

Radboud University  
Nijmegen School of Management: Business Administration

# The Constructions of Inclusive Leadership in Academia

Inclusive leadership in Academia

**Submitted by**  
Cathrin Hirling s1047515

**Master Thesis**  
26 July 2020

Master Specialisation in Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Management  
Supervisor by Yvonne Benschop  
Second Examiner: Carolin Ossenkop

## Preface

The completion of this master would not have been at all possible without the endless support I received throughout. Firstly, thank you to Yvonne Benschop for all your encouragement and endless amount of support that you so selflessly offered. I feel very privileged to have someone so evidently passionate and incredibly knowledgeable to guide me through this process. Secondly, I would like to thank Jeannette Heldens for all your continuous support and providing me the opportunity to complete this research at Radboud. Thank you for being an ease to work alongside with and always being so kind in openly offering your time and support along the way. Thirdly, thank you to all my friends situated throughout the world who have managed to still show me endless amounts of support and believing in me even with geographic challenges. To all my whānau, Michele, Christian, and Felix: thank you for always pushing me to be my best and putting up with my freak-out moments. Lastly thank you to my GEM ladies Romy and Mila, thank you for always offering endless amounts of advice and support but most importantly always providing some laughs.

I cannot say it to you all enough, thank you!

## Table of Contents

---

<b>Summary</b>	4
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b>	5
1.1 Problem Context	5
1.2 Aim of the research and research question	7
1.3 Academic Relevance	9
1.4 Societal Relevance	9
1.5 Outline Research Report	10
<b>Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework</b>	11
2.1 Leadership in academia	11
2.2 Inclusive Leadership behaviours	12
2.3 Barrier of Inclusive Leadership	14
2.4 Identity work	15
<b>Chapter 3: Methodology</b>	19
3.1 Research Paradigm	19
3.2 Research Design	19
3.3 Case Study	19
3.4 Data Collection	20
3.5 Data Analysis	21
3.6 Quality Criteria	23
3.7 Research Ethics	24
3.7 Limitations to Research	25
<b>Chapter 4: Results</b>	27
4.1 Academic Context	27
4.2 Organisational context	28
4.3 Diversity and inclusion	30
4.4 Leadership in Academia	31
4.5 Inclusive Leadership Behaviours	33
4.5.1 Creating a Safe environment for all	33
4.5.2 Communication	34
4.5.3 Courage	36
4.5.4 Equity	38
4.6 Identity work: tensions faced	40
<b>Chapter 5: Discussion</b>	43
5.1 Conclusion	43
5.2 Recommendations: managerial implications	46
5.3 Contribution to Theory	47
5.4 Reflection	48
5.4.1 Quality of research	48
5.4.2 Limitations and future research	49
5.4.3 Reflexive notes from researcher	49

## Summary

---

With diversity alive in organisations, the importance of ensuring all individuals feel able to express their full selves is key to unlocking a climate of inclusion. With leaders being viewed as holding responsibility in creating a productive work environment, they are categorised as one of the main influencers to facilitating inclusion. As inclusion is being viewed as the key ingredient to unlocking diversity, it is becoming increasingly more desirable and sought after. Although the value in inclusion is being increasingly recognised, how leaders can enable a climate of inclusion through their own leadership behaviour is still vastly unknown. This qualitative study looks into the accounts held by academic leaders around the perceived ability to be inclusive in their leadership behaviour. All participants lead a team of academic professionals and have been internally pre-identified as being inclusive. Academia holds an often-individualistic way of working with reward systems that support this, therefore inclusion can be viewed as polarising in comparison to academia. The main behaviours that leaders valued in facilitating an inclusive environment in their teams was through creating a sense of safety, investing in communication channels, being courageous, and emphasizing the importance of equity. Further, the study brings forward the often-hidden contradictions that leaders are faced with, especially in relation to the paradoxes that inclusivity brings.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

---

### 1.1 Problem Context

---

With globalisation continually changing the landscape of markets, organisations require to continually adapt to ensure continual success. It has led to merging of country boundaries with an increase of an integration of cultures. With this, contemporary workplaces are increasingly made up of a diverse workforce, bringing multitudes of identities and therefore complexities (Benschop, Holgersson, Van den Brink & Wahl, 2015). This form of diversity brings together varying ethnicities, ages, races, classes and genders within one given workplace. Over the years it has been considered as a strategic leverage for organisations to utilise and develop the increasing heterogenous workforce (Randel et al, 2018; De Prins, De Vos, Van Beirendonck & Segers, 2015). Diversity is perceived for allowing greater access to creativity through the variety of perspectives and knowledge available, thereby leading to an increase in organisational performance through innovation (Groysberg & Connolly, 2013; De Prins et al., 2015).

But recently it has become more visible that simply having diversity in the workforce does not automatically lead to the benefits of increased productivity (Shore et al., 2011). Rather having a central focus on diversity has been seen to potentially lead to adverse effects such as discrimination or biases (Shore, Randel, Chung, Dean, Ehrhart & Singh, 2011). To effectively leverage the potential benefits that diversity offers it is crucial for organisations to simultaneously facilitate a climate of inclusion (Randel et al., 2018; Shore et al., 2011). Shore et al., (2011) define inclusion as making individuals feel a sense of belonging whilst simultaneously being valued for their unique selves. Over the years, diversity has become seemingly viewed as more problematic with issues around discrimination, biases and affirmative action plans, as well as tokenism (Shore et al., 2011). Diversity has recently evolved and been understood as being two parts of one coin. To have diversity and to gain higher levels of employment engagement one must simultaneously ensure a sense of inclusion (Shore et al., 2011; Randel et al., 2018). Inclusion is understood as the key to unlocking and integrating existing diversity successfully (Randel et al., 2018; Shore et al., 2011). Recently, with inclusion becoming increasingly popular, organisations are continually seeking out ways as to how to enable a climate of inclusion.

As leaders are seen as having the ability to influence and enable human capacity, it is therefore this reason that leaders are often seen as a leverage tool to best enable high performing

teams (Alvesson & Syeningson, 2003). With competition and diversity increasing, ambiguity is consequently becoming a part of everyday organisational life. To cope with the continuous ambiguity, it is seen as requiring effective and adaptable leadership to cater to the given demands (Alvesson & Syeningson, 2003). With the rise in demand for inclusive workplaces leaders have become a central focus as enablers for creating such environments. Therefore, inclusive leadership is being viewed as stringent to truly unlock the full potential that diversity has to offer (Randel et al., 2018). Inclusive leaders are categorised as demonstrating behaviours that support all team members through ensuring justice and equity, promoting diverse contributions and encouraging all unique perspectives and capabilities available to be heard (Winters, 2014; Randel et al., 2018). It is recognised that encouraging the involvement of all team members enables the full utilization of the available human competencies to best enable high performing teams (Shore et al., 2011; Randel et al., 2018). Inclusive leaders are viewed as not only producing high performing teams but also creating increased job satisfaction, in turn reducing turn-over and retaining key capabilities, allowing organisations to best compete within their given market (Adamson, 2017; Randel et al., 2018; Winters, 2014).

As effective leadership is crucial and inclusive leadership being viewed as enabling high performing teams, it has become highly desirable for organisations to develop this form of leadership. With leaders having a strong impact on culture and practices, their demonstrated behaviour directly impacts performance through the promotion or undermining of inclusion (Shore et al., 2011; Bilimoria, Joy & Liang, 2008). But how as a leader one can effectively enact inclusive leadership is still vastly unknown. Further, although inclusive leadership is perceived as highly valuable, it hides the possible paradoxical challenges that leaders face when adopting behaviours and practices that are deemed as inclusive. As leaders face the ever-present tensions of managing their team members while simultaneously ensuring organisational objectives are achieved, supporting leaders to ensure contradictions are minimised is important to ensure organisational effectiveness (Randel et al., 2018; Shore et al., 2011). For a culture of inclusion to become more of a workplace reality, inclusive leadership needs to be unpacked further to better understand the ability of leaders to facilitate an inclusive environment (Shore et al., 2011). It is further essential for inclusive leadership to be understood in terms of the possible contextual constraints it may be faced with, consequently inhibiting its full potential (Shore et al., 2011; Ehrhart & Schneider & Macey, 2014; Mitchell et al., 2015). Leaders evolve their leadership behaviours in order to fit into their given context, therefore the importance of identifying possible contextual constraints when incorporating certain behaviours is highly important in order to best mitigate these (Alvesson & Syeningson, 2003;

Alvesson & Willmott, 2002). For a leader to be effective in their leadership, their leadership behaviour requires to be adapted and suited to the given environment. This is also known as the process of identity work (Hatchz & Shultz, 2004). The identity work performed by leaders is the result of discarding certain characteristics in order to adopt others. This is often completed by leaders to best assimilate to their given environment to ensure success (Hatchz & Shultz, 2004; Alvesson & Syeningsson, 2003). With an ever-increasing demand on leaders to produce productive teams, their behaviours are put into the spotlight, but often the identity work that occurs behind the scenes remains hidden (Hatch & Shultz, 2004). To best ensure leaders are assimilating appropriately to the organisation's needs, there is an area of interest in terms of how organisations can correctly support leaders to enable a climate of inclusion (Randel et al., 2018; Shore et al., 2011; Winters, 2014).

The contextual limitations that inclusive leadership may face is still vastly unknown, especially in environments that are highly individualistic and competitive in nature. One thing that is known is that the majority of individuals want to be included. Like most organisations academic institutions are experiencing significant change. It is viewed that academia is currently shifting away from the traditional model it was built off and heading towards a more collaborative culture. Thereby, this is calling upon and requiring new forms of academic leadership (Söderhjelm, Björklund, Sandahl & Bolander-Laksov, 2018). The flow-on effects from globalisation is creating ever present change, such as the increasingly present diversity, therefore organisations must ensure they are appropriately equipped to manage and evolve to their given environment. Universities have seen a substantial increase of student enrolments over the years. This has led to greater attention being placed on teaching, as this is now one of the main institutional sources of income. This is creating a shift in resources to ensure organisations invest into areas where value is created, in this case teaching. The change requires not only a shift in resources but further a reframing of what excellence means within academia. With academia being seen as holding a culture where excellence is demonstrated and measured off one's involvement in research, new areas of demand such as teaching are challenging this whilst simultaneously requiring a leadership style that effectively accommodates this change (Söderhjelm, Björklund, Sandahl & Bolander-Laksov, 2018; Bolden, Gosling, Peters & Ryam, 2012).

## 1.2 Aim of the research and research question

With a continual evolution regarding what is deemed of value as a leader within an organisation, there is a need for appropriate adaptation and transformation to be conducted

through identity work (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002). Shamandi, Silong, Ismail, Samah & Othman (2011) refer to leadership role requirements as “constantly shifting to match the demand and desires of peers, subordinates, and superiors” (p. 49). With a currently growing diverse workforce, attention is now being shifted to facilitating inclusion. Leaders are increasingly viewed as being central in facilitating inclusive work climates through adopting the perceived appropriate behaviours (Randel et al., 2018; Winters, 2014).

With the combination of intensified competition, continual pressure to self-develop and inclusive leadership understood as vital to leverage the benefits of diversity, leaders often are blindly faced with complex and competing tensions. The aim of this research is to analyse current leaders’ behaviours and experiences within an academic environment to better understand the link between their own behaviours and understandings of inclusive leadership. It will uncover the dynamic behaviours and practices that leaders have adopted, to allow for a greater insight into how inclusivity may be fostered and performed by leaders in academia.

Not only will it develop greater insight from leaders into what leadership behaviours they perceive as best enabling inclusion, but it will further uncover the possible barriers and tensions that leaders see themselves faced with when adopting inclusive behaviours. By exposing possible barriers that leaders may face, it will bring forward what may be responsible for hindering inclusion. Not only this, but focusing attention on what leaders require to effectively create an inclusive environment will contribute to developing further understanding into the practices of inclusion. This will bring greater insight and awareness into how leaders may best enable and enact inclusive practices through their own leadership to best extract the benefits from the existing diversity. Research has brought forward the many benefits that inclusion brings (Randel et al., 2018; Shore et al., 2011; Winters, 2014) but much is still unknown as to how leaders can effectively translate this into practice, especially in organisations that are highly competitive in nature such as academia. The challenges and tensions that inclusion brings for leaders still needs much attention to better unpack how inclusion can be maximised to its full potential whilst understanding the possible limitations (Randel et al., 2018; Mitchell et al., 2015). Thereby this study will offer greater insight into how leaders are facilitating inclusive climates through their leadership in the context of academia.

“How do academic leaders influence inclusive environments through their individual leadership behaviour?”

In order to answer this question, empirical research will be conducted at Radboud University situated in the Netherlands, interviewing current leaders. With the given institution being situated within the knowledge economy a certain type of leadership is required to best manage its workforce. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with current managers who lead teams of academic professionals, all of whom have been internally pre-identified by the Human Resource Department as being inclusive leaders. Further information of the given case study is provided in chapter 3.

### 1.3 Academic Relevance

---

Academic leaders manage teams consisting of highly educated individuals who are understood to be requiring a greater need of involvement in decision-making whilst allowing for autonomy (Bolden, Gosling, Peters & Ryam, 2012). This qualitative research will contribute to the existing literature by offering greater insight into the complex tensions that academic leaders face. Analysing the interactions and processes between leadership, inclusion and leadership identities in an academic context will allow focussing attention to better understand the underlying processes (Brown, 2017; Alvesson & Willmott, 2002). This study will unpack the perceptions, behaviours and experiences of pre-identified inclusive leaders in academia, whilst simultaneously providing insight into the evolving landscape of academic leadership. By analysing pre-identified inclusive leaders, it provides a spotlight onto the power of leadership in terms of the role it plays in facilitating a climate of inclusion. It not only provides greater insight into inclusive leadership within an academic context but further it allows for possible limitations and leverage points to be identified. This again further builds understanding around inclusive leadership, in turn also nurturing diversity and equality. Furthermore, greater insight into the identity dynamics of academic leaders through the process of performing identity work will be provided.

### 1.4 Societal Relevance

---

While inclusive leadership offers many perceived benefits and is viewed as a tool in dealing with the inevitable diverse workforce, its suitability to given contexts such as academia is not brought into question. This research will develop a better understanding into the opportunities as well as possible tensions and barriers that may be hindering inclusive leadership in the academic context. As academic institutions are environments that are prone to high workloads, members are vulnerable to issues such as burnout (Ghorpade, Lackritz & Singh, 2007). Understanding how best to facilitate a climate of inclusion within a highly demanding industry will develop a richer understanding as to how this may be brought to life, leading to a

better work environment. The encouragement of creating not only a productive but also safe and positive work environment can lead to improved economic and societal wealth (Kirton & Greene, 2016).

### 1.5 Outline Research Report

The research includes five chapters. The above introduction provides insight into the direction and relevant themes that are present throughout the report, the second consists of the relevant theoretical frameworks that help give a better analysis and understanding of the given subjects. The methodology of chapter three gives a clear description of the research design, including methods used for data collection and data analysis. Chapter four consists of the results, and lastly, chapter five contains the discussion including the practical recommendations, limitations of research and possible areas ripe for future research.

## Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

---

The following chapter includes insights into existing literature on leadership within academia, inclusive leadership behaviours, the perceived barriers of inclusion, and the process of identity work performed by leaders.

### 2.1 Leadership in academia

---

Leadership is defined as being responsible for being at the forefront of change. Additionally, leadership within an organisational setting tends to be strongly linked to the right to manage (Berg, Barry & Chandler, 2012). Leadership can be utilised as a strategy by organisations to allow for value creation through effective use of its existing human capabilities. The perception of an effective leader in an organisation has been transformed from being grounded in traditional top-down to now holding a stronger focus on building relationships that emphasise trust (Randel et al., 2018). There are many possible styles of leadership in an organisational context, with some being more dominant or favoured than others, but all share a common feature: power (Ford, 2010; Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003). Katz, Eilam-Shamir, Kark & Berson (2018) have defined leadership as having the ability to ‘transform the needs, values, preferences and aspirations of followers from self-interests to collective interests’ (p. 10). This demonstrates the power that organisational leaders hold. Further, it highlights how leaders can be used as a gateway by organisations and as a mechanism of control to ensure organisational objectives are achieved. The perception that leadership can be utilised as a means to an end in producing a competitive advantage is one that is often taken for granted (Berg et al., 2012).

Leadership within an academic context is unique in the sense that the institutions are built off knowledge and include an exceedingly intelligent workforce (Bolden, Gosling, Peters & Ryam, 2012). Therefore, academia requires a certain type of leadership to ensure academic professionals are effectively led. The style of leadership adopted in these institutions are not built off control but rather, as defined by Anthony & Antony (2017), academic leadership is most effective when one is able to sustain and drive change in pursuit of a common goal, while simultaneously allowing for autonomy. Academic leaders are unique in the sense that they often access their position due to their proven academic excellence rather than their perceived managerial capabilities. This reflects that academic leaders gain their positions more often due to their research skills rather than due to their perceived leadership capabilities (Anthony & Antony, 2017). This not only brings into question issues of academic leaders’ suitability for leadership positions but also, due to the nature of academia being highly individualistic and

competitive, leaders are faced with many tensions and contradictions to achieve the perceived value of unity (Anthony & Antony, 2017).

With a large emphasis on ensuring professional autonomy, it is central for leaders to produce an environment that allows for a sense of freedom to maintain members' motivation to better ensure high-quality research and teaching (Anthony & Antony, 2017). Bolden et al., (2012) define academic leadership as having a strong self-leadership, again linking to the industry being highly individualised. With academia valuing autonomy, too much management can be viewed as being counteractive to individual's productivity, as it may block creativity. But when leadership is utilised effectively it is also known for facilitating greater creativity by creating a positive climate, such as through enabling inclusion, which can foster a shared vision and direction (Söderhjelm et al., 2018; Randel et al., 2018). Academia is experiencing a shift from the traditional strong focus on rewarding individual success to encouraging a more collaborative and unified culture (Söderhjelm et al., 2018). The demand for effective leadership in academia is growing to ensure excellence in all spheres rather than only in research. This is a reaction to the growing competition that universities face, leading to areas previously overlooked but now demanded to be valued, such as teaching (Bolden et al., 2012; Söderhjelm et al., 2018).

With academic excellence traditionally being based off research that is highly competitive and individualistic, diversifying and reframing what 'excellence' stands for within academia is allowing for a movement towards more of a shared collective. This movement towards becoming more of a collective group rather than dominantly individual is seeing greater inclusion of what excellence may mean. It is further reframing the perception of the power of unity and being a collective to produce and share work collaboratively, rather than the previous individual model. This sees unity and thereby inclusion as factors that are becoming increasingly valued. Interview questions will be posed to leaders to gain an understanding about what type of leadership behaviours they believe are required to lead academic professionals. Further questions are posed around what possible changes they have seen within the academic context and how they have catered to this in terms of possibly adapting their own leadership style to accommodate.

## 2.2 Inclusive Leadership behaviours

As previously mentioned, not only to cope with the increasing diversity found within organisations today but also to successfully utilise varying capabilities, there has been a spike in popularity regarding inclusive leadership. Shore et al., (2011) define leaders as being key in

setting a climate and promoting inclusion due to producing the narratives of expected behaviours. Thereby, Shore et al., (2011) define inclusion as “the degree of 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). Inclusive leaders are deemed as crucial to encouraging and nurturing diverse perspectives within decision-making and discussions through facilitating voice mechanisms for all, especially for minority groups and women, who are often less represented. It is understood that when leaders bring about a norm of inclusion, this will not only lead to higher performing teams but further lead to an organisational culture of equality (Randel et al., 2018; Winters, 2014; Shore et al., 2011).

In order to successfully participate as an inclusive leader, individuals are required to have ‘pro-diversity beliefs, humility, and cognitive complexity’ (Randel et al., 2018, p. 190). These characteristics are viewed as allowing for openness and acceptance towards diversity, facilitating leaders to be able to successfully identify and integrate the existing diversity to contribute to positive organisational outcomes. Leaders must see the benefits of diversity but also hold the behavioural trait of acknowledging that even as a leader they may not know it all. Having the humility and continual openness to learn, such as from team members, allows access to more of a world view by encouraging all to participate whilst ensuring a safe environment to do so (Randel et al., 2018; Shore et al., 2011; Winters, 2014; Gallegos, 2013).

The ability to see individuals for their strengths and weaknesses produces a multi-dimensional view to ensure all possible value available is utilised. Randel et al., (2018) define inclusive leadership as having five sets of characteristics that, when enacted, allow leaders to fulfil team members’ needs of belonging and uniqueness. To facilitate belonging it is deemed that the leader must ensure individuals are supported as team members, ensure justice and equity, and share decision-making. To ensure a sense of uniqueness leaders are perceived as needing to encourage diverse contributions and help all team members to contribute to their best ability (Randel et al., 2018). In order to facilitate team members to fully unleash their potential through leverage of voice, it is vital for leaders to facilitate an environment that is perceived as safe for learning and sharing, so individuals feel able to express their full selves (Booyesen, 2014; Shore et al., 2011; Randel et al., 2018). But this does not come without challenges. A major challenge for leaders when facilitating inclusion is managing the competing but equally legitimate perspectives that may emerge (Gallegos, 2013). It is viewed that fostering an inclusive environment is key to allowing the possible advantages of creativity and increased performance that diversity offers to be brought to life, but this can come with

new or different challenges (Randel et al., 2018; Burrell, 2016; Winters, 2014). Integral for leaders, to create an inclusive environment requires creating space for all perspectives to be voiced, even though as a leader one may not individually agree with them (Gallegos, 2013; Winters, 2014; Randel et al., 2018). A key for leaders who want to facilitate inclusion is to adopt the behaviours as mentioned, to give way and encourage collaboration, which will ensure an overall greater sense of unity and thereby inclusion. This often requires tackling the possible subtle forms of biases or exclusionary practices. Therefore leaders require courage to be authentic and to question the way of doing things in order to make way and build a stronger foundation of inclusion (Vinkenburg, 2017). Inclusive leadership is heavily based around building high quality relationships with subordinates whilst simultaneously ensuring fair treatment to enable a safe, equal and productive climate (Gallegos, 2013; Shore et al., 2011).

With inclusive leadership being an area that is still being discovered and developed, leaders' actions and the possible outcomes that may best enable inclusion are still an existing grey area (Vinkenburg, 2017). Since academia is faced with contextual constraints creating boundary conditions, it may not be possible for all aspects as specified by Randel et al., (2018) to be enacted, even though they are perceived as leading to beneficial outcomes. The traditional context of academia is built of being highly individualistic, valuing autonomy and experiencing vigorous competition, thereby holding prominent pressure to produce research that is of high quality. Whereas in stark contrast, inclusion is built off unity and is highly relational. The given characteristics of inclusive leadership will be used to analyse current leaders' behaviours as well as experiences within academia. It will help gather information in terms of their self-perceptions of how their behaviours are facilitating and allowing for inclusion. Although certain styles of leadership are deemed as permitting more positive behaviours and thereby facilitating better work climates, it does not consider contextual constraints. Certain styles of leadership may not be suitable in all organisations due to the way of working, making them be counteractive whilst continually hiding the paradoxes leaders may face.

### 2.3 Barrier of Inclusive Leadership

As mentioned previously with inclusion holding many benefits, inclusive leaders may be faced with varying tensions that impede on their ability to create inclusive environments.

Inclusive leadership requires leaders to hold an awareness and understanding around diversity to see the importance (Randel et al., 2018; Winters, 2014), but further for leaders to engage within inclusive practices, team members need to be supportive of this. If team members themselves do not see the benefit in diversity or do not wish to take part, such as in

shared decision making, it can deter and disenable a leader to create an inclusive climate (Randel et al., 2018). As inclusive leadership is moving away from the previous forms of dominant leadership, such being assertive and competitive, team members may view it as ineffective and thereby be less supportive (Randel et al., 2018; Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell & Ristikari, 2011). Thereby not only leaders but also team members must buy in to the value of diversity and inclusion in order to cohesively create a safe and open work environment. Winters (2014) states the importance for the climate of inclusion to be set by leaders but also requiring bottom-up support to ensure it is sustained throughout (Bilimoria, Joy & Liang, 2008).

Academia is already heavily dependent on individual output as a measure of success (Ghorpade, Lackritz & Singh, 2007). Hence leaders must feel able to authentically act in terms of their behaviour that may be going against the traditional form of leadership. This may be through encouraging team collaboration to conduct research to better solve the increasing complex issues, rather than the traditional individualistic model (Söderhjelm et al., 2018). Not only do leaders need to feel a sense of support from their team but further from the organisation that they are within. Organisational practices need to be aligned to support inclusive leadership, such as enabling leaders to be able to reward individual successes but also as importantly teamwork (Shore et al., 2011). This allows leaders to encourage their team to act in a more cohesive manner which is vital in terms of creativity and innovation. But existing reward systems that are not yet geared towards supporting such environments can create difficulty for leaders in facilitating inclusive environments (Shore et al., 2011; Randel et al., 2018; Söderhjelm et al., 2018). As inclusive leadership is perceived as requiring quality relationships to be created and fostered, with leaders often being in a position where time is a limited resource it may be difficult to enable this (Gallegos, 2013). To identify the possible barriers to inclusion that leaders face, questions will be posed within the given interviews to understand how leaders receive support from their team, peers and organisation in relation to facilitating an inclusive environment. Further, questions will be asked where inclusion is understood as being successfully adopted within academia and areas which are still viewed as lacking.

#### 2.4 Identity work

With some leaders being viewed as being inclusive in their demonstrated behaviours, much is still unknown as to how leaders in the same context may be able to demonstrate more inclusive behaviours and practices compared to others. In the context of academia many leaders have risen to leadership positions not due their leadership skills, thereby identity work has been

performed by many to transform into a leader and ultimately in this case what is perceived as an inclusive leader.

How leaders navigate and adopt their behaviours through the process of identity work is requiring further attention to understand how they implement or alternatively dispose certain behaviours. The academic context plays a significant role in contributing to what is required of leaders in terms of behaviours and values to be effective within their given market. In the case of academia, to deal with growing competition the ability to manage change by being adaptable is important for leaders. It is viewed as key for leaders to continually encourage creativity within teams to ensure continual success, understood as effectively being achieved through collaboration (Anthony & Antony, 2017; Randel et al., 2018; Söderhjelm et al., 2018). Individual identity is heavily influenced by the given context, through the given discourse and practices in place it encourages the reproduction or transformation of one's identity (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Hatch & Shultz, 2004).

Identity work is defined as a process that is undertaken to mitigate tensions and ambiguities that may arise due to varying interactions (Alvesson et al., 2008). When leaders feel a sense of conflict to their self-image it can lead to pressure to assimilate to fit into the given narrative to foster one's sense of belonging (Hatch & Shultz, 2004). This is also true when leaders get a positive response from certain behaviours, which will lead them to be reinforced. Leaders' identities are enabled but also constrained to the context in which they are situated (Brown, 2017). Hatch & Schultz (2004) define identity work as a process of which "people are continuously engaged in forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that are productive of a precarious sense of coherence or distinctiveness" (p. 444). Consequently, this demonstrates that identities are fragile to the perceptions of others and are adapted to reflect the perceived desired characteristics within one's given context (Hatch & Schultz, 2004).

Leaders who feel their individual self as being threatened or vulnerable tend to alleviate this pressure through assimilating to the social ideals that are in place (Alvesson et al., 2008; Hatch & Shultz, 2004)). The behaviours that are deemed as valuable tend to be those that are dominant within the given context. This leads to issues of identities that fall outside this context to become unaccepted and therefore marginalised. Not only does this consciously or unconsciously prescribe identities, it further makes individuals who do not fully fit the given mould to possibly assimilate and hide their perceived non-valued identities. The surveillance of self by adhering the given valued characteristics can lead to the issue of the available diversity not truly being utilised to its full possible potential. With identity work being

performed due to discursive practices that regulate the accepted or restricted characteristics within a given profession, this process of identity regulation allows for certain identities to be dominant and others to be more marginalised (Hatch & Schultz, 2004; Budgeon, 2014). It is vital to ensure that leadership behaviours deemed as beneficial are complementary to the given context to ensure suitability and alignment (Hatch & Shultz, 2004; Randel et al., 2018).

The process of identity work it will be used to analyse how academic leaders may see their identities as leaders and construct themselves within an academic context. The engagement and performance of identity work with the differing leadership characteristics used as points of reference, will allow greater understanding into how leaders navigate their behaviour to enable inclusive environments. Further, as mentioned, many academic leaders are progressed due to research excellence, the identity work performed when becoming a leader is one that is often overlooked and thereby the possible tensions faced are too.

With inclusive leadership offering many perceived benefits and viewed as a tool in dealing with the inevitable diverse workforce, it does not bring into question its suitability in relation to contexts such as academia. A measure taken by organisations to ensure appropriate adaptation and further survival in their given environment can be seen through attempting to facilitate inclusive work climates to best leverage the existing diversity (Randel et al., 2018; Shore et al., 2011; Winters, 2014). The possible contextual constraints that may influence how inclusive leadership is adopted are not clear and the limitations and effects that inclusive leaders may face is also vastly unclear. As academia is highly competitive and autonomy is valued, how leaders are able to be inclusive whilst ensuring the needs of their team members are met is widely unknown (Anthony & Antony, 2017; Alvesson & Syeningsson, 2003; Randel et al., 2018). Therefore, the defined model of inclusive leadership and its given behaviours will be used to analyse and understand how current academic leaders perceive their ability to operationalise inclusive leadership to enable inclusion to be a reality. Further the possible barriers of inclusion that leaders may face in terms of their own leadership but also the support that may be provided by their given team, peers and organisation will be used to uncover what leaders see as hindering inclusion. Lastly, leader's identity work will be used in relation to the context of academia to better understand which behaviours have been successfully adopted and how their leadership style may have evolved in terms of behaviours to suit the changes within academia. It will further uncover areas in which leaders may see opportunity to act more inclusive but still are unable to adopt such behaviours due to the dynamic contextual challenges they may face making certain inclusive behaviours perceived as unsuitable to enact. Even

though such behaviours may be seen as positive by a leader they may be viewed as unfeasible to reproduce within the unique context of academia.

## Chapter 3: Methodology

---

### 3.1 Research Paradigm

---

The philosophical assumption underpinning this given qualitative research is through the social constructivist stance. By holding a relativist ontology and subjectivist epistemology it views that there are multiple realities, thereby knowledge and meaning is understood as made collectively through language and social processes (Lee, 2012). Social constructivism identifies that there is no one single truth, rather there are multiple that are all relative to the individual and are actively co-constructed (Symon & Cassell, 2012; Lee, 2012). Knowledge and reality are open to interpretation and are shaped by historical, cultural, and societal contexts making knowledge indeterminate through diverse perspectives (King & Brooke, 2017). By this study acknowledging the varying perspectives held it allows the varying truths of reality to be uncovered, to better understand how meaning and knowledge is continually negotiated through interactions creating emerging realities (Crotty, 2003). The research captures thick narratives from leaders within the academic context to gain deeper insight into the understanding and knowledge that has been built by leaders within the same given environment (Symon & Cassell, 2012; Lee, 2012). By holding this stance, reflexivity was ensured throughout to understand how the given paradigm was of influence to ensure all accounts were interpreted openly and equally.

### 3.2 Research Design

---

This empirical research provides a thick description into leaders' experiences, understanding and meaning making within the academic context. Qualitative research is best suited to the subjectivist stance as it allows to uncover the varying perspectives and so-called realities that individuals construct as actors but also collectively when interacting with their given context. It assists in giving voice to the phenomenon of interest by collecting and further analysing information from those who are directly involved (Symon & Cassell, 2012).

### 3.3 Case Study

---

The eleven respondents are from Radboud University in Nijmegen. One selection criterion is that all participants are currently in a leadership position, managing a team of academics at Radboud University. From the eleven participants, seven were males and four were females. Three were from Nijmegen School of Management, five from the Faculty of Science, and three from the Faculty of Social Science. Interviewing leaders from varying faculties ensured a

broader scope of information in terms of backgrounds, to account for greater diversity in terms of backgrounds, experiences and perceptions. All respondents have been internally identified as being inclusive by the Human Resource Department, thereby holding a reputation for being an inclusive leader. The definition of an inclusive leader was given to the Human Resource Department of which they then nominated leaders based off this description. Selection based on the perceived reputation of a leader being inclusive is most appropriate to accommodate for the given time limitations. This provides the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding into how inclusive leadership is understood and enacted within academia. As participants have been pre-identified as inclusive leaders, it can lead to the accounts made to be more primed and interpreted as being inclusive. Although specifically selecting inclusive leaders provides accounts from front runners of inclusive leadership, the findings only represent leaders who are highly visible to the Human Resource Department for being inclusive. Choosing participants at random would have provided a broader understanding into academic leadership, but with given time restrictions the method used in ensuring participants are existing inclusive leaders allowed for a deeper insight into inclusive leadership. Again, if time had permitted, it would have been desirable to also encompass the demographics of each participants' team to give a better indication of the existing diversity. All participants being current academic leaders and pre-identified as inclusive, provides the appropriate sample to gain greater understanding into how leaders create an environment of inclusion within academia. Further, there are no age or gender restrictions for participation in order to best allow for a diverse pool of candidates. A further criterion of selection was subject to the individual's availability and willingness to participate. The interviews were all conducted in May of 2020.

### 3.4 Data Collection

The data collection method used was through conducting semi-structured single Skype interviews guided by an interview guide. All interviews were on average estimated to be around 60 minutes. Due to the unfolding COVID-19 epidemic, Skype interviews eliminated issues around travel and being unable to meet face-to-face.

The use of interviews allowed the narratives to be captured straight from the so-called source. This form of investigation best enables the visible and invisible phenomenon occurring to be brought to light. Symon and Cassell (2012) conclude that sourcing data through this method allows for a gateway into how best to understand what goes on regarding one's behaviour, values, beliefs and decisions made. Skype enabled the interviews to be conducted in a location of the participant's choice. This best accounted for ensuring a comfortable

environment that permitted participants to feel able to speak openly, therefore possibly offering richer information (Lo Lacono, Symonds & Brown, 2016; Weller, 2017). Conducting interviews allowed knowledge to be individually collected about the participants' experiences and their given context. Guided by the social constructivism paradigm, interviews allow for rich descriptions and accounts from multiple voices to discover how phenomena are produced and constructed. The conducted analyses of the data enable a better understanding into how knowledge is built through individual interactions within the given context of academia and how this has built up varying realities (Symon & Cassell, 2012). Due to conducting interviews, it is important to be aware that respondents can give 'favourable truths' which can prevent the extraction or exposure of crucial insights due to possible held political agendas (Alvesson, 2011; Symon & Cassell, 2012). As interviewees can have difficulty relaying their experiences and knowledge it can again lead to individuals saying what they perceive is of value to satisfy their role of being a respondent (Alvesson, 2011).

Through the use of semi-structured interviews the set of parameters is minimised to enable rich descriptions to be extracted from respondents in order to maximise novelty. This provided the opportunity for new perspectives and insights to be discovered by allowing some degree of freedom for the interviewee to guide the conversation into areas that they deem important (Kings & Brooks, 2017). This freedom enabled access to different possible insights provided by participants that previously may have been hidden. Bringing this knowledge forward helps better frame how understanding is actively constructed (Symon & Cassell, 2012; Baerveldt, 2013). The interview guide was built off the theory stipulated in chapter 2 to ensure the themes used within the open-ended questions were aligned to the aim of this given research.

All interviews conducted were recorded and transcribed for further analysis. To remain reflexive throughout is crucial to help discover the tacit or taken-for-granted processes in place that shape or influence the respondents and the contextual environment. The inevitable complexities of interviews required careful interpretation of the data, which was ensured by remaining self-critical throughout regarding assumptions, the process, and the results (Alvesson, 2011; Symon & Cassell, 2012).

### 3.5 Data Analysis

Template analysis is the method used to analyse the data. Template analysis is highly suitable for analysing textual data and allows structure as well as a degree of flexibility to adapt to the given study (King & Brooks, 2017). This form of qualitative analysis allows examining the varying perspectives of academic leaders regarding inclusive leadership by deconstructing the

textual data. Throughout the analysis it was vital to ensure not only one truth was sought after, allowing for multiple perspectives to be acknowledged and analysed (Symon & Cassell; Chia 1995). Template analysis is founded off a coded template that helps define themes within the data and further organise them into a structure to identify the possible interrelated conceptual themes. (Symon & Cassell, 2012). To begin the analysis, themes used in the interview guide, which are derived from chapter 2, were tentatively used to bring focus on the particular aspects of interest to the given research (Kings & Brooke, 2017).

Reading over the transcripts allowed identifying the reoccurring and distinctive themes that leaders reflected on, these being used as the preliminary codes for the initial template (Kings & Brook, 2017). The process is fluid and iterative allowing to explore how the derived data can be best formulated into clusters. This enabled emerging themes to be easily restructured and re-clustered to find the best fit (King & Brooke, 2017). The codes were then put into hierarchical order, enabling the data to be analysed at the varying levels of importance whilst allowing themes to be laterally connected to reflect the existing relations between themes and further condensed (Symon & Cassell, 2012).

As it is an iterative process, the template was modified throughout until all the necessary themes had been identified. The final template enabled the main themes to be clearly ordered and identified out of the large amounts of data, being further analysed in chapter 4. It provided the opportunity to critically identify what may have been possibly more favourable truths or what was not said, this bringing a voice to the possible silent and hidden aspects. The final template clearly demonstrated the distinctive themes that were identified to better understand the given context of academia, inclusive leadership, and the existing tensions that participants experienced. This enabled the patterns and links between themes to be examined whilst reviewing the held relevance to the given research question, creating a better overview and understanding of the data retrieved. The analysis demonstrated four core behaviours that participants saw as key for inclusive leadership. Further, it enabled the spoken but also hidden tensions that academic leaders face due to the given academic context. Lastly, it provided insight into what participants perceived as enabling or inhibiting them from being inclusive.

As mentioned previously, ensuring openness when selecting codes and putting them into hierarchical order is crucial. This was accounted for by keeping track of the varying evolving stages of the template whilst keeping a research diary. This formed an audit process as to where key decisions were made to remain reflexive. A code book was established to further demonstrate how the raw data was transformed into the given template. The quotes in the code book clearly reflect how themes were identified, chosen, and how they were

interpreted. The code book ensures a clear picture of the described data and supports the quality of the process of ensuring transparency of the given analysis and how the data was interpreted (King & Brooke, 2017; Symon & Cassell, 2012).

Using template analysis created the opportunity for content analysis to be conducted to discover the patterns and at times hidden phenomena enabling a deeper understanding to how academic leaders contribute to creating an inclusive environment. Further, the template simultaneously brought forward the individual and collective understandings held to better recognise the differences, similarities and more hidden aspects of how leaders construct and make sense of their given realities individually but also collectively. This gained a better insight into how realities are shaped, adapted and co-constructed in line with the social constructivism stance that underpins this given research.

### 3.6 Quality Criteria

To ensure integrity and relevance throughout the use of Guba and Lincoln's (1989) four-point quality criteria are adopted. The first regards creditability, which is crucial by ensuring a good fit between the constructed realities of the given respondents and the reconstructed attributed given to them to best capture the given meaning. This can be achieved by remaining reflexive through member checking and ensuring a research diary is kept throughout. Second is transferability; this prevents generalizability of results by providing thick descriptions for enough detail regarding the given context. By doing so, the reader will be able to take their own takings where applicable to transfer to their own given environment. Third is the criterion of dependability, also referred to as an audit process of how perceptions and understandings shift and emerge throughout the research. This again is ensured by keeping a research diary. Fourthly confirmability: ensuring that it is clear where the given data has been sourced from and further how it has been transformed into the given findings. Sourcing all data through semi-structured interviews will ensure the data is processed and analysed in the same manner, thereby achieving consistency. Simultaneously ensuring consistency throughout the four-point quality criteria and consistency throughout the research questions, used and applied theory, as well as findings, will best enable the required triangulation of research to be achieved and best allow for an in-depth understanding (Symon & Cassell, 2012). To ensure clarity of the given analysis procedure a code book is used to demonstrate how the raw data is translated into findings.

It is important to mention that throughout the process reflexivity is considered as vital in order to better bring forward the possible hidden or taken-for-granted narratives (Johnson,

Buehring, Cassell & Symon, 2006). Maintaining a research diary and the use of peer debriefing will make visible the assumptions held and the changes of these; this enhancing one's ability to question the relationship between knowledge and the production of knowledge. The discussion in chapter 5 holds a section that is dedicated to bringing insight into the reflexivity of the researcher in terms of the methodology and theoretical pre-understandings, thereby allowing to best account for how this may have shaped the given findings (Symon & Cassell, 2012).

### 3.7 Research Ethics

---

It is vital to ensure research ethics are appropriately addressed and maintained throughout the given study to ensure the utmost highest integrity. As research in essence is producing knowledge, Kant (1997) highlights the importance of ensuring appropriate and quality methods are implemented throughout the research process. Therefore, it is the duty of the researcher to acknowledge that certain methodological interests are held to enable self-appraisal of one's limits and subjectivities. Symon and Cassell (2012) stipulate nine virtues that are applied throughout this study to ensure a high standard of research ethics is accounted for.

The first is through deliberative conversation to ensure clear and open conversations about ideas and all voices are heard. All Skype interviews are conducted in a manner where others are not able to hear or interrupt to ensure privacy. To ensure consistency of language and behaviours throughout it was known that individuals all hold varying perspectives and understandings making reactions vary. All data and relationships were all dealt with in a clear and sensitive manner, with all respondents being informed prior the interview taking place about the purpose of the research, the duration and expected involvement, the effects of their involvement, their rights and ability to withdraw whilst ensuring awareness of the limitations of doing so. The data collected is only accessible to the researcher and is stored in a secure manner to ensure confidentiality. Unless discussed with the participants, all information will remain confidential. All intentions were disclosed upfront to all participants to ensure honesty and transparency, with sharing progress updates where required. Interviewees were given the opportunity to review their given transcripts for member checking purposes. This ensured all information is transparent and credible. The mistakes that were made were dealt with in the appropriate manner and understood, therefore preventing them from re-occurring. It was crucial to remain aware throughout the given research of the inevitable interests held as a research and all others involved, being reflective of others' interests and reflexive of one's own interests brings awareness to judgements that were made. This awareness not only ensures the

research did not only favour certain truths more than others but also maintained relevance to the given research to ensure findings were transparent. Although the given research provides greater understanding into inclusive leadership in academia, it is important to highlight that the world cannot be measured in a uniform manner and understanding the world through research is not the only way to access greater understanding. The last to consider is the irony of conducting research is self-producing knowledge whilst simultaneously avoiding self-promotion. This irony exposes how research can lead to the absorption of less favourable truths, therefore reinforcing the importance of remaining reflexive and aware throughout.

In the discussion of chapter 5, a section is designated to address methodological and personal reflexivity throughout the process. This brought awareness to the conscious and unconscious choices and the shifts in behaviour allowing for the varying perspectives throughout the process whilst ensuring the above research ethics were maintained (Rorty 1989; Symon & Cassell, 2012).

### 3.7 Limitations to Research

With any qualitative research method there are limitations that a researcher must be aware of to ensure they are accounted for throughout. A limitation to template analysis is that during coding there can be multiple interpretations for any of the given phenomena. This is accounted for by remaining reflexive to one's position. Further, the flexibility in structure offered by this form of analysis can lead to overfitting the data into the template. The risk of fragmentation of information is reduced by understanding one's ontological stance to best account for the inevitable multitudes of understandings. Due to template analysis not having a rigid procedure of application such as other methods, it is heavily dependent on one's philosophical stance, time and resources available, as well as the participants of the study. Thereby it may offer flexibility but at the same time one must ensure processes are consistent and justifiable. Further, the flexibility in its method leads to a complex coding template but always coming back to the central question ensures the template is relevant. Whilst interpreting the final template it was ensured that it was not simplified and solely taken as a summary of the data collected; rather it was continually ensured that the in-between and hidden meanings were searched for (Symon & Cassell, 2012; King & Brooke, 2017). With Skype interviews, which, as mentioned can create issues around building rapport, this is eliminated and accounted for by several emails being exchanged with each participant prior to the interview to build a sense of familiarity (Seitz, 2015). All participants were able to be interviewed in their own chosen environment. This may have created a greater sense of comfort, possibly leading to interviewees feeling more

able to be open about their personal experiences (Lo Lacono, Symonds & Brown, 2016). As interviews are highly exposed to possible biases all interviews were carried out consistently whilst ensuring after each interview perceptions and ideas were entered into the research diary to best ensure the given quality criteria are met (Alvesson, 2011; Symon & Cassell, 2012; Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

With the given time restraints of this study it is not feasible to conduct additional interviews to gain further in-depth insight. Further, time restrictions do not allow for a long-term study to be conducted to analyse how the phenomena may progress over time. Both these limitations are accounted for by providing thick descriptions to ensure results can be used where deemed appropriate by the given reader (Symon & Cassell, 2012; Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

## Chapter 4: Results

---

This chapter analyses the data collected. The eleven interviews conducted were further transcribed and analysed, identifying re-occurring themes and stark differences between leaders' perceptions around facilitating inclusion through their leadership behaviour. The analysis brought forward the many complex tensions that academic leaders are faced with, and the varying strategies deployed in order to best balance the competing demands. The findings presented below are categorised into the main themes derived from the analysis, consisting of; the academic and organisational context, the held understanding of leaders regarding diversity and inclusion, academic and inclusive leadership, reflected leadership behaviours, and identity work.

### 4.1 Academic Context

---

The context of academia was dominantly characterised by participants as being individualistic and highly competitive in nature. "I have not seen much change; I think it is still very individualistic" (interview 1), "[...]we think so individualistic. [...] we do not think as a team. [...]in science is that it is very individual" (interview 7), "[...] yeah I fully realise that there is a lot of competition" (interview 11). But interestingly it was also seen as being built off collaboration and unity. "I don't see academia being individualistic. It is absolutely about team play. I mean that was the academia when I was a researcher and a lecturer and that is the same in the current situation. It is always about team play" (interview 10), "[...] I don't know if it is individualistic [...] But I guess especially in chemistry, I am in a theory group which I always collaborate a lot with experimentalists, and in an experimental setting you cannot work by yourself. It is always a team effort. [...]" (interview 6). The differences in perceptions can be strongly linked to the demands of a given faculty. Areas perceived as offering greater opportunities for collaboration are more dependent on teamwork, such as in experimental teams. Teamwork is viewed as enabling greater inclusion compared to other areas that are more independent in their way of working. Further, multidisciplinary teams are viewed as more inclusive. This is often described being due to the varying backgrounds, therefore reducing in-team competition, thus being more inclusive.

Areas in academia viewed as more traditional, such as areas in science, are seen as holding less visible diversity and more homogenous in nature, thereby deemed more exclusive. "[...] in the faculty of science which is [...] very different from the social science for instance. [...] when I came to my group I experienced that maybe formal leaders where not that

inclusive” (interview 4), “I see a lot of other areas that it is less so from tradition. [...] So for mathematics or so, you hardly see any women at professor levels” (interview 2). With perceived levels of inclusion varying and heavily dependent on the specific field, collaboration as a whole was often described as difficult to operationalise. Collaboration was often referred to as ‘team science’, seemingly viewed as becoming more spoken about. Team science was seen as encouraging conversations and holding space for collaboration, deemed to influence attitudes for greater inclusion. Although the increased collaborative terminology was viewed as positive, it was frequently seen as intangible due to the individualistic nature of academia often seen as unavoidable, therefore lacking in practice.

To truly shift to a more inclusive and collaborative culture it was seen as critical to make changes to the assessments and reward systems, thereby changing the understanding of what is valued; “as long as it is very important to be the first author, people will do the best to become the first author on an article. That’s just, it’s a wicked game” (interview 7). This supports the identified shift towards greater collaboration, hence a rise in spoken demand but seemingly lacking in practice due to the existing reward systems in place not being adapted, therefore inhibiting a complete transformation (Shore et al., 2011; Randel et al., 2018; Söderhjelm et al., 2018). It is understood that as long as the reward systems remain it will compromise other areas of academia to be seen of value, such as teaching or teamwork, leaving individualism to continue to dominate and keeping collaboration on the periphery. Participants further understood it was vital to also instil a culture of team thinking, especially at the beginning of one’s academic career, “people all have their own ideas and we are trained to think independently” (interview 6). Participants spoke of the importance of ensuring a culture of collaboration is encouraged at the beginning of one’s academic career. Doing so is viewed to eventually evolve into becoming the mainstream culture.

Participants spoke of the demand for greater inclusion as key to enabling greater collaboration in order to produce high performing teams. Inclusion is discursively understood as an ethical tool that leaders can draw upon to facilitate and maximise productivity through their power held (Berg et al., 2012). Therefore, inclusion is dominantly understood by participants as a means to gaining greater productivity.

#### 4.2 Organisational context

Overall the findings showed that leaders felt a strong sense of support, both from their teams and from Radboud University. “I am actually very inspired by our director, [...] who I think is a very inspiring, inspiring leader and very approachable” (interview 11), “[...] when I see a

director [...] they are very inclusive and very open as well [...]. I think they are very good at listening” (interview 4), “Yeah I think my team is quite supportive” (interview 9). It was also spoken about that some leaders felt a sense of loneliness, “sometimes it is lonely at the top. So, it is not always easy to find support” (interview 3). With competition being one of the main causes of lack of support that was felt, “the further you get along in your career the less support of your environment is you would say. I think that is one of the reasons why many people feel lonely or just do not want to continue their academic career because [...] there is a lot of envy, a lot of competition” (interview 1).

Although at times it was mentioned that leadership positions in academia can be quite lonely due to the individual nature, the leadership support that the University offered was highly appreciated. There was a strong repetitive appreciation from leaders in terms of the felt investments made by the University through offering leadership development courses which were highly valued. The courses brought opportunities for leaders to expand their network as well as a safe platform to share their problems and concerns. This made leaders feel more supported and also granted them access to new perspectives, feedback, and insights for their own personal leadership. Participants spoke about how the culture at Radboud was focused on creating a sense of safety, with the existing governance often referred to as being open and inclusive. There were some views that decision making higher in the hierarchy could be more inclusive by adding more diverse voices but overall predominantly Radboud’s University Board were acknowledged for their friendly and supportive leadership. Not only was the University Board viewed as inclusive, but leaders referred to their own direct managers as creating an environment where they felt listened to and as equals, both being key attributes to facilitating inclusion (Gallegos, 2013; Shore et al., 2011).

Although there is a strong and positive sense of leadership, the feasibility of this type of leadership to be mirrored and infused further down the hierarchy may be more difficult. As leadership positions change at each stage within the hierarchy, as leaders progress, roles often become increasingly more focused on leadership responsibility. As leaders in academia often hold multiple roles their time requires to be delegated and split to ensure their varying responsibilities are fulfilled. Leadership is time intensive, especially inclusive leadership (Randel et al., 2018). Therefore, the feasibility for leaders to replicate and be more inclusive in their own leadership may depend on where they are located in their hierarchy. Leaders higher in hierarchy may have the one role of being a leader, but those further down may be a leader alongside roles in research and teaching. Not only does holding multiple roles further infringe on the limited time that leaders have, but academic leaders lower in the hierarchy are in direct

contact with the existing competition in their team. This confrontation may lead to a leader feeling a greater sense of pressure and exposure to conflict compared to leaders that are higher up, therefore being more removed from the possible repercussions from decisions made.

#### 4.3 Diversity and inclusion

---

Overall diversity and inclusion were viewed as being highly valuable and important. All participants spoke positively about diversity and its importance. Many participants spoke of being involved in varying diversity committees outside of their work requirements. This strongly supports Randel et al., (2018) that one must be aware of the value that diversity has to offer in order for it be truly utilised. Diversity was most often talked about in terms of social categories such as ethnicity, but gender was perceived as the most important aspect, “that’s diversity in practice; here in the organisation diversity is mostly gender” (interview 3). Diversity was dominantly understood as what was of difference, “[...] anything where people are different than what is typically considered the norm”(interview 6). By accessing difference, participants viewed that this lead to accessing varying perspectives. This allowing for greater creativity (Randel et al., 2018; Burrell, 2016; Winters, 2014). Further, when diversity was brought together in a cohesive manner it was seen to create an overall stronger team (Randel et al., 2018; Winters, 2014).

Participants speak of diversity in terms of gaining access to greater productivity. The narrow understanding around diversity, with gender explicitly being seen as the central focus, can create a certain blindness to the various forms that diversity can present itself in. Further, a narrow understanding can hide the deep interconnectedness that diversity has with inclusion, therefore preventing equality from being adequately addressed.

Interviewees found defining inclusion to be more difficult, with the main focus being around safety. A safe climate was strongly seen as the ability to bring together differences through ensuring all voices were able to be expressed. Higher involvement through inclusion was viewed as leading to greater overall wellbeing, creativity, trust, productivity, and when successful, enhanced team cohesion (Randel et al., 2018; Winters, 2014). Inclusion was not only viewed in terms of voice but also what success looks like, “by being not inclusive where you only promote those who fit the norm, you miss a whole pool of different voices, different talents” (interview 6). It is evident that there is a demand for changes to the current reward systems and the definition of value. It is believed these changes will allow for an improved climate of inclusion (Shore et al., 2011; Söderhjelm et al., 2018).

#### 4.4 Leadership in Academia

---

The dominant factor to being an academic leader is to provide a sense of autonomy (Anthony & Antony, 2017; Bolden et al., 2012). Participants described a need to find a balance between individuals feeling supported whilst ensuring a felt sense of freedom in their work; “really need the facilitating style of leading. You know you really, because these are all smart people. [...] they have their own ideas, you know” (Interview 4). Participants saw that being an academic leader meant leading a team of highly motivated professionals, thus requiring to ensure all team members feel valued and trusted (Bolden et al., 2012). Leaders recognised that individuals want to be the driver of their own work, which intensifies the higher an individual progresses in the hierarchy. Therefore it is perceived as vital to demonstrate a sense of trust in both each individual and the overall team capabilities (Bolden et al., 2012; Anthony & Antony, 2017).

Participants identified the need to create a sense of involvement to ensure a sense of team. Leaders implemented this through shared decision making and a collective team vision (Anthony & Antony, 2017). Participants understood that demonstrating respect and trust towards their team by creating opportunities for greater involvement, lead to a reinforcing loop that produced a better work climate and in turn increasing productivity.

With academics valuing autonomy, leaders continually expressed the importance of providing the freedom for individuals to be their unique selves (Anthony & Antony, 2017). Participants understood that doing so enabled individuals’ strengths to be identified, nurtured and developed to further ensure all value available is capitalised. Utilising all skills available was perceived to generate greater productivity and increasing team members’ motivation by ensuring enjoyment in one’s work. It was often understood that focusing on motivating individuals influenced the overall team’s productivity, creating an energising climate, which again is a reinforcing loop.

Although the interviewees show a desire to create a space for greater team involvement, how obtainable this is as a leader within academia may not be as straightforward. Academic professionals are prone to being more individually focused, therefore may be more outspoken in their demands and may see a use in collaboration (Anthony & Antony, 2017).

As leaders, participants perceived that it was important to provide an environment of safety, but the individual reward system as mentioned previously is seen to create unfavourable behaviours and perpetuates insecurities, “every personal reward leads to behaviour that you don’t want” (interview 7), “A lot of insecurity, a lot of discussions of social insecurity or fear. And what is also hidden is the competitiveness” (interview 5). Competition is another factor identified as influencing a culture that is deeply embedded and toxic. Participants spoke about

team competition as being unhealthy and the best way to mitigate this was through ensuring a culture of 'team'; "within the team there is no competitiveness" (interview 6). To overcome in-team competition, participants spoke of celebrating individual successes as team successes. This was seen as diluting and taking away the individualistic aspect. The competition that was acknowledged as being present and existing was only external of the team. This was seen as healthy. With internal group competition seen as counteractive to creating a team environment, leaders may see that focusing strongly on external competition mitigates potential internal conflicts from arising (Anthony & Antony, 2017). A strong emphasis placed on the importance of being able to manage competition and the pressure to survive within academia brings into question how much of the competition is purposefully silenced or otherwise hidden, "[...] we never explicitly discuss this with one another and that is interesting. And that maybe is a marker that there may be more competition than I actually realise" (interview 11). Competition not explicitly nor openly spoken about may dangerously allude to a false sense of safety by silencing the reality that academic careers face.

Competition is viewed as an inescapable part of academia that unfortunately steps away from collaboration and favours individualism, moving away from inclusion. Leaders viewed that creating a team culture encompassed with efficient and clear communication channels was key in reducing any felt in-team competition to enable greater team collaboration (Gallegos, 2013). Further, participants viewed it as vital to ensure a team member could call upon the given support networks independently when the individual sees fit.

As mentioned previously, leadership was understood as ensuring a sense of safety. Inclusive leadership was strongly understood by participants as creating a safe environment by ensuring all individuals felt comfortable to express their differences. It was understood that for leaders to be inclusive it was key to not only nurture voice mechanisms but also protect them by addressing and stopping inappropriate jokes (Gallegos, 2013; Winters, 2014; Vinkenburg, 2017; Randel et al., 2018), "you have a respectful work atmosphere, where nobody is making racial jokes, nobody is making sexist jokes, you know. That is diversity as well, where you create an environment where everybody feels welcome" (interview 3). Participants viewed inclusive leaders as openly carving out space where all individuals feel safe to express their full selves and to ensure not only the outspoken voices are heard. A climate of respect allows the existing and often invisible differences to be brought forward. Actively seeking out opinions and perceiving all members as equals, through listening and attempting to understand the possible varying views, leads to a climate of respect. Participants defined that this makes a leader inclusive (Gallegos, 2013; Shore et al., 2011).

The findings demonstrate inclusive leadership discursively understood as creating a safe environment, in turn enabling team members to flourish. With safety being viewed as the golden pillar of inclusive leadership, this again narrows down the meaning, diluting its broader definition and issues related to it. Safety is one part of inclusive leadership but it is only a part of a whole (Randel et al., 2018). This narrow understanding keeps all other aspects required to enable inclusion on the periphery, therefore not adequately addressing the problems at hand. A leader's aim to fulfil a team member's need of safety will not automatically lead to addressing the issues around inclusion adequately. Inclusion is a variety of characteristics that require to be realised and nurtured simultaneously to ensure individuals feel a sense of safety as well as a sense of belonging, respect, equity and feel valued for their unique selves (Shore et al., 2011; Gallegos, 2013; Randel et al., 2018). Leaders holding a narrow understanding of inclusion inhibits the ability to identify the radical actions that are required to adequately address the issues surrounding discrimination and equality. Therefore, a leader holding a deeper understanding into the characteristics and complexities of inclusion will best enable inclusion.

#### 4.5 Inclusive Leadership Behaviours

From results the analysis identified four main leadership behaviours: creating a safe environment, communication, courage, and equity. These four behaviours strongly link into the theory that is understood to underpin inclusive leadership (Randel et al., 2018; Shore et al., 2011; Gallegos, 2013).

##### 4.5.1 Creating a Safe environment for all

Respondents often referred to their leadership as being of service to the group. Central to enabling this was creating a safe environment. The term safety was strongly linked to voice mechanisms. Participants viewed that creating a felt safety enabled everyone to feel comfortable to part-take in discussions; "the most important thing is, you need to create a safe climate. People should feel safe. And that also took me a long time because I feel so easily safe myself, I just didn't see it that it is a problem for some people" (interview 7). The importance of self-awareness and the power of perspective taking allows leaders to step into other people's shoes to better question how others may feel. Leaders spoke about the importance of actively seeking perspectives of others to enable a greater sense of understanding through becoming exposed to issues that others are faced with. Participants recognised their position of privilege and it was often seen as their duty to utilise this to implement strategies to overcome barriers that minorities faced. "If it is a senior white male scientist, then you know these people are going to dominant the discussion. If you give the first word to a younger person, to a woman,

it really helps to create a more open atmosphere. [...] We should show them that everybody is equal. [...] you specifically give the first word to a young female scientist. [...] it is important, but you also hear it is awkward. It is awkward to talk about it; you don't want to talk about it like this. But it is still necessary" (interview 7). This strategy was used to send a clear signal that not only women's voices were valued but all minorities. This was seen to bring more of a balance and equal value of voices enabling greater inclusion (Gallegos, 2013; Winters, 2014; Randel et al., 2018). Again, it was not only important to create greater opportunity for voices but also to protect them, "[...] when you feel that a discussion is going a certain way that you think this is not an inclusive discussion. [...] Also, in the education environment make sure that you have this most open, not make jokes" (interview 6).

A leader's awareness of their held power and the possible differences of felt safety provides the opportunity to help protect and bring forward the previously silenced voices, enabling more inclusive discussions. Furthermore, the increased sense of inclusion was seen as unlocking an even greater sense of overall safety. This supports that leaders are key in creating a safe climate where all individuals feel safe to express their voices, in turn leading to greater contribution by better utilising capabilities available (Booyesen, 2014; Shore et al., 2011; Randel et al., 2018). As defined by Shore et al., (2011), leaders are key to ensuring a climate of safety by producing narratives of expected behaviours supporting inclusion.

#### 4.5.2 Communication

A key part of inclusive leadership is the ability to create high quality relationships (Gallegos, 2013; Shore et al., 2011), participants spoke about the importance of providing clear and open support networks to their team. This was often achieved by being very vocal in offering support as well as ensuring they are viewed as approachable. Throughout, leaders emphasised the importance of actively seeking feedback from their team, not only in terms of what the team required but also in ways that the leader themselves could improve. Leaders acknowledged that at times these conversations were uncomfortable for team members to be critical of them but once fostered, it improved communication. Many leaders spoke about the value in having an open-door policy or ensuring high visibility by walking around the office. These two strategies allowed for greater physical proximity alluding to being more approachable and open. Leaders spoke about the importance of investing into creating a team culture that is supportive, friendly, as well as fun, in order to facilitate team cohesion. Small team traditions, such as having a welcome ceremony for each new team member, ensures an immediate felt sense of welcome and team belonging. The respondents placed a strong value and importance on ensuring that

individuals feel supported and a sense of belonging, this significantly aligning with how leaders enable inclusive environments (Shore et al., 2011; Gallegos, 2013; Randel et al, 2018). The time required to invest in and build quality relationships is often a forgotten factor, making it more hidden within leadership duties (Gallegos, 2013). It is especially difficult for leaders in larger teams to remain personable to each individual team member.

Participants viewed one-on-one meetings as providing the opportunity to build personable relationships but also gain a multidimensional view of each individual's strengths, career goals, but also weaknesses (Randel et al., 2018). Leaders placed a large emphasis on the importance of understanding each member's needs in order to adequately develop and manage these; "the question 'what do you need? How can we support you? [.....] that already acknowledges that there are many differences and that everybody has their own needs" (interview 11). It not only ensures all capabilities are utilised but it also provides the opportunity to ensure team members are suited to the given environment, "I will try to find a solution either by reorganizing something or, as for instance as a director, I will place people to other departments. [...] and with a lot of people they got burn-out [...] put someone in a better position" (interview 2). Removing an individual from the team is of course an exclusive act, but it is justified by finding a more suited environment, which is usually more favourable for the individual as well as the entire team. Leaders face the unescapable reality that they are often the main decider to whether an individual is suitable for development or not. This demonstrates leaders showing a level of cognitive complexity by seeing individuals for both their strengths and weaknesses (Randel et al., 2018). This held understanding is perceived by leaders to allow them to create more heterogenous teams, aiming to bring together and balance out different personality traits, perspectives and ideas to make a stronger team.

A paradox that leaders face is that investing and building quality team relationships facilitates greater trust and communication but it also brings issues around being viewed as a friend vs. a leader. "If you are drinking beers with somebody every Friday on a very friendly basis and you basically excel kind of full trust in somebody [.....]. So, it is a thin line often [.....]. So, one moment you are nice and the other you are not, so yeah" (interview 5). The opportunity to interact outside of work allows for better team building and social cohesion but these relationships can create difficulty with balancing equality and leadership. Leaders are faced with having to make difficult decisions that are not always valued by all team members. As a leader you are required to represent varying interests. Each level of leadership holding different interests results in leaders often being faced with opposing demands. This demonstrates that leaders feel unable to act completely in the favour of everyone but rather

have to act in the best interest for the highest number. It is viewed that by ensuring clear boundaries are set in terms of support available, and acknowledging the responsibilities that leaders have to make, these inevitable tensions can be reduced.

#### 4.5.3 Courage

---

Many of the barriers that inclusion faces in academia stems from academic tradition. It takes courage from a leader to question the long-standing current practices in place as inadequate and inhibiting inclusion (Shore et al., 2011; Vinkenburg, 2017). To be courageous as a leader means to act in an authentic manner and feel able to question the status quo (Vinkenburg, 2017) in order to act outside of the existing dominant script available to academic leaders. Participants signified courage through their accounts of encouraging greater collaboration, voicing their vulnerabilities, and openly showing humility even when unsupported.

A main focus of leaders was to encourage greater collaboration within their teams. This was often spoken about in terms of bringing together varying research backgrounds. Leaders spoke of actively seeking out differences in order to enable a more diverse portfolio of skills within their teams. “What I try to establish, but it’s difficult, one is to include people who think different than others in my team” (interview 1). By including individuals that demonstrated some form of difference, leaders perceived this as accessing greater voice and in turn creativity. Leaders spoke of strategies such as changing recruitment criteria to ensure greater inclusion, especially of women, in order to build a more diverse environment. To encourage team collaboration, leaders spoke of creating a culture of sharing ideas through the use of collective brainstorming. To begin with this was not enthusiastically welcomed due to it being against the norm of the independent nature of work, but as it progressed, the value was seen by others, and in turn it led to a more collaborative environment. As mentioned previously, a leader’s provision of a sense of freedom in one’s work whilst simultaneously encouraging individuals to try new ways of working, such as greater collaboration, helps foster an inclusive learning environment.

Leaders spoke about the importance of reassuring individuals that there is no one correct way of working or career pathway in academia. Academia was often described as holding high pressure to succeed to the rigid success models. Leaders voiced their attempts to alleviate this by placing confidence in team members to try something new. Participants often spoke about holding a strong dislike towards the rigid and perceived unhealthy success models in place, which is viewed as further perpetuating the existing competition (Ghorpade, Lackritz & Singh, 2007; Söderhjelm et al., 2018). Leaders helping team members hold a broader

perception on the meaning of success in turn elevates the felt pressure to live up to the rigid ideals in place, understood as enabling greater creativity. This demonstrates leaders showing courage by openly encouraging team members to move away from the status quo and what is predominantly understood as being of value.

Even though leaders may hold a strong belief that certain practices are truly detrimental to their team, this view may not be shared or supported by other leaders, thereby leading to some ideas not being implemented, consequently inhibiting change (Shore et al., 2011; Randel et al., 2018). Again, this highlights the importance of awareness. Although leaders may have a desire to facilitate greater collaboration, there is limited space for this; “[...] although we have teams it is a lot about individual careers. [...] So individual and I think that is also why I am kind of sceptic a lot of talks about inclusive leadership, team building, academic as a whole is just not made for it” (interview 7). The current reward system in place being focused around individual careers maintains the silo independent nature of academia, leaving leaders limited opportunities to integrate greater collaboration. Even though leaders are innovative in finding ways to collaborate, it is seen that until there is a shift in what is valued, there are limitations on where collaboration and teamwork can take place (Shore et al., 2011; Randel et al., 2018; Söderhjelm et al., 2018).

Leaders voicing their own concerns to team members not only brings a greater sense of safety, but it demonstrates leaders modelling the behaviour which they are encouraging (Shore et al., 2011; Winters, 2014); “that you are expressing your doubts and that I wasn’t aware of that, [...] it made her feel more self-confident because she had doubts. So, the idea that I had doubts was able to express them more. Made her feel more confident but at the same time it gives me the opportunity to get some more of their ideas” (interview 1). Taking the courage to demonstrate that as a leader you too are vulnerable and have concerns is believed to form more of a genuine safe, open, and supportive network through showing humility (Randel et al., 2018). The culture of openly discussing problems and knowing support is available is two-fold in nature, not only does it offer support to the team, but it further provides a sense of support for the leader to voice their own concerns.

An issue that can arise from leaders openly voicing their concerns is that it can create a felt lack of direction, thereby counteractive to being seen as a confident driver for the team. Further, leaders voicing their concerns may be due to a lack of confidence and uncertainty in their leadership ability. This again may cause team members to feel a lack of direction (Randel et al., 2018). This reflects the difficulties leaders can face when showing their vulnerabilities and openly acknowledging they do not always hold all the answers. This may be more evident

in academic leadership as leaders often gain their position not solely off their proven leadership abilities (Anthony & Antony, 2017). This may create leaders to feel out of their depth at times and therefore turn to their team to voice their concerns in hope to gain input.

A leaders' active questioning or adapting traditional practices demonstrates authenticity and therefore courage. Only through challenging current attitudes or ways of working can greater awareness and therefore opportunity for change be created (Vinkenburg, 2017; Winters, 2014). New ideas are not always welcomed by others, and it takes courage to remain passionate and to continue to push for changes in practices and narratives by being the change you want to see (Shore et al., 2011; Vinkenburg, 2017). By demonstrating humility, one must openly be vulnerable, which may not be seen as valuable in the dominant stream of leadership but by doing so it may allow others to see that having concerns is acceptable.

#### 4.5.4 Equity

In order to manage the competition and pressure within academia, leaders spoke about the importance of ensuring equity throughout to best nurture inclusion (Gallegos, 2013; Shore et al., 2011). Equity was encouraged and spoken about in terms of being fair in all activities, with a strong focus towards the distribution of resources, transparency in shared decision making, and clear promotional criteria.

Leaders spoke of the importance of ensuring that time and other resources were invested into everyone equally, and not just those who were highly visible due to being either very vocal or highly successful; “if you only reward the stars and you forget about the rest then you're, then you get a very nasty atmosphere, in your organisation, so you have to pay attention to all the people who are doing the hard work behind the scenes” (interview 3).

To further ensure fairness it was viewed as vital to ensure transparent decision making whilst ensuring open and clear timelines are given. Often it was mentioned about the importance of having open and collective decision making as it increased the opportunity for involvement and discussions to take place; “[...] a very democratic group and for me a decision is only as I said, when it is supported, you know, we come to a decision together within the council. We have bi-weekly meetings with the council [...] then we have every month what we call the core team meeting [...]. I stimulate that a lot and that makes people very much involved in the organisation. We have many formal and informal structures organised for, you know, collective or inclusive decision making” (interview 4). As shared decision making is known to be more inclusive and brings more favourable team outcomes (Randel et al., 2018) it is often highly sought after but again it is time intensive; “there are a lot of decisions to be

made every day so, we cannot discuss everything. But we have an agreement that we discuss the bigger decisions in the advisory board”, “You cannot always listen to everybody; it is impossible” (interview 3). It is not always feasible to listen to all voices, nor is it efficient (Gallegos, 2013). Many leaders acknowledged that the constraint of time restricts their leadership abilities, strongly viewed due to their leadership role not being their only substantive role which they have to fulfil. As a leader numerous decisions have to be made daily as well as quickly, therefore is unrealistic to discuss every decision that may affect the team. This is unfortunately another unavoidable tension that leaders are faced with that obstructs transparency and team involvement.

As promotions are highly sought after they are understandably a very sensitive matter. Some leaders believed that the process is fair and transparent; “By being very transparent of what is needed to get a promotion for instance, [...]. This takes a whole procedure, but I want to be very clear about why this person is the one getting this promotion, being very transparent and explain it a lot” (interview 9). As long as you remained clear and transparent throughout of what is required to attain the given promotion it was understood as ensuring equity. Others saw the criteria and process as being deeply flawed and exclusive, “an imbalance between fair and open criteria and stressing the fact that open and fair criteria are never objective” (interview 7), “[...] there is insufficient transparency [...] in terms of career prospects. [...] to have a whole set, a whole set of norms or values, institutions, practices that basically guide this very sensitive process of who gets where, who gets a promotion or has not. [...] Because you can’t do this inclusively” (interview 5). Although leaders discursively spoke of a desire to be transparent and fair, achieving this in practice within a highly competitive industry may unfortunately be unrealistic. Promotions are exclusive in nature, and the criteria still being strongly suited to the evident individualistic, competitive success model can lead to a felt unfairness, thereby negatively affecting the work environment.

It is seen that to be successful in research, one cannot be inclusive, as it is viewed as more of an individual endeavour. Thereby it is viewed as one or the other but they cannot coincide with each other; “[...] trying to position itself as one of the top institutes [...] and that almost naturally induces an emphasis on top research, on commitment to hardworking, not really promoting a life work balance, not really promoting team science” (interview 8). As inclusive leadership is deemed as requiring fair treatment to enable a productive environment (Gallegos, 2013; Shore et al., 2011; Randel et al., 2018), leaders may face difficulties in achieving this, especially when it comes to promotions and when there is a departmental desire to be the best. This demonstrates that the perceptions and understandings held for creating

value are still built off the individualistic model, resulting in leaders struggling to find a balance between driving success and ensuring fairness.

#### 4.6 Identity work: tensions faced

As mentioned previously, academic leaders often rise into their positions not necessarily due to their leadership capabilities (Anthony & Antony, 2017). This can cause leaders to either strongly identify as a leader or not. It was further evident that leaders faced tensions in terms of ensuring value was created by either adapting their behaviour to suit their given environment or demonstrate leadership behaviour that was outside of the perceived status quo.

“I am not seeing myself as a leader, I see myself as somebody who is responsible for them. For their careers and for their wellbeing but also for their performances” (interview 1). Some leaders understood their role as being of service to the group. Academic leaders gaining access to their leadership position not necessarily based off their leadership capabilities, may cause them to feel less confident in their given leadership role. “I became the director a little bit by accident [...]. So, I did not apply for the job. Rather I kind of fell into it. I do find that I am often, I do not have ambitions to be dean or vice president or anything like that, but I do find that I do get sucked into these types of positions” (interview 3). Leaders seeing their leadership career progression as more coincidental and not due to their innate desire may create difficulty for academic leaders to strongly self-identify as a leader, which may lead to a lack of confidence in their role, or a sense of imposter syndrome. This may be even further perpetuated due to academic leaders often having multiple roles alongside their leadership responsibilities, therefore one may feel a greater association and connection with the other roles that they hold. Holding varying roles brings varying responsibilities. This requires individuals to be able to wear and switch between different so-called hats, yet again possibly bringing uncertainty to one's leadership identity. Therefore, this may reinforce leaders to feel more comfortable to be seen as more of a team member through sharing leadership responsibility, rather than taking a more dominant leadership stance. Not strongly identifying as a leader may allow individuals to feel more able to step away from the connotations that leadership often carries, such as needing to be viewed as powerful and dominant (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003; Ford, 2010; Koenig et al., 2011; Randel et al., 2018). It came across that to be a leader one must be assertive and take charge, but many seemed to struggle with this; “I am not very confrontational, sometimes I think I should be a little bit more bossy” (interview 3), “I am a supportive leader but I also very much realise that you know being only supportive is not the, sometimes you have to be directive and use your expertise just to guide people in the path, even though they

may, you know, initially don't believe this is the correct path. [...]that finding the balance, there is, I think, is one of the biggest challenges as an academic leader", (interview 11). Other leaders found it difficult to be viewed as approachable as they felt they were more assertive. As assertiveness is often associated with leadership, it can be viewed that it is necessary for individuals to imitate this behaviour in order to be successful. With inclusive leadership seen as moving away from the traditional leadership behaviours (Randel et al., 2018; Koenig et al., 2011), this may be the reason as to why leaders struggle to find a balance of being viewed as demonstrating what is of value or expected of a leader when being inclusive, "to be perceived friendly enough or not too decisive or directive. That would help me" (interview 2). Currently there is a perception held that to be seen as an approachable and supportive leader, thereby inclusive, requires adapting certain leadership behaviours in order to be successful. There is an understanding held by respondents that enacting inclusive leadership behaviours breaches the current expectations or ideals of a leader. This paradox that is attached to enacting inclusive leadership can make it difficult to navigate. As defined by Randel et al., (2018) inclusive leadership is built on ensuring team members feel supported, ensure justice and equity, and share decision making. Therefore, a leader being assertive and dominant does not align with the concept of inclusive leadership. Interestingly, leaders felt as though they were able to be inclusive in some areas, such as ensuring a platform for all voices and ideas to be shared, but due to their position of power they felt they had to be assertive in some aspects, thereby felt less inclusive. As leadership is deeply intertwined with the concept of power (Ford, 2010), unfortunately leaders are faced with reality of having to make decisions that won't always benefit everyone.

Only for female leaders did gender play a role in terms of feeling a need to assimilate to their given environment. Female leaders entering a male populated environment, such as a meeting, spoke of adapting their behaviours in order to blend in by attempting to demonstrate the desired characteristics that they perceived as fit (Hatch & Shultz, 2004), "I am not a very quiet person but in that meetings I am very quiet. You know, when they talk about what to do in the labs and, you know, their business, in many cases not my business [...]. But for me, how I solve that is that I contact people individually, and that helps" (interview 4). This quote is a technique reflected on by a female participant, which she uses in order to fit into a male dominated environment through adapting her characteristics. Individual identities are sensitive to other people's perceptions and the given environment, therefore adjustments are often made in order to feel a greater sense of belonging and inclusion (Brown, 2017; Alvesson et al., 2008; Hatch & Shultz, 2004). Individuals adapting their own identity, such as through surveilling

themselves to be less expressive, is not only creating a sense of exclusion but it is preventing the ability to fully express themselves. These barriers inhibit differences to be noticed, making the potential diversity go unseen, in turn creating skills to be underutilised and furthermore potentially losing increased creativity and performance (Randel et al., 2018; Burrell, 2016; Winters, 2014).

## Chapter 5: Discussion

---

This chapter concludes the main findings of the given research, pointing out the practical implications and the theoretical recommendations and a discussion including the limitations and areas for research. The aim of the research was to gain greater insight into the understandings held by academic leaders surrounding inclusive leadership, and how they may be enacting this through their own leadership behaviours. The research included eleven in-depth interviews with present academic leaders from varying faculties at Radboud University, of whom all manage teams of academic professionals and have been pre-identified by the Human Resources Department as representatives of inclusive leadership.

### 5.1 Conclusion

---

The accounts made by participants were categorised into four core inclusive leadership behaviours, all based off the theoretical underpinnings in chapter 2, surrounding inclusive leadership. Leaders expressed the importance of ensuring a sense of safety, creating strong communication channels, being courageous, and facilitating equality through fair processes and treatment. Participants understood these four behaviours when enacted to enable and influence an inclusive team culture. But it was evident that even when leaders hold a strong desire to be inclusive leaders, contextual constraints can hinder this, such as the way of working and reward systems (Shore et al., 2011; Randel et al., 2018; Söderhjelm et al., 2018; Alvesson & Syeningsson, 2003; Alvesson & Willmott, 2002). This was a tension that academia leaders faced, with competition and individuality being understood as part of academia (Anthony & Antony, 2017). The perceived intensity of the existing competition in each department was an indication of the level of felt inclusion, therefore the ability of leaders to be inclusive was dependent on the area which they were situated in. Work that was more dependent on teamwork, such as laboratories, was seen as more inclusive in nature. Areas that were viewed as more traditional were viewed as being more individualistic, such as areas of science, therefore were perceived as being more exclusive.

Leader's viewed that encouraging greater collaboration and involvement further enabled a greater sense of team. Often this was seen as achieved by communicating an overarching common goal or vision to create a sense of unity. This was deemed especially important when greater diversity was present. This reinforces the imperative role that leaders play in creating a work environment where individuals feel a sense of belonging to further nurture a climate of inclusion (Randel et al., 2018; Winters, 2014; Shore et al., 2011). Although

building quality relationships was viewed as time intensive, they were seen as indispensable for a leader. Participants regarded investing into quality relationships as enabling high performing teams through individuals feeling appreciated for their unique selves, whilst gaining enhanced insight to each team member's needs, interests, and weaknesses. To enable inclusion, leaders require for individuals to feel seen and heard through ensuring quality channels of communication (Randel et al., 2018; Gallegos, 2013; Shore et al., 2011).

Interestingly, inclusive leadership was discursively understood by participants as ensuring a sense of safety in order for all team member to flourish. Leaders understood that facilitating a safe climate helped aid the extraction of the available capabilities to increase productivity (Shore et al., 2011; Booysen, 2014; Randel et al., 2018). For leaders to successfully ensure a safe environment, it is stringent to gain perceptions of others' felt safety. Leaders require to actively seek team members' perspectives to truly expose the possible hidden aspects of felt unsafety, for both voice mechanisms and physical safety.

Inclusion was perceived as a means to accessing greater productivity. Even though it is clear participants understood the importance of being inclusive, leaders found it difficult to define and often inclusion was referred to as a tool that enabled greater productivity. Inclusion requires to be understood as a part of a collective, reinforcing system deeply intertwined with the concepts of diversity and equality. Greater understanding around the meaning of inclusive leadership and how, as a leader, one can best reflect such behaviours, will give a more substantial picture of the meaning and power that inclusive leadership holds in order for it to flourish. The sheer power of awareness was exhibited by participants reflecting on how being increasingly exposed to diversity in turn motivated leaders to be more inclusive within their decision making. Through holding pro-diversity beliefs, leaders are more active in being inclusive of diversity and more conscious of being fair (Randel et al., 2018; Winters, 2014). Leaders who hold awareness of their power whilst understanding what behaviours are most appropriate to enable inclusion, have the opportunity to be role models of the change they wish to see.

With the academic context being viewed as limited for opportunities of inclusion, participants spoke that to enable inclusion one must often act authentically to question the status quo; therefore courage is required (Söderhjelm et al., 2018; Winters, 2014; Vinkenbunrg, 2017). Leaders implementing more inclusive practices, such as brainstorming sessions, planted the much dire seed required for team members to see and buy into the value of inclusion. Although often incremental, the given changes were perceived to bring a shift in attitudes

therefore offering greater support to further nurture inclusion (Winter, 2014; Bilimoria, Joy & Liang, 2008).

Participants saw it was essential to ensure equity in terms of time, resources, and promotions. Although seen as vital, participants' ability to ensure this in practice was difficult. The main constraints faced by leaders was the factor of time (Gallegos, 2013), ensuring fair treatment, and fostering equality. Leaders spoke of the importance to ensure a sense of appreciation to all members to ensure a sense of cohesion and fairness (Gallegos, 2013; Shore et al., 2011). Promotions are inescapably exclusionary, with the criteria often being referred to by participants as flawed and unclear, again impacting leaders perceived ability to be inclusive. Although leaders spoke of wanting to ensure the utmost transparency, it was not always feasible nor efficient to meet organisational demands. Unfortunately, this is a harsh reality that leaders are faced with when balancing their own responsibilities, representing varying interests and faced with academia's heavy competition (Berg et al., 2012; Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003; Anthony & Antony, 2017).

With respondents being found to either strongly identify as a leader or not, this may be again an outcome from academic leaders rising from their proven research skills rather than their managerial capabilities (Anthony & Antony, 2017). As academic leaders often hold other positions alongside their leadership role, it can cause leaders to invisibly have to wear, and interchange between, several identities. Academic leaders not strongly self-identifying as a leader can be due to feeling more connected and confident in their other substantive role. This can negatively impede on one's leadership abilities and confidence. It is vital to ensure academic leaders feel connected and confident in their given position to maximise one's felt courage to act inclusively. By being a leader, it was desired to create value with participants reflecting on more traditional aspects of leadership being seen as favoured or needed. Participants saw inclusive leadership as contrasting to what was perceived as required from a leader: dominant and assertive. The tension between being viewed as assertive whilst supportive and vice versa, was a common problem identified by respondents. As inclusive leadership is shifting away from the dominant style of leadership (Randel et al., 2018), behaviours that are understood as required to be enacted to ensure value need to be reframed in order for inclusive leadership to be seen as a validated style of leadership. Further, only female leaders reflected on adapting their behaviours, as it was understood to bring greater value, especially in male dominated environments. Female leaders can be viewed as more exposed to performing identity work to enable a greater sense of belonging. This reflects how

identities are regulated and shaped usually unknowingly by other individuals' perceptions, especially so for female leaders (Hatch & Shultz, 2004; Alvesson et al., 2008).

## 5.2 Recommendations: managerial implications

For leaders to truly utilise and integrate existing diversity through enabling inclusive climates, awareness of how diversity may present itself is required. Awareness therefore must be the number one focus to ensure an overall transformation, based off greater understanding. With the proven important role that leaders play in enabling an inclusive climate, organisations must clearly communicate the behaviour which they wish leaders to enact. As the term 'inclusion' is often perceived as quite abstract to many, it can create difficulty for leaders to implement or create a false perceived sense of oneself being inclusive. The term 'inclusion' needs to be clearly understood alongside the concepts of diversity and equality. The three characteristics are deeply intertwined and require to be understood simultaneously, rather than exclusively, to enable inclusive leadership to be adopted to its full potential.

Leaders require to not only understand what inclusive leadership is but also what set of leadership behaviours best enable an inclusive environment to be formed. Attention to the power held as a leader and to contribute to facilitating inclusion through ensuring safety, clear communication, ensuring fairness and demonstrating courage, can enable inclusion to flourish. For an organisation, clear communication is required to signal that inclusive leadership is a favoured form of leadership. When inclusive leadership being understood as desirable, it can cause leaders to feel more confident in stepping away from the perceived required traditional forms of leadership and investing into inclusive leadership. The power of educating leaders around inclusive leadership will allow for an overall trickle-down effect that will cohesively transform and create more inclusive environments. This may become evident within a leader's recruitment practices or in meetings; holding awareness can lead to the required shift in perspectives, which can bring multitudes of positive changes. Without holding an understanding of the importance and the potential value whilst simultaneously knowing the behaviours that best enable diversity and inclusion to flourish, it will remain underutilised. To account for academic leaders accessing leadership positions not necessarily based off their leadership capabilities, confidence must be infused into their leadership identity. Doing so will allow academic leaders to feel more capable, connected and empowered in their leadership role.

Further, leaders are required to understand that facilitating an inclusive environment is not solely ensuring a safe environment. For inclusion to be a team reality, leaders must clearly

understand their responsibility to create a shared sense of team belonging whilst ensuring all individuals feel appreciated and recognised for their individual unique selves. This study highlights the importance of communication and how it is a main foundation of inclusion. Communication is often taken for granted or underutilised. Offering courses for leaders to build their communication skills, which can be applied not only within their leadership but in all interactions, would be indispensable. These courses could focus on an individual's listening skills, communicating their own needs, as well as demonstrating understanding and being empathetic to others. This could help contribute to leaders being able to improve their perspective taking of others, thereby help see issues that they may have been blind to before. Perspective taking can be a vital tool to help identify and bring out the diversity that may be present, as well as previously unseen issues, such as in relation to safety, which again can further inclusion.

Clear advice to all leaders must be provided in order to push for inclusive leadership to be adopted. Inclusion must not be sold only for its benefits; the possible difficulties leaders may face when being inclusive must be made clear to ensure they are properly equipped to mitigate these tensions appropriately. It will provide leaders to acquire awareness, the appropriate tools needed, and guidance to act accordingly. This is especially important when it comes to leaders feeling unable to be assertive and supportive. Addressing this will help leaders feel more confident and able to be approachable, yet feel capable to complete their given tasks to the level required. Further, a focus on fairness and how this can be best ensured, especially when faced with difficult situations, such as promotional rounds or the repercussions that socializing outside of work can bring, will again infuse greater confidence into one's leadership abilities. Purely by being open to leaders regarding the possible tensions that may arise and how to enable greater inclusion, organisations can allow leaders to feel more able to openly discuss their problems rather than feeling as though they are facing them alone.

For inclusive leadership to become a workplace reality, all leaders need to be held accountable in supporting a climate of inclusion through their leadership behaviour. Thereby, inclusive leadership, what it means, what it looks like, and what role each individual has to play, will best allow a clear message to be embedded for it to be sincerely realised.

### 5.3 Contribution to Theory

This study has provided greater theoretical insight into inclusive leadership, academic leadership, identity work, and the tensions leaders face when enacting inclusive leadership. The findings contribute to the existing literature by reflecting the importance of a supportive

environment (Shore et al., 2011; Randel et al., 2018; Söderhjelm et al., 2018). A leader's desire alone does not enable one to enact inclusive leadership behaviours to its full potential. As evident in academia, the way of working and reward systems in place need to complement this style of leadership (Randel et al., 2018; Shore et al., 2011; Koenig et al., 2011; Alvesson & Syeningsson, 2003; Alvesson & Willmott, 2002). Time, again, is a resource which is consistently viewed as scarce (Gallegos, 2013), but evidently viewed more so when carrying out inclusive leadership behaviours due to greater collaboration and relationship building being highly time intensive. Further, this study has demonstrated that academic leaders often lack self-identifying as a leader (Hatch & Shultz, 2004; Alvesson et al., 2008), which is negatively impacting on their confidence and felt leadership capabilities. Although a leader may want to be inclusive, they may not feel confident to do so. This adds to the existing literature by reflecting that leaders require to not only be courageous and authentic (Randel et al., 2018) but also confident to truly stand up for inclusion. Greater understanding is provided to the tensions of academic leaders that arise due to gaining their position often based off their proven academic excellence rather solely off proven leadership (Bolden et al., 2012; Anthony & Antony, 2017). The discourse that surrounds leadership in academia and what is expected in order to reflect excellence, is not supportive of inclusive leadership. The study demonstrates that inclusive leadership is theoretically understood as stepping away from the traditional, more dominant style of leadership (Randel et al., 2018; Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell & Ristikari, 2011). This contributes to existing theory that there is a held understanding that by adopting inclusive leadership behaviours, one takes a more supportive and softer form of leadership, therefore seen as unable to be assertive or dominant. Further, greater insight has been provided as to how leaders have successfully overcome contextual barriers in order to adopt inclusive leadership behaviours within academia.

## 5.4 Reflection

---

This provides a critical reflection on the quality of research, the limitations, recommendations for future research as well as reflexive insights of the researcher.

### 5.4.1 Quality of research

---

Throughout the given research the four-point quality criteria were upheld throughout, consisting of creditability, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The utmost highest of integrity was simultaneously ensured and maintained whilst remaining reflexive throughout. Conducting the study independently, although a research diary was kept throughout to ensure reflexivity, creates the risk of reconstructing more meaning to certain

phenomena than others. The interviews were being conducted in English, which was not the primary language of participants. Therefore, it was difficult at times to understand the meaning of content. Richer information might have been collected if interviews were conducted in the participants' native language. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and further sent to each participant for member checking. This allowed for data to be confirmed and any possible misinterpretations to be reviewed and mitigated. In the results section, the heavy use of quotes allows a clear understanding of the given environment, ensuring findings are well understood to enable their transferability to other contexts where viewed suitable. Keeping a research diary throughout allowed an audit of one's own perceptions to ensure dependability, but again, this is limited due to the study being of an independent nature. Confirmability was ensured through being consistent in interviews, transcribing, member checking, and ensuring a research diary was kept consistently. Thereby, all information analysed can be traced back to the interview guide, transcripts, code book, and the final template.

#### 5.4.2 Limitations and future research

As the study consisted of a small sample of identified inclusive leaders, it did not bring the perspective of other leaders, such as those chosen at random, to gain a broader more in-depth analysis of the possible differences and similarities between leaders' behaviours. This could provide greater understanding into the distinctive behaviours that inclusive leaders enact. As all data collected was individually self-reported, the information provided by participants is relied on unverified with the possibility of predominately more favourable truths being voiced. Secondly, only speaking to leaders rather than including team members provided a one-sided story about perceptions of their felt inclusion. A better understanding on the relationship between leaders and those they lead would present a more rounded picture of inclusion. Whereas the given research was only being conducted in one institution, future research could be conducted across multiple institutions to see whether the specific organisational cultures impact the understanding and ability of leaders to be inclusive. The limitations mentioned all provide ripe areas for future research to further enhance our understanding and unpack the meaning of inclusive leadership in academia.

#### 5.4.3 Reflexive notes from researcher

Before starting this research, I had already been exposed to the culture at Radboud University through being a student. Although this is very different compared to being employed, it did not allow me to begin with a 'clean slate'. I already held a small but still present pre-understanding of what the culture and leadership seemingly was from an outside looking in. Not only this, but

I already had seen and heard about how the competition in academia was often detrimental to an individual's wellbeing. The pre-understandings held led me to hold biases in the sense that I only saw academia as highly competitive and individualistic, thereby I did not see much room for genuine collaboration. Not only this but the theoretical underpinnings around academia kept bringing forward a so called 'toxic individualistic culture'. As I progressed within my data collection, I discovered that the majority of leaders confirmed this being a part of academia but had found strategies to create an environment where individuals felt safe and supported. At the beginning, I was quite sceptical as to how inclusion was actively being initiated. As the research progressed, I naturally gained a deeper understanding to fully appreciate the difficulties that leaders face, but most importantly into the constructions that leaders reflected on to overcome the varying challenges in order to successfully create more of an inclusive climate.

## References

- Adamson, M. (2017). Postfeminism, neoliberalism and a 'successfully' balanced femininity in celebrity ceo autobiographies. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 24(3), 314-327. doi:10.1111/gwao.12167
- Alvesson, M. (2011). *Interpreting interviews*. London: SAGE.
- Alvesson, M., & Sveningsson, S. (2003). Good visions, bad micro-management and ugly ambiguity: Contradictions of (non-)leadership in a knowledge-intensive organization. *Organization Studies*, 24(6), 961-988. doi: 10.1177/017084060302006007
- Alvesson, M., & Willmott, H. (2002). Identity regulation as organizational control: Producing the appropriate individual. *Journal of Management Studies*, 39(5), 619-644. doi:10.1111/1467-6486.00305
- Alvesson, M., Lee Ashcraft, K., & Thomas, R. (2008). Identity matters: Reflections on the construction of identity scholarship in organization studies. *Organization*, 15(1), 5-28.
- Alvesson, Mats. (2002). *Postmodernism and social research*. Buckingham: Open University
- Anthony, S., & Antony, J. (2017). Academic leadership - special or simple. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 66(5), 630-637. doi:10.1108/IJPPM-08-2016-0162
- Baerveldt, C. (2013). Constructivism contested: Implications of a genetic perspective in psychology. *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science*, 47(1), 156-166. doi:10.1007/s12124-012-9221-z
- Bashir, N., Lockwood, P., Chasteen, A., Noyes, I., & Nadolny, D. (2013). The ironic impact of activists: Negative stereotypes reduce social change influence. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 43(7), 614-626. doi:10.1002/ejsp.1983
- Benschop, Y., Van den Brink, M., Holgersson, C., & Wahl, A. (2015) Future challenges for diversity management in organizations. In Bendl, R., Bleijenbergh, I., Henttonen, E. & Mills A. J. (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Diversity Studies in Organization and Management*, pp. 553-74. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Berg, E., Barry, J., & Chandler, J. (2012). Changing leadership and gender in public sector organizations. *British Journal of Management*, 23(3), 402-414. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8551.2011.00751.x
- Bilimoria, D., Joy, S., & Liang, X. (2008). Breaking barriers and creating inclusiveness: Lessons of organizational transformation to advance women faculty in academic science and engineering. *Human Resource Management*, 47: 423-441.

- Bolden, R., Gosling, J., Peters, K. and Ryam, M. (2012), "Academic leadership: changing conceptions, identities and experiences in UK higher education", Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, Series 3, Publication 4
- Booyesen, Lize. (2014). The Development of Inclusive Leadership Practices and Processes. In B. M. Ferdman, & B. R. Deane (Eds.), *Diversity at work: The practice of inclusion* (pp. 391–412). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Burrell, L. (2016). We just can't handle diversity. *Harvard Business Review*, 94(7/8), 70-74. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2016/07/we-just-cant-handle-diversity>
- Brown, A. (2017). Identity work and organizational identification. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 19(3), 296-317. doi:10.1111/ijmr.12152
- Cardador, M. (2017). Promoted up but also out? the unintended consequences of increasing women's representation in managerial roles in engineering. *Organization Science*, 28(4), 597-617. doi:10.1287/orsc.2017.1132
- Caza, Brianna Barker, Heather Vough, and Harshad Puranik. 2018. "Identity Work in Organizations and Occupations: Definitions, Theories, and Pathways Forward." *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 39(7):889–910.
- Crotty, M. (2003) *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and perspective in the research process* (Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage Publications).
- De Prins, P., De Vos, A., Van Beirendonck, L., & Segers, J. (2015). Sustainable HRM for sustainable careers: Introducing the 'Respect Openness Continuity (ROC) model'. In A. De Vos & B.I.J.M. Van der Heijden. *Handbook of research on Sustainable Careers*. Cheltenham, UK/ Northampton, MA, USA: Edgar Elgar.
- Ehrhart, M. G., Schneider, B., & Macey, W. H. (2014). *Organizational climate and culture: An introduction to theory, research, and practice*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ford, J. (2010). Studying leadership critically: A psychosocial lens on leadership identities. *Leadership*, 6(1), 47-65.
- Foucault, M. (2002) *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Oxon: Roudledge Classics
- Gallegos, P.V. (2013). The Work of Inclusive Leadership: Fostering Authentic Relationships, Modeling Courage and Humility. In B. M. Ferdman, & B. R. Deane (Eds.), *Diversity at work: The practice of inclusion* (pp. 177–202). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Ghorpade, J., Lackritz, J., & Singh, G. (2007). Burnout and personality: Evidence from academia. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 15(2), 240-256.
- Groysberg, B., & Connolly, K. (2013). Great leaders who make the mix work. *Harvard Business Review*, 91, 68–76.

- Guba, E.G. and Lincoln, Y.S. (1989) *Fourth Generation Evaluation*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Hatch, Mary Jo & Schultz, Majken (2004) *Organizational Identity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Johnson, P., Buehring, A., Cassell, C., & Symon, G. (2006). Evaluating qualitative management research: Towards a contingent criteriology. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 8(3), 131–156
- Kapasi, I., Sang, K., & Sitko, R. (2016). Gender, authentic leadership and identity: Analysis of women leaders' autobiographies. *Gender in Management*, 31(5-6), 339-358. doi:10.1108/GM-06-2015-0058
- Katz, I., Eilam-Shamir, G., Kark, R., & Berson, Y. (Eds.). (2018). *Leadership now : Reflections on the legacy of Boas Shamir (First ed., Monographs in leadership and management, volume 9) [First edition.]*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Publishing Limited. (2018).
- King, N., & Brooks, J. (2017). *Template analysis for business and management students (Mastering business research methods)*. Los Angeles: Sage. (2017).
- Koenig, A. M., Eagly, A. H., Mitchell, A. A., & Ristikari, T. (2011). Are leader stereotypes masculine? A meta-analysis of three research paradigms. *Psychological Bulletin*, 137, 616–642.
- Lee, C. (2012). Reconsidering constructivism in qualitative research. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 44(4), 403-412. doi:10.1111/j.1469-5812.2010.00720.x
- Lewis, P., Benschop, Y., & Simpson, R. (2017). Postfeminism, gender and organization. *Gender, Work and Organization*, 24(3), 213-225. doi:10.1111/gwao.12175
- Lo Iacono, V., Symonds, P., & Brown, D. H. (2016). Skype as a tool for qualitative research interviews. *Sociological Research Online*, 21(2), 1-15. <https://journals-sagepub-com.ru.idm.oclc.org/doi/abs/10.5153/sro.395>
- Mitchell, R., Boyle, B., Parker, V., Giles, M., Chiang, V., & Joyce, P. (2015). Managing inclusiveness and diversity in teams: how leader inclusiveness affects performance through status and team identity. *Human Resource Management*, 54(2), 217–239. doi: 10.1002/hrm.21658
- Moon, K., & Blackman, D. (2014). A guide to understanding social science research for natural scientists. *Conservation Biology*, 28(5), 1167-1177. doi:10.1111/cobi.12326
- Randel, A. E., Galvin, B. M., Shore, L. M., Ehrhart, K. H., Chung, B. G., Dean, M. A., & Kedharnath, U. (2018). Inclusive leadership: Realizing positive outcomes through belongingness and being valued for uniqueness. *Human Resource Management Review*, 28(2), 190-203.

- Romani, L., Holck, L., & Risberg, A. (2019). Benevolent discrimination: Explaining how human resources professionals can be blind to the harm of diversity initiatives. *Organization*, 26(3), 371-390. doi:10.1177/1350508418812585
- Rorty, R. (1989). *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rumens, N. (2017). Postfeminism, men, masculinities and work: A research agenda for gender and organization studies scholars. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 24(3), 245-259. doi:10.1111/gwao.12138
- Seitz, S. (2015). Pixilated partnerships, overcoming obstacles in qualitative interviews via Skype: a research note. *Qualitative Research*, p. 1-7. doi:10.1177/1468794115577011
- Shamandi, E., Silong Abu, D., Ismail Ismi, A., Samah Bahaman Bin, A. and Othman, J. (2011), "Competencies, roles and effective academic leadership in world class university", *International Journal of Business Administration*, Vol. 2 No. 1, pp. 44-53
- Shore, Lynn, Randel, A., Chung, B., Dean, M., Holcombe, K. & Singh, G. (2011) Inclusion and Diversity in Work Groups: A Review and Model for Future Research. *Journal of Management* 37(4) 1262-1289.
- Söderhjelm, T., Björklund, C., Sandahl, C., & Bolander-Laksov, K. (2018). Academic leadership: Management of groups or leadership of teams? a multiple-case study on designing and implementing a team-based development programme for academic leadership. *Studies in Higher Education*, 43(2), 201-216. doi:10.1080/03075079.2016.1160277
- Symon, G., & Cassell, C. (2017). *Qualitative organizational research : Core methods and current challenges*. Los Angeles: SAGE. (2017).
- Vinkenburg, C. (2017). Engaging gatekeepers, optimizing decision making, and mitigating bias: Design specifications for systemic diversity interventions. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 53(2), 212-234. doi:10.1177/0021886317703292
- Weller, S. (2017). Using internet video calls in qualitative (longitudinal) interviews: Some implications for rapport. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 20(6), 613-625. doi: 10.1080/13645579.2016.1269505
- Winters, M. (2014). From diversity to inclusion: An inclusion equation. In B. M. Ferdman, & B. R. Deane (Eds.), *Diversity at work: The practice of inclusion* (pp. 205–228). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.