indicates an external locus of control, which does not correspond with the inclusive leadership behavior of self-awareness.

4.2.3 Bias and stereotypes

What is important in being an inclusive leader is being aware of your own biases. This also seems to be the case with some of the managers that were interviewed. One manager said: *“Without a doubt I also have some invisible barriers and I am also contributing to barriers that people perceive to work at our organization”*. Another respondent mentioned *“In the end, I guess everyone still has unconscious bias and assumptions”*. Managers say they are willing to learn more about their own bias and stereotypes and eight out of thirteen interviewees explicitly asked for the end result of this thesis so they could learn from it or out of personal interest for the topic. Important to mention here, is that

all respondents participated in these interviews voluntarily and therefore might already be interested in the topic of inclusive leadership.

However, I still identified some assumptions and stereotypes during the interviews. First, I recognized consensus bias, meaning people tend to perceive their own perspective as common and neutral (Romani et al., 2019). This is manifested in the expectation that employees have to adjust their way of working to what is perceived to be the norm in the department or organization, especially when talking about people from other cultures. Two examples: *“They often have to get used to the Dutch code of conduct”* and *“With people from those countries we notice they find it hard to adjust”*. Besides this consensus bias, there are also two common stereotypes that popped up during the interviews, one about age and one about gender. Regarding age, there is the stereotype of seeing young people as renewing, enthusiastic and energizing, and seeing older people as a bit stubborn, but also experienced in both life and work. Of course, this is based on some truth, as young people often just get out of education and indeed do have new insights, but it tends to get generalized during the interviews. Regarding gender, there is some bias about women and children or pregnancy. At least four respondents explicitly mentioned women as being obstructed by pregnancy or having children, for example: *“You know when you hire a women at the age of 28 without children, the odds are high that she will be absent due to pregnancy”*, or *“The chance the gender will be balanced is not very high due to women getting children, among other things”*.

The stereotypes that were mentioned during the interviews indicate some blind spots or a level of unawareness these respondents have of their own biases. Having biases can obstruct managers from being inclusive, because bias can lead to a reinforcement of structural existing equalities (Romani et al., 2019), especially when choices for promotion or hiring people are based on these stereotypes. One respondent also experienced herself how colleagues asked her about children, even though that was not a work-related question and, as she said, *“none of their business”*. This shows how stereotypes do not only affect decisions, but it can also make people feel uncomfortable and sometimes even lead to people defending themselves.

4.2.4 Context

Some of the respondents perceive the context where they work as a sort of barrier. One very practical barrier seems to be the geographical location of WUR, which is seen as less attractive, and therefore obstructs them from attracting good candidates, especially internationals. Related to this is that they find it hard to retain international employees, for example because they are moving back to their home country. However, these things are not easy to change. Furthermore, the discipline of work also possibly affects diversity and inclusion. One of the disciplines is seen as a male-dominated work field, and therefore it seems hard to find female candidates and get the gender balance, due to the history of the discipline. *ASG*, the biology discipline, is traditionally a work field that involves both men and women and that would explain the more equal distribution regarding gender. Another thing that is

linked to the discipline is, as mentioned before, how *WFSR* is characterized by procedures and rules, which can also make it harder to be inclusive to different ways of working and thinking. As I said, context is not something that is easy to change, at least not by individual managers. Nonetheless, using the context as a barrier indicates an external locus of control, which might also stand in the way of inclusion. Seeing possibilities despite the context, on the other hand, indicates self-awareness and inclusive leadership to me. One of the respondents explicitly mentioned this as well: *“You can see the context as a barrier, but you can also see it as a given reality and see where you can still be creative”*. She mentioned how using the context as a barrier might be a way for managers to hide from their own responsibilities: *“You can also hide behind procedures as barriers, so I think that is stupid and easy, saying that it is not in your control to change”*. I agree with her on this and I think knowing the boundaries of your context is important, but real inclusion is when someone can still be an inclusive leader despite external restrictions. This can also be traced back to what is mentioned earlier, about educating yourself and take your own responsibility instead of waiting for the perfect conditions to be inclusive.

4.2.5 Employees

Besides barriers on organizational level, managerial level and in the context of it all, respondents also perceive some barriers within the teams. First of all, diverse teams are seen as a requirement before one can be an inclusive leader: *“You can only be an inclusive leader when your team is diverse”*. Most respondents perceive the level of diversity at WUR as being insufficient. They say there is too much uniformity and the majority of employees at WUR is white. Again, this indicates an external locus of control. Having a diverse team is something that managers can also play their part in, through recruitment and selection to start with. Second, managers say they find it hard to be inclusive when employees do not enjoy their work anymore or when they prefer a directive style of leadership. This seems interesting, because this would mean there are conditions attached to being an inclusive leader. Of course, leadership is shaped through mutual interaction, but managers are change-agents in their positions and have a large part in shaping their own leadership. The thing that is mentioned the most, is the language discussion that seems to be really persistent within WUR. There is no consensus on whether to use English or Dutch and this causes conflicts, dissatisfaction and dilemmas. One manager said: *“Language is really an issue here. When you work in an international organization with people from different backgrounds from different countries, Dutch is no longer appropriate, but some Dutch employees think that is a shortcoming”*. Another manager said *“When we still communicate in Dutch, how serious are we about diversity and having different nationalities? It should not be Dutch anymore”*. Disadvantages from language as a barrier are that jokes are not understood and there arises some distance within the group. A solution could be dual language and make people have language courses, both Dutch and English.

4.3 Facilitators

Not only were barriers discussed during the interviews, managers also perceive facilitators that can enhance or support inclusive leadership. Based on literature, I identified three categories of facilitators: a shared vision for change, organizational processes and individual facilitator. These categories were discussed in the theoretical framework as well. After analyzing the interviews, I added another one: context. These four facilitators are discussed below.

4.3.1 Shared vision for change

According to literature, a very important first facilitator towards inclusive leadership is to develop a shared vision of the concept of inclusive leadership (Burstein et al., 2004). Shared language on diversity and inclusion can be helpful. There should be a clear definition of inclusive leadership and what behaviors are related to that (Workman-Stark, 2017). This is clearly not the case yet, as already discussed in paragraph 4.1.1. Managers are change-agents in the journey towards inclusion and therefore they should understand what inclusion means and why it is important. Furthermore, it can be helpful to have some role models, so called showcasing, which might help to stimulate others to change their behavior and be more aware (Workman-Stark, 2017). This matches with what is being said during the interviews. Respondents would like to see more role models in higher positions, just start doing something and having more attention for leaders and leadership in higher positions. Top management should set an example for the lower positions at WUR, not only at being diverse, but also at being inclusive.

A large part of this discussion is pressure from above. This can be pressure from top management, but also from society, to being more diverse and inclusive. The majority of respondents is convinced that targets should be used. They think key performance indicators and quota would help to create more awareness, but also calling out leaders or departments that are not living up to these standards. According to respondents there should not only be key performance indicators, but these should also be actively managed and controlled to make a difference. Furthermore, they ask for more pressure from top management to choose female candidates, or to give women a stage and they call for more opportunities for both women and other nationalities. Being constantly reminded of it would help managers in increasing their awareness. Setting goalposts or quantifying a vision into concrete measures could be really helpful in their opinion. As being said before, this illustrates how the respondents want to be motivated extrinsically, instead of having intrinsic motivation to be inclusive. However, I think intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation are closely related and can exist simultaneously. When setting targets creates more awareness on diversity and inclusion, this could also help managers to see that the change towards inclusion is worthwhile, contributing to their intrinsic motivation as well.

4.3.2 Organizational processes

It has been mentioned several times that managers can only be successful change-agents when processes and procedures fit the inclusion strategies (Workman-Stark, 2017). Therefore, organizational processes are seen as a big facilitator towards inclusive leadership. During the interviews, one thing popped up every time: providing training, such as feedback training, training in mind bugs or bias, training cultural diversity, language courses and leadership courses. Respondents think training should be regular and they say it would be helpful to combine leadership and diversity or inclusion in one training. Furthermore, refreshment courses are preferred by most respondents, to keep things on top of mind and not letting it fade away. Another thing that would be helpful according to managers, is putting the topic of diversity and inclusion on the agenda. Respondents think topics like diversity and inclusion should be a structural part of conversations. HR advisors already have some attention for diversity and inclusion, reminding the managers and keeping them aware, and managers experience this as something positive. Making inclusive leadership structural part of work also means making it part of the evaluation system and other HR practices. Being valued for inclusive leadership would definitely help the respondents to be more inclusive and to have more awareness. In all interviews where this was mentioned, managers welcomed the idea of making it part of the evaluation systems. Again, this seems to be about extrinsic motivation, requiring pressure or imposed procedures. Nevertheless, I think a change in evaluation systems also sends a message about which behaviors are appreciated and valued and it illustrates what is deemed important by top management, so it is not just about external pressure in my perspective.

Other tools that were mentioned by the respondents are tests to understand yourself and your colleagues, such as Insights Discovery, diverse selection committees, having flexible working conditions, being guided by a coach when you are becoming a manager, creating facilities for people with a distance to the labor market and have more support for women, for example by helping them to position themselves or by creating a peer group of female leaders. I think these tools can indeed be helpful in creating more awareness and in displaying what is seen as important by WUR, as long as they are used as a tool instead of the holy grail to inclusion. Working towards inclusion is still to the utmost extent something that lies with the managers as change-agents and having the right tools is supportive, but not comprehensive. A more specific example of a facilitator is Jops, the agency within WUR for people with a distance to the labor market. This agency contacts managers to make them aware of the possibility to hire people who are disabled and help them in this process by providing support and guidance. One of the respondents came up with the idea to use this concept for other categories of diversity as well, for example calling managers to ask them whether they thought of hiring women or other minority groups and being dedicated to get more minorities in departments. Again, this points out the extrinsic motivation that is apparently needed in creating awareness.

As being said in literature, it is not easy to change organizational processes, as organizational change is often affected by power and politics (Achterbergh & Vriens, 2019). In some interviews,

power and politics were indeed mentioned by the respondents, for example how decision-making can be quite political and there is still an hierarchical structure within the organization. It can also be seen as political when minority groups are only included when they meet certain norms or standards. Saying you want to hire women, but only of excellent quality, or being willing to hire people with a distance to the labor market, but only if they meet existing norms can be seen as political choices too, based on resistance towards social change within the organization. This is something that should be taken into account.

4.3.3 Individual facilitators

Individual facilitators are personal characteristics of leaders that might help being inclusive (Randel et al., 2018). The first individual facilitator mentioned in literature is pro-diversity beliefs, which means seeing diversity as something positive instead of problematizing it. Every respondent in this research says how he or she sees the benefits and value of diversity, using reasons such as: diversity provides different perspectives, which helps to expand your horizon and to break through existing thinking patterns, diversity provides new ways of working, diversity helps to create a stronger team where employees learn from each other, decision-making gets better and diversity improves the quality of the output. Finally, some respondents see diversity as a moral or societal duty or think it is important to set an example for the rest of the organization. It is questionable whether these answers are sincere, or whether these are colored by social desirability. Not seeing the value of diversity is often seen as discriminating in our society, which might also withheld managers from being open and honest about their genuine thoughts on diversity. Furthermore, as being said before, the respondents in this research were voluntarily participating and therefore already had a slight interest in the topics of diversity and inclusion.

Second, humility is another individual facilitator that is mentioned in the literature. This entails a high level of self-awareness and appreciating unique strengths of employees instead of feeling threatened. Most respondents say they are valuing diverse perspectives, having regular conversations with people who they perceive as being different, which is keeping them sharp. They use words such as ‘nice’ and ‘interesting’. However, as I mentioned before, this is not linked to issues of diversity, inclusion or inequalities. Examples that were mentioned by managers are about the more abstract differences between individuals and are not related to social categories.

Third, cognitive complexity is, according to theory, the ability to see both strengths and limitations of employees instead of being short-sided. One quote from the interviews is: *“There are differences, and you might think some characteristics are annoying, but can also be helpful. It is a sort of balance or scale of pros and cons and you should not judge immediately”*. This is an example of being able to see both pros and cons to an employee.

4.3.4 Context

Finally, there are some facilitators related to the context of the organization or the discipline. As mentioned before, in one of the disciplines, gender is more balanced due to the history of that work field. Also, the international orientation of WUR makes it easier to attract internationals. This is contradicting something that is said before, which shows how someone can perceive something as a facilitator and someone else does not experience this at all and sees the opposite instead. Finally, the government is seen as an institution that could help to guide people with a distance to the labor market. As being said previously, context is not easy to change and talking about the context as being a barrier or a facilitator can indicate an external locus of control. This does not mean it is not helpful to know what is perceived as an external facilitator, because being aware of what is helping managers to be a more inclusive leader can reinforce inclusive leadership behaviors and create opportunities for inclusion.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and discussion

This chapter is providing a conclusion to this study by answering the research question: “*How do managers see their own inclusive leadership behaviors and what do they perceive as the barriers to and facilitators of inclusive leadership?*”. The findings that were presented in the result section will be used to come to a coherent conclusion, followed by an elaboration on the contribution to theory and directions for future research. After this, there is a discussion of the limitations of this study, and a reflection on ethical aspects, the quality of the research and the position of the researcher. Finally, an advisory report with recommendations for WUR regarding inclusive leadership can be found at the end of this chapter, in line with the aim of this study to provide practical advice for organizations regarding inclusive leadership.

5.1 Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the results, the research question “*How do managers see their own inclusive leadership behaviors and what do they perceive as the barriers to and facilitators of inclusive leadership?*” will be answered in this section.

Starting with the barriers to inclusive leadership, managers say they perceive several barriers that obstruct them from being inclusive. Barriers can obstruct change towards inclusion, especially when people are unconscious of them. To start with, there is no clear shared definition of the concept of inclusive leadership. Only four out of thirteen managers have an idea of inclusive leadership that corresponds with the literature. Managers find the concept hard to define, too abstract or they define it as equality instead of inclusion. The danger in seeing everyone as equal is to unconsciously contribute to the inequality regimes that are already present in the organization, not recognizing differences and not acknowledging how some groups might be deprived by existing structures and procedures. Fair treatment is one of the inclusive leadership behaviors used in this study and it is important to understand the difference between fair treatment and equal treatment. These two definitions tend to get confused during the interviews. According to the respondents, clear communication, vision on inclusive leadership and pressure from top management are missing and inclusive leadership could be more embedded in systems and procedures. These findings point to extrinsic motivation and might also indicate an external locus of control, which does not correspond with being self-aware, one of the inclusive leadership behaviors. Besides a potential lack of self-awareness, managers have the tendency to talk about leadership in more generic terms, instead of mentioning specific inclusive leadership behaviors, tied to social categories. Examples that were mentioned by respondents barely involve issues of diversity and inclusion and when talking about differences or diverse perspectives, managers are mainly talking about differences between individuals on an abstract level, instead of differences between social categories. A lack of knowledge on diversity and inclusion might be one of the reasons why examples are about leadership in general rather than inclusive leadership specifically. This lack of

knowledge can be seen as a barrier and the same goes for the external locus of control and lack of self-awareness.

What also appears to obstruct managers from being inclusive is the implicit assumptions that are made about the different categories of diversity. These social categories are valued differently and are not seen as equally important by the respondents. Religion and sexual orientation are seen as private and not work-related, even though literature proves otherwise. Furthermore, respondents are setting certain conditions for being an inclusive leader, such as having employees who are being open to an inclusive style of leadership. This is pointing to an external locus of control, instead of managers taking their own responsibility to be change-agents. However, talking about barriers and finding solutions for them, even if they are external, makes these obstacles more visible and therefore it provides opportunities in working towards inclusive leadership.

Not only do managers perceive barriers in working towards inclusive leadership and diversity, but facilitators were identified as well. An important facilitator is the so called 'showcasing', meaning there should be more role models and good examples of inclusive leadership in higher echelons. Not only does this benefit rules and procedures that are imposed top-down, but it also demonstrates the importance of diversity and inclusion in the organization. Other facilitators that were mentioned during the interviews were training on bias, leadership and diversity, tools and evaluation systems. These might reflect the lack of knowledge with managers, indicating their conscious incompetency, but can also be seen as external motivators. This does not have to be something negative, as by shaping these tools towards an inclusive organization the organization is again sending a message to the managers, displaying the importance of it. Not only do tools and systems have to be aligned with a clear vision on inclusive leadership, but I also think extrinsic motivators are eventually enhancing intrinsic motivation as well. Pressure might not be the ultimate way to reach diversity and inclusion, but it can be seen as a tool to create more awareness, thereby making managers more open-minded and being amenable to intrinsic motivation as well. Finally, the context was also mentioned as a facilitator. This might seem odd as it is not something that can be easily changed, but I think it is important to be aware of the context, of both restrictions and opportunities that are outside our control. Knowing what is out there can stimulate managers to make more use of these possibilities.

To conclude, managers perceive several external barriers and facilitators to inclusive leadership, but also obstruct themselves through a potential lack of knowledge and awareness and by having an external locus of control. It is essential to pay attention to the meaning of inclusive leadership and to carry out the importance and value of diversity and inclusion as an organization. Lowering barriers or providing facilitators can help managers in performing inclusive leadership behaviors, but this is not everything. Managers themselves are required take their responsibility and need some internal locus of control.

5.2 Contribution to theory

Besides making a contribution to practice through giving recommendations to the organization, this study also contributes to existing theory. To start with, this research has gained insights into perceptions of managers regarding inclusive leadership. Although there are already some studies on the perspectives of employees regarding inclusive leadership (Van Laer & Janssens, 2011), literature on perceptions of managers seem to be scarce. This study shines a light on these perceptions, which is important because managers are change-agents in working towards inclusion. Having more insights into what managers see as obstructing and enabling them to be inclusive leaders is filling a gap in existing literature. Having these insights helps to work towards inclusive leadership, by lowering barriers and enhancing facilitators.

Furthermore, this study contributes to existing literature on diversity and inclusion by providing new insights on the barriers to and facilitators of inclusive leadership. Having an external locus of control and a lack of knowledge and awareness on issues of diversity and inclusion can be seen as barriers to inclusive leadership. Although there is already some literature on self-awareness as an inclusive leadership behavior (Wasserman et al., 2008; Workman-Stark, 2017) and also on the importance of a shared definition (Burstein et al., 2004; Workman-Stark, 2017), this study confirms the relevance of being self-reflective and having a clear defined vision on inclusive leadership for being an inclusive leader.

A third contribution to theory is the categorization of inclusive leadership behaviors, which I introduced in my theoretical framework: self-awareness, social awareness, relational agility, fair treatment and courage. These five categories are based on overarching themes when reviewing existing literature. This literature review is of value because it brings together a variety of studies on inclusive leadership and because these categories can be used in other studies as well.

Finally, this research provides insights into the potential link between motivational theories and theories on inclusive leadership. In practice, extrinsic motivation is already used to create more awareness and thereby enhancing intrinsic motivation, for example through gender quota in several organizations. However, this angle is not explicitly mentioned in literature on inclusive leadership yet and it might be interesting to study extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation and how these might affect inclusive leadership. Studying this in depth to understand these mechanisms and to make better use of external pressure in working towards inclusion.

5.3 Directions for future research

In doing future research into inclusive leadership, it would be interesting to conduct interviews with managers who did not volunteer for this study, to see whether this study is an accurate representation of managers at WUR, or whether the respondents in this study were the more inclusive managers with already an interest in the topic. Also, I recommend interviewing managers with other nationalities, as in this study there were only participants with the Dutch nationality. I can imagine how managers with

different nationalities perceive other barriers and facilitators or have different ideas about inclusion, diversity and inclusive leadership. Not only do they serve as role models for minority groups, but they also have more awareness and sensitivity for diversity and inclusion issues, due to their own experience in a predominantly white society for example (Alire, 2001). Furthermore, I believe that interviewing top management must be done in future research to understand how processes are being influenced top-down and how positions of power are reflected in the daily business of an organization.

Another recommendation is to study other departments or other organizations, as it would be interesting to see the impact of the context. There are already some differences between the two departments *ASG* and *WFSR*, even though they are both part of WUR. I can imagine that a non-academic context, a more commercial organization or a company with a less hierarchical structure would result in other perceptions regarding diversity and inclusive leadership.

More research is also needed on the specific facilitators and barriers that were mentioned in this study. Future research can zoom in on specific training opportunities, for example by observing the bias training or leadership programs and their participants to get more in depth information of what is already there and how this actually works out in practice. It would be interesting to involve change-agents in the organization in the research on inclusive leadership, for example by interviewing someone from the initiative *Jops* or a member of the Gender & Diversity project group. Because this study was specifically focused on the perceptions of managers, these change-agents were not taken into account, but it would be valuable to see inclusive leadership from a broader range of perspectives.

Finally, the relation between intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and inclusive leadership has to be investigated. My expectation is that external pressure or support is needed to motivate managers in the first place, but that this will eventually lead to more awareness and, through this, to intrinsic motivation. However, these are just assumptions and it would be interesting to test these and to devote a study to these concepts in relation to each other.

5.4 Limitations

There are some limitations that need to be taken into account when interpreting the results of this study. First of all, as mentioned in paragraph 3.5.2 in the methodology section, Skype interviews have both advantages and disadvantages compared to face-to-face interviews. Some disadvantages that occurred during the interviews were, for example, problems with video and distractions caused by working from home. To see whether this form of interviewing had affected the results, I checked with the respondents how they experienced doing the interview through Skype. In general, respondents did not think it affected the way they reacted and that their answers would be more or less the same during face-to-face interviews. The main reason for this, is that everyone was already working from home for seven or eight weeks, and therefore they already got used to this way of communicating.

Another important limitation, that was already mentioned throughout the result section, could be the voluntariness of the research. Participants decided themselves whether they wanted to be

interviewed about the topic of inclusive leadership. Therefore, it might be the case that all respondents already have an interest in or affinity with the topic, causing bias in the results. Results might be different when there would also be participants involved who are not familiar with the topic or do not see the value of it. The interest in the topic was also apparent when respondents asked for the end result of the thesis, so they could learn and broaden their knowledge.

Third, something that can never be prevented fully is the presence of socially desirable answers. Things that were undertaken to reduce social desirability were, for example, guaranteeing confidentiality and anonymity, asking indirect questions, such as “Do you see examples of inclusive leadership within the organization?” and emphasizing there are no right or wrong answers. However, talking about one’s own strengths and weaknesses is still something that is seen as sensitive to social desirability.

Fourth, using theory for the initial template could have been restrictive in interpreting the data. To prevent from this, I made the decision not to re-read the literature thoroughly before coding, because I wanted to be open to other codes as well. By using open coding and fitting these codes into the initial template afterwards, there were both codes that fitted with theory and also new ones from the data material.

Finally, my own assumptions and bias also have been affecting the outcomes of this study. The results are co-constructed, because of the mutual exchange of knowledge with the respondents and because my interpretation of the results is influenced by my own assumptions, values and experiences. Being reflexive is therefore of great importance and is taken care of in this study by keeping a research diary (*Appendix 5*). This is also contributing to the criteria of research quality ‘*sincerity*’ (Tracy, 2010). As was already mentioned in the methodology section, I had prior knowledge and ideas about inclusive leadership, because of my previous work experience at HR and because of my Master specialization. Therefore, my perspective was already colored before starting the interviews. Furthermore, my background also affected my thoughts and feelings before and during the interviews. I felt insecure because of my age and my position as a student and I noticed how it made me feel nervous, being afraid I would not be taken seriously. Especially with men, I sometimes felt uncomfortable, making myself small and inferior, something I also see myself doing at work. This gets even worse when they are academics and therefore having some prestige. An example from my research diary: “*he was very formal, which made me feel small and a little unprofessional*”. Feeling uncomfortable and insecure could have led to me asking less critical questions and being more compliant, and it helped me to write this down. The difference between men and women could also come from women being more informal during the interviews. I am not sure why this was the case, but in my research diary I wrote down the thought of these interviewed women wanting to be liked and being more people-pleasers. However, this can also be a stereotype that is part of my own assumptions and bias. In addition, the research diary helped me to reflect and to become more aware of my own pitfalls, for example preparing and structuring my process perfectly, instead of just start doing it. I also

noticed some co-construction the other way around: not only did the information help me to write down my results, but I already made a difference by doing interviews about the topics of inclusion and diversity. I wrote down: *“I realized how I am already making a difference by doing these interviews. Having a chat about diversity and inclusion keeps the topics alive with my respondents, regardless the outcomes of the interviews. It feels good to also contribute in this slightly different way.”*

5.5 Recommendations WUR

More insights into the barriers and facilitators of inclusive leadership can help organizations in shaping their policies, procedures and communication regarding diversity and inclusion. Although these recommendations are directed at WUR, insights can also be transferred to other cases.

First of all, it is of utmost importance to communicate the value and importance of both diversity and inclusive leadership within the organization. This can be done by creating a shared definition and vision on inclusive leadership, by embedding it into procedures, policies and systems, by offering tools and training and by having role models in the higher management positions. These measures should be carried out by top management in cooperation with HR. Managers are change-agents and have to carry it out, so it is of importance to co-create a vision on inclusive leadership. HR can have a facilitating role in this, by advising managers, providing tools and training and creating awareness during their conversations with managers at all levels. Together these things will create a sense of importance and enhance awareness with both managers and employees.

More practical, inclusive leadership can be made part of the evaluation system and other HR practices, to value inclusive leadership and to make it easier to call people into account when they do not show behavior that is suitable for an inclusive leader. There should also be more attention for leadership training, perhaps combined with diversity or bias training. Becoming a leader can be quite overwhelming, especially when it is your first leadership position, which is why coaching might be of use as well. These coaches can emphasize the value of being inclusive too, making it an integral part of leadership and working at WUR. Besides training and education focused on leadership, managers explicitly called for more regular training moments on topics such as bias, mind bugs and diversity and also refreshment courses on these, to keep the insights on top of mind and be more aware.

Related to this awareness is the use of targets and quota to reach more diversity within teams. Apparently managers prefer some pressure and extrinsic motivation in working towards inclusive leadership. Having some monitoring and control attached to it helps them in making it part of their system and prioritize it over other things. Although it is questionable whether extrinsic motivation leads to real inclusion, extrinsic motivators are sometimes needed to break through old patterns, which is also seen with the gender quota at Eindhoven University, for example.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview guide Dutch

Introductie

Allereerst wil ik u bedanken voor uw tijd en deelname aan mijn onderzoek over inclusief leiderschap. Ik ben Romy Gerritsen en ik studeer Business Administration aan de Radboud Universiteit in Nijmegen, met een specialisatie in Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Management. Mijn Master thesis gaat over de belemmerende en bevorderende factoren rondom inclusief leiderschap, vanuit het perspectief van managers. Dit wil ik onderzoeken door een aantal managers van Wageningen Universiteit en Onderzoek te interviewen.

Het interview duurt ongeveer één uur en ik wil het gesprek graag opnemen als u hier geen bezwaar tegen heeft. Ik zal de opname gebruiken om het interview te transcriberen en te analyseren en ik behandel de informatie uiteraard vertrouwelijk. Uw anonimiteit is gegarandeerd, het transcript zal volledig geanonimiseerd worden zodat de data niet getraceerd kan worden naar individuen. De onderzoeksresultaten worden gebruikt in een advies aan de WUR en mijn uiteindelijke Master thesis zal beoordeeld worden door mijn eerste en tweede examinator.

Het interview bestaat uit open vragen. We zullen eerst beginnen met algemene vragen over uw functie en wat achtergrond informatie en daarna volgen er vragen over inclusief leiderschap en de belemmerende en bevorderende factoren die u hierin ervaart. Er zijn geen goede of foute antwoorden, omdat ik vooral geïnteresseerd ben in uw mening en zienswijze over deze onderwerpen.

Heeft u nog vragen voor we beginnen?

THEMA LIJST

Deel 1: Achtergrond informatie

Vragen	Toelichting
1. Wat is uw functie? 2. Aan welke afdeling geeft u leiding? 3. Hoeveel medewerkers heeft u onder u? 4. Hoe lang werkt u al voor WUR? 5. Hoe zou u uw dagelijkse taken beschrijven?	Deze vragen worden gebruikt om achtergrondinformatie over de respondent te verkrijgen.

Deel 2: Inclusief leiderschap deel I

Vragen	Toelichting
<p>1. Hoe ziet u inclusief leiderschap? Of: Hoe zou u inclusief leiderschap definiëren?</p> <p>2. Is inclusief leiderschap belangrijk in de organisatie?</p> <p>2a. <i>In welke mate ondersteunen het beleid en de procedures van de organisatie inclusief leiderschap?</i></p> <p><i>vb. wordt inclusief leiderschap meegenomen in de beoordeling en waardering van prestaties?</i></p> <p>2b. <i>Hoe communiceert de organisatie over inclusie en inclusief leiderschap? (shared vision)</i></p>	<p>Deze vragen worden gebruikt als een inleiding op het onderwerp ‘inclusief leiderschap’, maar gaan nog niet over de persoonlijke leiderschapsstijl van de respondent.</p>

Deel 3: Belemmerende factoren van inclusief leiderschap

Vragen	Toelichting
<p>1. Wat voor barrières of obstakels ervaart u in het komen tot inclusief leiderschap?</p> <p>2. Is inclusie voor u een prioriteit en waarom wel/niet?</p> <p>3. Wat is volgens u de waarde van inclusief leiderschap?</p> <p>4. Vindt u het belangrijk dat uw team divers is samengesteld? (<i>bias and stereotypes</i>)</p> <p>4a.. <i>Is uw eigen team divers? Waarom wel/niet?</i></p> <p>4b. <i>Welke vormen van diversiteit ziet u in uw team?</i></p> <p><i>vb. sekse, leeftijd, etniciteit, afstand tot de arbeidsmarkt, seksuele geaardheid, religie</i></p> <p><i>vb. verschillende nationaliteiten in het team</i></p>	<p>Deze vragen geven inzicht in de belemmerende factoren van inclusief leiderschap zoals ze ervaren worden door de managers. De 4 categorieën van belemmerende factoren uit het theoretisch raamwerk zijn gebruikt om deze vragen op te stellen.</p>

Deel 4: Bevorderende factoren van inclusief leiderschap

Vragen	Toelichting
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Wat helpt u om een inclusieve manager te zijn?2. Ziet u goede voorbeelden van inclusief leiderschap in de organisatie? (<i>pro-diversity beliefs</i>)	Deze vragen geven inzicht in de bevorderende factoren van inclusief leiderschap zoals ze ervaren worden door de managers. De categorieën van de bevorderende factoren uit het theoretisch raamwerk zijn gebruikt om vragen op te stellen. Mogelijk komen een aantal factoren eerder al aan bod, bijvoorbeeld bij vraag 2.2.

Deel 5: Inclusief leiderschap deel II

Vragen	Toelichting
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Wat betekent inclusief leiderschap voor u persoonlijk?2. Wat voor soort leidinggevende bent u? Wat vindt u belangrijk als leidinggevende? <i>2a. Als ik het iemand uit u team zou vragen, hoe zou diegene uw stijl van leiderschap typeren?</i>3. Kunt u een voorbeeld geven van een situatie waarin u trots was op hoe u als leider hebt gehandeld?4. Kunt u een voorbeeld geven van een situatie waarvan u achteraf wilde dat u het als leider anders had aangepakt?	Deze vragen geven een indruk van de ideeën en perspectieven van managers met betrekking tot inclusief leiderschap. De vragen zijn gebaseerd op de literatuur uit het theoretisch raamwerk.

Deel 6: Afronding

Vragen	Toelichting
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Zijn er onderwerpen die niet besproken zijn in dit interview en die u nog graag zou willen benoemen?2. Hoe hebt u het interview via Skype ervaren?	Deze vragen worden gebruikt om informatie te vergaren over het interviewproces en om de respondent de mogelijkheid te geven om onderwerpen die niet aan bod zijn geweest tijdens het interview alsnog te bespreken.

Appendix 2: Interview guide English

Introduction

First of all, I want to thank you for your time and for participating in my research on inclusive leadership. My name is Romy Gerritsen and I am a master student Business Administration from the Radboud University of Nijmegen, with a specialization in Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Management. For my master thesis I am investigating the barriers and facilitators to inclusive leadership as perceived by managers. In doing so, I am interviewing several managers from Wageningen University and Research.

The interview will take about one hour and will be recorded if permitted by you as a respondent. The recording will be used to transcribe and analyze the interview and will of course be handled with confidentiality. The anonymity of you as a respondent is also guaranteed as I will not use any names, so the data will not be traceable to individual respondents. The results of the research will be used in an advice to Wageningen University and Research and my final Master thesis will be assessed by my first and second examiner.

The interview consists of open questions. We will start with some general questions about your function and some background information and after that we will move on to the questions about inclusive leadership and the barriers and facilitators you are seeing within your job. There are no right or wrong answers, because I am mostly interested in your opinion and perception of these topics.

Do you have any questions before we start?

TOPIC LIST

Part 1: Background information

Questions	Aim
1. What is your formal job title? 2. Which department do you manage? 3. How many subordinates do you have? 4. How long have you been working for WUR? 5. How would you describe your daily tasks?	These questions are required in order to get some background information of the respondent

Part 2: Inclusive leadership part I

Questions	Aim
<p>1. How do you see inclusive leadership? Or: How would you define inclusive leadership?</p> <p>2. Is inclusive leadership seen as important within the organization?</p> <p>2a. <i>To what extent do organizational policies and practices support inclusive leadership? e.g. do performance evaluation systems value inclusive leadership?</i></p> <p>2b. <i>How does the organization communicate about inclusion and inclusive leadership? (shared vision)</i></p>	<p>These questions will be used as an introduction to the topic of inclusive leadership, but are not about the personal style of leadership of the respondent yet.</p>

Part 3: Barriers to inclusive leadership

Questions	Aim
<p>1. What kind of barriers do you perceive to inclusive leadership?</p> <p>2. Where can we find inclusion on your priorities list and why there?</p> <p>3. What is the value of being inclusive according to you?</p> <p>4. Do you think it is important to have a diverse team? <i>(bias and stereotypes)</i></p> <p>4a. Is your own team diverse? Why/why not?</p> <p>4b. What categories of diversity do you see in your team? <i>e.g. gender, age, ethnicity, distance to the labor market, sexual orientation, religion</i> <i>e.g. a variety of nationalities in your team</i></p>	<p>These questions help to gain insights into the barriers to inclusive leadership as perceived by managers. The 4 categories of barriers that were reviewed in the theoretical framework are used to guide these questions.</p>

Part 4: Facilitators of inclusive leadership

Questions	Aim
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What helps you in being an inclusive leader?2. Do you see good examples of inclusive leadership in the organization? (<i>pro-diversity beliefs</i>)	These questions help to gain insights into the facilitators of inclusive leadership as perceived by managers. The 3 categories of facilitators that were reviewed in the theoretical framework are used to guide these questions. Some facilitators might pop up earlier in the interview.

Part 5: Inclusive leadership part II

Questions	Aim
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What does inclusive leadership mean to you?2. What type of leader are you? What do you think is important as a manager? <i>2a. If I would ask anyone from your team, what would they say about your style of leadership?</i>3. Can you give an example of a situation where you were proud of how you handled it as a leader?4. Can you give an example of a situation where you wish you had been acting differently as a leader?	These questions will give an idea of the understandings of inclusive leadership and the perceptions of managers with regards to this topic. The questions are based on the reviewed literature on inclusive leadership and inclusive leadership behaviors as discussed in the theoretical framework.

Part 6: Final questions

Questions	Aim
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Are there any subjects that were not addressed in the interview but you would still like to discuss or mention?2. How did you experience doing this interview through Skype?	These questions are used to gain meta information on the interviewing process and to give the respondent the opportunity to give more information when this was not discussed during the other parts of the interview

Appendix 3: Initial template for data analysis

Initial template for data analysis

1. Inclusion

- 1.1 Belongingness
- 1.2 Uniqueness

2. Diversity

- 2.1 Gender
- 2.2 Ethnicity
- 2.3 Age
- 2.4 Religion
- 2.5 Sexual orientation
- 2.6 Distance to the labor market

3. Inclusive leadership behaviors

- 3.1 Self-awareness
 - 3.1.1 Reflection
 - 3.1.2 Being vulnerable
 - 3.1.3 Admit mistakes
 - 3.1.4 Learn from feedback
 - 3.1.5 Be aware of own strengths and weaknesses
 - 3.1.6 Reflect on own assumptions and bias
- 3.2 Social awareness
 - 3.2.1 Empathy
 - 3.2.2 Be open to ideas, listening
 - 3.2.3 Value and encourage diverse perspectives
 - 3.2.4 Mistakes should not be punished
 - 3.2.5 Openness
 - 3.2.6 Shared decision making
- 3.3 Relational agility
 - 3.3.1 Collaboration
 - 3.3.2 Common goal
 - 3.3.3 Communication
 - 3.3.4 Being equal
 - 3.3.5 Trying to understand others
- 3.4 Fair treatment
 - 3.4.1 Explain decisions
 - 3.4.2 No favoritism
 - 3.4.3 Fair systems needed
- 3.5 Courage
 - 3.5.1 Being brave
 - 3.5.2 Make tough decisions
 - 3.5.3 Question the status quo

4. Barriers to inclusive leadership

- 4.1 Organizational policies and practices
 - 4.1.1 Fit with inclusion strategies
 - 4.1.2 Performance evaluation system
 - 4.1.3 Historical influences
- 4.2 Lack of managerial commitment
 - 4.2.1 Lack of understanding concepts
 - 4.2.2 Inadequate training
 - 4.2.3 Not being held accountable

- 4.2.4 Not seen as priority
- 4.3 Bias and stereotypes
 - 4.3.1 Being aware about bias
 - 4.3.2 Consensus bias
 - 4.3.3 Favoritism

5. Facilitators to inclusive leadership

- 5.1 Shared vision for change
 - 5.1.1 Clear understanding of the concept
 - 5.1.2 Showcasing
- 5.2 Organizational processes
 - 5.2.1 Decision-making
 - 5.2.2 Evaluation systems
- 5.3 Individual facilitators
 - 5.3.1 Pro-diversity beliefs
 - 5.3.2 Humility
 - 5.3.3 Cognitive complexity

Appendix 4: Final template for data analysis

Final template for data analysis

1. Inclusive leadership

- 1.1 Definition inclusive leadership
 - 1.1.1 Unknown
 - 1.1.1.1 Hard to define
 - 1.1.1.2 Unfamiliar
 - 1.1.1.3 Never thought of it
 - 1.1.1.4 Abstract concept
 - 1.1.2 Not making a difference based on background
 - 1.1.2.1 Everyone is allowed to participate
 - 1.1.2.2 Being objective
 - 1.1.3 Valuing people for their unique contribution
 - 1.1.3.1 Making a difference dependent on needs of people
 - 1.1.3.2 Being open to diversity
 - 1.1.3.3 People can contribute from their own background
 - 1.1.3.4 Being yourself at work
 - 1.1.4 Paradox, twofold
 - 1.1.4.1 Good to mention but shouldn't make a difference
 - 1.1.4.2 Hard to be more diverse because that means you make a difference
- 1.2 Examples inclusive leadership
 - 1.2.1 Empathy, being able to put oneself in someone else's position
 - 1.2.2 Being informal
 - 1.2.3 Motivate employees
 - 1.2.4 Being involved
 - 1.2.5 Set boundaries
 - 1.2.6 Being open-minded
 - 1.2.6.1 Go outside your standard thinking patterns
 - 1.2.6.2 Take assumptions away
 - 1.2.7 Give minorities opportunities
- 1.3 Examples exclusive leadership
 - 1.3.1 Dominance
 - 1.3.2 Turning business into something personal
 - 1.3.3 Not seeing the worth in people
 - 1.3.4 Alpha males
 - 1.3.5 Exclusive leadership is not prevented or controlled

2. Diversity

- 2.1 Gender
 - 2.1.1 Current situation
 - 2.1.1.1 Male-dominated organization
 - 2.1.1.2 Less balance in higher positions
 - 2.1.2 Value
 - 2.1.2.1 Balance is refreshing
 - 2.1.2.2 Balance is hard to find
 - 2.1.3 Explanation
 - 2.1.3.1 Gender balance stems from discipline
 - 2.1.4 Policies
 - 2.1.4.1 Choose women when there is equal suitability
- 2.2 Ethnicity
 - 2.2.1 Value
 - 2.2.1.1 Having diverse perspectives

- 2.2.1.2 Brings other sphere
 - 2.2.1.3 Not seen as important
 - 2.2.1.4 Value differs per function
 - 2.2.2 Expectations
 - 2.2.2.1 Expected to fit into the Dutch way of working
 - 2.2.3 Different levels
 - 2.2.3.1 Difference between levels (PhD, postdoc, staf)
 - 2.2.3.2 Management consists of white men
 - 2.2.3.3 Less internationals on higher positions
 - 2.2.4 Barriers
 - 2.2.4.1 Cultural differences
 - 2.2.4.2 Hard to attract
 - 2.2.4.3 Language discussion
 - 2.2.5 Facilitators
 - 2.2.5.1 WUR is international oriented
- 2.3 Age
 - 2.3.1 Current situation
 - 2.3.1.1 Balanced age composition
 - 2.3.1.2 Difficult to get young people into positions because of experience
 - 2.3.1.3 Difficult to balance
 - 2.3.2 Value
 - 2.3.2.1 Internal mobility
 - 2.3.2.2 Complementary skills
 - 2.3.2.2.1 Experience and new insights
 - 2.3.2.3 Innovation and renewing
 - 2.3.2.4 Different perspectives
- 2.4 Religion
 - 2.4.1 Value
 - 2.4.1.1 Seen as something private
 - 2.4.1.2 Not seen as relevant
 - 2.4.1.3 No active policies
 - 2.4.2 Paradox
 - 2.4.2.1 Religions can be incompatible with inclusion
 - 2.4.3 Lack of information
 - 2.4.3.1 No information about Ramadan
- 2.5 Sexual orientation
 - 2.5.1 Value
 - 2.5.1.1 Not seen as relevant
 - 2.5.1.2 Mentioned as *not an issue*
 - 2.5.1.3 Not allowed to discriminate
 - 2.5.1.4 No active policies
- 2.6 Distance to the labor market
 - 2.6.1 Intention
 - 2.6.1.1 Intention to hire
 - 2.6.1.2 Active policy
 - 2.6.1.3 Use specialized agency
 - 2.6.1.4 No experience with hiring so far
 - 2.6.2 Barriers
 - 2.6.2.1 Required level of education
 - 2.6.2.1.1 Dangerous material
 - 2.6.2.1.2 Specialized work
 - 2.6.2.2 Not enough possibilities
 - 2.6.2.3 Inaccessible buildings
 - 2.6.2.4 Time-consuming

2.7 General

2.7.1 Current situation

2.7.1.1 Insufficient diversity

2.7.1.1.1 Too much uniformity

2.7.1.1.2 WUR is too white

2.7.1.2 Ideas about diversity and inclusion differ

2.7.2 Value diversity

2.7.2.1 New ways of working

2.7.2.2 Seen as important

2.7.2.3 Valuable for the organization

2.7.2.4 Moral or societal duty

2.7.2.5 Internal image

2.7.2.6 Reflection of society

2.7.2.7 Stronger team

2.7.2.7.1 Learn from each other

2.7.2.7.2 Being complementary

2.7.2.8 Being an example for the rest of the organization

2.7.2.9 Different perspectives

2.7.2.9.1 Break through thinking patterns

2.7.2.9.2 Expands your horizon

2.7.2.9.3 Keeps you sharp

2.7.2.10 Better decision-making

2.7.2.11 High quality output

2.7.2.12 Helps people to be more open to other perspectives

2.7.3 Differences between categories

2.7.3.1 Different ways of dealing with categories

2.7.3.1.1 Gender can be quantified

2.7.3.1.2 Religion and sexual orientation can't be quantified

2.7.3.1.3 More accepted to have a policy for one than others

2.7.3.1.4 Seen as private business

2.7.3.2 Valuing different perspectives depends on function

3. Style of leadership

3.1 Inclusive leadership behaviors

3.1.1 Self-awareness

3.1.1.1 Reflection

3.1.1.1.1 Be aware of the impact you have

3.1.1.1.2 Challenge yourself

3.1.1.2 Being vulnerable

3.1.1.2.1 Showing you are human

3.1.1.3 Admit mistakes

3.1.1.3.1 Being able to change opinion

3.1.1.4 Be aware of own strengths and weaknesses

3.1.1.4.1 Being surrounded with people who complement you

3.1.2 Social awareness

3.1.2.1 Empathy

3.1.2.1.1 Find out what is underneath

3.1.2.1.2 Trying to understand

3.1.2.2 Be open to ideas, listening

3.1.2.2.1 Listen to people genuinely

3.1.2.3 Value and encourage diverse perspectives

3.1.2.3.1 Empowerment

3.1.2.3.1.1 Use qualities

3.1.2.3.1.2 Challenge people

3.1.2.3.1.3 Focus on growth

- 3.1.2.3.1.4 Coaching
 - 3.1.2.4 Mistakes are allowed
 - 3.1.2.5 Shared decision making
 - 3.1.3 Relational agility
 - 3.1.3.1 Collaboration
 - 3.1.3.1.1 Cooperation
 - 3.1.3.1.2 Connection
 - 3.1.3.1.3 Trust
 - 3.1.3.1.4 Relational
 - 3.1.3.2 Common goal
 - 3.1.3.2.1 Creating shared goal
 - 3.1.3.2.2 Finding solutions together
 - 3.1.3.3 Communication
 - 3.1.3.3.1 Have regular conversations
 - 3.1.3.3.2 Time and attention
 - 3.1.3.4 Being equal
 - 3.1.3.4.1 Communicate on the same level
 - 3.1.3.4.2 Being accessible
 - 3.1.3.4.2.1 Being approachable
 - 3.1.3.4.2.2 Being visible
 - 3.1.3.4.2.3 Laugh together
 - 3.1.4 Fair treatment
 - 3.1.4.1 Explain decisions
 - 3.1.4.1.1 Being clear
 - 3.1.4.1.2 Explain why you do things
 - 3.1.4.2 Being aware of diversity and inclusion
 - 3.1.5 Courage
 - 3.1.5.1 Being brave
 - 3.1.5.1.1 Having courage to have difficult conversations
 - 3.1.5.1.2 Call others into account
 - 3.1.5.1.3 Stand up for your people
 - 3.1.5.2 Make tough decisions
 - 3.1.5.2.1 Having the final responsibility
 - 3.1.5.3 Question the status quo
 - 3.1.5.3.1 Speaking up against others
 - 3.1.5.3.2 Bring diversity into conversations
 - 3.1.5.3.3 Raise questions and bring issues to light
- 3.2 Other leadership behaviors
 - 3.2.1 Set boundaries
 - 3.2.1.1 Being clear
 - 3.2.1.2 Define shared framework
 - 3.2.2 Responsibility in teams
 - 3.2.2.1 Small teams
 - 3.2.2.2 Professionals
 - 3.2.2.3 Freedom or space
 - 3.2.3 Focus on soft skills
 - 3.2.3.1 Communication
 - 3.2.3.2 Result oriented
 - 3.2.3.3 Proactive
 - 3.2.4 Facilitate employees
 - 3.2.5 Being involved content-wise

4. Barriers to inclusive leadership

- 4.1 Organizational policies and practices
 - 4.1.1 Fit with inclusion strategies

- 4.1.1.1 WUR not inclusive for younger generations
 - 4.1.1.1.1 Lack of work-life balance
- 4.1.1.2 WUR is too careful
- 4.1.1.3 Procedures are organized around certain groups
- 4.1.1.4 Training is insufficient
 - 4.1.1.4.1 Not offered at suitable time
 - 4.1.1.4.2 Not offered often enough
 - 4.1.1.4.3 More training for leadership needed
- 4.1.2 Performance evaluation system
 - 4.1.2.1 Not part of the evaluation
- 4.1.3 Historical influences
 - 4.1.3.1 WUR is still hierarchical
- 4.1.4 Budget
 - 4.1.4.1 Not enough budget to hire internationals
 - 4.1.4.2 Budget is needed for training and development
- 4.2 Lack of managerial commitment
 - 4.2.1 Lack of understanding concepts
 - 4.2.1.1 No clear understanding of the concept of inclusive leadership
 - 4.2.2 Inadequate training
 - 4.2.2.1 There should be more leadership training
 - 4.2.3 Not being held accountable
 - 4.2.3.1 Targets would help to hold people accountable
 - 4.2.4 Not seen as priority
 - 4.2.4.1 Not enough awareness
 - 4.2.5 Top management barrier
 - 4.2.5.1 Stuck in their thinking patterns
 - 4.2.5.2 Less diversity in higher positions
 - 4.2.5.3 Not enough self-reflection in higher positions
 - 4.2.6 Lack of time for reflection.
- 4.3 Bias and stereotypes
 - 4.3.1 Being aware about bias
 - 4.3.1.1 Self-reflection
 - 4.3.1.2 Willing to learn
 - 4.3.1.3 Aware of unconscious bias
 - 4.3.2 Consensus bias
 - 4.3.2.1 Expect people to adjust
 - 4.3.3 Bias or assumptions
 - 4.3.3.1 Age: young people are renewing
 - 4.3.3.2 Gender: women and children or pregnancy
- 4.4 Context
 - 4.5.1 Discipline
 - 4.5.1.1 Men-dominated discipline
 - 4.5.1.1.1 Hard to find female candidates
 - 4.5.1.2 Discipline characterized by procedures
 - 4.5.2 Geographically less attractive
 - 4.5.3 Hard to retain internationals
- 4.5 Employees
 - 4.6.1 Employees who are not enjoying their work anymore
 - 4.6.2 Employees want to have a directive leader
 - 4.6.3 Language discussion
 - 4.6.4 Cultural diversity causes miscommunication
- 4.6 No barriers perceived

5. Facilitators to inclusive leadership

- 5.1 Shared vision for change

- 5.1.1 Clear understanding of the concept
 - 5.1.1.1 Shared language is helpful
- 5.1.2 Showcasing
 - 5.1.2.1 Start doing
 - 5.1.2.2 Role models in higher positions
 - 5.1.2.3 More attention for leaders and leadership in higher positions
- 5.1.3 Pressure
 - 5.1.3.1 From top management
 - 5.1.3.2 From society
 - 5.1.3.3 Use targets
 - 5.1.3.3.1 KPI's
 - 5.1.3.3.2 Quota
 - 5.1.3.3.3 Easier to call out
 - 5.1.3.3.4 Creates more awareness
- 5.2 Organizational processes
 - 5.2.1 Decision-making
 - 5.2.1 Shared decision making
 - 5.2.2 Evaluation systems
 - 5.2.2.1 Make inclusive leadership part of the evaluation
 - 5.2.2.2 Make inclusive leadership part of intervision
 - 5.2.3 Training
 - 5.2.3.1 Training mindbugs and bias
 - 5.2.3.2 Training feedback
 - 5.2.3.3 External training
 - 5.2.3.4 Training leadership
 - 5.2.3.5 Combine leadership and diversity
 - 5.2.3.5 Language courses
 - 5.2.3.6 Training cultural diversity
 - 5.2.3.7 Regular training
 - 5.2.3.8 Refreshment courses
 - 5.2.4 Tools
 - 5.2.4.1 Tests to understand yourself and colleagues
 - 5.2.4.1.1 Insights discovery
 - 5.2.4.2 Support for women
 - 5.2.4.2.1 Help women to position themselves
 - 5.2.4.2.2 Peer group female leaders
 - 5.2.4.3 Facilities for people with a distance to the labor market
 - 5.2.4.3.1 Shared facilities or arrangements between units
 - 5.2.4.4 Selection committees should be diverse
 - 5.2.4.5 Flexible working conditions
 - 5.2.4.6 Having a coach
 - 5.2.5 Putting it on the agenda
 - 5.2.5.1 Structural part of conversations
 - 5.2.5.2 Being reminded by HR advisors
 - 5.2.5.3 Enlarge diversity to create more awareness
 - 5.2.6 Freedom
 - 5.2.6.1 Arrange your own team
 - 5.2.6.2 Being facilitated in the choices you make
- 5.3 Individual facilitators
 - 5.3.1 Pro-diversity beliefs
 - 5.3.1.1 Seeing the value of diversity
 - 5.3.1.2 Take into account differences of people
 - 5.3.2 Humility
 - 5.2.3.1 Make people aware of their own perspectives
 - 5.2.3.2 Having regular conversations with people who are different

- 5.3.3 Cognitive complexity
 - 5.3.3.1 Seeing different sides of people, pros and cons
 - 5.3.3.2 Being less judging
- 5.4 Context
 - 5.4.1 Discipline
 - 5.4.1.1 International oriented discipline makes it easier to attract
 - 5.4.1.2 Gender balanced due to history discipline
 - 5.4.2 Government
 - 5.4.2.1 Government needed for people with distance to the labor market

6. Daily work situation

- 6.1 Span of control: 10-100 employees, average 50
- 6.2 Decision making
 - 6.2.1 Shared decision making
 - 6.2.2 Being decisive if needed
 - 6.2.3 Decision-making process political WUR
- 6.3 Daily tasks
 - 6.3.1 Meetings
 - 6.3.1.1 Internal meetings
 - 6.3.2.1 External meetings
 - 6.3.2 Facilitating employees
 - 6.3.3 HR tasks
 - 6.3.3.1 Development
 - 6.3.4 Managing people
 - 6.3.5 Networking
 - 6.3.5.1 Acquisition
 - 6.3.5.2 International trips
 - 6.3.6 Strategic
 - 6.3.6.1 Strategic planning
 - 6.3.6.2 Finance and control
 - 6.2.6.3 Strategic decision making
 - 6.3.7 Operational
 - 6.2.7.1 Operational tasks
 - 6.27.2 Projects of interest

7. WUR policies current situation

- 7.1 Inclusive leadership
 - 7.1.1 Evaluation
 - 7.1.1.1 Inclusive leadership not part of evaluation
 - 7.1.1.2 Sometimes valued with words
 - 7.1.2 Communication
 - 7.1.2.1 No explicit communication about inclusive leadership
 - 7.1.2.1.1 Could be more visible
 - 7.1.2.2 Inclusive leadership perceived as important
 - 7.1.2.2.1 Recruitment processes
 - 7.1.3 Training
 - 7.1.3.1 Awareness training
 - 7.1.3.2 Leadership training
 - 7.1.3.3 Cultural diversity training
 - 7.1.3.4 Bias training
- 7.2 Diversity
 - 7.2.1 Internationalization
 - 7.2.1.1 WUR wants to be internationally oriented
 - 7.2.2 Gender
 - 7.2.2.1 Attention for gender

- 7.2.2.1.1 Gender and diversity part of policies
 - 7.2.2.1.2 Gender project group
 - 7.2.2.1.3 Workshop gender
 - 7.2.2.2 Equal suitability means choosing women
 - 7.2.2.3 No quota
- 7.2.3 Distance to the labor market
 - 7.2.3.1 Active policy for people with distance to the labor market
 - 7.2.3.1.1 Jobs
 - 7.2.3.1.2 Requests from HR
 - 7.2.3.2 Facilities for people with distance to the labor market
- 7.2.4 Targets
 - 7.2.4.1 No quota
 - 7.2.4.2 Targets are needed
- 7.2.5 General
 - 7.2.5.1 Attention for diversity and inclusion
 - 7.2.5.1.1 Not needed
 - 7.2.5.1.2 Already there, positive
 - 7.2.5.1.3 Not formal yet