

Fostering employee volunteering in public organizations through inclusive leadership

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Abstract:

Public organizations have been trying to manage diversity with all its facets among their employees to create an environment that fits all. Thus, an interest in inclusive leadership started to rise. Given the increasing costs, on the other hand, a concurrent interest in employee volunteering started to emerge. Little is known, however, about employee volunteering in public organizations. Therefore, this paper investigates the extent to which inclusive leadership in public organizations can foster employee volunteering.

By relying on quantitative analysis, a questionnaire was disseminated to N=208 officials with different educational levels and employment conditions at an Egyptian public university. This paper concludes that as public officials have public service motivation, they are more likely to volunteer. This volunteering can be fostered by adopting two traits of inclusive leadership: availability and accessibility to create a sense of uniqueness and belongingness among the employees.

تعزيز التطوع الوظيفي في المنظمات العامة من خلال القيادة الشاملة

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الملخص

تسعي المنظمات العامة شأنها شأن المنظمات الأخرى إلى إدارة التنوع من أجل خلق بيئة عمل تشمل الجميع. ومن هنا زاد الاهتمام بالقيادة الشاملة. ومن ناحية أخرى ونتيجة لارتفاع التكاليف، ظهر اهتمام متزامن بتشجيع التطوع الوظيفي. لكنه لا تتوفر المعلومات الكافية عن التطوع الوظيفي في المنظمات العامة. لذلك يسعى هذا البحث إلى دراسة مدي تعزيز القيادة الشاملة للتطوع الوظيفي في المنظمات العامة.

ولدراسة ذلك تم اعتماد التحليل الكمي حيث تم توزيع استمارة استبيان على عينة عشوائية مكونة من ٢٠٨ موظف يعملون في إحدى الجامعات الحكومية المصرية. ثم تم تحليل البيانات باستخدام برنامج SPSS النسخة ٢٠.

ويستنتج البحث أن الموظفين الحكوميين يكون لديهم الاستعداد للتطوع الوظيفي لوجود دافع الخدمة العامة لديهم. ويمكن دعم هذا التطوع الوظيفي من خلال انتهاج سمتين أساسيتين من سمات القيادة الشاملة وهما التواجد والنفوذ لخلق إحساس بالتفرد والانتماء بين الموظفين الحكوميين.

الكلمات الدالة: القيادة الشاملة، التطوع الوظيفي، التواجد، النفاذ، الانفتاح.

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Introduction

Various organizations, whether public or private, have been striving to become organizations that fit all their employees regardless of their differences (Sung, 2021). Hence, an interest in diversity management has been increasing. Various anti-discrimination laws have been issued to ensure fair treatment. Diversity management, however, does not necessarily guarantee inclusion (Mor Barak, 2015). Therefore, there has been a stream of literature advocating the shift away from the command-and-control styles of leadership to more positive relational styles of leadership, such as inclusive leadership (Ye et al., 2019). Inclusive leadership entails that leadership is always present to the employees, attentive to their needs and concerns, and accepts differences in opinions and perspectives as well as involves the employees in decision-making (Buskirk, 2020; Javed et al., 2021; Korkmaz et al., 2022; Roberson & Perry, 2021). It is assumed that this positive relationship between the leadership and the employees would encourage the latter to reciprocate by demonstrating extra proactive behavior (Tran & Choi, 2019; Zhao et al., 2020).

Employee volunteering, on the other hand, is about helping others and improving life (Mcgregor-Lowndes & Edwards, 2006). Unlike ordinary work activities, employee volunteering has the advantage of accomplishing goals with reduced costs and high quality and performance (White, 2016). Furthermore, employee volunteering is not controlled by many administrative restrictions (Principi et al., 2012) and encourages innovation and entrepreneurship, especially at times of austerity (Halsall et al., 2016).

Many private and non-governmental organizations resort to volunteering as part of their corporate social responsibility towards the community (Lukka, 2000; Principi et al., 2012), and to achieve various benefits for the employees and the organizations (Johnson-Coffey, 1997; Lukka, 2000; Neely et al., 2021). Thus, most of the research on employee volunteering has focused on private and non-governmental organizations. Yet little is known about employee volunteering in the public sector (Lukka, 2000). Recently, empirical research has been urging studying employee volunteering in public organizations as their counterparts, i.e. the non-governmental organizations face challenges in raising resources to help people (Pevnaya et al., 2020). It is suggested that public sector employees may have the potential to volunteer as they have the public service motivation to help others (Pevnaya et al., 2020; Wilson & Rotolo, 2006).

Therefore, this paper aims to investigate the extent to which inclusive leadership fosters employee volunteering in public organizations. The importance of this paper is twofold. First, it seeks to highlight whether inclusive leadership encourages public employees to demonstrate extra-work activities and volunteer. Second, it seeks to offer in-depth insights into how the different traits of inclusive leadership foster employee volunteering.

Employee volunteering: Definition and outcomes

Employee volunteering can be defined as a freely chosen social unpaid activity to benefit other individuals, the community, and/or oneself (Neely et al., 2021; White, 2016). It can be formal i.e. arranged by an organization, or informal emerging from the personal initiative of the volunteer (Lukka, 2000; White, 2016). Accordingly, employee volunteering entails various dimensions. First, volunteering involves freely planned, altruistic behavior instead of passive and spontaneous behavior (Im & Chung, 2018;

Rodell et al., 2016). Second, it entails non-economic characteristics (Lin, 2018; Neely et al., 2021) where the volunteer gives his time and effort to help others without receiving financial rewards in return (Lukka, 2000). Third, employee volunteering is not only useful to the beneficiaries. It can be beneficial also to the volunteer and his organization (Rodell et al., 2016; White, 2016). Dempsey-Brench & Shantz (2021), Garcia (2020) and Lin (2018) highlight that the motivations for volunteering can range from altruistic behavior and the willingness to help others to egoistic motivations like developing new skills, increasing psychological development and well-being, and strengthening social relationships.

Various research has shown that women (Lin, 2018; Neely et al., 2021); highly educated employees (Lin, 2018; Wilson & Rotolo, 2006); employees with high income (Lin, 2018; Wilson & Rotolo, 2006); employees working in academic and nonprofit organizations (Vanoverschelde, 2017); old employees (Lukka, 2000; Neely et al., 2021; Principi et al., 2012); people working in non-governmental organizations and public sector organizations (Pevnaya et al., 2020; Wilson & Rotolo, 2006); and managers are more likely to volunteer than others (Lukka, 2000).

Further empirical research has demonstrated various positive outcomes for employee volunteering whether at the individual level or the organizational level. At the individual level, the employees may develop and upgrade their skills (Lukka, 2000), expand their social network and learning experiences (Lysova & Saduikyte, 2015), increase self-esteem and life satisfaction, enjoy a sense of belongingness and appreciation (Rodell et al., 2016), ignore turnover intention (Im & Chung, 2018; Principi et al., 2012) and feel lower depression (Rodell et al., 2016). At the organizational level, organizations may encourage employees to volunteer to improve performance efficiency and effectiveness

(Lin, 2018; Rodell et al., 2016), commitment and engagement (Dempsey-Brench & Shantz, 2021) identification with the organization (Im & Chung, 2018), organizational citizenship behaviour (Im & Chung, 2018), employee retention and work-related skills (Dempsey-Brench & Shantz, 2021; White, 2016), organizational reputation and attractiveness (Rodell et al., 2016), and reduce the need for training (Principi et al., 2012).

To reap the benefits of volunteering, empirical research has mentioned various antecedents that encourage employee volunteering. One of these antecedents is leadership. Halsall et al. (2016) maintain that when leadership has a positive relationship with the employees, the employees will reciprocate with extra proactive behavior.

Inclusive leadership

Inclusive leadership is one of the relational leadership styles that was first defined by Nembhard and Edmondson in 2006 as the words and deeds of leadership to recognize and appreciate employees' contribution (Ahmed et al., 2021; Buskirk, 2020; Tran & Choi, 2019). Accordingly, leadership would appreciate and recognize the diverse skills, perspectives, and opinions of the employees, and the employees would identify themselves with the organization (Mor Barak, 2015). Thus, inclusive leadership creates a sense of uniqueness and belongingness simultaneously (Korkmaz et al., 2022; van Knippenberg & van Ginkel, 2021), and presents a shift away from the command-and-control approach of leadership to a relational leadership based on inclusion (Workman-Stark, 2017).

Inclusive leadership is important for underprivileged and marginalized groups (Workman-Stark, 2017). It implies that everyone is treated fairly regardless of their power status

(Mendelsohn, 2021), by offering support, direction, and guidance, as well as recognizing their diverse skills. This would lead to continuous interaction between the leadership and the employees, and create an organizational environment filled with values like care for others, trust, respect, humbleness, sympathy and mercy, and engagement (Ahmed et al., 2021; Buskirk, 2020; Wuffli, 2016).

Recent research has been focusing on three basic traits of inclusive leadership: availability, accessibility and openness. Availability means that employees can reach leadership at any time. Accessibility indicates that the employees can express their concerns and voice without fear of rejection or embarrassment, and leadership offers guidance, support, and feedback to the employees. Openness implies that leadership welcomes different ideas, opinions, and perspectives of the employees, and involves them in decision-making (Buskirk, 2020; Javed et al., 2021; Sung, 2021; Tran & Choi, 2019). These traits allow the employees to speak up, share information (Minehart et al., 2020), and be motivated and engaged (Qurrahtulain et al., 2022), regardless of their power status (Zhao et al., 2020). In return, the employees reciprocate positively to the organization and increase their performance (Xiaotao et al., 2018).

Although other leadership styles, such as transformation and servant leadership, imply positive relationships with the employees, inclusive leadership is distinct as it seeks to undermine differences in power status (Minehart et al., 2020). For example, even though transformational leadership encourages employees to transcend their interests to achieve organizational goals (Buskirk, 2020; Tran & Choi, 2019), transformational leadership is not necessarily inclusive (Sung, 2021). Whereas inclusive leadership encourages and appreciates the input and output of all employees

(Randel et al., 2018). Also, even though servant leadership tries to serve the employees, it does this to achieve the interests of the organization and the stakeholders. Inclusive leadership, on the other hand, creates an environment where the employees feel psychologically empowered and have an impact on the organization (Ashikali et al., 2021; Mendelsohn, 2021; Qurrahtulain et al., 2022; Randel et al., 2018).

Empirical research demonstrates the positive outcomes of inclusive leadership whether at the individual or organizational level. At the individual level, inclusive leadership is positively related to job satisfaction (Javed et al., 2019; Luu, 2019; Sung, 2021), performance (Jin et al., 2017; Luu, 2019; Qurrahtulain et al., 2020), psychological well-being and safety (Ahmed et al., 2021; Zhao et al., 2020), creativity and innovation (Mendelsohn, 2021), innovative work behavior (Buskirk, 2020; Choi et al., 2017; Javed et al., 2021) and voice (Jolly & Lee, 2021). At the organizational level, inclusive leadership is positively related to organizational commitment (Mendelsohn, 2021), work engagement (Bao et al., 2022), collective voice behavior (Chen et al., 2021; Ye et al., 2019), organizational citizenship behavior (Younas et al., 2021) and negatively correlated to intention to quit (Mendelsohn, 2021). However, it is important to pinpoint that research has indicated that inclusive leadership has a curvilinear impact on performance (Xiaotao et al., 2018) and that it may encourage prosocial rule-breaking (Wang & Shi, 2021).

Inclusive leadership and employee volunteering

As employee volunteering is an altruistic, unpaid activity to benefit others including oneself and the organization, various antecedents have to be available to encourage volunteering (White, 2016). Focusing on the public sector, Wilson & Rotolo (2006) even recommend paying great attention to these antecedents to embed

volunteering in the work of public employees as they are more likely to volunteer than their counterparts in the private sector due to the public service motivation that they have.

Previous empirical studies have highlighted how important it is that organizations understand the different motivations of employee volunteering (Lin, 2018), recognize and appreciate the contributions of employee volunteering (Dempsey-Brench & Shantz, 2021; Lysova & Saduikyte, 2015; Principi et al., 2012), grant financial and logistical support to employee volunteering programs (Rodell et al., 2016), offer support (Garcia, 2020) and publicity (Rodell et al., 2016). All these requirements can be provided by leadership, especially inclusive leadership.

Inclusive leadership creates a sense of uniqueness and belongingness simultaneously among the employees (Younas et al., 2021). The employees feel that the organization recognizes and appreciates their different skills, opinions, and contributions, and in turn feel proud of identifying themselves with the organization (Korkmaz et al., 2022). This can be achieved by offering purposeful direction, sustaining positive relationships with the employees (Wuffli, 2016), listening to their needs and expectations (Bannay et al., 2020), and moving away from the all-knowing and all-powerful leadership style to a positive relational leadership (Workman-Stark, 2017; Ye et al., 2019). Since inclusive leadership entails that leadership is reachable, offers supports and encourages the employees to speak up without fear of rejection or embarrassment, and considers employee opinions while making decisions, it can be suggested that inclusive leadership can have a positive influence on employee volunteering. Thus, this paper assumes that:

H1: Inclusive leadership influences employee volunteering

To gain further insights into how inclusive leadership may influence employee volunteering it is important to explore how the different traits of inclusive leadership can influence employee volunteering. As mentioned previously, there are three basic traits of inclusive leadership, availability, accessibility, and openness.

Availability indicates that leadership is always present and reachable (Randel et al., 2018; Sprouse, 2021), and maintains a close relationship with the employees to promote job satisfaction (Roberson & Perry, 2021; Wang & Shi, 2021). Accordingly, inclusive leadership is not connected only to the employees at a professional level but is also connected to them at an emotional level where it motivates the employees to demonstrate extra proactive behavior (Tran & Choi, 2019; Zhao et al., 2020).

Previous literature has indicated that employee volunteering requires having positive interpersonal relationships with leadership (Halsall et al., 2016), and receiving ongoing organizational support (Garcia, 2020; Principi et al., 2012) to encourage the employees to demonstrate extra proactive behavior and volunteer (Tran & Choi, 2019). Hence, this paper assumes that:

H2: Inclusive leadership availability influences employee volunteering

A second trait of inclusive leadership is accessibility. Accessibility refers to the ability of the employees to express their voices and concerns to the leadership without being afraid of embarrassment or rejection (Wang & Shi, 2021). Accessibility is of great importance to marginalized groups who might feel distanced and underprivileged (van Knippenberg & van Ginkel, 2021). It would make them feel treated fairly regardless of their power status or social background (Buskirk, 2020; Mendelsohn, 2021). As a result,

the employees would reciprocate and demonstrate extra performance (Qurrahtulain et al., 2022; Sung, 2021; Tran & Choi, 2019; Younas et al., 2021).

Empirical research on employee volunteering maintains that employees with desirable jobs and working conditions would reciprocate and volunteer (Rodell et al., 2016), especially if volunteering was based on free will and was not mandatory (Principi et al., 2012; Rodell et al., 2016). Hence, when the employees feel that they are fairly treated regardless of their power status and social background, they are more likely to volunteer. Therefore, this paper assumes that:

H3: Inclusive leadership accessibility influences employee volunteering

A third trait of inclusive leadership is openness. Openness indicates the willingness to accept differences in opinions, ideas, and perspectives (Javed et al., 2021; Minehart et al., 2020; Qurrahtulain et al., 2022), exchange of information (Buskirk, 2020; Mendelsohn, 2021), involvement in decision making (Javed et al., 2021), recognizing and appreciating the input and outputs of the employees (Bannay et al., 2020; Younas et al., 2021), encouraging innovation and creativity (Bannay et al., 2020; Workman-Stark, 2017), and promoting learning and development (van Knippenberg & van Ginkel, 2021). As a result, leadership would be able to make better decisions (Javed et al., 2021), create a culture that tolerates diversity (Roberson & Perry, 2021; Ye et al., 2019), achieve collaboration with the employees (Choi et al., 2017; Jin et al., 2017; Jolly & Lee, 2021), and enhance employee engagement and retention (Qurrahtulain et al., 2022). Also, the employees would feel recognized and appreciated (Bao et al., 2022), and fully contribute to the organization (Randel et al., 2018; Ye et al., 2019).

Empirical research has highlighted various motivations for employee volunteering. among these motivations is the need for psychological growth and well-being(Jolly & Lee, 2021), enhancing self-esteem and recognition (Garcia, 2020; Rodell et al., 2016), skill development, (Lin, 2018), and career advancement (Rodell et al., 2016). Employees are more likely to volunteer when they perceive their organizations as recognizing the contributions of their employees, offering them an environment where they can express their opinions (Rodell et al., 2016), and granting them autonomy (Garcia, 2020). Thus, since inclusive leadership openness welcomes the contributions of the employees, the expression of different opinions, and skill development, this paper assumes that:

H4: Inclusive leadership openness influences employee volunteering

Methodology

To investigate the extent to which inclusive leadership is positively correlated to employee volunteering in public organizations, this paper used an Egyptian public university as a case study. Public universities are thought to be good examples of public organizations encouraging employee volunteering for several reasons. First, a basic component of any university's mission is to offer various services to improve the local community. Thus, it can be expected that various volunteering activities are conducted by the universities to improve the living conditions of the local community. Second, universities usually encourage affiliates to volunteer in corporate social responsibility activities and programs. Hence, it can be expected that university officials are engaged whether directly or indirectly in volunteering activities at their universities. Third, university officials, like many public officials, may have a public service motivation to help others. Therefore,

the probability of being willing to volunteer might be high among university officials. Finally, there are different conditions of employment at the universities. Some are appointed and others are hired based on a contract. Also, university officials have different levels of education. Thus, the probability of adopting inclusive leadership is high at the universities.

As a result, a public university was chosen to provide a comprehensive analysis of the extent to which inclusive leadership is positively correlated to employee volunteering in public organizations.

For data collection, a questionnaire was designed relying on the scales used by Garcia (2020), Lin (2018), Vanoverschelde (2017), and White (2016) to measure employee volunteering, as well as the scales adopted by Buskirk (2020) and Mendelsohn (2021) to measure inclusive leadership. Thus, the questionnaire included questions on the extent to which the public employees volunteer and the role of leadership in encouraging employee volunteering. The questionnaire also included questions on the three traits of inclusive leadership: availability, accessibility, and openness. The aim of the questionnaire was twofold. One, it aimed to investigate the extent to which university officials volunteer in activities that would support local communities. Two, it sought to highlight the extent to which inclusive leadership encourages university officials to volunteer. Later, the questionnaire was pilot-tested on three experts in the field. Based on their recommendations, a few questions were rephrased to avoid any confusion.

Thereafter, the questionnaire was disseminated to a random sample of N= 208 public officials at a public university. Later, the responses were coded to guarantee the anonymity of the participants, as well as statistically analyzed using SPSS version 20

software. To verify the hypotheses, both Spearman's rho correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis were deployed.

Results

To investigate the extent to which inclusive leadership is positively correlated to employee volunteering in public organizations, a questionnaire was disseminated to N= 208 university officials at a public university. Table 1 represents the demographic characteristics of the participants.

Table 1: Characteristics of the participants				
		Gender		Total
		Female	Male	
Educational level	high school	13	22	35
	university	48	82	130
	postgraduate	19	24	43
Total		80	128	208
Job	non-managerial	56	77	133
	managerial	24	51	75
Total		80	128	208
Years of experience at work	Less than 1 year	4	0	4
	From 1 year till less than 5 years	10	0	10
	From 5 years till less than 10 years	13	56	69
	More than 10 years	53	72	125
Total		80	128	208
Employment condition	Based on a contract	0	14	14
	Previously based on a contract	29	32	61
	Has always been appointed	51	82	133
Total		80	128	208

To test the inter-item reliability of each trait of inclusive leadership as well as employee volunteering, a Cronbach analysis was conducted. All sub-scale alpha levels revealed an adequate level of inter-item reliability. The sub-scale alpha level for inclusive leadership availability was $\alpha= 0,908$ (including sub-scale items: my manager is always present when needed, my manager treats us like we belong to one family, and my manager always offers support and guidance). The sub-scale alpha level for inclusive leadership accessibility was $\alpha= 0,909$ (including sub-scale items: everyone can reach my manager and speak up, my manager treats everyone fairly without discrimination, and we are not afraid to express our opinions). Finally, the sub-scale alpha level for inclusive leadership openness was $\alpha= 0,924$ (including sub-scale items: my manager promotes open discussions, my manager allows differences in opinions, and my manager considers our opinions when making decisions). As for employee volunteering, the sub-scale alpha level was $\alpha= 0,940$ (including sub-scale items: I am happy in my work as it opens windows for volunteering, my work allows me to achieve my goals in life, I volunteer to help others, I am proud to volunteer, my work appreciates that I volunteer, volunteering helps me learn new things, volunteering is beneficial also for my organization, and I am willing to keep volunteering in the future).

To investigate the extent to which the participants volunteer, the mean and standard deviation of the responses related to the scale for employee volunteering were calculated. The results revealed a high score of $M= 4,074$ and $SD= 0,8$. This indicates that the participants volunteer to a high degree.

Moreover, the mean and standard deviation for the compound construct “inclusive leadership” were calculated, as well as the mean and standard deviation for each trait of inclusive leadership to investigate the extent to which inclusive leadership and its three traits are witnessed by the participants. The compound construct showed a high score of $M= 4,255$ and $SD= 0,76$, which indicates

that the participants witness inclusive leadership at work. Furthermore, availability showed the highest scores of $M= 4,358$ and $SD= 0,79$, followed by openness with a score of $M= 4,231$ and $SD= 0,77$ and accessibility with a score of $M= 4,205$ and $SD= 0,79$, respectively. These results indicate that participants witness inclusive leadership availability more than openness and accessibility respectively.

The relationship between inclusive leadership and employee volunteering

To investigate the relationship between inclusive leadership and employee volunteer, this paper controlled for the influence of demographics and socio-economic factors. Then to investigate the extent to which inclusive leadership is positively correlated to inclusive volunteering, Spearman's rho analysis was conducted (see Table 2). The results revealed a positive correlation of $r(207) = .474, p < .01$. This indicates that employee volunteering is fostered when leadership promotes a sense of uniqueness and belongingness among the employees, recognizes and appreciates their different skills and contributions, sustains positive relationships with them, offers purposeful direction, and listens to their needs and expectations.

		inclusive leadership	openness	accessibility	availability	volunteering	
Spearman's rho	Inclusive leadership	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,938**	,958**	,942**	,474**
	openness	Correlation Coefficient	,938**	1,000	,845**	,878**	,401**
	accessibility	Correlation Coefficient	,958**	,845**	1,000	,870**	,472**
	availability	Correlation Coefficient	,942**	,878**	,870**	1,000	,458**
	volunteering	Correlation Coefficient	,474**	,401**	,472**	,458**	1,000

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

To verify the influence of inclusive leadership on employee volunteering, a multiple regression analysis at a 95% confidence interval was conducted (see Table 3). The results reveal a significant model summary of $F_{(1,2)} = 12,517$, $p < .001$, $Adj. R^2 = .143$, $R^2 \text{ change} = .155$. This conclusion verifies thereby H1 and indicates a significant positive influence of inclusive leadership on employee volunteering.

Table 3: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95,0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	2,651	,297		8,929	,000	2,066	3,236		
1 availability	-,447	,178	-,441	-2,516	,013	-,797	-,097	,135	7,422
accessibility	,572	,176	,570	3,250	,001	,225	,919	,134	7,437
openness	,228	,141	,221	1,622	,106	-,049	,505	,222	4,497

a. Dependent Variable: volunteering

The relationship between inclusive leadership availability and employee volunteering

To offer in-depth insight into how inclusive leadership is positively correlated to employee volunteering, the correlations between the three traits of inclusive leadership on one hand and employee volunteering on the other were calculated using Spearman's rho analysis and multiple regression analysis.

The results revealed a positive correlation between inclusive leadership availability and employee volunteering of $r(207) = .458$, $p < .01$. To verify the influence of leadership availability on employee volunteering, the multiple regression analysis found a

significant negative influence of $\beta = -.441, p < .001$. This implies that the less leadership is present and reachable, offers support, and attunes to the expectations and needs, the more the employees are likely to volunteer. This conclusion verifies H2 yet represents a negative influence.

The relationship between inclusive leadership accessibility and employee volunteering

To investigate the extent to which inclusive leadership accessibility is positively correlated to employee volunteering, Spearman's rho analysis was conducted. The results revealed a positive correlation of $r(207) = .472, p < .01$. To verify the influence of leadership accessibility on employee volunteering, the multiple regression analysis found a significant positive relation of $\beta = .570, p < .001$. This maintains that when leadership allows the employees to express their voice and concerns regardless of their power status and without being afraid of rejection or embarrassment, the employees are more likely to volunteer. This confirms thereby H3.

The relationship between inclusive leadership openness and employee volunteering

To test the extent to which inclusive leadership openness is positively correlated to employee volunteering, Spearman's rho analysis was conducted. The results revealed a positive correlation of $r(207) = .401, p < .01$. To verify the influence of leadership openness on employee volunteering, the multiple regression analysis revealed a non-significant positive influence of $\beta = .221, p = .101$. This suggests that welcoming differences of opinions and ideas, exchanging information with the employees, involving them in the decision-making process, encouraging innovation and creativity, appreciating their inputs and outputs, and promoting

learning and development do not influence the likelihood of employee volunteering. This conclusion thereby rejects H4.

Finally, it is important to recognize that inclusive leadership accessibility had the strongest correlation with employee volunteering ($r(207) = .472, p < .01$), and the strongest influence on employee volunteering ($\beta = .570, p < .001$), followed by availability ($r(207) = .443, p < .01$) with a negative influence on employee volunteering ($\beta = -.441, p < .001$) and openness ($r(207) = .401, p < .01$) with no significant influence, respectively. This indicates that for employee volunteering accessibility plays the strongest role in fostering employee volunteering, followed by availability.

Discussion

To investigate the extent to which inclusive leadership fosters employee volunteering in public organizations, a questionnaire was disseminated to N=208 university officials of an Egyptian public university. The results reveal various conclusions regarding the relationship between inclusive leadership and employee volunteering in public organizations. For example, the results reveal that university officials are involved in employee volunteering. This confirms previous research of Wilson & Rotolo (2006) who highlight how public officials are likely to engage in employee volunteering due to the public service motivation that they have.

The results also demonstrate that the participants witness inclusive leadership. This can resort to the different employment conditions and educational levels that the employees have, and hence, the necessity to have a positive relational leadership that would encompass all the diversity among the employees in a way that would be beneficial to the organization. This further agrees with

(Ahmed et al., 2021; Buskirk, 2020; Roberson & Perry, 2021; Workman-Stark, 2017; Ye et al., 2019).

Additionally, the results contribute to previous literature and confirm a positive correlation between inclusive leadership and employee volunteering. Even though previous research has highlighted various organizational antecedents to promote employee volunteering such as having positive interpersonal relationships between leadership and employees (Halsall et al., 2016) and receiving organizational support (Garcia, 2020; Principi et al., 2012), this paper confirms a positive relationship between inclusive leadership and employee volunteering. This implies that when leadership promotes a sense of uniqueness and belongingness among the employees, they start to reciprocate by engaging in freely chosen unpaid pro-social behavior that would benefit themselves, their organization, and their community.

Finally, the results also offer in-depth insight into how inclusive leadership influences employee volunteering. Interestingly, they reveal the three traits of inclusive leadership do not influence employee volunteering equally. For example, the results reveal that inclusive leadership accessibility had the strongest positive influence on employee volunteering. This implies that when the employees feel that they can express their voice without being afraid of rejection and embarrassment they are more likely to be encouraged to be engaged in freely chosen unpaid pro-social activities. This conclusion agrees with previous research of Qurrahtulain et al.(2022), Sung, (2021), Tran and Choi (2019), and Younas et al. (2021).

On the other hand, inclusive leadership availability had a negative influence on employee volunteering, denoting that when leadership is absent and not reachable all the time to the employees, the latter would seize the opportunity and engage more in freely chosen

unpaid pro-social activities. Even though this conclusion variates from previous research of Garcia (2020), Halsall et al. (2016), and Principi et al. (2012) but it may suggest that employee volunteering requires granting the employees more discretion and autonomy to engage in unpaid pro-social activities. Close presence and supervision of leadership, however, might not offer the employees the chance to volunteer.

Surprisingly, even though inclusive leadership openness is positively correlated to employee volunteering, it had no significant influence on employee volunteering, disagreeing thereby with previous research. This may indicate that accepting differences in opinions, participation in decision making, and encouragement of innovation and creativity are not influential for employee volunteering as 1- allowing the employees to express their voice freely, and 2- enjoying discretion and autonomy. Again, this may agree with the basic characteristic of employee volunteering, which is being not controlled by administrative restrictions, and hence, for the employees openness might not be crucial. Furthermore, it may demonstrate that public officials might have a strong public service motivation to volunteer irrespective of leadership openness.

To sum up, public officials are likely to engage in employee volunteering as they have public service motivation. To benefit from their differences, it is crucial to adopt inclusive leadership to create a sense of uniqueness and belongingness simultaneously among the diverse employees to benefit the organization from their diversity. Inclusive leadership would furthermore encourage the employee to get engaged in employee volunteering, as they would find leadership allowing the employees to express their voice without being afraid of embarassment or rejection, as well as offer them discretion and autonomy.

Study implications and limitations

This paper introduces several theoretical and practical implications as well as has a few limitations as follows:

Theoretical implications

By investigating the extent to which inclusive leadership fosters employee volunteering, this paper confirms that public officials engage in employee volunteering as they are more likely to have public service motivation.

It further contributes to the literature and confirms that positive relational leadership, as inclusive leadership, is one of the organizational antecedents fostering employee volunteering. Therefore, this paper goes along with the stream of literature that calls for a shift from a command-and-control style of leadership to more positive relational styles of leadership to encourage employees to engage in freely chosen unpaid pro-social activities.

Finally, this paper highlights the importance of recognizing that the different traits of inclusive leadership do not influence employee volunteering equally. Accessibility had the strongest influence on employee volunteering. Thus, this paper suggests that each trait should be studied separately when studying the influence of inclusive leadership on other variables.

Practical implications

This paper has demonstrated that inclusive leadership positively influences employee volunteering. Therefore, it recommends that leadership focuses on having positive relationships with the employees more than adopting a command-and-control style of leadership to encourage the employees to engage in freely chosen unpaid pro-social activities.

Also, it is crucial that leadership becomes inclusive by creating an environment that creates a sense of uniqueness and belongingness among the employees, where they would feel free and secure to express their voice, and enjoy discretion and autonomy to be motivated to engage in pro-social activities like volunteering.

Study limitations

This study has a few limitations. Of these limitations is the reliance on self-reports that may be biased. Therefore, longitudinal studies relying on other tools for data collection are recommended to verify the result. Furthermore, this study relied on a sample of public university officials, which may limit the generalizability of the results in other sectors. Thus, future cross-sectional and cross-cultural studies might be required to generalize the results in other contexts. Finally, further qualitative studies are recommended to offer more insights into how the different traits of inclusive leadership influence employee volunteering.

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