

The Development of Inclusive Leadership in the Medical and Tourism Industries in Oita Prefecture

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Summary of Research

This research project seeks to understand the benefits of inclusivity and diversity in developing social and business capital. It will test the need to cultivate not just a diverse workplace and customer/industry contacts but also an inclusive approach to their whole operations. There is growing recognition that leaders have a critical role to play in achieving this. Our group is focused on how to develop the practical management and leadership skills that will ensure that inclusivity is promoted in the context of the medical and tourism industries in the local region. However, while the language of diversity and inclusive leadership is increasingly used in the management and tourism literature there is little readily available practical guidance that is:

- Evidence-based, drawing on the latest international and national research and practice;

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- Evidence-based, drawing on the latest international and national research and practice;
- Business-focused, demonstrating the connection between inclusive leadership and both business outcomes (e.g. innovation, performance) and individual outcomes (e.g. feelings of belonging and uniqueness); and
- Comprehensive, clearly describing and connecting the three inter-related concepts of diversity, inclusion and inclusive leadership, and describing not just the characteristics of an inclusive leader but importantly also the knowledge, skills and behaviors they need to build inclusion.

To help us develop such practical programs in the context of APU and Oita Prefecture we will work with the following organizations: A range of local hospitals, accommodation and healthcare/aged care facilities has expressed interest in providing the workshop participants central to our research. One of the main goals of these sectors as expressed recently (in the Onsen Academia program) is the development of more effective local management and their ability to create new and successful integrated activities such as medical tourism based on local resources. To these participants we add

the experience of two active international programs involved in training for inclusive leadership to provide the benchmarks required for local development.

We will obtain these benchmarks from the Institute for Tourism Leadership Australia (ITLA) and Practical Learning, Paris, organizations we have worked with in the past in studying management behavior. ITLA provides a Diploma of Leadership and Management and various tailored and non-accredited courses and workshops focused on developing inclusive leadership capability in the tourism sector across Australia. ITLA contends that industry business operators need to embrace inclusive and collective leadership to build on local social capital. Practical Learning Paris seeks to develop management capacity by example through training in inclusive leadership and the energy of diversity. Industry leaders adopting a mindset encouraging collective actions and the achievement of mutual and sustainable goals is the foundation for success. A thorough understanding of the influencing factors and mechanisms of community resilience in destinations is also vital not only for recovery after disasters but also for strengthening their adaptive capacity to manage sudden change.

We will use our research to contribute to the development of the inclusive leadership literature and practice. We will build a practical information and training based inclusive leadership system for industry use. In applying these ideas to the development of a practical and localized model of inclusive leadership training for Oita Prefecture, we will concentrate on the healthcare and tourism sectors in Beppu. Successful medical management in the context of medical tourism relies on the ability of key players to bring medical resources and attractions within communities together while facilitating responsible practices and inclusive community development.

Our research is based strongly in the leadership and management literature while at the same time closely identifying the relevant management practices and suggesting ways to implement them in the Oita context so that this can form the central part of the outcomes of the research. We are basing our research on the Shore et al 2011 model of work group inclusion, and the Griggs et al (2014) integrated framework for sustainable development goals but will carry out an exhaustive literature review prior to building our inclusive leadership model based on the real-world experiences of our international group.

To develop these inclusive leadership concepts into an overall model, we aim to ensure that the capabilities incorporated include the mindsets, knowledge, skills, and behaviors of leaders in making their organizations inclusive. We want to create an outcome that is inclusive so that leaders (of different ages, cultural backgrounds, and genders) feel valued and respected, have access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute their perspectives and talents to improve their organization.

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