

# Inclusive Leadership and Employee Well-Being: The Mediating Role of Person-Job Fit

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**Abstract** This study explored the effects of inclusive leadership on employee well-being and innovative behavior. We also investigated the mediating role of person-job fit in these relationships. We tested these effects on a sample of 207 employees in five telecommunication companies in Vietnam, using a questionnaire survey. The results showed that inclusive leadership is positively related to employee well-being and innovative behavior, and that person-job fit mediates these relationships. The study makes theoretical contributions to the literature of leadership and organizational psychology, and suggests useful managerial implications for organizations to boost employee well-being and innovative behavior. Taking a cultural approach, this study provides empirical cross-cultural validity of the effect of inclusive leadership on employee well-being.

**Keywords** Employee well-being · Inclusive leadership · Person-job fit · Innovative behavior

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## 1 Introduction

Recently, employee well-being and innovative behavior have been increasingly emphasized as the foundation of organizational performance (Huhtala and Parzefall 2007). As a result, studying the drivers of employee well-being and innovative behavior is vital (Scott and Bruce 1994). Amongst several possible influential factors, leadership has been identified as an influential driver of employee well-being and innovative behavior (Arnold et al. 2007; Densten 2005; Gong et al. 2009; Sivanathan et al. 2004). Studies in this regard have concluded that a leader exerts significant influence on employee well-being and innovative behavior through work demands, control, and social support (Gilbreath and Benson 2004; Harris and Kacmar 2006). However, few studies have explored the relationships among specific leadership styles, employee well-being, and employee innovative behavior in a single context. Sharifirad (2013) was a welcome exception, arguing that transformational leadership catalyzes employee well-being and innovative behavior thanks to its highly motivational effects on followers (Bass 1985). Meanwhile, Fletcher (2004) and Uhl-Bien (2006) called for further research on an understudied type of leadership, namely relational leadership, because changing economic conditions require leaders to be more attentive to relationship building, in order to create a more motivated workforce (Uhl-Bien 2006; Carmeli et al. 2010). In line with this call, some researchers have garnered their interest in one specific core facet of relational leadership, inclusive leadership, which differs from other leadership styles by its explicit focus on the leader's openness, availability, and accessibility to meet employees' needs (Hollander 2009). However, research on the effects of inclusive leadership on employee well-being and innovative behavior has been scarce. In this study, we argue that inclusive leadership affects employee well-being and innovative behavior thanks to large motivational influences of this leadership style (Hollander 2009; Carmeli et al. 2010).

In addition, though the literature has documented the linkage between person-job fit and leadership (Mulki et al. 2006; Babakus et al. 2011), employee well-being (Brkich et al. 2002; Singh and Greenhaus 2004), and employee innovative behavior (Afsar et al. 2014a, b), little has been directed toward the mediating effect of person-job fit in the relationship between inclusive leadership and employee well-being as well as innovative behavior. Meanwhile, previous studies suggested that there are numerous mechanisms by which leader behavior can influence employee satisfaction as well as involvement in creative tasks and called for further research on different mediating variables to understand the ways in which leadership affects employee well-being and innovative behavior (Carmeli et al. 2010; Sharifirad 2013).

To bridge these theoretical gaps, this study examines the effect of inclusive leadership on employee well-being and innovative behavior, and the mediating role of person-job fit in these relationships from the perspective of the leader-member exchange (LMX) theory (Graen 1976).

The LMX theory provides an important theoretical lens on leaders' behavior, which contributes to their followers' desired outcome (Volmer et al. 2012; Herman et al. 2013). The theory highlights that "most effective leadership processes occur when leaders and followers are able to develop mature relationships (partnerships) and thus gain access to the many benefits these relationships bring" (Graen and Uhl-Bien 1991, p. 225). Thus, this theory helps us to explain how inclusive leadership is associated with facilitating trust, respect, mutual obligation, and partnership between leaders and followers, which ultimately contribute to enhancing the latter's well-being (Volmer et al. 2012; Herman et al.

2013). The LMX theory also helps us to explain how inclusive leadership helps to build strong relationships between leaders and followers based on mutual learning, and how leaders' accommodations of different needs and followers' preferences promote better condition for employees' innovative behavior (Graen and Uhl-Bien 1991; Herman et al. 2013; Volmer et al. 2012).

For example, Volmer et al. (2012) emphasized that LMX identified leadership by focusing on interpersonal relationships between leaders and followers, as evidenced in inclusive leadership. They tested the interplay between LMX and creative work involvement by using longitudinal field survey data from a high-technology firm, and identified that a high quality of LMX led leaders to provide employees with a high degree of job autonomy in determining methods and means for completing creative work. Other researchers (Vinarski-Peretz et al. 2010; Ilies et al. 2007) have also argued that LMX positively influences creative work performance by enhancing inclusive leaders' behavior toward employees, such as task-related recognition, interpersonal support, and appreciation. In addition, LMX has the effect of challenging employees to perform difficult tasks and engage in greater risk-taking via inclusive leadership.

We also grounded the mediating role of person-job fit from this theory. Inclusive leaders have an ability to cultivate high-quality relationship with their followers (Carmeli et al. 2010; Volmer et al. 2012; Tse et al. 2013), which provides followers with increased resources to meet their job demands better. Thus, followers are likely to experience a higher person-job fit with inclusive leaders, which can be conducive to their positive job-related experience and outcomes such as employee well-being and innovative behavior. For example, Babakus et al. (2011) suggested that the person-job fit facilitated by a leader's inclusive behavior positively influences subordinate work-related outcomes. These benefits include innovative behavior, since the proper match between job demands and employee knowledge, skill, and ability reinforces employee motivation and learning, which provides critical organizational resources for employee innovative behavior. It also has the effect of reducing stress and turnover intention in the working process.

Hecht and Allen (2005) and Lin et al. (2014) also found that person-job fit, which is enhanced by a leader's relational behavior, has a positive impact on employee well-being, as employees could perform their jobs without being a hazard to themselves or others. In other words, person-job fit reduces emotional exhaustion levels, but increases self-efficacy and psychological satisfaction due to positive feelings incurred from the congruence between employee needs, desires, preferences, and rewards of the job, which ultimately enhance employee well-being.

This study makes three main contributions to the literature. First, it extends the literature of leadership by analyzing an underexplored type of leadership in relation to employee well-being and innovative behavior. Most research on the influence of leaders on employee innovative behavior and well-being has concentrated on overall leader support with general factors such as leader appreciation and support for employee ideas and leader support through resources (Hunter et al. 2007; Mumford and Hunter 2005; George and Zhou 2007). They did not distinguish between the different aspects of support (Carmeli et al. 2010); however, our study, by focusing on inclusive leadership, is attentive to specific aspects of leader support. Second, the study also extends our knowledge of the underlying mechanisms for employee well-being and innovative behavior. Research evaluating the mechanism by which relational leadership, inclusive leadership in particular, is relevant to employee involvement in innovative activities together with employee well-being is still rare (Carmeli et al. 2010, Sharifirad 2013). Hence, our study provides a valuable addition

to this line of inquiry in the literature. Drawing on the LMX theory, we also extend the applicability of the LMX theory to inclusive leadership studies.

Lastly, the findings of our study offer a cultural significance. Bahl et al. (2009) identified that most leadership studies have been conducted in Western societies, and stressed the need to add the empirical cross-cultural validity of leadership-work outcome relationships to the current literature. Concerning inclusive leadership, Carmeli et al. (2010) have confirmed the effect on employee involvement in creative tasks in a European context. Our study's focus on Vietnam, an Asian context with vastly different cultural characteristics from Western contexts (Wang and Yi 2011), provides empirical cross-cultural validity of the influence of inclusive leadership.

## 2 Hypotheses Development

### 2.1 Inclusive Leadership and Employee Well-Being

Inclusive leadership, coined by Nembhard and Edmondson (2006), refers to the "leaders who exhibit openness, accessibility, and availability in their interactions with followers" (Carmeli et al. 2010, p. 250). As this definition indicates, a leader's openness, accessibility, and availability to talk and discuss ideas of employees are the three reinforcing facets of inclusive leadership (Carmeli et al. 2010). These three aspects of inclusive leadership not only reflect the leader's care and concern for the follower, but also allow inclusive leaders to communicate their desirable expectations with followers effectively. In other words, inclusive leaders are open, willing to listen to employees and discuss new ways for achieving the work goals, and paying attention to new opportunities. These characteristics also enable them to cultivate high-quality relationships with employees (Carmeli et al. 2010). With these behaviors, they cultivate a social context that is safe for employees to voice, speak up, or contribute their inputs. Therefore, inclusive leadership contributes to employee well-being.

Inclusive leadership has been regarded as a mode of relational leadership featuring leaders' explicit attention to followers' needs and availability to them (Hollander 2009). Likewise, Carmeli et al. (2010) clarified that inclusive leadership is a form of relational leadership, emphasizing that leaders are available, willing to listen, and paying attention to followers' needs, whether the leader listens, and is paying attention to the follower's needs. As such, inclusive leadership is treated as a leadership style akin to several other leadership styles such as ethical leadership and transformational leadership. This is because inclusive leadership attends to three specific supportive behaviors of a leader, including openness, accessibility, and availability, similar to other leadership styles, such as servant leadership, which is characterized by a leader's specific behavior (Van Dierendonck 2010). In addition, based on Uhl-Bien (2006) elaboration on relational leadership, inclusive leadership, as a form of relational leadership (Carmeli et al. 2010), emphasizes on socially influenced processes to create changes. Thus, it is treated as a style of leadership, although it induces positive relational qualities between leaders and followers.

Hollander (2009) asserted that inclusive leaders are always supportive of followers. They encourage open communication to invite inputs from followers, have concern for the interests, expectations, and feelings of followers, and are available and willing to provide assistance to followers. Inclusive leadership is beneficial to employees in several ways.

According to Nembhard and Edmondson (2006), inclusive leadership helps to shape team members' beliefs that their voices are genuinely valued.

Employee well-being refers to a pleasure or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience (Locke 1976). Previous research has regarded affect, anxiety, and frustration as exemplary psychological indicators of well-being, while blood pressure and heart condition are considered the physiological indicators (Danna and Griffin 1999). Researchers have taken two approaches to understanding employee well-being: positive and negative. While the negative approach has been dedicated to studying burnout and occupational stress, the positive approach has construed well-being as an affective state that consists of two dimensions: pleasure and level of arousal (Cartwright and Holmes 2006; Diener et al. 1999; Linley and Joseph 2004; Maslach et al. 2001; Schaufeli and Bakker 2004; Warr 1994). Therefore, affective well-being has been referred as general well-being (Diener et al. 1999). Several studies used affective well-being to measure general well-being (van Horn et al. 2004). Following this research line, the current study takes the positive well-being approach and focuses on affective well-being as the general well-being.

Previous research has discovered that employee well-being is influenced by both the physical and the psychological work environment (Gilbreath and Benson 2004). Leadership style is one of the main psychological work environment factors influencing employee well-being (Sparks et al. 2001). Under the LMX theory, leader support serves as a job resource that influences employee well-being based on quality relationship between the leader and followers. Accordingly, we argue that inclusive leadership is conducive to employee well-being for three reasons. First, by attending to employees' needs, an inclusive leader cultivates trust among employees and strengthens the relationships between them, and thus improves employee well-being (Ramamoorthy et al. 2005). The underlying logic is that trust in the leader limits the perceived level of risk, vulnerability, and stress, which have detrimental effects on employee well-being (Schabracq et al. 1996). In support of this, Van Dierendonck et al. (2004) indicated that high-quality leadership behavior is conducive to employee well-being. Second, an inclusive leader's openness, availability, and accessibility lead to employees' satisfaction in their jobs (Butler et al. 1999), which is an indicator of well-being (Huhtala and Parzefall 2007). This is because the inclusive leader's supportive behavior helps employees to fulfill their work goals, and thus stimulates intrinsic satisfaction with work (Huhtala and Parzefall 2007). Third, the leader's openness and accessibility may enhance role clarity, which contributes to lessen perceived work stress, and thus enhance employee well-being (Turner et al. 2002). The reason is that the leader's open behavior provides employees with necessary information and knowledge to analyze the information for themselves (Sofarelli and Brown 1998). Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

**H1** Inclusive leadership is positively related to employee well-being.

## 2.2 Inclusive Leadership and Innovative Behavior

Farr and Ford (1990) defined employee innovative behavior as "the intentional introduction within one's work role of new and useful ideas, processes, products, or procedures" (p. 63). Kanter (1988) and Scott and Bruce (1994) stressed that innovative behavior is a multi-stage process. This involves problem recognition, generation of ideas, building support for ideas, and implementation of ideas. While Amabile (1988) viewed innovative behavior as a motivational issue, Anderson et al. (2004) acknowledged that many factors are facilitators

of innovative behavior. These factors may come from individuals, work groups, and organizations. The influences of specific leadership styles on employee innovative behavior have been widely addressed. For instance, employee innovative behavior has been linked to transformational leadership (Afsar et al. 2014a, b; Sharifirad 2013; Janssen 2000; Nusair et al. 2012; Reuvers et al. 2008), leader-member exchange (Agarwal et al. 2012; Sanders et al. 2010; Volmer et al. 2012), and ethical leadership (Yidong and Xinxin 2013). These studies shared one commonality: in order for employee innovative behavior to occur, the leader needs to foster, encourage, and support creativity (Shalley and Gilson 2004).

An inclusive leader's openness, accessibility, and availability enhance employee satisfaction in interactions with the leader and extend employee knowledge and expertise (Carmeli et al. 2010; Choi et al. 2015), therefore motivating employees to involve in innovative work. We argue that inclusive leadership is positively associated to employee innovative behavior in three ways. First, supportive behavior of inclusive leaders provides employees with emotional and cognitive resources, which motivate them to be engaged in creative work (Amabile 1997; Vinarski-Peretz and Carmeli 2011). In a similar vein, Tierney et al. (1999) disclosed that a leader's open interactions with followers, encouragement, and support help to enhance employees' creativity, which is an initial component of employee innovative behavior (West 2002). Second, the leader's openness to employees' ideas and suggestions contributes to establish a perception of support for creativity and innovation among employees, which in turn forms a supportive climate for employees to experiment and suggest novel ideas (Cerne et al. 2013). The perception of a supportive climate makes them feel free to share information and express true thoughts about work (Kernis 2003). They feel secure to propose unconventional ideas and introduce conflicting opinions without fear of the consequences (Avolio et al. 2004). A supportive climate that is developed over time by a leader's support facilitates and fosters innovative behavior (Åmo 2006; Cropanzano and Mitchell 2005). Finally, leader availability and accessibility contribute to providing timely counseling and advice to employees, which increase employee role clarity in their work processes and therefore facilitate employee generalization and implementation of novel and useful ideas (Carmeli et al. 2010). Thus, we hypothesize the following:

**H2** Inclusive leadership is positively related to employee innovative behavior.

### 2.3 Inclusive Leadership and Person-Job Fit

Person-job fit has been defined as the perceived degree of match between an individual's knowledge, skills, abilities, needs, values, and the requirements of specific jobs or job tasks (Shin 2004). Kristof-Brown et al. (2002) reckoned that good person-job fit occurs when a person has sufficient abilities to perform a job. Edwards (1991) divided person-job fit into two basic types. One is the demands-abilities fit in which employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities are compatible with what their jobs require. The other form is labeled the needs-supplies or supplies-values fit in which employees' needs, desires, and preferences are met by the jobs they perform (Kristof-Brown et al. 2005). Some studies have examined the different influences of each sub-type of person-job fit on their study outcomes (Ying 2011). Others treated person-job fit as a single construct featuring the characteristics of both sub-types (Mulki et al. 2006). Our study adapts the latter approach.

We argue that inclusive leadership is related to person-job fit in three possible ways. First, an inclusive leader's openness to discuss problems with employees (Choi et al. 2015) may reduce employees' uncertainty and ambiguity in work roles (Thomas and Lankau 2009, Turner et al. 2002), thereby enhancing their capabilities to fulfill their jobs' demands. Second, inclusive leadership creates a supportive working environment (Hollander 2009) which promotes employee optimism and belief that they have fitting abilities to meet the requirements of their jobs and tasks (Tims et al. 2011). This is because in a supportive work climate, employees feel motivated, while experiencing less aversive arousal resulting from failures or hardship in their jobs (Gong et al. 2009). Babakus et al. (2011) disclosed that motivation stemmed from a supportive climate enhances employees' perception of person-job fit. Lastly, by showing constant support to employees (Hollander 2009), an inclusive leader is likely to provide employees with mastery experiences (Bandura 1977). Importantly, mastery experiences boost employees' confidence in their abilities because they may enjoy numerous opportunities to receive positive feedback about their efforts and performance (Tims et al. 2011). Following this logic, we propose the following hypothesis:

**H3** Inclusive leadership is positively related to person-job fit.

## 2.4 Person-Job Fit and Employee Well-Being

Person-job fit can be linked to employee well-being because of three reasons. First, positive perception of person-job fit makes employees more satisfied in work. Quinn (2005) indicated that the perception of having capabilities in fulfilling tasks helps employees derive more joy from their work. Brkich et al. (2002) and Singh and Greenhaus (2004) specified that a proper match between employee skills and abilities and the set of job requirements makes employees happy with their jobs. Second, when employees perceive a close fit between their abilities and job demands, they experience less stress and exhaustion (Singh and Greenhaus 2004) and worry less (Quinn 2005). In other words, the perception of person-job fit may weaken the effect of exhaustion at work (Halbesleben and Buckley 2004; Janssen 2004; Wright and Hobfoll 2004), thus improving employee well-being. Lastly, Akkermans et al. (2013) suggested that employees' positive self-evaluations of their abilities serve as personal resources. These personal resources are relevant to well-being because they stimulate personal growth development and goal achievement (Akkermans et al. 2013; Xanthopoulou et al. 2009). We argue that person-job fit helps them to perform their jobs well (Brkich et al. 2002) because employees who have fitting abilities with the job demands may perform their job effectively (Hamid and Yahya 2011), which in turn can enhance their well-being. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

**H4** Person-job fit is positively related to employee well-being.

## 2.5 Person-Job Fit and Innovative Behavior

We argue for the positive influence of person-job fit on employee innovative behavior in the following ways. First, employees feel optimistic and self-confident and develop a sense of accomplishment when they perceive that they can meet their job demands (Xie and Johns 1995). The confidence in their abilities motivates them to try new things more often and not be afraid of possible failures (Cerne et al. 2013). We argue that the positive perception of person-job fit influences their expectations of the consequences of the new trials and experiments. Positive expectations in turn encourage them to try new things, ideas, and processes (Cerne et al. 2013). Second, Avolio et al. (2004) added that



employees' positive assessment of their abilities to deal with the job's or task's requirements enable flexible and creative thinking which is a crucial element of innovative behavior. The confidence in abilities allows employees to think more flexibly and creatively because they experience less constraints derived from a lack of abilities (Avolio et al. 2004). Thus, we hypothesize the following:

**H5** Person-job fit is positively related to employee innovative behavior.

## 2.6 Person-Job Fit as a Mediator Between Inclusive Leadership and Employee Well-Being and Innovative Behavior

Previous research has shown a strong linkage between leadership and employee well-being and innovative behavior. However, the underlying theoretical mechanism is less clear (Carmeli et al. 2010; Sharifirad 2013). Based on the LMX theory, our study evaluated person-job fit as a mediator of the relationship between inclusive leadership and employee well-being and innovative behavior. Specifically, leaders' concern for others' needs and preferences, a characteristic of inclusive leadership (Carmeli et al. 2010), is appreciated by employees because employees realize that this concern of the leader is one of the main sources for creating supportive feedback and opportunities for participation (Van Vianen 2000). As such, inclusive leaders are likely to cultivate high-quality relationships with their subordinates (Carmeli et al. 2010). According to the LMX theory (Graen 1976), in a high-quality relationship in which a leader's and subordinates' preferences are matched (Van Vianen 2000), subordinates are provided with enhanced resources from their leader (Eisenberger et al. 2010). This enables them to meet their job demands better, and accordingly their perception of person-job fit is enhanced, which in turn catalyzes positive outcomes like employee well-being and innovative behavior.

In addition to the supporting explanation from the LMX theory (Graen 1976), we argue that inclusive leadership positively influences employee well-being through person-job fit in two possible ways. First, an inclusive leader's supportive behavior may boost employee perception of person-job fit by forming a supportive work climate (Babakus et al. 2011). This is because a supportive work climate may foster employee motivation and lessen their negative feelings resulting from failures and hardship in their jobs (Gong et al. 2009). Thus, inclusive leadership positively affects person-job fit. The perception of person-job fit, in turn, contributes to enhance employee well-being, as it creates more joy and lessens stress in work (Quinn 2005). These linkages suggest that person-job fit acts as a mediator in the effect of inclusive leadership on employee well-being. Second, supportive behavior of inclusive leaders supplies employees with mastery experiences, since the latter have more opportunities to receive positive feedbacks about their efforts and performance (Tims et al. 2011). Thus, they are more likely to experience a fit between their abilities and job requirements. These results suggest that inclusive leadership acts as a catalyst to employee perception of person-job fit. With the positive perception of a match between their abilities and job demands, employees tend to experience more satisfaction and less stress and exhaustion incurred during the work process (Singh and Greenhaus 2004); therefore, their well-being is enhanced. Clearly, inclusive leadership enhances employees' perception of person-job fit which in turn influences employee well-being. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

**H6** Person-job fit mediates the relationship between inclusive leadership and employee well-being.



An inclusive leader's explicit attention to followers' needs is a job resource, which influences employees' assessment of their abilities in relation to their job's requirements. We reason that an inclusive leader's open discussion and prompt responses to employees when needed can enhance clarity in employees' work roles (Thomas and Lankau 2009, Turner et al. 2002) and mitigate employees' hardship in their jobs (Gong et al. 2009). Besides, frequent exhibition of supportive behavior of the inclusive leader offers affluent mastery experiences among employees (Bandura 1977) thanks to the increased opportunities to receive positive feedback (Tims et al. 2011). This enhances employees' confidence in their abilities to perform their tasks. Hence, inclusive leadership catalyzes employees' perception of person-job fit. The person-job fit may positively influence employee innovative behavior because the confidence in capabilities to complete the job may raise employee optimism in trying new things, ideas, and processes (Cerne et al. 2013). In addition, when employees have a positive perception of their abilities-job demands fit, the confidence accompanied enables them to think about the issues more flexibly and creatively (Avolio et al. 2004), which is useful for the generalization of innovative ideas. This suggests that inclusive leadership is relevant to person-job fit, which in turn influences employee innovative behavior. Hence, we propose the following hypothesis:

**H7** Person-job fit mediates the relationship between inclusive leadership and employee innovative behavior.

### 3 Methodology

#### 3.1 Respondents and Procedure

Five companies from the telecommunication industry in Vietnam participated in this study. These five companies were in the list of 500 largest enterprises in Vietnam (Vietnam Report 2013), ranked by revenue, profits, growth rates, number of employees, and assets. Among their various branches around the country, only the main branches in Hanoi city were contacted for data collection. This particular population was selected based on two main criteria. First, the rates of employee concentration in Hanoi branches were higher compared to others. Second, through our conversations with their HR staffs, we learned that these companies valued their employees' well-being and innovative behavior. While they were seeking ways to enhance employee well-being and innovative behavior, they would be more willing to cooperate with us on this research. The demographic information of the sample are as follows: 64 % were males; 68 % were aged 25–39 years; 11 % were aged below 25 years; 21 % were aged over 40 years; 71 % had earned a bachelor's degree; 18 % had earned postgraduate degrees; 79 % had a job tenure of two to ten years; and finally, the majority of the respondents worked in production (33 %) and marketing (23 %) sections.

We used a questionnaire that was initially written in English and translated to Vietnamese language. Then, the translated version was back-translated into the source language by a different translator to check for meaning compatibility. The technique continued until the translated version became representative of the originating questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two main parts: Part (1) was designed with five closed-ended multiple-choice questions about employees' demographic information; Part (2) was used to obtain employees' ratings on the measuring items of the study's variables.

The questionnaires were distributed over 3 weeks. We identified a contact person in each organization and provided the contact people with information about the

questionnaire by email or telephone. Of the 13 organizations contacted, five provided a reply. Then, the questionnaires were sent to the contact people in person for distribution to the participants. We provided a box for completed questionnaires at each organization's reception desk. Participants were informed of the study objectives and the preservation of confidentiality of individual responses. Once a week, a reminder call was made to the contact people. Then, we collected the completed questionnaires from the contact people and the boxes initially put at the reception desks. Out of 300 questionnaires delivered, 216 were returned, giving a response rate of 72 %. Of these 216 questionnaires, nine questionnaires were considered invalid due to omitted or incorrect answers. Eventually, 207 responses were found valid for data analysis. According to Malhotra et al. (2006), the number of participants for an exploratory study should be at least 4–5 times the total number of items in the study. Since our study contained 27 items, its sample size of 207 respondents meets this criterion. Besides, Bentler and Chou (1987) suggested that under the normal distribution theory, the ratio of sample size to the number of free parameters should be close to 5:1 to get trustworthy parameter estimates in Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). In this study, this ratio was 4.8:1, as the number of free parameters was 54, including 27 error variances, a total of 23 (27-4) factor loadings, and four first-order factor variances. Thus, this study's sample size is moderately sufficient to estimate the parameters.

### 3.2 Measurement

#### 3.2.1 Employee Well-Being

Items measuring employee well-being ( $\alpha = .974$ ) were adopted from Arnold et al. (2007). They comprised six items that ask employees about the extent of positive affective well-being they experienced. A sampling item was "In the past six months, I have felt joyful." Each item was rated on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The scale reliability was reported by Arnold et al. (2007) with Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of .97. It was also found to positively correlate with transformational leadership and meaningful work (Arnold et al. 2007). The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of our scale was .974.

#### 3.2.2 Employee Innovative Behavior

Nine items adopted from Janssen (2000) were used to measure employee innovative behavior ( $\alpha = .953$ ). An example of the items used was "I create new ideas for difficult issues." They were rated by employees on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). In the study by Janssen (2000), the nine-item innovative behavior scale was rated by both employees and supervisors and its reliability was reported to be appropriate with Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of .95 for the self-rated and .96 for the supervisor rated scores. Besides, Janssen (2000) also reported positive correlation of innovative behavior with job demands. The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of our scale was .953.

#### 3.2.3 Inclusive Leadership

Inclusive leadership was measured with nine items ( $\alpha = .951$ ) that were adopted from Carmeli et al. (2010). The items were rated on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). A sample item was "The manager is open to

hearing new ideas.” The scale reliability was reported by its developers with Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  of .94 (Carmeli et al. 2010). Carmeli et al. (2010) also found that the scale correlates positively with employee psychological safety and employee involvement in creative work. Previous research confirmed its validity and found positive correlations with affective organizational commitment, employee creativity, and work engagement (Choi et al. 2015). The Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  of our scale was .951.

### 3.2.4 Person-Job Fit

To measure person-job fit, three items adopted from Mulki et al. (2006) were employed ( $\alpha = .912$ ). A sample item was “My skills and abilities perfectly match my job demands.” All of the items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Its reliability was reported adequate with Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  of .87 (Mulki et al. 2006). Mulki et al. (2006) have found that it has positive correlations with participative leadership, overall job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, but negative correlation with emotional exhaustion. The Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  of our scale was .912.

## 3.3 Control Variables

Well-being has been found to fluctuate with age and gender (Keyes et al. 2002). Innovative behavior is influenced by age, gender, job category (Choi and Chang 2009), job tenure, and educational level (Tierney and Farmer 2002). Concretely, Whittington and Smith-Doerr (2005) revealed that men have higher levels of innovation than women. Janssen (2001) showed that age is a potential predictor of creativity. Rank et al. (2009) posited that people in the marketing department may yield more potential for innovative behavior than those working in routine areas such as human resources. Therefore, we used age, gender, educational level, job tenure, and job category as the control variables.

## 3.4 Assessments of Common Method Variance

To minimize common method bias, in accordance with Podsakoff et al. (2003) suggestions, we demonstrated our commitment to the confidentiality of responses by stating this goal on the cover letter attached to each questionnaire. Common method bias was assessed using Harman’s single factor test for all items. Our results suggest that no general factor emerged to account for the majority of the variance. An unrotated factor analysis extracted four distinct factors that accounted for 81.647 % of the total variance. The largest factor explained 36.311 % of the variance. Therefore, common method variance did not affect this analysis. In addition, variance inflation factors (VIF) were calculated to check for multi-collinearity. VIF values ranged from 1.052 to 1.222, which were much lower than the upper limit of 10.0 (Neter et al. 1989). Therefore, multi-collinearity issues did not affect this analysis.

# 4 Results

## 4.1 Reliability and Validity

The reliability of the constructs was tested using Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha$ ). The Cronbach’s alpha values of the constructs ranged from .912 to .974. These results indicate that adequate internal consistency was associated with most of the measures. To test validity, we

conducted exploratory factor analysis (EFA) on construct measures. The extraction method used was principal component analysis. Rather than oblique rotation, orthogonal rotation, varimax in particular, was chosen because the factors were assumed to be independent (Field 2009), and the literature has supported it as the most widely used method in psychological research (Fabrigar et al. 1999). Four factors emerged with eigenvalues greater than 1, accounting for 81.647 % of the variance. Four items with low factor loadings were ignored for subsequent analyses. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was also carried out to ensure discriminant validity. All the remaining 23 items were used for running CFA in Amos. The widely used method, which assumes multivariate normal data and a reasonable sample size (about 200 observations), maximum likelihood (ML) estimation, was selected (Hox and Bechger 1998). The fit indices,  $\chi^2 = 313.852$ ;  $df = 183$ ;  $p < .000$ ;  $\chi^2/df = 1.715$ ; goodness-of-fit index (GFI) = .958; incremental fit index (IFI) = .984; root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .059; normed fit index (NFI) = .963; Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) = .982; and comparative fit index (CFI) = .984, showed that the hypothesized four-factor model had good fit. Hence, the factors in the measurement model had adequate reliability and validity.

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics for the study constructs. Of the four constructs, inclusive leadership has the highest mean (5.089), while employee well-being has the lowest mean (4.300). Most of the constructs were found to be correlated. With respect to control variables, employee well-being was correlated with gender and age, while innovative behavior was correlated with gender, age, educational level, job tenure, and job category.

## 4.2 Hypothesis Testing

We used Amos 20 to conduct structural equation modeling. The standard estimation method in SEM, maximum likelihood estimation, was selected because of our moderately sized sample and normal data distribution (Hox and Bechger 1998). Our data for all indicator variables met Weston and Gore's (2006) criterion for normality (i.e., skewness less than an absolute value of three and kurtosis less than an absolute value of 10). The largest skewness of our measured variables was 1.5, while the largest kurtosis was 1.2. Our measurement model included latent constructs with all the observed items that were confirmed after CFA. The path diagram of the structural model is shown in Fig. 1. Although the GFI has a value of .867, below the benchmark of .90, it is considered acceptable (Hair et al. 1998). Other indices, including  $\chi^2/df = 1.708$ , RMR = .044, NFI = .963, RMSEA = .059, TLI = .982, and CFI = .984, collectively suggest that our measurement model fits well (Hu and Bentler 1999). Our hypothesized model was tested against two alternative models. The first alternative model placed employee well-being as a mediator together with employee person-job fit to predict employee innovative behavior. The indices of this model show the following results:  $\chi^2/df = 1.831$ ; RMR = .134; NFI = .961; RMSEA = .064; and CFI = .982. Another alternative model with both person-job fit and employee innovative behavior as mediators to predict employee well-being was tested, and its model fit indices include the following:  $\chi^2/df = 1.737$ ; RMR = .100; NFI = .963; RMSEA = .060; and CFI = .984. Clearly, the alternative models suggest poorer fits compared to the hypothesized model.

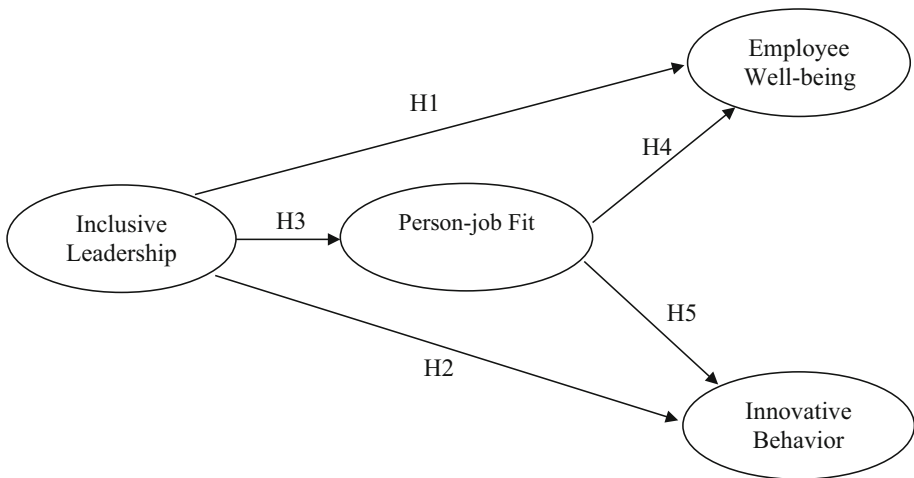
Hypothesis 1, which tested the relationship between inclusive leadership and employee well-being, was supported ( $\beta = .189$ ;  $p < .01$ ). Similarly, Hypothesis 2, which tested the relationship between inclusive leadership and innovative behavior, was supported ( $\beta = .180$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Hypothesis 3, which tested the effect of inclusive leadership on

**Table 1** Descriptive statistics and correlations for all variables

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Gender	.358	.480	–							
2. Age	1.106	.556	-.021	–						
3. Educational level	1.169	.553	.009	.178*	–					
4. Job tenure	1.314	.808	.060	.357**	.195**	–				
5. Job category	1.652	1.406	-.210**	.097	.195**	.178*	–			
6. Inclusive leadership	5.089	.886	-.039	.121	.180**	.078	.120	–		
7. Person-job fit	4.927	1.285	-.181**	.166*	.153*	-.008	.124	.213**	–	
8. Employee well-being	4.300	1.311	-.278**	.172*	.073	.117	.088	.340**	.324**	–
9. Innovative behavior	4.463	1.141	-.261**	.259**	.280**	.181**	.374**	.234**	.222**	.074

N = 207

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$



**Fig. 1** Analytical model

person-job fit was supported ( $\beta = .210$ ;  $p < .01$ ). Hypothesis 4, which tested the influence of person-job fit on employee well-being, was also supported ( $\beta = .337$ ;  $p < .01$ ). Finally, Hypothesis 5, which examined the relationship between person-job fit and innovative behavior, was supported ( $\beta = .171$ ;  $p < .05$ ) (Table 2).

To test the mediating effects of person-job fit, we conducted bootstrapping tests using structural equation modeling with a bootstrap sample of 5000 based on well-defined recent recommendations (Mallinckrodt et al. 2006). This method directly produces bootstrapped biased corrected confidence intervals for indirect effects (Mallinckrodt et al. 2006).

Two separate mediation analyses were conducted. In the first mediation analysis, we began by testing the direct effect of the independent variable (i.e., inclusive leadership) on

**Table 2** Standardized estimates from the structural model

Direct effects	Coefficient	T_value	Outcomes
<b>Paths</b>			
Inclusive leadership → Employee well-being (H1)	.189**	2.779	Supported
Inclusive leadership → Innovative behavior (H2)	.180*	2.432	Supported
Inclusive leadership → Person-job fit (H3)	.210**	2.877	Supported
Person-job fit → Employee well-being (H4)	.337**	3.965	Supported
Person-job fit → Innovative behavior (H5)	.171*	2.443	Supported

$\chi^2 = 314.192$  (df = 184,  $p < .000$ ); RMR = .044; GFI = .867; CFI = .984; RMSEA = .059;  
NFI = .963; IFI = .984; TLI = .982

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

the dependent variable (i.e., employee well-being). Then, we included person-job fit as the mediator in the established model and obtained the indirect effect of inclusive leadership on employee well-being. The second mediation analysis followed the same procedure with employee innovative behavior as a dependent variable.

As seen in Table 3, our results show that person-job fit significantly mediated the relation between inclusive leadership and employee innovative behavior (estimate of standardized indirect effect: .037; Bias corrected confidence intervals [95 % CI]: .007 to .092). Person-job fit also mediated the relationship between inclusive leadership and employee well-being (estimate of standardized indirect effect: .071; Bias corrected confidence intervals [95 % CI]: .023–.144). Under the light of Zhao et al. (2010) discussion, we concluded that person-job fit plays a mediating role in the relationship between inclusive leadership and employee well-being and innovative behavior. We confirm that both indirect and direct effects from the two mediation analyses (see Table 3) are statistically significant (Zhao et al. 2010). Accordingly, Hypotheses 6 and 7 were supported.

## 5 Discussion

### 5.1 Theoretical Implications

While the existing literature suggests that a specific leadership style that exhibits positive behavior to inspire employees may enhance employee well-being and innovative behavior (Sharifirad 2013), our study also found that inclusive leadership, characterized by leaders' openness, accessibility, and availability, is an effective way to achieve these two outcomes. Our findings are in line with previous studies, indicating that inclusive leadership is positively related to employee well-being (Arnold et al. 2007; Densten 2005; Liu et al. 2010, Sharifirad 2013) and innovative behavior (Gong et al. 2009; Mumford et al. 2002; Sivanathan et al. 2004).

As leader supportive behaviors are present in several leadership styles, inclusive leaders perform distinct supportive behaviors. For instance, inclusive leadership concerns a leader's willingness to listen to followers' ideas and requests, similar to servant leadership (Van Dierendonck 2010). It focuses on listening and inviting employees' inputs in the decision-making process, which ultimately leads to quality relationship between the leader and members (Graen and Uhl-Bien 1995; Hollander 2009). Similar to servant leadership,

**Table 3** Bootstrap analysis of the magnitude and statistical significance of the direct and indirect effects

Independent variable	Mediator variable	Dependent variable	SMC	Beta standardized direct/indirect effect	$\beta$ mean direct/indirect effect	SE of mean	95 % CI <sup>a</sup> (lower, upper)
Inclusive leadership		Employee well-being	.067	.260***	.377 <sup>a</sup>	.099 <sup>a</sup>	.117–.393
Inclusive leadership	Person-job fit	Employee well-being	.177	.071**	.189	.030	.023–.144
Inclusive leadership		Innovative behavior	.047	.216**	.305 <sup>a</sup>	.097 <sup>a</sup>	.073–.354
Inclusive leadership	Person-job fit	Innovative behavior	.075	.037*	.179	.021	.007–.092

CI confidence interval, SMC squared multiple correlation

<sup>a</sup> These values are based on unstandardized bootstrapped beta coefficients

\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

inclusive leaders focus on caring for followers' needs, actively seeking their contributions, and providing them with formal and informal support to complete their task better (Van Dierendonck 2010). Through sufficient stress on leader availability and promptness, an inclusive leader makes significant efforts for supporting and meeting followers' needs and interests (Hollander 2009; Van Dierendonck 2010).

By focusing on inclusive leadership, our study extends leadership research in several ways. First, our study confirmed the positive association between inclusive leadership and employee involvement in innovative activities in the context of Vietnamese employees. We found that leadership and its outcomes are highly culturally dependent. This is because the national culture can affect personal values, attitudes, behavior, as well as organizational practice. Vietnam, as an Asian country, has different cultural characteristics, such as high collectivism, high uncertainty avoidance, and long-term oriented culture (Hofstede 2001; Wang and Yi 2011), in contrast to the U.S. and European contexts. For instance, collectivistic cultures emphasize the significance of the group and the importance of cohesion within the social group. Leaders and employees in these cultures are integrated into strong, cohesive groups from the very beginning of their careers in a company, whereas in individualistic cultures, each employee is expected to look after himself or herself (Hofstede 2001).

Thus, in Vietnam, which is a highly collectivistic society, leaders are expected to take care of their employees beyond the obligations prescribed in formal contracts (Ramamoorthy et al. 2007). This cultural factor helps to shape inclusive leadership and strengthen leaders' inclusive and supportive behavior in managing their employees. If employees receive benefits from the organization in a collectivistic society, then they will feel obliged to reciprocate. Employees in cultures with high uncertainty avoidance, like Vietnam, tend to avoid uncomfortable and uncertain situations by sharing a close relationship with the leader. Employees in uncertainty-avoiding cultures are more emotional and motivated by intrinsic factors like harmonious relationship with colleagues and leaders. Leaders in this culture may strengthen employee motivation and organizational



commitment by providing close care and concern for employees and emotional ties, which can be effectively achieved by inclusive leadership.

Long-term views on society and employees in the Vietnamese culture may also decrease incentives for leaders to share a vertical-based relationship with employees and maintain a performance-oriented leadership style. In particular, in this culture, maintaining quality leader-member relationship over time is likely to be more important than immediate performance maximization (Zhang et al. 2006). Employees in long-term-oriented cultures are more motivated based on inclusive leadership, which is important for improving employee well-being and innovative behavior in the Vietnamese context.

On the other hand, House et al. (2004) divided 62 countries into 10 clusters in the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) study and placed each societal cluster within six leadership styles. Inclusive leadership has not been directly addressed in the GLOBE study. However, inclusive leadership shares some common characteristics of other leadership styles, such as team-oriented, participative, and humane styles. While both team-oriented leadership and inclusive leadership emphasize collaboration with others, inclusive leadership encourages inputs from followers in the process of completing a job, which is identical to participative leadership. Moreover, both inclusive leadership and humane leadership emphasize support and concern for followers (Carmeli et al. 2010; House et al. 2004; Koopman et al. 1999).

Although we found that information about Vietnam was not reported in the GLOBE study, among the ten societal clusters evaluated, Vietnam is closely associated with the Confucian culture cluster of China, South Korea, and Japan, as Vietnam has been strongly influenced by Confucianism (Nguyen 2011). In this vein, we assume that inclusive leadership is largely relevant to the Vietnamese organizational context because both team-oriented and humane styles are highly valued by Confucian countries, and participative style is moderately valued in this cluster (House et al. 2004). This suggests that inclusive leadership may unevenly be present in the Vietnamese context, and that this country-specific culture exerts an important role in shaping inclusive leadership and its effectiveness (Koopman et al. 1999).

Moreover, Mumford et al. (2002) and Carmeli et al. (2010) stated that leadership plays a crucial role in facilitating employee involvement in innovative activities in knowledge intensive, complex, and uncertain environments like the Vietnam telecommunication industry. Our study used the sample of telecommunication firms in Vietnam, which were forced to focus on employees' job-related performance such as innovative behavior (Nguyen and Papadopoulos 2011). We believe that the findings of our study reflect the big picture of the technological and knowledge-intensive firms in the Vietnamese context in particular and the Asian countries with a Confucian influence in general.

Second, most of the leadership studies in relation to employee well-being and innovative behavior have focused on a general pattern of leader behavior (Oldham and Cummings 1996; Tierney et al. 1999; Carmeli et al. 2010). Especially, a majority of leadership studies in relation to employee well-being and innovative behavior have centered on transformational leadership (Sharifirad 2013), in which a leader motivates employees and influences their behavior by getting them to "internalize and prioritize a larger collective cause over individual interests" (Lian and Tui 2012, p. 67). This indicates that a transformational leader focuses on influencing employees through a pursuit of organizational goals first (Kanungo 2001). However, our study on inclusive leadership may follow a different path through which leaders can catalyze employee well-being and innovative behavior by highlighting follower needs (Hollander 2009). This observation is in line with previous calls to focus on follower needs for the purpose of creating a

motivated and productive workforce (Shuck and Herd 2012). Our study on inclusive leadership, a core facet of relational leadership, contributes to enrich the literature linking relational leadership and innovative performance, which is still in the early stage of development (Carmeli et al. 2010; Uhl-Bien 2006).

Third, we also discovered that person-job fit mediates the relationship between inclusive leadership and employee well-being and innovative behavior. Our study's result extends the findings of Brkic et al. (2002) and Singh and Greenhaus (2004), showing that perceptions of person-job fit make employees happier in their jobs. Likewise, it is consistent with the findings of Afsar et al. (2014a, b) and Ying (2011), which identified the influence of person-job fit on innovative behavior. Nevertheless, our evaluation of person-job fit as a mediator adds two key contributions to the scholarly world. First, our study's focus on person-job fit as a mediator is a timely response to the call for studying key mechanisms by which leader behaviors are associated with employee well-being and involvement in creative activities (Sharifirad 2013; Carmeli et al. 2010). Our results may motivate future researchers to test person-job fit as a potential mediator in the relationships between other specific leadership styles and employee well-being as well as innovative behavior. Second, as previous studies have documented, person-job fit influences job satisfaction, quality of work life, positive adjustment in new organization, and turnover intention (Cable and Derue 2002; Edwards 1996; Guan et al. 2010). Our study establishes a direction for future research to evaluate person-job fit as a mediator in the relationship between inclusive leadership and these outcomes. In addition, the present study offers the LMX theory as a sound theoretical framework in understanding the relationships between leadership and individual-level outcome. Our study provides a clue for the LMX theory to extend its applicability to leadership study in explaining other types of leadership and their effectiveness.

Our study treated person-job fit as a single construct connoting both employees' abilities–job demands fit and employees' needs–job supplies fit, as shown in many previous studies (Edwards 1991; Kristof 1996; Mulki et al. 2006). From the methodological perspective, person-job fit can be measured by either an actual fit, gauging the fit between separately rated personal and job characteristics (Cable and Judge 1996), or a perceived fit, measuring the perception of compatibility or similarity between the value of the person and job asking that how a person fits well in the job (Kristof-Brown et al. 2002; Mitchell et al. 2001). In this regard, Edwards et al. (2006) pointed out that measures of person-job fit tend to overlap with measures of affect, as the perception of person-job fit that combines the person and job, disregards the direction of their differences, treating positive and negative discrepancies equally. They also distinguished the other approach (an actual fit), which is a comparison between the person and job characteristics, by assigning different weights to them depending on how the comparison is framed. We applied employees' perceptions of person-job fit, which seems more appropriate, because our study focused on individual's perception and attitude as the central predictors of individual-level behavior and outcomes (Cable and Judge 1997). However, future studies should consider both the actual and perceived person-job fit approaches, and investigate further the mechanisms linking the distinct results of each approach to strengthen the theoretical and empirical implications of the person-job fit.

## 5.2 Managerial Implications

Our findings indicate that inclusive leadership and person-job fit are positively associated to employee well-being and innovative behavior. In order to improve employee well-being

and innovative behavior, managers need to put leadership practices under consideration (Sparks et al. 2001; Vinarski-Peretz and Carmeli 2011). We suggest that managers should raise supervisor awareness of the positive effects of inclusive leadership on employee well-being and innovative behavior. In doing so, they may generate supervisors' greater commitment to the application of this type of leadership at work. Furthermore, managers should provide immediate supervisors with sufficient training on the practices of inclusive leadership so that they can exhibit openness, accessibility, and availability effectively to their employees (Carmeli et al. 2010). Besides, to promote the effectiveness of inclusive leadership, human resource policies and practices such as training, performance assessment, and reward systems should be aligned with and in support of an inclusive leadership style (Choi et al. 2015).

Moreover, in order to boost employees' well-being and innovative behavior, managers should pay attention to managing employees' perceptions of person-job fit effectively through the process of hire, communication, and socialization. Cable and DeRue (2002) disclosed that managers may measure and manage person-job fit both during anticipatory socialization (selection and recruitment) and after organizational entry (training and socialization). We suggest that managers need to examine employees' characteristics carefully to select the fitting employees for the jobs or the tasks (Brkich et al. 2002; Singh and Greenhaus 2004). In the working processes, managers need to provide constructive feedbacks and appropriate mentoring, which may enhance employees' perception of person-job fit. They may also enhance employees' perception of person-job fit by providing training classes, extra courses, and seminars with a focus on developing employee knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for their job and organization's demands (Hamid and Yahya 2011).

### 5.3 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

We note five main limitations of this study. First, this is a cross-sectional study. It is restricted from testing whether inclusive leadership caused higher employee well-being and innovative behavior. Future studies should conduct longitudinal research to verify the findings. Second, the ratings of all variables were collected from the same employees, which may result in inflated relationships because of single-source effects. Future researchers are encouraged to collect data from various sources. Third, due to the choice of the sample, which was limited to the employees of only five telecommunication industry organizations in the Vietnamese context, our results cannot be generalized to the entire Vietnamese context or organizations in other industries. Future research should involve larger and more generalized samples. Fourth, our application of the EFA solution is a possible limitation. We used orthogonal rotation, assuming that our factors (or dimensions of these factors) are uncorrelated. However, this assumption may not always hold, as Fabrigar et al. (1999) indicated that many constructs in behavioral studies are possibly correlated with one another. In such cases, oblique rotation may be more appropriate. We, therefore, suggest that future research be cautious about selecting rotations in performing EFA.

The last limitation of our study involves the sample size. While our sample size met the criterion by Malhotra et al. (2006) for an exploratory study, it moderately met the criterion of the ratio of 5:1, as specified by Bentler and Chou (1987) for SEM. Future studies are encouraged to use a larger sample size to increase the validity of empirical findings.

## 6 Conclusion

This study focused on the effects of inclusive leadership on employee well-being and innovative behavior and the underlying mechanism of these effects. Our findings reveal that inclusive leadership, characterized by openness, accessibility, and availability, catalyzes employees' perception of person-job fit, which is in turn positively related to employee well-being and innovative behavior. The study provides additional support for the role that supportive leader plays in enhancing employee well-being and innovative behavior. This study contributes to the literature in three ways. First, the study provides an important step toward understanding inclusive leadership, a relatively underexplored facet of relational leadership, and leadership research, in general (Carmeli et al. 2010). Second, it opens a promising path for future research to include person-job fit as a potential mediator in examining other leadership-employee positive outcome relationships. Finally, it heightens the relevance of inclusive leadership to the Vietnamese culture and opens up a fertile ground for cross-cultural future research of inclusive leadership.

## Appendix 1: Questionnaire Items

Variables	Items
Inclusive leadership	My manager is open to hearing new ideas
	My manager is attentive to new opportunities to improve work processes
	My manager is open to discuss the desired goals and new ways to achieve them
	My manager is available for consultation on problems
	My manager is an ongoing "presence" in this team—someone who is readily available
	My manager is available for professional questions I would like to consult with him/her
	My manager is ready to listen to my requests
Person-job fit	My manager encourages me to access him/her on emerging issues
	My skills and abilities perfectly match with my job demands
	My personal likes and dislikes match perfectly with my job demands
Employee well-being	There is a good fit between my job and me
	In the past 6 months, I have felt motivated
	In the past 6 months, I have felt energetic
	In the past 6 months, I have felt enthusiastic
	In the past 6 months, I have felt lively
	In the past 6 months, I have felt joyful
	In the past 6 months, I have felt cheerful

Variables	Items
Employee innovative behavior	I create new ideas for difficult issues
	I search out new working methods, techniques, or instruments
	I generate original solutions for problems
	I mobilize support for innovative ideas
	I acquire approval for innovative ideas
	I make important organizational members enthusiastic for innovative ideas
	I transform innovative ideas into useful applications
	I introduce innovative ideas into the work environment in a systematic way
	I evaluate the utility of innovative ideas

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