

# **INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL AIMS**

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**A CRITICAL EXPLORATION OF TENSIONS FACING LEADERS IN NEWS MEDIA  
ORGANIZATIONS**

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# **INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL AIMS: A CRITICAL EXPLORATION OF TENSIONS FACING LEADERS IN NEWS MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS**

## **Abstract:**

In recent years, the concept of inclusive leadership (IL) has received significant attention from scholars and practitioners. Perhaps not surprising, given that the concept, understood as a leadership style focused on facilitating employees' sense of inclusion, has been proposed as a path for leaders and organizations to achieve both economic and social goals (e.g. Korkmaz et al., 2022). Emerging research, however, finds that the literature so far only to a limited extent has acknowledged challenges to implementing IL in practice. Seeking to address this gap in the literature, we investigate what tensions leaders face when implementing IL in news media organizations. We do this by building on ten qualitative interviews with journalists and editors and a theoretical framework informed by Randel et al. (2018). Our findings suggest that there exist several tensions between IL behaviors and the organizational aims of objectivity and ideology and that these tensions can be found across three contexts of importance to journalists' sense of inclusion, namely, the newsroom, the news content and the public sphere.

## **Keywords:**

Inclusive leadership, Organizational aims, Tensions, News media organizations

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

In recent years, the concept of inclusive leadership (IL) has received significant attention, as a result of globalization and changing demographics. IL has been held as a path for leaders and organizations to achieve both economic and social goals (e.g. Korkmaz et al., 2022). It can be understood as a leadership style focused on facilitating employees' sense of inclusion, which is when employees simultaneously experience a sense of belonging and are valued for their uniqueness (Shore et al., 2011). The concept has received interest from both scholars and practitioners, recognizing the importance of leadership in achieving inclusion (Shore et al., 2011; Cho et al., 2017; Randel et al., 2018; Korkmaz et al., 2022).

IL is a relatively new concept that is often praised and applauded. Numerous positive outcomes of IL have been explored, including its effects on job satisfaction, job retention, and employee innovative behavior. Nonetheless, the encouragement of diversity, which is central to IL, may imply certain tensions for leaders in practice. Tensions refer to competing demands that must be attended to simultaneously (Ferdman, 2017; Smith & Lewis, 2011). While some researchers have begun looking at these, there is still a need for further development in this area (Ferdman, 2017; Navid & Kuna, 2020; Randel et al., 2018).

To address this research gap, the present study investigates tensions facing leaders implementing IL. The study is conducted in the context of the news media industry, which could be seen as a particularly relevant case for the exploration of tensions, given the existence of certain boundaries concerning what can be included in news content.

## 1.2 Prior Research & Research Gap

The first wave of literature on IL has been concerned with conceptualizing the concept (Nembhard & Edmonson, 2006; Zanoni & Janssen, 2007; Carmeli et al., 2010; Sabharwal, 2014). Further on, some researchers focused on quantitatively exploring the relationship

between IL and various outcomes, which are primarily positive. Studies have also been occupied with describing IL behaviors (Randel et al., 2018; Korkmaz et al., 2022), but the literature is yet to look at the dynamics arising when placing IL in a broader context. Every organization is a complex entity driven by multiple and sometimes competing demands which may place leaders in a situation where implementing IL practices clashes with other organizational needs. To our knowledge, the tensions and challenges associated with implementing IL were indicated by Randel et al. (2018) as a topic for future research and have only been explored to a limited degree.

### 1.3 Purpose and research question

We explore what tensions occur when implementing inclusive leadership in practice. The study builds on ten qualitative interviews with journalists and editors from six Nordic news media organizations. We hope that studying organizational factors that may be in tension with IL, can be of interest to both researchers and practitioners of IL, within the media industry and beyond. The research question of the study is as follows:

*What tensions exist when implementing inclusive leadership in news media organizations?*

### 1.4 Limitations of scope

The study focuses on the definition and theoretical framework of IL proposed by Randel et al. (2018). We acknowledge that the findings of our study may be less relevant to scholars with other understandings of IL. However, we have chosen to proceed with this definition due to its solid theoretical support and because its explanatory behaviors are helpful in examining tensions related to IL in practice. To be further noted, the study focuses on exploring what tensions arise when implementing IL rather than attempting to study how these tensions can be managed or resolved. While this second path of inquiry is highly relevant, the present study has been limited to the former due to available resources and for an improved focus.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Inclusive leadership

The concept of inclusive leadership could be seen as a continuation of earlier literature emphasizing diversity management and leadership theories (Korkmaz et al., 2022). The concept has received much attention in recent years, as researchers and practitioners have recognized the importance of leaders' role in achieving inclusion (Nishii & Mayer, 2009). Scholars can be found to have made various interpretations of what inclusive leadership entails. While some researchers, such as Nembhard & Edmonson (2006), focused on the leaders' invitation and appreciation of others' contributions, others, like Carmeli et al. (2010), emphasized leaders' openness, accessibility, and availability. Multiple IL conceptualizations are based on the conceptualization of inclusion by Shore et al. (2011) (Ferdman, 2014; Nishii, 2013; Javed et al., 2017; Mor Barak, 2014; Randel et al., 2018). This conceptualization is derived from Brewer's (1991) optimal distinctiveness theory and explains how uniqueness and belongingness lead to inclusion (Shore et al., 2011). Randel et al. (2018) took this conceptualization even further, suggesting a set of behaviors that foster inclusion through facilitating *belongingness* and indicating value for *uniqueness*.

*Belongingness* refers to the extent to which individuals feel accepted, respected, and valued by their peers and leaders and their sense of being an integral part of the group (Randel et al., 2018). Ferdman (2014) added that group members strive to become more like their peers to belong to the group. As a result, some researchers pointed out that leaders who overemphasize *belongingness* while paying little attention to *uniqueness*, create assimilation among group members, which was also demonstrated by the optimal distinctiveness theory (Ferdman, 2014; Brewer, 1991). Hence, various researchers seem to have supported the idea that inclusive leaders must balance practices that foster *belongingness* with practices that strengthen the acceptance of differences, with the latter practices dealing with the *uniqueness* aspect of IL (Ferdman, 2014; Randel et al., 2018). *Uniqueness*, for its part, entails recognizing and valuing

team members' diverse experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives (Shore et al., 2018). Ferdman (2014) related *uniqueness* to distinctiveness, and underlined that differentiation is a prerequisite for group members to feel included. From this perspective, inclusive leaders create an environment where everyone feels comfortable expressing their individuality and using their unique strengths and talents to contribute to team processes and outcomes.

A considerable portion of the IL literature has been concerned with positive outcomes. Notably, the literature has associated inclusive leadership practices and an inclusive workplace culture with several positive outcomes, including improved performance, enhanced employee engagement, job satisfaction, retention, and employee innovative behavior (Cox & Blake, 1991; Ferdman, 2014; Qi et al., 2018). While both Randel et al. (2018) and Korkmaz et al. (2022) have investigated IL from the outlook that it may yield positive outcomes, only a limited number of researchers have investigated the topic of adverse IL outcomes (Xiaotao et al., 2018; Zhu et al., 2020), supporting the argument made by Korkmaz et al. (2022), stating that this area needs further development.

## 2.2 Inclusive leadership and tensions

Although mainstream IL theory advocates for the harmonious coexistence of differences, some researchers suggested that tensions often arise when different forces face off (Ferdman, 2017; Navid & Kuna, 2020). Organizations possess multiple values, goals, demands, and needs, and in some cases, these may be contradicting forces. Hence, leaders may encounter situations where implementing IL practices conflicts with other organizational aims. Randel et al. (2018) illustrated the above-mentioned point by mentioning how organizational aims in political and religious organizations can make it problematic to implement IL.

We have identified, in the literature, two categories of tension related to the implementation of IL. One such category is the tension between *implementing IL requirements* and *business needs*. IL implementation requires specific organizational measures. Navid & Kuna (2020) identified three measures that may be in tension with other business needs. First, implementing



IL will often bring about organizational change, which may conflict with the potential business need for stability. Secondly, IL requires flexible procedures, which may challenge the need for bureaucratic control. Finally, IL implementation may demand costly resources, jeopardizing the commercial need for short-term profitability. In these cases, tensions play out between *requirements for implementing IL* and *business needs*.

The second category we found is the tension between *belongingness* and *uniqueness*, the two factors that, according to Randel et al. (2018), constitute IL (Ferdman, 2017). These two forces present a dilemma between highlighting or downplaying individual differences (Holck & Muhr, 2016; Ferdman, 2017). An overemphasis on *belongingness* can exclude individual differences while attending too much to *uniqueness* might inhibit the chances of forming a collective identity. This tension concerns the two main aspects of IL (Randel et al., 2018).

Identified tensions category	Description	Example
The tension between requirements for IL implementation and business needs	Implementing diversity and inclusion practices requires organizational measures which can be in tension with other business needs.	Implementing IL may require organizational change, which is in tension with the business's need for stability.
Uniqueness-belonging tensions	Uniqueness, focusing on differentiation, can be in tension with belonging, emphasizing togetherness.	Focusing too much on belonging may exclude individual differences, while too much attention to uniqueness may hamper creating a collective identity.

*Table 1: categories of tensions found related to inclusive leadership*

The mentioned categories document that tensions are essential to include in understanding IL. However, as we identified, only a few examples from the IL-literature incorporate tensions. Moreover, due to the complexity of organizational realities, there are reasons to believe that there exist potential tensions yet to be uncovered and understood concerning IL implementation.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

As previously mentioned, Randel et al. (2018) identified and described a set of leadership practices constituting both the belongingness and uniqueness aspects of IL. The IL behaviors identified by Randel et al. (2018) consist of three behaviors aimed at facilitating belongingness; *supporting individuals as group members*, *ensuring justice and equity*, and *sharing decision-making*. Moreover, the authors proposed two behaviors indicating value for uniqueness: *encouraging diverse contributions* and *helping group members fully contribute*. These practices can play out at multiple arenas where “information is generated, processed, and received” (Sheppard et al., 1992, p. 13).

#### 3.1 Inclusive leadership behaviors

*Supporting group members* is crucial to facilitating belongingness and entails catering to employees' needs and considerations (Randel et al., 2018). The behavior is further concretized by Nembhard & Edmonson (2006), who stated that it entails making employees feel comfortable and showing concern for their best interests. A similar conception can be found in Mor Barak et al.'s (1998) suggestion that leaders must create a comfortable environment that caters to employee's needs and concerns, in order to support group members.

Inclusive leaders can further facilitate belongingness by *ensuring justice and equity* in the workplace (Randel et al., 2018). According to Sabharwal (2014), inclusive environments require that leaders are committed to fair treatment of individuals regardless of differences. Several researchers highlighted that ensuring justice and equity is about prioritizing due processes and providing equal opportunity for employees to participate in work-related and non-work-related activities (Randel et al., 2018; Lind & Tyler, 1988). For instance, if a leader suggests organizing a meeting over drinks at a bar after hours, that may diminish the feeling of inclusion for an employee whose religion does not allow him or her to drink alcohol (Randel et al., 2018). Randel et al. (2018) also pointed out that fair leaders proactively address issues

related to discrimination or bias and ensure that all employees have equal opportunities for growth and advancement.

A final core element of how leaders facilitate belongingness is by *sharing decision-making* (Randel et al., 2018). Researchers have recognized the importance of shared decision-making for inclusion (Mor Barak & Daya, 2013). Genuinely considering and using employee input to define work is identified as essential leadership practices to achieve shared decision-making (Nishii, 2014; Mor Barak, 2014).

Inclusive leaders can indicate value for uniqueness by *encouraging diverse contributions* (Randel et al., 2018). Several IL researchers have confirmed that eliciting diverse contributions and inviting group members to provide input are among the most critical IL behaviors (Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006; Lirio et al., 2008: 443). Valuing diverse contributions is about accepting and seeking individuals' unique viewpoints (Shore et al., 2011).

*Helping group members fully contribute* is the second and final leadership behavior that indicates value for uniqueness and is mainly about making employees feel that their contributions are welcome (Randel et al., 2018). To make individuals contribute to the best of their abilities, leaders should explore the employees' strengths and provide them with the necessary tools to carry out their work (Randel et al., 2018).

### 3.2 Theory discussion

The mentioned IL practices have paved the way for an increased understanding of the concept, and several scholars have based their understanding of IL on these behaviors (Fang et al., 2019; Shore & Chung, 2021; Van Knippenberg & Van Ginkel, 2021; Ashikali et al., 2021; Roberson & Perry, 2021). Van Knippenberg & Van Ginkel (2021) underlined that these practices give rise to inclusiveness only when implemented simultaneously, as it is the combination of belongingness and uniqueness that constitutes inclusiveness. Hence, it is of interest to include all of the proposed IL behaviors in the theoretical framework used in our analysis (Randel et al., 2018).

Some researchers suggested a potential gap between theory and practice when it comes to IL (Roberson & Perry, 2021). Randel et al.'s (2018) usage of the verbs *supporting*, *encouraging*, and *helping* to define IL behaviors, could make the behaviors challenging to translate into practice. These verbs may appear vague and diffuse and lack actionability. Regardless, Randel et al.'s (2018) definitions of IL practices represent a step in the right direction in concretizing IL. We believe that the five practices have more explanatory power than Korkmaz et al.'s (2022) 20 suggested IL practices. Therefore, we find that the five behaviors suggested by Randel et al. (2018), combined with other researchers' contributions to expand the definition of the behaviors, are most suitable for analyzing tensions of IL in the different contexts.

The IL behaviors suggested by Randel et al. (2018) are intended to represent a tool for practitioners wanting to implement IL. However, the theoretical framework does not incorporate any challenges or tensions in the theory. One of the challenges of implementing IL, presented by Randel et al. (2018), involves balancing belongingness and uniqueness when not all differences fit organizational demands, such as in religious, political, or in our case, journalistic organizations. Randel et al. (2018) pointed this out as an area for future research. This challenge might also be referred to as a tension between IL and other organizational values (Ferdman, 2017). The present study is positioned in this tension. The five leadership practices constitute a theoretical framework that offers great support for identifying what tensions may arise when implementing these practices across various contexts.

## 4. Methodology

### 4.1 Method

#### 4.1.1 A pragmatic approach

The research question is answered with the help of journalists' and editors' accounts of their experiences at work. While their experiences are recognized as subjective and, at least in part, socially constructed, they are also understood as created in interaction with a common external world. With a philosophical position that acknowledges both the subjective and objective, the epistemology and ontology of the present study could be understood as *pragmatic* (cf. Saunders et al., 2015).

#### 4.1.2 A qualitative and inductive study

The study relies on qualitative data, gathered through semi-structured interviews, to answer the research question. The use of qualitative data could be motivated by our study's focus on complex social phenomena and its exploratory approach.

While we, the authors, had some theories in mind, such as inclusive leadership, at the start of the study, the research could broadly be understood as following an inductive approach. The authors sought to contribute and develop theories rather than testing existing ones (Saunders et al., 2015). The inductive approach was also exemplified by the authors arriving at the final research question first after having started to explore the empirical material.

#### 4.1.3 A cross-sectional and mono-method study

The study used a cross-sectional design as the participants' understandings were investigated only at the specific points in time of the interviews and not over time. Additionally, the study could further be categorized as a mono-method study, as interviews were the only source of empirics.

## 4.2 Data collection & Analysis

### 4.2.1 Sampling

The study is based on ten qualitative interviews with six journalists, three editors, and one diversity manager across six Nordic media organizations. The sampling strategy of the study follows a combination of convenience sampling, self-selection, and purposive sampling (cf Saunders et al., 2015). This is because the interviewees and their associated organizations were selected based on not only their accessibility to the researchers and perceived interest in participating, but also their judged potential to inform the study. The choice to interview editors and journalists and interview a diverse set of media organizations was convenient to the researchers and seen as a way to include multiple perspectives in the study. The focus on the Nordics was mainly because editors and journalists located in this part of the world were more accessible to us. At the time of sample selection, the study emphasized diversity, leading people with minority backgrounds to be judged as particularly relevant to the study. This contributed to the sample largely consisting of people with minority backgrounds.

Two of the organizations participating in the study have explicit ideological orientations, meaning that they are openly committed to promoting a particular agenda. These ideological news media organizations include a *left-wing newspaper* whose primary concern is to be the voice of the lower classes of society, as well as a *minority-focused digital newspaper* that seeks to represent the voice of ethnic minorities. Additionally, the study involves four mainstream news media organizations, which represent commonly held views and beliefs in their reporting (Cambridge University Press, n.d.). These news media organizations include a *national broadcaster*, a *commercial broadcaster*, a *commercial newspaper*, and a *local newspaper*.

Below is an overview of the interviewees and a short description of their associated organizations.

Respondent number	Position	Organization
1	Editor-in-Chief	Left-wing newspaper
2	Journalist	
5	Journalist	
3	Journalist	Mainstream national broadcaster
7	Diversity Manager (former Journalist)	
4	Editor	Minority-focused digital newspaper
8	Journalist	
6	Journalist	Mainstream commercial newspaper
9	Journalist	Mainstream commercial broadcaster
10	Editor	Mainstream local newspaper

*Table 2: Overview of study participants*

#### 4.2.2 Interview process, transcription & translation

Interview guides with questions for the interviewees were constructed in preparation for the semi-structured interviews and have been attached to the appendix in their final versions (edited for clarity). In constructing the two guides, the questions were tailored to the role of the interviewee. The initial interview guide was refined and developed during the first few interviews. This was done to generate better and more relevant data and to accommodate changes made to the research question and the direction of the study.



The interviews were conducted online for accessibility and convenience and were approximately 30 minutes long. All interviews were recorded and transcribed using the built-in functionality of Microsoft Teams. The original quotes from the interviews were in another language than English and have therefore been translated, and the quotes have been further adjusted for clarity, comprehension, and anonymity.

#### 4.2.3 Interview analysis

The analysis of the empirical material started with the researchers conducting a thematic analysis. The process of coding and generating second-order categories and themes from the empirical material was done in two rounds. The first was primarily conducted by one of the researchers, while the second was done by dividing the material between each other. Harmonization of the coding process was facilitated using online collaboration tools, keeping the transcripts and lists of codes visible to both researchers at all times.

The first round of coding was done with the research question, "how does leadership affect the inclusion of diverse perspectives in the newsroom?" in mind. After the material had been coded, the researcher responsible for this first round constructed approximately 21 second-order categories and six themes from this material. In parallel with the coding, the researchers kept notes on interesting aspects of the interviews.

Following advice from our supervisor, the researchers conducted an additional round of coding of the material in order to code parts of the transcript previously deemed irrelevant. This was done to reduce the risk of excluding material relevant to the study. This second round of coding was done without a specific research question in mind and focused on covering parts of the transcripts not previously covered. After the second round of coding, the researchers differentiated between the empirical material of the editors from the empirical material of the journalists. This was done based on the advice of our supervisor and facilitated the analysis of any differences between the two groups. This time, the two researchers in collaboration, constructed 21 second-order categories and seven themes from the editors' material and

approximately 44 second-order categories and ten themes from the journalists' material. This tally excludes two themes from both groups marked as "other", containing some miscellaneous themes and second-order categories. The researchers have included an overview of the thematic analysis for the groups in the appendix.

Following the above thematic analysis, the researchers settled on the current research question, having found tensions between various contexts and IL implementation as an interesting direction for the research. To further investigate this direction, the researchers initially mapped the data found in tension with IL behaviors from theory. Mapping the coded data toward Randel et al.'s (2018) five IL behaviors enabled us, in the analysis, to identify that there were tensions related to some of these behaviors. The mapping helped the empirical material as it related to the research question and further helped pinpoint the specific IL behaviors found in tensions with other organizational aims. While the empirics contained cases where tensions were not found, the mapping process focused on the empirical material indicating the presence of tensions.

### 4.3 Ethical considerations

In the process of writing this paper, various measures were taken to ensure ethical conduct. Before the start of each interview, each participant was informed about their participation's anonymous and voluntary nature. In addition, the interviewees' identities were protected as the study neither published their names nor the names of their organizations. Furthermore, all interviewees directly quoted have been allowed to review and reject the quotation before publication. Finally, permission to record the interviews was obtained.

Participants were sent a consent form designed by the Stockholm School of Economics. Each participant has also been informed of their right to withdraw their consent and data through this form. The measures taken to ensure anonymity and consent should ensure that the disclosed data, such as employee and employer relationships, work conditions, and thoughts on diversity, is of minimal risk to harming the individual participant.

#### 4.4 Method criticism

The paper could be reviewed based on the quality criteria of dependability, credibility, and transferability that Lincoln and Guba (1985) developed for qualitative research. Regarding the dependability criterion, the research may, to some extent, have been affected by changes in research focus and the semi-structured character of the data collection. Interview guides from the data collection have been attached in the appendix to increase the transparency of how the data was collected.

The credibility of the research may have been improved by conducting interviews longer than 30 minutes to ensure that a lack of trust, rapport, and insufficient data did not lead to a misrepresentation of the participants' accounts. In the present case, however, the researchers prioritized shorter interviews over longer ones to ensure accessibility to the research participants and possibility to cover multiple perspectives. Beyond this, the fact that the interviews were recorded may have impacted participants' willingness to share their experiences truthfully. On the other hand, the measure likely strengthened the study's credibility by allowing the researchers to refer to the recording and double-check interpretations.

Furthermore, the study's credibility may further be criticized regarding the role the researchers played in extracting findings from the empirical material. The analysis could not guarantee the exclusion of researchers' preconceptions and biases affecting the findings. Nevertheless, to reduce this margin of error, the researchers systematically conducted a thematic analysis, coding next to every single piece of data, before mapping tensions against the theoretical framework.

When considering the transferability of the research, the Nordic context could be a limiting factor. This concerns the media industry and the notion that inclusive leadership may vary across cultural contexts. In addition, the small number of interviews meant that several perspectives on the research question were not captured, possibly affecting the findings'

credibility and transferability. However, the fact that the interviews covered both journalists' and editors' accounts at a diverse set of news agencies within this chosen geographical area adds to the credibility and transferability of the study.

## 5. Empirics

The thematic analysis and mapping of the empirical material highlighted that ideology and objectivity ideal had significant influence within the news media organizations, imposing limitations on journalists' ability to raise their unique perspectives across various work contexts. Moreover, editors were found to have an active role in shaping and enforcing these aims.

### 5.1 Organizational aims of ideology and objectivity

The *left-wing newspaper* provides an illustrative example of the role of ideology within an organization. Both journalists and the editor from the *left-wing newspaper* hint that ideological position is an influential factor at work.

We are a [media organization] [...] belonging to the left side of the political spectrum [...] When we write about left-side cases, class is very much in focus, so things that run contrary to the notion that class is the most important can maybe be difficult to get through. (2, journalist, left-wing newspaper)

While it is evident that ideological aims were influential within the *left-wing newspaper*, the mainstream media organizations do not talk explicitly about having an ideology. Instead, these organizations consider themselves apolitical, abiding by the journalistic principles of objectivity and neutrality.

Working with news, one should be objective and not bring in their strong opinions. Let's say if you vote for the Labor party, for example, then you should not produce news content to favour that party (6, journalist, mainstream commercial newspaper)

The objectivity ideal implies conducting journalism in a neutral, open, and non-judgmental approach where things are based on facts and personal opinions are left out.

Objectivity in journalism is that one is neutral and do not pre-judge. That one gathers facts and write pieces based on those and not involve one's own opinions (6, journalist, mainstream commercial newspaper)

This was much in contrast to the *left-wing newspaper*, where the editor had a different outlook on the idea of objectivity altogether and even questioned it.

I think the objectivity ideal for me is a bit wrong, as I think that the best journalists have never been objective. (1, Editor-in-Chief, left-wing newspaper)

## 5.2 Implications of ideology

Leaders in the *left-wing newspaper* could be seen as influential in shaping and enforcing the ideology of the newspaper. The editor explains the importance of journalists sticking to the ideological line of the paper. While the editor accentuates that having a wide range of ideas is important within both the newsroom discussions and the news content, she stresses that frequent open ideological disputes in the content would not look good from the outside, indicating that journalistic input at least sometimes needs to be dismissed by leaders.

...not everyone who thinks something other than the newspaper can write comments every day arguing against their own newspaper. It doesn't work out. We would look schizophrenic from the outside. [...] It is not the case that all journalists agree with the editor, but they can't sit and write pieces that go against the editor's pieces. (1, Editor-in-Chief, left-wing newspaper)

The empirics showcase that the positions of the paper are not set once and for all but formed in exchanges with the journalists. Nonetheless, editors could be seen as much in charge of these discussions.

We have had discussions about racism and stuff like that, where the editors have disagreed with many outspoken and active anti-racists about which strategy to pursue [...] These types of discussions are happening more often than before, so I feel that we

have a bit more open discussion about it now. While before, it was more like, we stand for this; end of discussion. (5, journalist, left-wing newspaper)

That ideological boundaries could impact journalists' sense of inclusion is further indicated by the account of journalist 2. In this case, the journalist had refrained from raising certain perspectives because her colleagues did not consider them to suit the organization's ideology.

I tried to write about racism [...] But then I had to kind of argue pretty hard, and I felt tears in my eyes because I kind of had to explain why racism is a problem that is not too small. [...] people who have some influence were sceptical, so then later I became a bit reluctant to write about it. (2, journalist, left-wing newspaper)

### 5.3 Implications of objectivity

In the *mainstream commercial broadcaster*, a journalist speaks about how their editor actively enforces the norms of objectivity by applying certain limitations on their personal behavior outside of work.

Our editor actually wrote some days ago that if you decide to work at a big newsroom, you have to let go of certain things. You cannot be a member of a political party, you cannot participate in all kinds of demonstrations, and you represent the channel or newspaper externally. (9, journalist, mainstream commercial broadcaster)

The same editor even implements restrictions on journalists' expressions, also publicly outside of the work context.

Our editor sent us a reminder about being careful with what opinions you have, how you behave and stuff like that, and that is difficult, right? Because we are people, but at the same time that is how it is when you work at [a large news media organization] [...], then there are requirements, right? You cannot go around meaning too much. (9, journalist, mainstream commercial broadcaster)

The active moderation from editors on journalists' room for expression publicly could be challenging for the journalists themselves, potentially restricting their ability to fully contribute to the organization, with their unique backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. While the editor's expectation is primarily aimed at what journalists express in the public sphere, these norms and ideals might also affect the perspectives journalists bring up internally.

You cannot write on Twitter or Facebook and not like this and that. It's not that easy, right? Because we are engaged human beings. And I have many colleagues who have made a mistake, and then the editor calls immediately saying that that comment must be removed. (9, journalist, mainstream commercial broadcaster)

The objectivity norm's impact on journalists could be further indicated by another journalist at the *mainstream commercial newspaper*, expressing that he has stopped having strong opinions.

“I've incorporated it. I have stopped having strong opinions, but I have been in the media industry for a very long time”. (6, journalist, mainstream commercial newspaper)

In summary, the empirical material demonstrates that the organizational aims of ideology and objectivity can impose restrictions on journalists' possibility to fully be and express themselves.



## 6. Analysis

The following section looks at what the organizational aims of objectivity and ideology found in the empirics mean for implementing inclusive leadership in news media organizations. We do so by comparing the IL behaviors that Randel et al. (2018) suggested with what the organizational aims imply for leaders. We find tensions playing out in the contexts of the newsroom, the news content, and the public sphere. In the newsroom, where leaders may have to enforce ideological boundaries in discussions; in the news content, in which leaders in their editorial role might have to enforce ideological boundaries and uphold standards of objectivity; and finally, in the public sphere, where leaders may need to place limits on journalists' expressions. We go through the contexts in the above order exploring how the organizational aims can be found to exist in tension with implementing inclusive leadership

### 6.1 Newsroom

In this section, we look at the tensions occurring regarding implementing inclusive leadership in the newsroom. With the newsroom, we refer to work-related meetings, such as editorial meetings regarding the news content. As the empirics showed, most news media organizations have daily morning meetings where all journalists are present. The discussions, planning, and evaluations that take place in these meetings all serve the purpose of producing news content. Interviewees described these meetings as a venue and opportunity for raising different perspectives.

While the newsroom may be the main arena for journalists' voices to come forward, leaders in news media organizations with an ideological position may choose to restrict perspectives incompatible with the organization's ideology. As indicated by a journalist working in the *left-wing paper*, the fact that leaders previously had put down their foot in ideological discussions suggests that they sometimes play an active role in setting ideological boundaries favoring certain viewpoints. While these boundaries may be up for negotiation, it is clear that the

ideological boundaries enforced by leaders affect what perspectives come through in the ideological newsroom. This was exemplified when a journalist in the *left-wing newspaper* hesitated to raise particular perspectives, partly due to their lack of alignment with the newspaper's ideology.

Randel et al.'s (2018) inclusive leadership behaviors of *encouraging diverse contributions* and *sharing decision-making* (Randel et al., 2018) are incompatible with the leadership restrictions of discussions in the newsroom based on their organization's ideology. When not all contributions in newsroom discussions are welcomed, Randel et al.'s (2018) IL practice of *encouraging diverse contributions* is limited, as unique viewpoints are neither accepted nor sought (Shore et al., 2011). Similarly, in organizations with explicit ideologies, editorial decisions are often grounded in their ideology, which may narrow the leader's possibility to genuinely consider and use employee input in defining work (Nishii, 2014; Mor Barak & Daya, 2013), and effectually contradicts Randel et al.'s (2018) IL-practice of *sharing decision-making*.

In summary, we found that tensions exist between the organizational aims of ideology and the IL practices of *encouraging diverse perspectives* and *sharing decision-making* in the newsroom context.

## 6.2 News content

Another way for journalists to express themselves is within the news content. Since the news content is the final output of the journalistic work, journalists' sense of contribution within this context is likely significant to their sense of being valued for their uniqueness at work.

News content is not created in a vacuum but made with consideration of other organizational aims. Specifically, the organizational aims of ideology and objectivity norms could be found in determining tolerated angles within the news content. As indicated by the empirics, leaders in ideological organizations may need to reject perspectives that do not support the organization's ideology within the news content. The editor of the *left-wing newspaper*

exemplified this by stressing the importance of journalistic pieces agreeing with the organization's ideology. Further, the case where a journalist in the *left-wing newspaper* was discouraged from writing about racism, as it was perceived to disturb the organization's ideological focus, exemplified how ideological boundaries can limit journalists' contributions.

Moreover, there existed a consensus among mainstream news organizations that journalists should strive to be objective, indicating the leaders may need to reject contributions not perceived as objective in the news content.

As discussed above, the organizational aims of ideology and objectivity may create a leadership demand to restrict specific perspectives, which is not in harmony with the IL behaviors *encouraging diverse contributions* and *helping group members fully contribute*, which together make up uniqueness (Randel et al., 2018). Accordingly, tensions are observed between IL and the norms of ideology and objectivity in news content production. In practice, it becomes challenging for leaders to *encourage diverse contributions* and *help members fully contribute* when particular contributions are not welcome in the news content (Randel et al., 2018). Accordingly, the tension between ideology and objectivity, on one side, and IL, on the other, can be explained by how ideology and objectivity limit leaders' ability to *encourage diverse contributions* and *help group members fully contribute* to the news content.

### 6.3 Public sphere

The empirics further showed that leaders restrict journalists from expressing their opinions in the public sphere, outside the contexts of the newsroom and news content. While journalists' expression in the public sphere could be considered playing out outside of the workplace, we found it relevant to include it as a context as it still may affect journalists' experience of inclusion at work.

In organizations with an objectivity ideal, leaders may expect journalists to act neutral regarding any politicized issue in the public sphere. A journalist in the *mainstream commercial broadcaster* expressed how leaders in "objective" news organizations may restrain journalists'

opportunity to be politically engaged, participate in demonstrations, and express themselves in public arenas, and reminded the journalists about being careful about what opinions they had. Another journalist in a similar type of organization points out that he had internalized the objectivity ideal and stopped having strong opinions. When there are strict boundaries regarding what journalists can say in the public sphere, the easier option for them may be to engage in self-censorship and stop having much to say. Building on that, journalists' tendency to let go of unique opinions could be seen in the light of leaders' moderation of journalists' public engagement. The above-mentioned examples illustrate that when leaders encourage journalists to downplay their personal viewpoints, little by little, the journalists may lose part of their individuality.

When leadership causes journalists to downplay their personal opinions over time, they do the opposite of *encouraging diverse contributions* (Randel et al., 2018). Similarly, leaders demand that journalists disregard their personal opinions and not *help employees fully contribute* (Randel et al., 2018). On the contrary, journalists will feel they must compromise parts of their uniqueness. This highlights the tension between the demand for journalists to be objective and the IL practices constituting uniqueness (Randel et al., 2018).

## 7. Discussion & Answer to research question

### 7.1 Answer to research question

We analyzed ten qualitative interviews with editors and journalists using a theoretical framework of inclusive leadership based on Randel et al. (2018) to answer the research question:

*What tensions exist when implementing inclusive leadership in news media organizations?*

Our analysis found that tensions exist between IL and the organizational aims of ideology and objectivity and were present in different contexts of the journalistic work. In the newsroom, tensions were found related to balancing the organizational aims of ideology and the IL practices of *encouraging diverse contributions* and *sharing decision-making*. In producing news content, tensions were found between the organizational aim of ideology and objectivity on the one hand and the inclusive leadership behaviors of *encouraging diverse contributions* and *helping group members fully contribute* on the other. And finally, in the public sphere, tensions were found between objectivity and the inclusive leadership behaviors of *encouraging diverse contributions* and *helping group members fully contribute*. These findings confirm that tensions exist when IL is implemented in the news media industry.

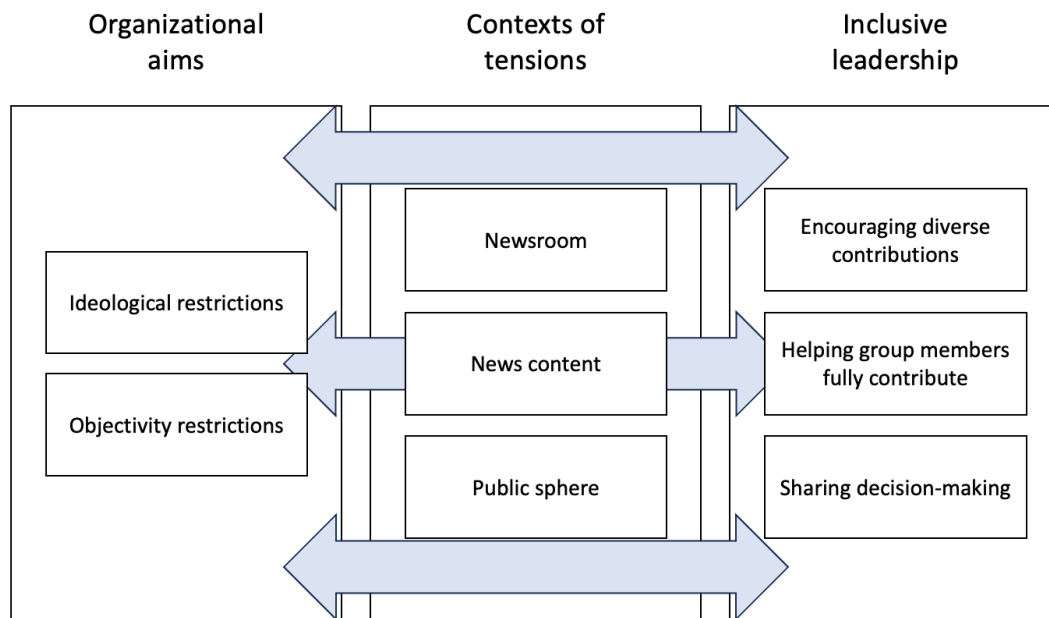


Figure 1: Overview of findings

## 7.2 Contributions to Literature

The present study contributes to the existing literature on inclusive leadership by exemplifying how its practice can be in tension with other organizational aims.

While the literature largely has portrayed IL as something that every organization should strive for, our study nuances this picture by highlighting that other organizational aims may be in tension with IL. In doing so, the study could be seen advancing the literature which so far, beyond trying to conceptualize the phenomena (Nembhard & Edmonson, 2006; Zanoni & Janssen, 2007; Carmeli et al., 2010; Sabharwal, 2014), largely has looked at its various antecedents, mediators, moderators, and outcomes (Randel et al., 2018; Korkmaz et al., 2022).

The already existing literature revolving around IL and tensions, has shed light on either tensions between two IL factors, such as *uniqueness* versus *belongingness*, or tensions between two factors that are related to, but not part of IL itself, such as *requirements of IL* and *business*

*needs* (Navid & Kuna, 2020). In comparison, the present study stands out because it identifies tensions between IL and external organizational factors, an aspect missing in the literature. Randel et al. (2018) mentioned this as an area for future research.

Our study shows that inclusive leadership needs to be contextualized as it appears in an interplay between values, demands, goals, and cultures. The present study contributes to the literature by demonstrating how IL competes with other organizational forces. The study's findings provide valuable insights regarding the complexity of dealing with various, and often competing, organizational demands and aims.

### 7.3 Contributions to the theory

Although the theoretical framework provided great insights regarding the content of IL practices, it is also essential to observe how these practices interact with other organizational aims when observed in a broader context. The present study found that three of the suggested behaviors of IL, theorized by Randel et al. (2018), are in tension with other organizational aims. While both behaviors for facilitating uniqueness (*encouraging diverse contributions, helping group members fully contribute.*) were found in tension with the organizational aims, only one of these behaviors focused on facilitating belongingness (*sharing decision-making*), suggesting that the uniqueness dimension of IL may be specifically challenging for leaders to implement. *Encouraging diverse contributions* is a fundamental IL behavior (Randel et al., 2018). Therefore, practitioners may benefit from being aware that this behavior may be specifically prone to tension.

Understandably, Randel et al. (2018) have yet to be able to cover all aspects of IL in the paper presenting their framework. However, a discussion around these contextual specificities of implementing IL adds value to understanding IL behaviors. Furthermore, a better contextual understanding of IL implementation could increase conceptual clarity around how leaders need to balance IL with other organizational demands. Therefore, we propose the incorporation of tensions in theory about IL behaviors.

## 7.4 Contributions to Practitioners

The findings of our study highlight the challenges leaders face when attempting to implement inclusive leadership. However, while tensions exist, our findings do not necessarily suggest that media organizations cannot be inclusive. Instead, the key takeaway for news media organizations is that achieving inclusivity can require a nuanced approach that balances the competing demands of organizational aims and inclusive leadership practices.

While our study focused on the media industry, our findings also have broader implications for other industries. For example, religious organizations, political organizations, and companies with strong cultural values may face similar limitations when implementing inclusive leadership practices. Therefore, it is important for practitioners in these industries to recognize the potential conflicts between their organizational aims and inclusive leadership goals and carefully consider the unique context in which they operate.

There is a broad consensus that inclusive leadership is a good thing, and Randel et al.'s (2018) five IL behaviors provide substantial support for understanding how to implement IL. However, the study highlights that leaders, who are genuine about their IL efforts, should be clear about what they aim to achieve with inclusive leadership practices and whether they are willing to compromise on some of their other organizational aims.

## 7.5 Discussion of limitations

Although the study might provide ideas for solving tensions when implementing IL, the focus was to showcase the existence of tension rather than finding solutions. However, identifying various tensions and the contexts in which they play out could be seen as an important step in understanding how tensions may be resolved. Further, the study has yet to focus on discerning the effect of the tensions found on employees' experiences of inclusion. We acknowledge that the significance of the tensions found may ultimately depend on how they affect employees' experience of inclusion.



The study departed from the conceptualization of IL presented by Randel et al. (2018) but acknowledges that scholars have presented various views on the topic (Shore et al., 2011). This implies that the study's findings might be less relevant for those with a different idea of what IL entails. However, as previously mentioned, the theoretical framework theorized by Randel et al. (2018) provided a more detailed explanation of how to implement IL through concrete practices making it helpful in exploring tensions when implementing IL.

## 7.6 Future research

An interesting area for future research is the identification of additional tensions that may occur when implementing IL. For example, future studies could further examine what work situations are most important for employee experience of inclusion. Additionally, future research could look at other industries where the potential tensions differ from those already discovered. It may vary from industry to industry and context to context how explicitly the tensions play out. Therefore, it would be valuable with additional research on tensions between IL and organizational aims across industries and contexts. Finally, the present study leaves room for future researchers to explore how leaders may resolve or manage these tensions.

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## 9. Appendix:

### Appendix 1: Editor interview guide

Intro from us:

1. Present ourselves and the thesis project
  - a. Students at SSE writing thesis in management
  - b. Broader theme of leadership, diversity in journalism
  - c. The research question might change a little
2. General information about the interview
  - a. 30 minutes
  - b. Voluntary, anonymous and opportunity to go through citations
  - c. **GDPR form (Send in advance).**
  - d. Ask for consent to record interview through teams?

Introductory questions:

1. Ask about a specific article
  - a. Can you give a brief overview of how the news article came about
2. Through what process did it end up in the paper?
  - a. How do you decide and prioritize your news coverage?
  - b. Where do you come in on this process? And what role does leadership play in this process?
3. What are the most important parts of this process to get right?
  - a. Why? What is the bigger goal you hope to achieve?
    - i. The social role of journalism?
    - ii. How to report to the whole population in the best way?
4. Diversity at Organization X
  - a. What role do you believe diversity plays in achieving the goal of journalism?  
Har mangold?

- b. Do employees voice their different perspectives in the newsroom?
  - c. How diverse would you say Organization X is?
5. Leadership
- a. How do leaders ensure that diversity achieves that goal?
    - i. Could you give some concrete practices?
    - ii. Why do you believe these practices work?
    - iii. Dilemmas?
    - iv. What are the effects of these practices?
    - v. How do you make sure that people feel confident to bring up their perspective?
    - vi. Do you think people are different when they come into the office?
  - b. How would you describe the leadership at Organization X?
6. How does leadership affect diversity of perspectives in the newsroom?



## Appendix 2: Journalist interview guide

### **Intro from us:**

1. Present ourselves and the thesis project
  - a. Students at SSE writing thesis in management
  - b. Broader theme of leadership, diversity in journalism
  - c. General information about the interview
  - d. 30 minutes
  - e. Voluntary, anonymous and opportunity to go through citations
  - f. **GDPR form (Send in advance).**
  - g. Ask for consent to record interview through teams?

### **Questions**

1. Can you give us a brief overview of the article/previous reporting from \_\_\_\_?
2. When creating an article, to what extent is the content discussed with others before publication?
  - a. What kind of things are typically discussed?
  - b. How comfortable are people sharing their unique opinions in these discussions?
  - c. How would you describe the culture at Organization X with regards to diversity of perspectives?
  - d. How do you feel about sharing a perspective that contradicts with the general opinion at work?
  - e. What makes you feel that way?
  - f. What are the boundaries of diverse perspectives?
  - g. How do the leadership and your colleagues respond to different opinions?
  - h. How do the leaders affect these discussions?
  - i. How does the leadership support you in voicing your unique perspective?

- j. How does the organization work at different levels with unique perspectives?
- 3. What is it to be a good journalist in Organization X?
  - a. Objectivity, ideals?
  - b. What are the journalistic ideals at Organization X?
- 4. Do these ideals affect how leaders manage diversity of perspectives?
- 5. How do leaders at your newspaper work to encourage diversity of perspectives?

### Appendix 3: Table used for mapping tensions

Inclusive leadership: Journalist or Editors			
Dimensions	Categories	Second order	Excerpts
Fostering Employee's Uniqueness (E*)	Supporting employees as individuals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows concern about employee's feelings</li> <li>Shows concern about employee's expectations</li> <li>Shows concern about employee's interests</li> <li>Offers guidance to the employee</li> <li>Exhibits accessibility to the employee</li> <li>Exhibits availability to the employee</li> <li>Shows emotional support to the employee</li> </ol>	-Code 1 -Code 5 etc.
	Promoting diversity	Recognizes employee's individual differences <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exhibits openness to the employee</li> <li>Values employee's uniqueness</li> <li>Helps employee to contribute</li> <li>Listens to employee's ideas</li> </ol>	
	Empowering employees	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborating during decision-making with the employee</li> <li>Encourages the employee to become involved in organizational activities</li> <li>Promotes opportunity to share the ideas on how to perform work</li> </ol>	
	Contributing to employees' Learning and Development (L&D)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is open to the needs of the employee for development and growth</li> <li>Helps the employee advance their career prospects</li> <li>Provides feedback to the employee</li> <li>Cultivates the ability of the employee to learn and work</li> <li>Guides the employee when mistakes are made</li> </ol>	
Strengthening Belongingness within a Team (T*)	Ensuring equity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows moral behavior</li> <li>Shows unbiased judgment</li> <li>Ensures justice</li> <li>Distributes reward fairly</li> <li>Makes sure everyone is fairly represented</li> </ol>	
	Building relationships	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Makes team members feel like they belong and matter</li> <li>Supports employees as team members</li> <li>Enables effective function of diverse work groups</li> <li>Builds closer connections with employees</li> <li>Fosters relationships</li> <li>Enables respectful interactions within the team</li> </ol>	
	Sharing decision making	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides reasoning for practices</li> <li>Takes actions in collaboration with employees rather than to people</li> <li>Fosters transparent decision-making</li> <li>Consults with workers</li> <li>Builds consensus</li> <li>Includes others in decisions</li> </ol>	

#### Appendix 4: Journalist thematic analysis overview

Themes	Second-order categories
Organizational structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizational structure</li> <li>Organizational Size</li> <li>Hierarchy</li> </ul>
Organizational culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizational culture</li> <li>Room for diverse perspectives</li> <li>Organizational journalist ideal</li> <li>Organizations political ideology</li> <li>Newspaper motivation to produce diverse perspectives in content</li> </ul>
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Journalistic genre</li> <li>Journalistic norms and objectivity</li> <li>Professionalism</li> <li>Medias role</li> <li>Industry diversity efforts</li> </ul>
Organizational ambitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hiring</li> </ul>
Leadership takes on diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership appreciation</li> <li>Editor inviting voices</li> <li>Leadership diversity competence</li> <li>Leadership tolerance for disagreements</li> <li>Editor diversity recognition</li> <li>Consequences for speaking up</li> <li>Reflection</li> <li>Leadership to create environment for dialogue</li> </ul>
Editor-journalist dynamics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Editor journalist collaboration</li> <li>Editor journalist communication</li> <li>Editor journalist confidence</li> </ul>
Work process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work process</li> <li>Selection of material to cover</li> </ul>
Journalist impact on news production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Journalists' autonomy</li> <li>Journalists valuing autonomy</li> <li>Journalists impact on journalistic production</li> <li>Impact of diverse journalists</li> </ul>
Journalists takes on diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tokenism</li> <li>Journalist view on diversity</li> <li>Journalistic ambition</li> <li>Workforce representation</li> <li>Example of media failure to be critical</li> <li>Challenges in covering diverse perspective</li> </ul>
Journalists on voicing diverse perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sharing perspectives comfortability</li> <li>Personal capacity to voice a perspective</li> <li>Journalist expertise and competence</li> <li>Journalists on having the role as “voicer”</li> <li>Journalists' personal attachments to voiced perspectives</li> <li>Working years impact on journalist holding</li> <li>Reception of perspectives</li> </ul>

## Appendix 5: Editor thematic analysis overview

Themes	Second-order categories
Organizational structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Editor role responsibility</li> <li>• Organizational size</li> <li>• Hierarchy</li> <li>• Power</li> </ul>
Work process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work process</li> </ul>
Editor ambitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Editorial ambition</li> <li>• Journalistic ambition</li> <li>• Diversity ambition</li> </ul>
Organizational culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newspaper position</li> <li>• Organizational ideology &amp; internal political differences</li> </ul>
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objectivity &amp; Journalistic norms</li> <li>• Journalistic genre</li> </ul>
Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse workforce</li> <li>• Hiring</li> <li>• Workforce preference</li> <li>• Access to sources</li> </ul>
Diverse perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership affecting diverse perspectives</li> <li>• Room for diverse perspectives</li> <li>• Psychological safety</li> <li>• Diversity recognition</li> <li>• Importance of interest in diversity</li> </ul>

## Appendix 6: Bonus empirics (and some more extensive versions of quotes)

“I do not believe objective journalism exists. I believe that in journalism, we need factual journalism. These are the facts. And facts have to be put in place. And it has to be genuine, meaning we must be honest. When we interview people, they must know what they participate in. We should not be only tabloid. We are leftists and we should be a serious newspaper committing to thorough journalism. But we should not hide our political foundation. That does not mean that everything we write should be coloured by it, or that we only interview people on the left side. That would be extremely boring, and if I have done an interview with X, he's not exactly on the left side, he is a person who is politically opposing our ideology, I do those things often, but I do it from our [leftist] perspective. Then it becomes easier for people to orient themselves when that is being done, when you don't have a false premise that all journalism in X is objective. That is a misunderstanding.” (5, journalist, left-wing newspaper)

"If you come and say that the billionaires should pay less tax, then I don't think that would have been met with much understanding. So there are some fundamental things that I think you got to understand. It does not necessarily mean that all the journalists here are people from the left side. There are people without any particular background too here. But, it is a big advantage that you understand what is politically interesting for us, [...]. But when it comes to voicing deviant opinions, that depends on what you mean by deviant". -5

“I write about working life and social inequality which is in a way a [newspaper typical] topic that is not something difficult to get through. It may be that I chose it because it is comfortable too. I also care about it. [...] I've tried in the past in a way, but it's tiring for me to write about it, because I've experienced bad things myself it becomes extra difficult. [...] I tried to write about racism after [a specific event] [...] But then I had to kind of argue pretty hard, and I felt tears in my eyes because I kind of had to explain why racism is a problem that is not too small. There were some people in the office who obviously agreed, but people who have some influence were sceptical, so then later I became a bit reluctant to write about it. It was maybe a

feeling that it does not really align with what we should write about. What we should write about mainly should be about social justice. And that a minority perspective, in a way, maybe disturbs this focus in newspaper X. Even if class obviously relates to ethnicity and minority, it is often referred to as identity politics in a condescending way". (2, journalist, left-wing newspaper)

"...not everyone who thinks something other than the newspaper can write comments every day arguing against their own newspaper. It doesn't work out. We would look schizophrenic from the outside. But then, it's not what the newspaper has to agree on one line and work from there. [...] It is not the case that all journalists agree with the editor, but they can't sit and write pieces that go against the editor's pieces. [...] Our view is that we should have a breadth of opinions [in the paper] so I feel that it is very important that we have them internally as well and that we have an open tone because that must be the basis of a good working environment. Without that, no one dares to say anything. You don't get scolded for just thinking differently, I don't anyone thinks that at us" (1, Editor-in-Chief, left-wing newspaper)

"...the news should be objective, and they should not be delivered with my personal opinion. [...] What you describe should have a balanced and you should be objective. [...] That is a goal. So, it should not be that if I am in disagreement about anything that it comes through [to the receiver]. Because of that it is very strict what I can say on social media. For example, what I can like or not like and what I can say about my subjective opinions. [...] Journalist may very well have [their opinions] but should not say them. And there are a lot those demands, we can't have [...] this and that, and it's quite strict actually." (9, journalist, mainstream commercial broadcaster)

"...we have a common morning meeting for the whole newsroom every Monday and there we bring up anything that has been anything controversial or something written that someone is angry about. And what I atleast try to is to have a very open discussion[...] where all things are brought up [...]" (1, Editor-in-Chief, left-wing newspaper)

“The editorial meeting are perhaps the most important meetings we have and then one should come with one's ideas [...]” (6, journalist, mainstream commercial newspaper)