# Research on the Impact of Inclusive Leadership on Team Knowledge Sharing ——A Multilevel Model Test With TwoDimensional Identity as the Mediator

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ABSTRACT. Team knowledge sharing, as an important part of team knowledge management, plays a key role in team knowledge innovation. Inclusive leadership is a kind of relational leadership style, which has a positive impact on team knowledge sharing. Based on the theory of social identity, this paper examines the influence of inclusive leadership on team knowledge sharing. In addition, it also studies the mediating mechanism of team employees'recognition of team and leadership. This paper uses the method of questionnaire to make quantitative analysis, and the results need to be further explored.

**KEYWORDS:** inclusive leadership, team knowledge sharing, leadership identification, team identification

#### 1. Introduction

In the era of knowledge economy, people have fully realized the importance of knowledge as a core resource. The competitive advantage of a team depends on organizational innovation, and organizational innovation depends on the knowledge owned by the team. Knowledge management has become the most important since scientific management in the 20th century. Management development. In team knowledge management, discovering knowledge, sharing knowledge, using knowledge, and innovating knowledge are important links, and knowledge sharing is a key link. Knowledge sharing can make knowledge flow and use within a certain range, save knowledge acquisition costs, accelerate knowledge growth, and improve knowledge productivity.

According to the degree of transferability, the knowledge within the team is divided into explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge. Explicit knowledge is knowledge that can be clearly expressed in words, numbers, graphics or other symbols, and has the characteristics of being definable, accessible, and easy to

communicate; tacit knowledge is highly personalized, difficult to formalize, and even can only be expected Words and rumours, knowledge deeply rooted in personal experience, judgment and subconsciousness.

However, the efficiency of tacit knowledge sharing is very low. The loss of knowledge owners will also lead to sudden and unrecoverable loss of knowledge, which will bring unpredictable damage to the team. Therefore, the knowledge in the team is usually purely explicit. Between the purely implicit form, this kind of knowledge that has a certain sharing law and cannot be completely controlled by the organization has become the focus of knowledge sharing research. In addition, knowledge sharing not only means spending time and energy to do things that benefit others, but also means losing the advantage of monopoly resources. There is usually a certain degree of competition between team members. For the maintenance of personal interests, knowledge owners are unwilling to transfer knowledge or have reservations. If the team lacks an effective incentive mechanism, it is difficult to effectively stimulate the motivation of members to share, then the power to promote knowledge sharing will be obviously insufficient.

Nowadays, with the development of globalization, more and more companies are cooperating across borders. While obtaining opportunities, they also encounter many management problems. For example, employees have big differences in race, culture, values, experience, etc. Organizational management faces these problems with a more tolerant attitude. As an important dimension of inclusive management, inclusive leadership has gradually attracted the attention of scholars. Nembhard and Edmondson first introduced the concept of inclusive leadership into leadership research in 2006 [1]. Zhong Jing, Deng Jie, etc. define inclusive leadership as a specific relational leadership style, which mainly emphasizes respecting and satisfying the diverse needs of subordinates. At present, its influence in the field of organization and management is gradually deepening [2]. Brewer proposes that inclusive leadership acts as a group of leaders, whose focus is to promote team members to feel part of the team (a sense of belonging) and maintain their individuality (uniqueness), while promoting the process and results of the team [3]. In the era of knowledge economy, employees have higher requirements for an equal, free, and humane working atmosphere. They loathe mandatory supervision management methods, eager to get the respect, understanding and care of others, and hope to work autonomously in an environment of full trust.

Therefore, companies must create a good atmosphere of trust and maximize the enthusiasm of employees for knowledge sharing through humanized management [5]. Starting from the nature of people, inclusive leadership not only sees the uniqueness of employees, and further enhances their sense of belonging to the organization [6], they also pay attention to the adjustment and adaptability of the external dynamic environment [7]. Inclusive leadership is more subordinate-centered than other leadership types, pays more attention to the differentiated needs of employees, and can better reflect the organization's demand for leadership style. Inclusive leadership can more effectively integrate people and affairs, and better adapt to the actual management environment [8], which is conducive to the sustainable development of the organization. Social identity in organizational

management includes a series of forms such as organizational identity, team identity, and leadership identity. Compared with organizational identity, team members are more likely to identify with the work team they are in, so that team identity has a more positive effect on the work behavior of team members. Significant predictive power [17], and more scholars have called for the research on raising individual-level team identity to team-level collective team identity to promote the explanatory power of social identity theory in the context of team work [18]; Employees' leadership identification is another important psychological process in their work situations. Studies have confirmed that leadership identification is an important process mechanism for leadership effectiveness [19]. Based on this, this research will examine the team identification and The mediating role of leadership identification between inclusive leadership and knowledge sharing to clarify the corresponding mechanism

# 2. Research design

# 2.1 Research hypothesis

# 2.1.1 Research on the relationship between inclusive leadership and team knowledge sharing

At present, the academic community has defined team knowledge sharing from different perspectives. Research based on the views compiled by Wang and Noe defines team knowledge sharing as "providing team members with work information and knowing to help others and cooperate with others to solve problems, develop new ideas or The act of applying relevant policies and procedures"[9]. Srivastava et al. proposed that knowledge sharing in a team is not automatic, and leader behavior will significantly affect the degree of team knowledge sharing [10]. Zhong Jing et al. pointed out that in today's diversified environment of global markets, customers, ideas, and talents, inclusive leaders' cultural absorbing initiative will also play an exemplary role, encouraging individuals in the team to share themselves more actively Unique knowledge and skills, divergent thinking, to deal with dynamic environments [2]. According to the theory of social exchange, people follow the principle of reciprocity in the process of social exchange. When employees obtain economic and social emotional resources in the organization, they will have a sense of responsibility for repaying the organization [11]. When inclusive leadership functions as a whole, a harmonious leadership-member exchange relationship can be established. Therefore, when subordinates obtain social emotional resources, they will have a sense of identity, belonging and return to the organization[12], So I am more willing to communicate with leaders and teams.

From the perspective of leader-member exchange relationship, Carmeli et al. discussed the mechanism of interaction between inclusive leaders and team members. They believe that inclusive leadership is the core of relational leadership. It is a leadership style that "shows openness, availability, and accessibility in the process of interacting with followers. From the perspective of various dimensions of the inclusive leadership, when the openness of the inclusive leadership is displayed,

the leader humbly accepts the suggestions of the employees, and the employees will have higher work enthusiasm and think that they are valuable to the company [13]; When the availability of inclusive leadership is demonstrated, the leader will take the initiative to provide help for the problems encountered by the employees at work, and the employees will not be afraid of encountering difficulties in innovation activities, and their sense of self-efficacy in innovation will increase. More innovative activities will be carried out to produce innovative results [12]; when the accessibility of inclusive leadership is shown, the leader is more approachable, pays attention to the needs of employees, and actively participates in employee interaction and learns from each other, creating high-quality Leadership-members exchange relationships, and the organizational atmosphere is harmonious, so employees will not have negative psychology such as fear or resistance to the leader, and will be more willing to create new things to have more discussions with the leader [12].

Taking the above viewpoints comprehensively, this article assumes:

H1: Inclusive leadership has a positive impact on team knowledge sharing.

H1a: The open dimension of inclusive leadership has a positive impact on team knowledge sharing.

H1b: The availability dimension of inclusive leadership has a positive impact on team knowledge sharing.

H1c: The accessibility dimension of inclusive leadership has a positive impact on team knowledge sharing.

# 2.1.2 Intermediary benefits: team identification as an intermediary between inclusive leadership and team knowledge sharing

Team identification. Freud first proposed the definition of team identity in 1955, and believed that team identity is that many individuals use the same goal to replace their own ideals, and then identify with each other and identify with the team's common goals [30]. Team identity is derived from the theory of social identity and is a special form of social identity [20]. With the increasing prevalence of team work patterns, team members' identification with the team has attracted more scholars' attention [17]. Team identification emphasizes the unity of individuals and the team, willing to define themselves with the identity of the team, and consider themselves to be one of the team members. They are willing to share honor and disgrace with the team, and include and classify the team goals into their own goals [21].

Team identification can encourage team members to establish common values, cooperate with each other for the goals and honor of the team, and view the differences and differences of views within the team from a complementary perspective, thereby alleviating the prejudices and conflicts caused by differences, and ensuring that the views of team members can be obtained Reasonable evaluation provides conditions for effective communication and collaboration within the team [22]. Team members' recognition of their team identity will affect their behavior in communication and cooperation with other colleagues [20]. Team members with a strong sense of team identity are more willing to help colleagues and work hard for

the team's common goal [21]. Team recognition will strengthen the learning atmosphere within the team, promote communication between team members, and actively make altruistic behaviors to provide help and advice to others [23]. Therefore, team recognition can promote the frequency of communication between employees, members will be more selfless and sincere to present their opinions and ideas to more colleagues, and ultimately achieve team knowledge sharing.

Studies have confirmed that positive leadership styles such as transformational leadership and charismatic leadership are antecedent variables of team identification [31]. In his empirical research on corporate employees, Sun Liping found that the internalization of subordinates' identity has a partial mediating effect between moral leadership and subordinates' engagement [32]. In addition, Tang Chunyong, Chen Bing and Zhao Shuming's research found that an inclusive working environment meets the development needs of employees, and will increase employees' recognition of the organization and career [35]. At the same time, inclusive leadership can enhance employees' psychological security and sense of belonging [37], and make it easier for employees to produce organizational commitment and organizational identity [38]. Inclusive leaders pay attention to the needs of team members, create interpersonal relationships with employees based on trust and respect, encourage them to exert their individuality, and create a team atmosphere with a high degree of openness and freedom for team members[38], which makes it easier to use Employees generate team recognition.

Taking the above viewpoints comprehensively, this article assumes:

H2a: Team identity plays a part of the mediating role between the open dimension of inclusive leadership and team knowledge sharing.

H2b: Team identification plays a part of the mediating role between the availability dimension of inclusive leadership and team knowledge sharing.

H2c: Team identification plays a part of the mediating role between the accessibility dimension of inclusive leadership and team knowledge sharing.

# 2.1.3 Intermediary benefits: Leadership identification as an intermediary between inclusive leadership and team knowledge sharing

According to the theory of social identity, when employees in an organization form their self-concept, they will do so through their relationship with the organization or other characters (such as leaders) in the organization. Leadership identity is a state in which employees define themselves based on their relationship with the leader. When employees' cognition of the leader is incorporated into their self-concept, leadership identity is formed [34]. High leadership identification means that individuals regard specific leaders as self-reference points or self-definitions [27]. Specifically, the formation of leadership identity is a complex psychological process involving employees' assessment of the relationship between themselves and the leader, as well as employees' perception and evaluation of leadership charm, emotion, and motivation to follow [39].

Related research has also confirmed that some positive leadership styles, such as charismatic leadership, transformational leadership, self-sacrificing leadership, etc.,

have a positive predictive effect on leadership identity [27] [28]. According to the theory of social identity, team leaders are the main contacts and direct leaders of team employees in the work team. When team leaders show openness, availability and accessibility, team employees will respond based on the need to improve self-esteem and self-concept. It serves as a self-reference point for self-definition, thereby generating a sense of identity with the leader psychologically.

Taking the above viewpoints comprehensively, this article assumes:

H3a: Leadership identification plays an intermediary role between the open dimension of inclusive leadership and team knowledge sharing.

H3b: Leadership identification plays an intermediary role between the availability dimension of inclusive leadership and team knowledge sharing.

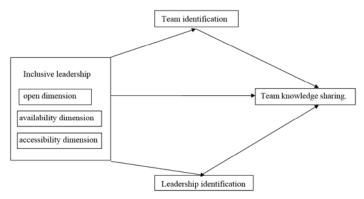
H3c: Leadership identification plays an intermediary role between the accessibility dimension of inclusive leadership and team knowledge sharing.

#### 2.1.4 The mediating role of two-dimensional identity

From the above arguments, it can be seen that in the context of team work, social identity mainly has two forms: team-level team identity and individual-level leadership identity, and these two forms of identity will exist in the team work context and affect the effectiveness of leadership. Based on the theoretical analysis of Hypothesis H2 and Hypothesis H3, this research proposes the following hypotheses:

H4: Team identification and leadership identification also play an intermediary role between inclusive leadership and team knowledge sharing.

Based on the above assumptions, the following model can be derived:



# 3. Research methods

## 3.1 Samples and procedures

At present, a total of 102 valid questionnaires have been collected. Table 1 shows the basic information of the team members of the sample. Among them, men

account for the majority, reaching 66.67%, and those with undergraduate education account for half of them, which is 51.96%. Working in a company team is 1-5 The annual population accounted for 54.9%.

| variable           | category                 | Frequency | percentage |
|--------------------|--------------------------|-----------|------------|
| gender             | male                     | 68        | 66.67%     |
|                    | Female                   | 33        | 32.35%     |
| education level    | College degree and below | 7         | 6.86%      |
|                    | Undergraduate            | 53        | 51.96%     |
|                    | Postgraduate             | 39        | 38.24%     |
|                    | PhD and below            | 2         | 1.96%      |
| Team working years | 1-5                      | 56        | 54.9%      |
|                    | 6-10                     | 36        | 35.29%     |
|                    | 10-20                    | 8         | 7.84%      |
|                    | 20                       | 1         | 0.98%      |

Table 1 Basic information of the sample team employees

#### 3.2 Variable measurement

# (1) Team approval

According to the definition of team identity in this study, the scale developed by Van and Bunderson (2005)[16] was used to measure team identity. On the basis of predecessors, improvements were made that are more suitable for this study. The scale has only one dimension , A total of 2 items. The scoring method is Likert 5 points.

# (2) Leadership approval

According to the definition of leadership identification in this study, the scale developed by Kark, Shamir and Chen (2003) [15] is used to measure leadership identification. The scale has only 1 dimension and a total of 8 items. The scoring method is Likert 5 points.

# (3) Inclusive leadership

This paper chooses a three-dimensional nine-item scale developed by Abraham Carmeli [14] and others. This scale has high reliability and validity and is used by many scholars. Many domestic scholars are also discussing the scale based on the Chinese scenario, which proves that it has good applicability in the field of inclusive leadership research in Chinese enterprises.

# (4) Knowledge sharing

This study combined with Dr. Ding Nan of Jiangsu University's scale on social network attributes in social networks, and made improvements that are more suitable

for this research. The scale has only one dimension and a total of 4 items. The scoring method is Likert 5 points.

## (5) Statistical analysis

The data source is a questionnaire survey. To test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, perform descriptive statistical analysis, correlation analysis and regression analysis on the data; use SPSS to perform relevant statistical analysis.

#### 4. Research results

#### 4.1 Data analysis

#### 4.1.1 Reliability analysis

In this study, the reliability of the variables was tested by testing the internal consistency of the variables, which was measured by Cronbach's  $\alpha$  value. As shown in Table 2, the tested independent variable's alpha value is 0.979; the dependent variable's alpha value is 0.958; the intermediary variable's alpha value of leadership identification is 0.88, the standard item's alpha value is 0.947; the intermediary variable's team identification alpha value is 0.937, The variable coefficients are all around 90%, indicating that the reliability of each scale is strong. Then SPSS is used to test the reliability of the overall questionnaire, the  $\alpha$  value is 0.987, and the standard  $\alpha$  value is 0.986, which shows that the overall reliability of the questionnaire is relatively high.

Measurement itemsCronbach's AlphaNumber of itemsInclusive leadership0.9799Team identification0.9585Team knowledge sharing0.9374Leadership identification0.888

Table 2 Cronbach's coefficient of reliability analysis

# 4.1.2 Validity analysis

Using SPSS for factor analysis, Table 3 is obtained. Validity test for independent variable inclusive leadership, KMO=0.912, greater than 0.7, indicating that the scale is valid; for dependent variable team knowledge sharing, KMO=0.803, greater than 0.7, indicating that the scale is effective; for intermediaries The validity of the variable leadership identification was tested, KMO=0.929, greater than 0.7; the validity of the intermediary variable team identification was tested, KMO=0.809, greater than 0.7, indicating that the scale is valid. Then SPSS was used to test the validity of the overall questionnaire, KMO=0.934, greater than 0.7, indicating that the questionnaire was effective as a whole. The KMO and Barlett sphere test were used to test the validity. The KMO value of each variable exceeded 0.7, and the significance level was 0.000, which shows that each scale has high convergence validity.

Barlett sphericity test Measurement items KMO measurement Approximate chi-square Significance probability Inclusive leadership 0.912 1090.266 0.000 Team identification 0.809 465.260 0.000 Team knowledge sharing 0.803 386.193 0.000

461.180

0.000

0.929

Table 3 KMO and Barlett test results

#### 4.1.3 Hypothesis testing

Leadership identification

#### (1) Related analysis

Before testing the hypothesis model, perform correlation analysis on each variable. The results are shown in Table 4. Among them, inclusive leadership and team knowledge sharing (r=0.645, p<0.01) are significantly related; inclusive leadership and team identity (r=0.842, p<0.01) are too correlated; inclusive leadership and leader are the same (r =0.952, p<0.01) the correlation is too high. The open dimension of inclusive leadership is significantly related to team knowledge sharing (r=0.667, p<0.01); the open dimension of inclusive leadership is too highly correlated with team identity (r=0.819, p<0.01); inclusive leadership There is too high correlation between the openness dimension and leadership identity (r=0.896, p<0.01). The availability dimension of inclusive leadership is significantly related to team knowledge sharing (r=0.587, p<0.01); the availability dimension of inclusive leadership is too correlated with team identity (r=0.796, p<0.01); The correlation between the availability dimension of inclusive leadership and leadership identity (r=0.927, p<0.01) is too high. The accessibility dimension of inclusive leadership is significantly related to team knowledge sharing (r=0.626, p<0.01); the correlation between the accessibility dimension of inclusive leadership and team identity (r=0.939, p<0.01) is too high. The correlation between the accessibility dimension of high and inclusive leadership and leadership identity (r=0.947, p<0.01) is too high. The correlation between team knowledge sharing and team identity (r=0.804, p<0.01) is too high; there is a significant correlation between team knowledge sharing and leadership identity (r=0.632, p<0.01).

For a large number of variables, the multicollinearity is more serious, which may be due to the problem of the method of measuring the data or the variable similarity is too high. The later solution is to replace the variables or use other data analysis tools to measure.

Measurement average average 1 2 3 5 6 7 8 9 10 items value value Control variable 1.2 0.557 1 gender 2education 2.4 0.753 0.408\*\* 1 level 3Working 0.815 0.416\*\* 0.209 1.62 1 years Independent variable 4Inclusive 3.7106 1.18552 0.338\*\* 0.271\* 0.450\*\* leadership 5open 3.7613 1.17525 0.321\*\* .296\* 0.430\*\*0.964\* dimensions 6availability 3.6872 1.27077 0.442\*\*0.974\*\* 904\* 0.330\*\*  $0.235^{\circ}$ dimensions 7accessibility 3.6831 1.21781 0.333\*\* 0.261\* 0.439\*\*<mark>0.974\*</mark> 0.906\* 0.930\* 1 dimensions Mediating variable 8team 3.8272 1.01378 0.362\*\*0 0.353\*\* 0.442\*\* 0.842\*\* 0.819\* 0.796\*\*0.939\* 1 identification 9Leadership 0.251\* 0.927\*\*0.947\*\* 3.6975 1.25014 0.336\*\* 0.451\*\*0.952\*\* 0.896\* 335 1 identification Dependent variable 10team 3.8611 0.96825 0.445\*\* 0.389 0.419\*\*0.645\*\*0.667\*\*0.587\*\*0.626\*\*0.804\*\* knowledge 0.632\*

Table 4 Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis

Note: \*\*\* means p<0.001, \*\* means p<0.01, \* means p<0.05.

# (2) Regression analysis

Use SPSS to perform regression analysis, and the results are shown in Table 5. The results of Model 2 show that the three dimensions of inclusive leadership, the open dimension of inclusive leadership ( $\beta$ =0.568, p<0.01), and team knowledge sharing have a significant positive effect. Hypothesis H1a holds; inclusive leadership can be used There is an insignificant negative relationship between the dimension of sex ( $\beta$ =-0.256) and team knowledge sharing, hypothesis 2b does not hold; the dimension of accessibility of inclusive leadership ( $\beta$ =0.214) has a non-significant positive relationship with team knowledge sharing The relationship, hypothesis 1c does not hold; because only H1a holds, neither H1b nor H1c holds, so hypothesis H1 does not hold. Because the dependent variable is not significant to the independent variable, the subsequent measurement of the intermediate variable is invalid.

The reason why the independent variable is not significant to the dependent variable may be variable selection, and the variable needs to be replaced for research.

Team Leadership Team knowledge identification identification variable sharing model 2 model 3 model 4 model 5 model 6 model 7 model 1 Control variable 0.236\* 0.186  $0.171^{+}$  $0.183^{+}$ 0.161\* 0.219 0.03 gender education level 0.236\* 0.131 0.178 0.133 0.043 -0.155 0.109 0.271\* 0.09 0.09 0.083 0.042 0.622 0.059 Working years Independent variable 0.568\*\* Open dimension 0.538\*  $0.336^{+}$ 1.275 0.286 Availability -0.256 -0.332 -0.2422.859 -0.017dimension Accessibility 0.214 0.065 -0.2185.578 0.532 dimension Mediating variable 0.489\*\* 0.263 -0.001 Leadership Team identity 0.813 11.571 14.097 18.415 133.44 35.337 11.571 F value 0.7410.311 0.533 0.492 0.704 0.915 Adjust R 0.284 0.465 0.909 0.496 0.671 0.72

Table 5 Regression analysis results

# 5. Conclusion

Most scholars have done research focusing on the impact of leadership style on team innovation performance. The research on team knowledge sharing needs to be further expanded. This article incorporates social identity theory on the basis of leadership style and team knowledge sharing, and wants to carry out a certain degree of Innovation, but research results need to be improved. In the subsequent research, further data processing and variable substitution are needed to strive for a certain contribution to the development of team knowledge innovation.

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