Inclusive Future

The Changing Framework for Inclusion and Inclusive Leadership

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REAL LEARNING. REAL IMPACT

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The aim of this second report of the Inclusive Future project is to look at the political and socioeconomic environment of organizations and analyze how key vectors of influence impact inclusion and inclusive leadership – as can be seen in the overview graph at the end of this summary. A detailed version of it can be found in the final conclusions (pages 88-89).

It takes a look at social movements and socioeconomic influences

- the #MeToo movement

- the Black Lives Matter movement

- socioeconomic inequalities (as brought into focus and exacerbated by COVID-19)

as well as

- COVID-19 as an unforeseeable disruptor together with two accelerators

- Millennials in management positions and Generation Z entering the workforce

- technological change

A first quantitative overview is provided using data obtained from Google Trends: It shows how the last two years have been impacted by the Black Lives Matter movement and COVID-19. The main part of this report provides an in-depth look at these drivers of change and aims to grasp their complexity while allowing to derive actions for inclusion and inclusive leadership.

Analyzing the two social movements #MeToo and Black Lives Matter reveals how they bring visibility to individual cases to point toward broader structural issues (patriarchy, toxic masculinity and systemic racism, and white privilege) and call for justice for underrepresented and marginalized groups. For defining and measuring inclusion this implies a focus on fairness and equity to address the structural imbalances brought forward. Moreover, as the two movements also sparked a debate on intersectionality, i.e. the specific situation of, e.g. Black women, organizations are urged to take uniqueness into account in measuring inclusion while keeping in mind that even the unique intersectional experiences are embedded in broader structures.

Once more, psychological safety is identified as the linchpin between the individual and organizational level: The heated debates around #MeToo's call to challenge patriarchy and toxic masculinity and Black Lives Matter's call to overcome systemic racism and white privilege urge the fostering of a psychologically safe environment where everyone feels safe to speak up on these issues. These social movements in combination with socioeconomic inequalities call, moreover, for inclusion to be taken seriously at all hierarchical levels for all individuals, not just those with talent or high potential. In combination with the analysis of socioeconomic inequalities, this calls for taking up socioeconomic background as an additional dimension of diversity going forward.

For inclusive leadership the impact of the social movements and socioeconomic inequalities shows that listening with humility is at center stage.

Crediting input from underrepresented groups and acting as their visible ally and vocal advocate is core in supporting the changes required to enhance inclusion and grow inclusive leadership. In addition, employees at all levels should actively educate themselves on the issues raised by the social movements and contribute to creating an inclusive culture.

The calls for justice voiced by social movements imply that fairness and equity are fostered and that inclusive leadership is seen as a collective process: To create psychological safety, everyone should be able to take a lead in creating an inclusive culture. In other words, every employee can and ought to contribute. As organizations are increasingly scrutinized, fact-checked and held accountable, inclusive leadership at the organizational level means taking a stand in potentially heated debates and back this up with broad and sustainable policies within the organization.

COVID-19 is analyzed as an unforeseeable disruptor that brought existing inequalities to the fore – and exacerbated them. Data shows the pandemic's unequal impact on those who lost their jobs as well as for those who remained in work. Organizations are urged to take this inequity into account, especially where underrepresented groups are concerned. Moreover, COVID-19 accelerated the speed of digital transformation, which calls for ensuring that remote and hybrid forms of work unfold their inclusive potential. As during face-to-face meetings, inclusive leadership – as a collective process – is

equally important in hybrid meetings to ensure that everyone's voice is heard, that offline conversations are shared with those participating online, that all contributions are credited and that the most optimum output is reached. Recent phenomena like the Great Resignation induced by COVID-19 hint, moreover, at a radical shift in the relation to work and a renewed call for work-life balance and purpose.

These trends are accelerated by two additional changes in the workforce: Technological transformation as well as Millennials taking on management roles and Generation Z entering the labor market. Both generations actively support diversity-related social movements and show a higher affinity for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity (EI&D) in the workplace. Moreover, these generations put more emphasis on organizational purpose and on making a difference in society than their predecessors.

Taken together, this report prepares the ground for Part III of Inclusive Future, in which ways to measure inclusion in order to create inclusive cultures and to foster inclusive leadership will be elaborated on.

Millennials and Gen Z as accelerators

Inclusion

Inclusive leadership

#MeToo

Black Lives Matter

Socioeconomic inequalities

COVID-19 as unforeseeable disruptor

Uniqueness

Humble, educated listeners

Psychological safety

Inclusive leadership as collective process

Fairness & equity

Take a stand and back it up

Individual

Team

Organization

Inclusive Future

Technological transformation as accelerator

Introduction

Introduction

Part I of Inclusive Future established the state-of-the-art components of inclusion: Inclusion comprises belongingness, authenticity and uniqueness as personal aspects, participation and fairness as organizational components as well as psychological safety, the latter taking a middle ground position in providing an environment that allows individuals to speak up freely without fear of retribution. As individuals from all walks of life should feel included, diversity is also key to definitions of inclusion – the figure on the next page summarizes this.

In Part I we discussed inclusion in depth and for each of its different components we obtained a benchmark of good practices to measure inclusion. While measures used in the academic field are tested intensively for reliability and validity, the high number of detailed questions prevents them from being applied in a corporate setting, which tends to limit the amount of time and effort employees need to spend on surveys. There, inclusion indices are used for several years that mix and match various aspects of inclusion, which makes a comparison or even benchmarking across organizations virtually impossible. While the common approach to measuring inclusion is to embed inclusion questions in larger employee engagement surveys, also alternative modes of measuring based on algorithms and artificial intelligence were discussed.

Most importantly, inclusive leadership was identified as a key driver for inclusion: Balancing belongingness, authenticity and uniqueness, inclusive leadership encompasses a broad array of inclusive behaviors that foster an environment where people from all walks of life feel they belong and can participate, where they can be their unique self and where their genuine input is valued and acted upon.

Components
of inclusion as
developed in Part I

Personal

Organizational

Belongingness

Participation

Authenticity

Fairness

Psychological safety

Uniqueness

Diversity
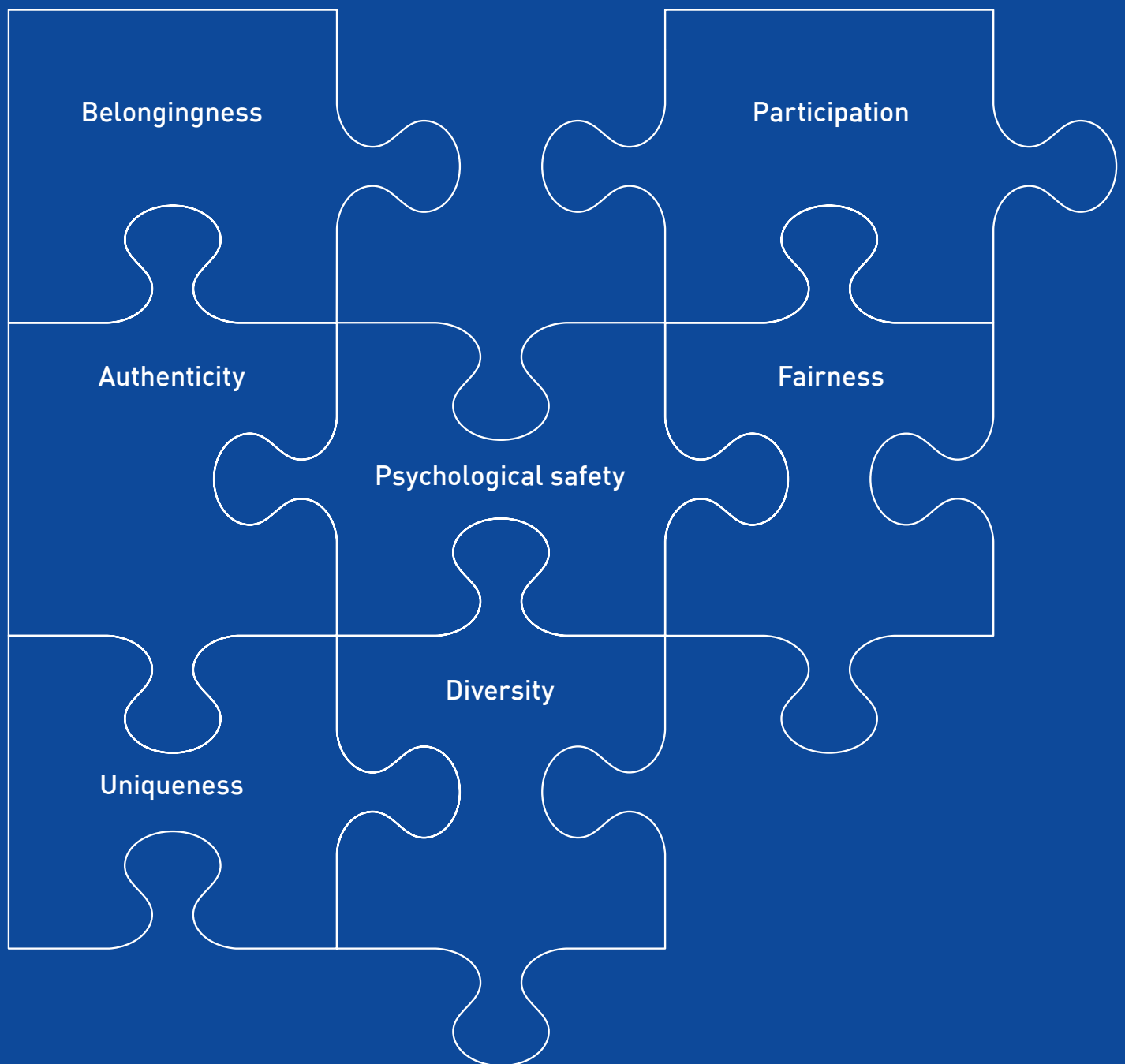
Have the socioeconomic events of the last years impacted the definition of inclusion? And if so, how?

Part II seeks answers to these questions. First, to assess their global impact, quantitative data from Google Trends is used to identify their importance on a macro level.

Based on this first quantitative analysis, the impact of key drivers of change is analyzed in detail. It starts with #MeToo and Black Lives Matter, two social movements that have had a global impact on debates related to inequalities, sexism and racism. The discussion of socioeconomic inequalities gained broader attention due to COVID-19 and is taken into account in this report as a third global social phenomenon. After looking at social movements and socioeconomic inequalities, we will review the impact of COVID-19 as an unforeseeable disruptive event, in particular how it accelerated the digitalization of work. In addition, we point toward two additional accelerators that are already impacting and will have a continued impact on inclusion and inclusive leadership: Millennials and Generation Z in the workforce as well as technological change.

Hence, Part II of Inclusive Future takes a closer look at how these phenomena impact inclusion at the individual, team and organizational level and explores what this means for measuring inclusion and inclusive leadership going forward.

Last but not least, it should be highlighted that, whenever possible, sources from underrepresented groups were used in this report to let individuals from the various groups speak for themselves.

"Climate strikes, calls for unionization, and support for Black Lives Matter and the #MeToo movement are becoming part of the reality in organizations, reinforced by the growing pressure from investors targeting environmental, social, and governance (ESG) aims."

(Reitz, Higgins, & Day-Duro, 2021)

Key politico-socioeconomic drivers:
First quantitative overview

Key politico-socioeconomic drivers: First quantitative overview

Since the beginning of 2020, the world has been turned upside down. This chapter analyzes the global importance of the key vectors of influence that will have an impact on how inclusion will be defined and measured in the future and what inclusive leadership and inclusive cultures will look like.

For this first quantitative view, search volume data obtained from Google Trends for the purpose of this project is analyzed (the detailed methodological background can be found in the Appendix). We identified Black Lives Matter (BLM) and #MeToo as key social movements that grasped the attention of Equity, Inclusion & Diversity (EI&D) experts and bring it in relation to economic inequality, a phenomenon that gained high visibility through the pandemic and is likely to continue to influence inclusion and inclusive leadership. Moreover, with COVID-19, we take into account the impact of the global pandemic itself.

As can be seen in the graphs on the next page, economic inequality and the #MeToo movement have had comparable numbers of searches over the past two years, with economic inequalities gaining momentum in the second half of 2021.

While the social movement #MeToo generated comparatively little search volume globally over the past two years, the Black Lives Matter movement generated such a high search interest that it surmounts the others. The tremendous peak of Black Lives Matter at the end of May 2020 is generally associated with the murder of George Floyd on 25 May 2020, but it is important to highlight that it coincides with the protests against the murder

of Breonna Taylor. She was killed by the police in her apartment on 26 March, but due to COVID-19 restrictions protests were delayed to later that year (Holmes, 2020).

Still, this high peak of BLM diminishes when adding COVID-19 to the picture. It interrupted lives tremendously globally – which can also be seen in its huge peak in 2020 and the ongoing high search volume throughout 2021 that clearly outnumbers the other topics considered in this analysis. Moreover, topics related to COVID-19 also dominate the global top 10 of all Google searches in 2020 (see Appendix).

Economic inequalities searched more often than #MeToo movement and gaining momentum

Global Google searches compared

— Economic inequalities (topic)

— #MeToo movement (topic)

Relative importance of search topic
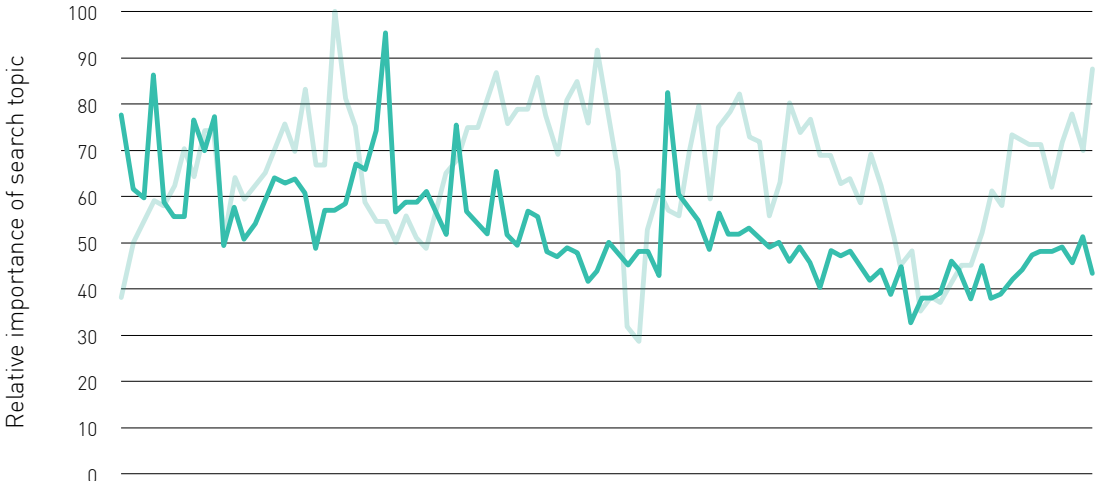
Black Lives Matter peaks in May/ June 2020 and outnumbers others

Global Google searches compared

— Black Lives Matter (topic)

— Economic inequalities (topic)

— #MeToo movement (topic)

Relative importance of search topic
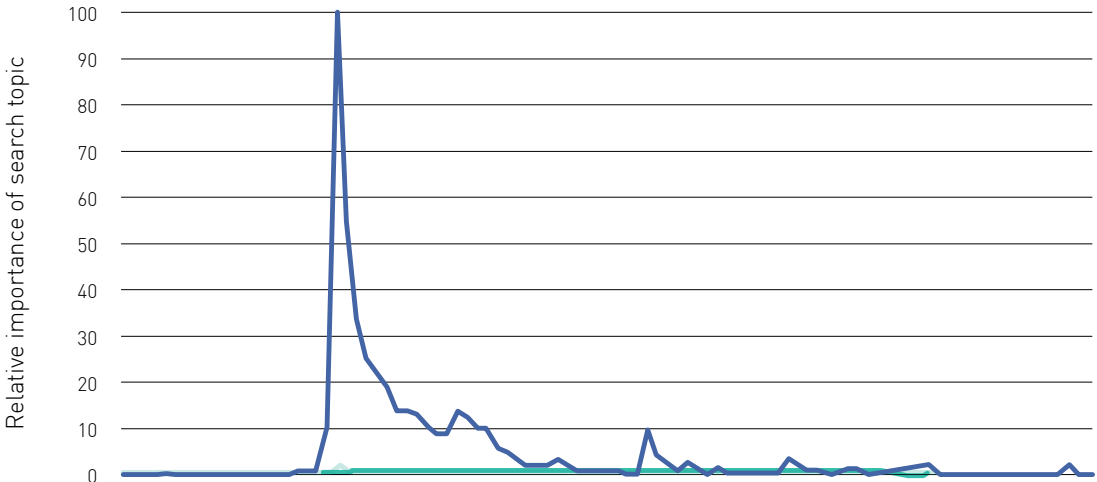
COVID-19 as backdrop that surmounts all others

Global Google searches compared

— Coronavirus (diseases)

— Black Lives Matter (topic)

Relative importance of search topic

2020   2021
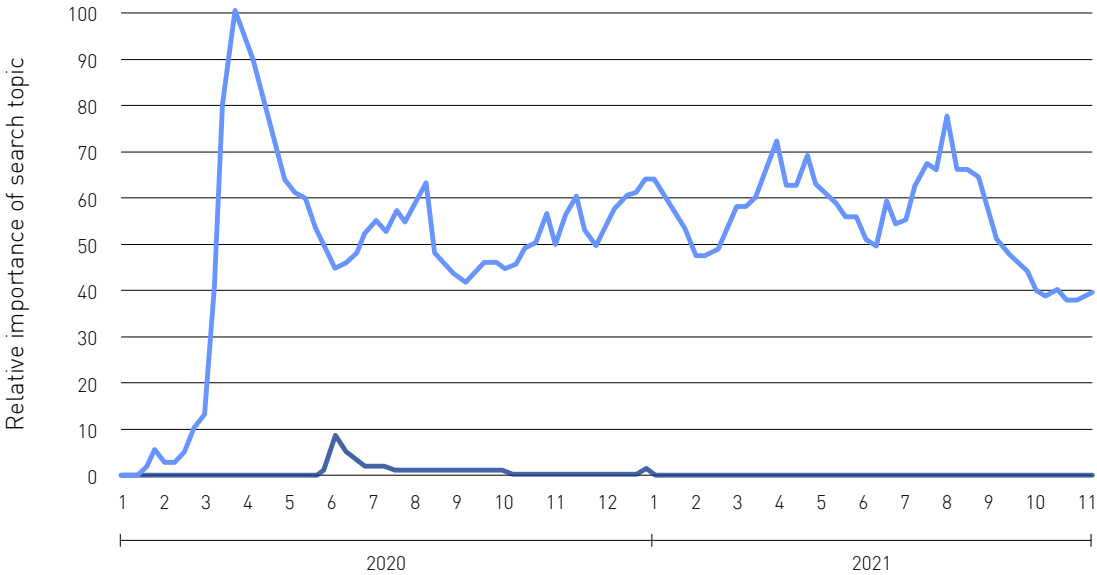
Setting the massive interest in COVID-19 aside, the analysis of the regional distribution highlights that BLM is the top search topic in many countries, but not in all: Economic inequality is top in many Asian and African countries as well as in Brazil, and #MeToo in Nepal, South Korea, India, Bangladesh and Nicaragua – as can be seen in the graph below.

The remaining part of this report is devoted to analyzing how these trends impact inclusion and how it can be defined and measured in organizations, what this means for inclusive leadership, and what managers and organizations must keep in mind to prepare for an improved inclusive future.

Beyond COVID: BLM, #MeToo & economic inequality
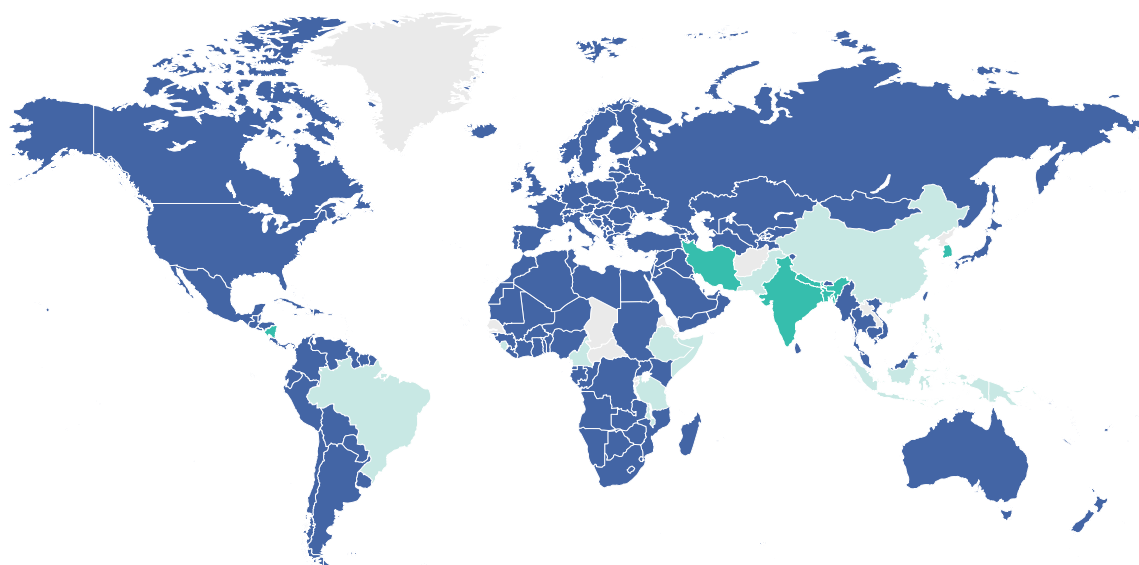
Black Lives Matter #1 search topic in many countries around the globe

#MeToo top in five countries, predominantly in Asia

Economic inequality top in many Asian and African countries as well as in Brazil

Global Google searches compared

— Black Lives Matter

— Economic inequality

— #MeToo movement

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Impact on inclusion and inclusive leadership

After this first quantitative overview, we will now take a detailed look at the key features of these drivers to assess their impact on inclusion and inclusive leadership.

#MeToo

For organizations and their EI&D journey to enhance inclusion and inclusive leadership #MeToo implies:

1. #MeToo makes individual cases of sexual harassment and sexism visible and points toward systemic power imbalances (patriarchy)

2. #MeToo highlights intersectionality: Race and socioeconomic background

3. #MeToo as a contested field: Advocacy, backlash, and the role of men and masculinity

#MeToo

The #MeToo movement dates back to 2006, when Black activist Tarana Burke used the hashtag on myspace to encourage victims of sexual violence to openly speak up about their experiences (Almanssori & Stanley, 2021; Onwuachi-Willig, 2018).

The movement gained worldwide momentum in 2017 when actress Alyssa Milano, in light of growing accusations against Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein, tweeted "If you've been sexually harassed or assaulted write 'me too' as a reply to this tweet" (Lee & Murdie, 2020), which resulted in 0.8 million uses of #MeToo on 16 October 2017 (Anderson, Toor, Rainie, & Smith, 2018).

#MeToo, hence, became the "hallmark of the current women's movement" (Keplinger, Johnson, Kirk, & Barnes, 2019).

Central to the movement is how sexual harassment and violence is embedded in gendered power relations at work (see, e.g., North, 2017), which implies that organizations should act on the issues raised by this movement.

sexual harassment and sexism embedded in gendered power relations at work

"I don't want to keep talking about individuals. You are all going to keep making boogiemen when we should be talking about systems. A person like Harvey Weinstein doesn't just exist in a vacuum."

Tarana Burke
in a talk at Brown University, 2018

By now, #MeToo had spread globally with local variations of the hashtag being used around the world:

#MeToo	#YoTambién	#SendeAnlat (Turkey)	#sdds (Kazakhstan)	#WithYou
#WeToo	#QuellaVoltaChe (Italy)	#AnaKaman (Egypt)	#RiceBunny (China)	#sas (China)
#asdas (S.Korea)	#asce (Macedonia)	#BalanceTonPorc (France)	#Cuéntalo (Spain)	#TimesUp
#TimeisNow	#HearMeToo	#MeQueer	#NiUnaMenos	#MeTooUN
#AidToo	#PremieroAssedio (Brazil)	#BabaeAko	#BabaeAk (Philippines)	#Sexual Harassment

#MeToo global hashtag family (UN Women, 2021)

1 #MeToo makes individual cases of sexual harassment and sexism visible and points toward systemic power imbalances (patriarchy)

An analysis of #MeToo tweets at the very height of the online movement on 15 October 2017 shows that the majority of tweets

- narrated stories of sexual harassment
- asserted existing patriarchal norms
- showed solidarity for victims (Wood, 2018)

Publicly speaking about it led to a denormalization of sexual harassment and violence (Wood, 2018). Hence, the #MeToo movement has increased visibility of a phenomenon usually hidden in patriarchal societies (Clark-Parsons, 2021) and not systematically confronted.

Plug
6%

Criticism
2%

Objections
8%

Meta-activism
9%

Narration
37%

Solidarity
16%

Assertions
22%
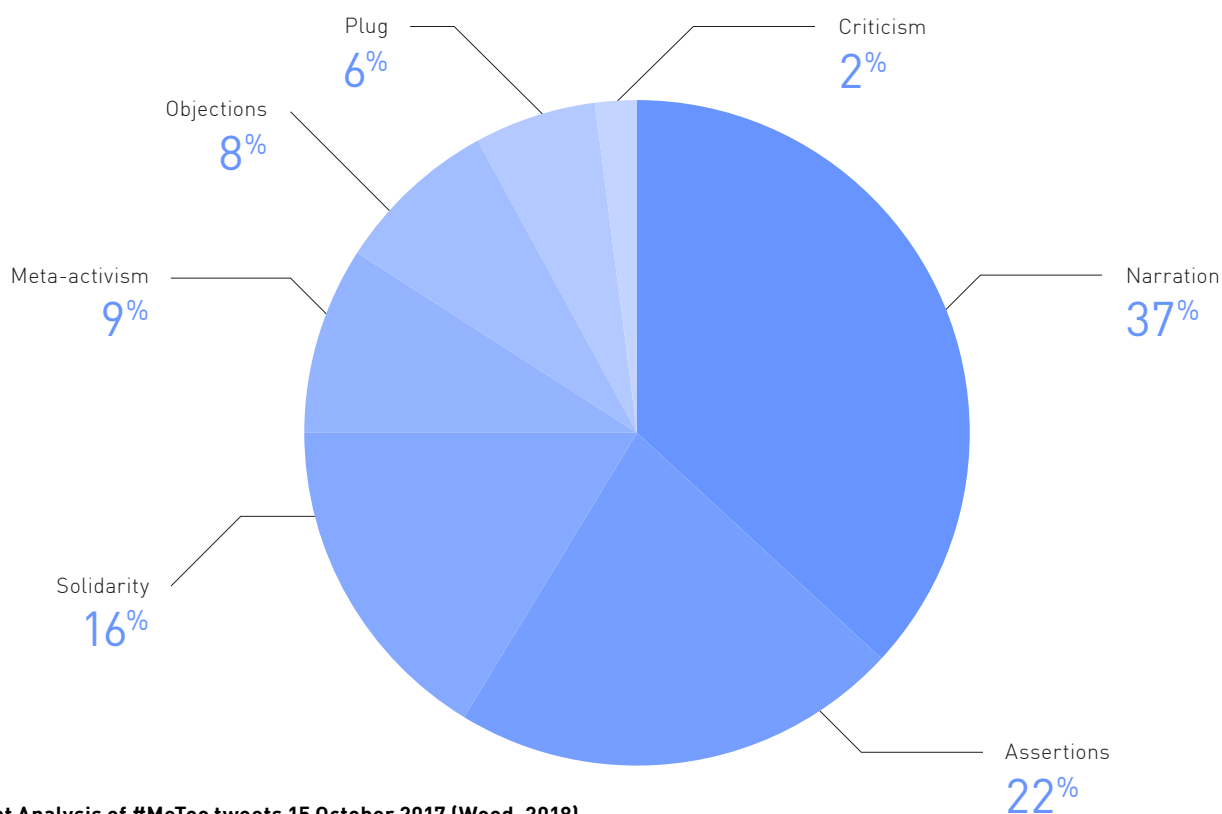
Content Analysis of #MeToo tweets 15 October 2017 (Wood, 2018)

A study comparing the prevalence of sexual harassment and violence in the US in 2016 and 2018 – before and after the peak of the movement in October 2017 – concluded that:

- The most severe forms of sexual harassment decreased: While in 2016 25% of women reported sexual coercion, this number fell to 16% in 2018

- Reports of unwanted sexual attention fell from 66% to 25%

- In contrast, the number for gender harassment (measured, for instance, as being confronted with sexist remarks or the display of sexist material in the workplace) increased from 76% in 2016 to a staggering 92% in 2018

- At the same time, the reported sense of self-esteem of women increased and their reported self-doubt decreased over the two-year period – and had a weaker relation to reported sexual harassment (Keplinger et al, 2019)

- Moreover, qualitative interviews showed that women saw a heightened scrutiny on the topic and that they felt more empowered and less ashamed to speak about sexual harassment (Keplinger et al, 2019), bringing the conversation to the front with more confidence

A study among men and women in the US showed that women were more likely to believe that sexual harassment in the workplace would decrease in light of the #MeToo movement and 77% of male respondents said they would be more careful about possible inappropriate behavior (Atwater, Tringale, Sturm, Taylor, & Braddy, 2019). This new mindset may offer organizations opportunities to help eradicate sexual harassment in the workplace with proactive initiatives.

severe forms of harassment decreased, reports of sexist remarks rose

Review sexual harassment policies

With sexual harassment being at the core of the #MeToo movement, organizations are now more than encouraged to reassess their anti-harassment policies, provide anti-harassment training and ensure that anonymous, neutral and fair grievance processes are in place. While many already have such processes in place, the data calls for improving them. Moreover, as the US Equal Opportunities Commission (2021) maintains, a homogenous workforce is a risk factor for sexual harassment. Accordingly, ensuring a diverse composition of the workforce is an important aspect to prevent harassment.

Discussing patriarchy is a necessary evil

That women are underrepresented and that men dominate leadership positions in organizations is a well-known fact and backed up by numerous studies (see, e.g., Ashcraft, 2012; Credit Suisse, 2019; Lewis & Simpson, 2012). #MeToo brought this issue to the center stage once more. As a result, organizations are now increasingly held accountable for addressing the systemic hurdles to equal access to leadership roles for all genders.

This implies that discussing patriarchy and its impact on corporate culture, systems and processes, as well as behaviors, is a necessary evil to accelerate inclusion and inclusive leadership.

Issues to revisit may include the unequal distribution of management positions reflected in in-group and out-group dynamics (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; van Knippenberg, 2018). For example, at team level: men interrupt women 30% more often than they do other men (Hancock & Rubin, 2015), heavily impacting women's ability to be seen as leaders.

Psychological safety to speak up – inclusive leadership to listen

Creating a psychologically safe environment is key for people to speak up about sexual harassment and everyday sexism. Similarly, inclusive leadership should focus on leaders' capabilities to listen.

Promoting talent and going beyond it: Inclusive culture

Organizations can act on the power imbalances between women and men by reviewing their talent pipeline, fast-tracking women and reviewing their external hiring policies. While many organizations are already working on these steps, few have mastered the fine nuances and behavioral influences that impact the end result. Most still require a thorough review of these steps to identify key decisive moments to improve the selection and promotion of talents.

Inclusive leadership, i.e. for leaders to act as visible allies and vocal advocates, plays a pivotal role in progressing toward further equity in organizations.

Moreover, the systemic power imbalances call for a broadening of inclusion efforts beyond talent. This implies seeing leadership as a collective process and fostering inclusive cultures.

Systemic power imbalances: Focus on measuring fairness and equity

To measure and define inclusion, #MeToo's focus on sexual harassment embedded in systemic power imbalances calls for a focus on fairness and equity.

2 #MeToo highlights intersectionality: Race and socioeconomic background

Despite the fact that Tarana Burke, a Black woman, initiated the #MeToo movement, it only gained momentum after the white actress Alyssa Milano used the hashtag in 2017 (Onwuachi-Willig, 2018) emphasizing that, once more, the intersection of gender and race matters to obtain visibility.

However, aside from the intersectionality of gender and race, #MeToo also points toward the intersectionality of gender and socioeconomic background. Harassment is not an assembly of individual cases; instead it arises from systemic power imbalances (North, 2017). Empirical studies show that gig workers, part-time and temp employees as well as those making a minimum wage – those most vulnerable – have the greatest risk of being subject to sexual harassment (Johnson, Keplinger, Kirk, & Barnes, 2019). This calls for organizations to expand their inclusion efforts to all sites.

Moreover, even though the media attention was directed to white cis-women being assaulted by cis-men, sexual harassment and violence is also prevalent for members of the LGBTQ+ community (Ison, 2019).

In short, sexual harassment is the result of a power dynamic that affects all situations – and where women and people with a lower socioeconomic background remain at a higher risk compared to others.

harassment arises from systemic power imbalances

Bring visibility to women from all backgrounds

Women from underrepresented backgrounds still take marginal positions within organizations (see, e.g, Holck, 2018; McKinsey & Lean In, 2020; Nkomo, Bell, Roberts, Joshi, & Thatcher, 2019) and #MeToo fueled the debate on intersectional inequalities.

The new emphasis encourages organizations to review their access to leadership positions for women including those from underrepresented groups. Moreover, this implies considering the potential to fast-track talent - while being aware of the dynamics of such a process within the organization.

In addition, the intersection of gender and socioeconomic background points toward broadening inclusion beyond a focus on talent – to all areas and sites of the organization. For measuring inclusion this means distributing surveys also to employees that do not have access to computers. Moreover, it should be ensured that they have access to information on EI&D issues.

Intersectionality: Focus on measuring uniqueness

The debates around the intersectional specificities of #MeToo point toward focusing on uniqueness in defining and measuring inclusion – while being aware that even the unique intersectional experiences are embedded in structural inequalities, as mentioned.

3 #MeToo as a contested field: Advocacy, backlash and the role of men and masculinity

The #MeToo movement brought visibility to sexual harassment and sexism and in its wake both advocacy and backlash surfaced. While two-thirds of tweets at the heart of #MeToo in October 2017 were positive – promoting advocacy, raising awareness, showing emotional support and expressing a need for change – a significant number of reactions were negative: Users trying to distract from the topic, promoting a different agenda, trying to take control over the debate or trolling it (Bogen, Bleiweiss, Leach, & Orchowski, 2021).

While feminist critics maintain that #MeToo did not go far enough, as it did not succeed in addressing systemic forms of patriarchal oppression to make an immediate impact, conservative critics point out that #MeToo went too far (Fileborn & Phillips, 2019) using rhetorical strategies of denial of systemic violence (Flood, 2019) or claiming that #MeToo would be about "destroying the lives of the accused and straining personal and professional relationships between men and women" (Clark-Parsons, 2021: 363).

The above leads to the inevitable role of men and masculinity in the #MeToo movement. Some men actively support the #MeToo movement and are visible advocates and allies, as can be seen in the use of #HowIWillChange – a hashtag initially promoted to talk about toxic masculinity, listening to the experiences of women, calling out other men, and making commitments to dismantle rape culture (Pettyjohn, Muzzey, Maas, & McCauley, 2019).

But also in this debate resistance to social change was voiced, promoting views that men are treated unfairly (Pettyjohn et al., 2019). With #himtoo, a specific counter movement to spark the idea that men would be falsely accused was initiated – a campaign that was not successful in derailing #MeToo (Boyle & Rathnayake, 2020). A common trope of critics is also that #MeToo would lead to a "policing of sex", even though the movement is not about consensual sex but about "abuse of power at work" (North, 2017).

#MeToo: Going too far and not going far enough, "destroying lives" and not addressing patriarchy and toxic masculinity

Fact Check: Wrong accusations

A recent analysis of false reporting rates in police rape cases (Orchowski, Bogen, & Berkowitz, 2020) shows that – depending on the methodology used – false reporting ranges from 2.1% to 10.3 %, a figure that is much lower than the public perception of wrong accusations being a common move by women to 'hunt' men and ruin their careers. This gap leads the authors to the conclusion that:

"Overestimation of the prevalence of false accusations perpetuates a culture where survivors of sexual violence are not believed when they come forward to report their experiences. Survivors who believe that their report will be met with skepticism may also refrain from reporting, which can reduce the likelihood that perpetrators of sexual violence are apprehended."

(Orchowski et al., 2020: 2–3)

Data from the US on the impact of #MeToo on the workplace shows that 16% of surveyed men claim to be more hesitant to hire "attractive women" (Atwater et al., 2019) after #MeToo and 39% of women believed that the attitude of men towards gender and diversity will be affected negatively. This issue also surfaced in the interviews with the Employee Resource Groups (ERG) at Philip Morris International (PMI), as can be seen below:

"I hear now that, you know, men will tell female colleagues, 'Ah, but you're lucky because you are a woman anyway, so, you know, your chances of getting promoted are higher than mine', which is not the... you know, the reality. The reality is we want the opportunities to be the same."

Interview with PMI ERGs

In the same study, 70% of female respondents and 58% of males agreed with a statement that "powerful men will continue to engage in sexual harassment" (Atwater et al, 2019: 9). Similarly, more than one-third of women believe that men are punishing women for speaking up on sexual harassment (Atwater, Sturm, Taylor, & Tringale, 2021: 310).

Overall, 42% of women in the US conclude that nothing has been done since 2017 to address the issues raised by #MeToo – with only 33% of men agreeing to this (Have Her Back, 2019).

toxic masculinity and alpha male culture

more than 2/3 of women in the US believe that men are punishing women for speaking up

"Um, we've already discussed some unlikely, unexpected commonalities with some of [the other ERGs]. I happened to mention toxic masculinity and that really resonated, which is kind of unexpected. And by that I meant what I have discovered on a personal level as you start in quite a kind of, um, if I could say, an alpha male culture, like Philip Morris [...] if you disclose something that people perceive as a weakness, I've felt a definite kind of, um, uh, what's the word, it's too much to say, let's just say negativity, let's just call it that."

Interview with PMI ERGs

As the PMI quote illustrates, also the interviews with the ERG (co-)heads pointed toward masculinity and male culture as a central trope. However, the transition to smoke-free can be seen as a window of opportunity to disrupt this male culture, as the following quote shows.

"So it was a very masculine culture and a very, uh, homegrown culture. And then as the company's vision has shifted to smoke-free, I think it helped in many ways, because we recognized that we didn't have the skills within the company to… to get us where we wanted to go. […] I think if we were still like a pure play tobacco company, a cigarette company, I think it would be even harder than it currently is. And it's kind of hard today."

Interview with PMI ERGs

In line with this are statements that being a woman is "something holding you back a little bit".

With a representative of the Women's Inspirational Network (WIN) reporting that they invited a professor who "just wrote her 15th book about the patriarchy" to an event, one can see that initiatives are already taken to debate core issues raised by the #MeToo movement. Indeed, the key question is how to include men in such heated discussions. As these are potentially dichotomous debates of "us" versus "them", facilitation and leadership are needed to address these issues in a sustainable way.

A dichotomous pattern became visible at an event organized by WIN when negative anonymous comments were made asking whether WIN is biased against men.

"And then how do we really, uh, also not create a divide? That's what scares me the most. It becomes us versus them, which is not right, you know. It's not about, I think, fixing the women and it's not about blaming the men. It's about: Can we take […] our characteristics, and by working together on a more equal footing and giving the opportunities to both genders, equal opportunities […] I think that's what creates a better future."

Interview with PMI ERGs

open debate beyond fixing women and blaming men

Dichotomized debates demand a clear position

Organizations are part and parcel of the contested debates brought to the fore by #MeToo: Within organizations, potentially dichotomized debates ("us" vs. "'them") need to take place in a well-thought-out, facilitated manner to allow all positions to be heard.

However, in order to stay on focus, these discussions are best accompanied by clear statements and guidance/coaching from top leaders in regard to the organization's strategic position on EI&D, alignment to its values and beliefs. Moreover, practices and policies that support these statements and anchor them in an inclusive culture are needed.

Men as allies and advocates – also in the debate on toxic masculinity

#MeToo also showed that many men take an active position as allies and advocates for gender equality – and that many men are suffering from and are willing to fight toxic masculinity.

This becomes visible in masculine anxiety, the fear of men not being able to live up to rigid standards of masculinity in society (DiMuccio, Sattari, Shaffer, & Cline, 2021).

Organizations can build on this knowledge to role-model different behaviors and highlight successes through storytelling.

Fostering psychological safety to create space for critical debates

The heated debates that can arise around #MeToo and gendered power relations call for fostering inclusion as psychological safety in order to establish a culture where everyone feels safe to speak up. Feeling safe to speak up also implies that some debates and conversations require clear guidance and coaching from key role models to offer a congruent language and approach to difficult topics.

Creating an inclusive culture might call for excluding the exclusionary

Creating an inclusive culture where everybody feels safe to speak up without fear of retribution may actually call for steps to exclude those that create a psychologically unsafe environment. In other words, it might lead to excluding those who are not willing to align to the organization's EI&D strategy and position, its values and beliefs and openly or unconsciously work against the common EI&D goal.

In one of the largest public oil & gas organizations, the CEO was openly heard to reply to people who inquired if their career as men was now limited due to an emphasized focus on increasing the presence of women in leadership positions, on at least two occasions: 'If I still must explain the D&I business case to you, then this may no longer be the right place for you to work'. While the statement may lead to excluding those who are not aligned to the EI&D strategy, it equally emphasized the clear position of the organization's expectations of leaders.

Black Lives Matter

For organizations and their EI&D journey to enhance inclusion and inclusive leadership BLM implies:

1. BLM brings visibility to systemic racism and racial injustice – across the globe
2. BLM points to intersectionality: Gender, LGBTQ+ and socioeconomic background
3. BLM fuels local debates on racism – globally
4. BLM as a contested field: From acknowledging white privilege to resistance

Black Lives Matter

Black Lives Matter (BLM) is a decentralized social movement that was initiated in 2013 by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi, three Black women – two of them identifying as queer (Petermon & Spencer, 2019) - as a movement to fight police violence and acts of police murder that remained unpunished.

The movement addressed how Black lives are shaped by a history of slavery and colonialism (Anderson, Barthel, Perrin, & Vogels, 2021) and evolved over the years into a broader movement "to fight for Freedom, Liberation and Justice" (blacklivesmatter.com, 2021) – BLM also uses individual cases to point toward systemic issues, in this case systemic racism.

After being around for seven years, the movement saw a huge peak in May 2020 with protests against the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. As the data from Google Trends showed, BLM was by far the most searched term among the social issues considered and by 2020 it became the largest protest movement in US history (New York Times, 2020).

Suddenly, a conversation that had previously taken place predominantly in North America crossed continents and impacted racial topics across the globe – and opened a new window of opportunity to discuss inclusion & diversity within organizations, as the quote on the next page and the subsequent chapters show.
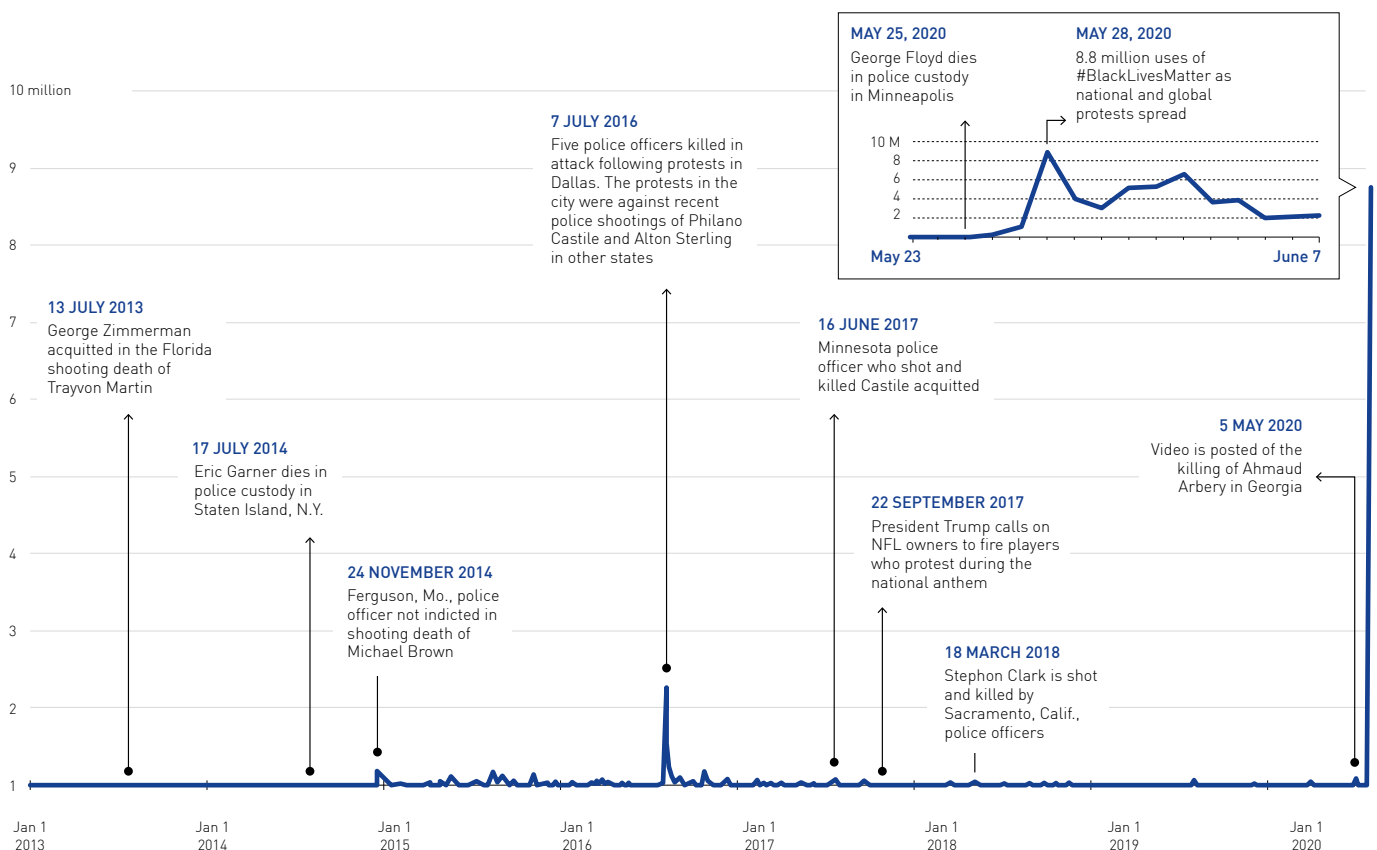
Public Twitter posts #BlackLivesMatter 1 January 2013 - 7 June 2020 (Anderson et al., 2021)

"Yeah, so it was really cool because we just started this conversation [on LGBTQ+ rights, AF] and [André Calantzopoulos] started thinking about it and everything happened with Black Lives Matter and he got really affected by that as well. So, I think there was just the moment in time that we had the right people speaking up and not afraid to speak up."

Interview with PMI ERGs

Survey of the HR Policy Association on the impact of Black Lives Matter

85%	Expansion of inclusiveness activities
85%	Increased C-suite involvement
70%	Starting/expanding unconscious bias training
57%	Evaluation of disaggregated workforce demographic data
51%	Hiring from educational institutions with strong minority talent

Further approaches:

Listening sessions and sharing experiences; removal of names from resumes; community partnerships to help source/prepare diverse talent; creating DE&I positions; piloting separate initiatives with commitment to advancing racial equality; and adding/strengthening incentive metrics on diversity

(HR Policy Association, 2021)

1   BLM brings visibility to systemic racism and racial injustice – across the globe

The very name of Black Lives Matter points towards visibility, justice and fighting systemic racism as the unmarked norm. #BlackLivesMatter tweets show that in addition to references to George Floyd's mortal agony facing police violence ("I can't breathe") justice and visibility were key claims of the movement (Bowman Williams, Mezey, & Singh, 2021).

Justice was addressed using the movement's central claim "No Justice, No Peace" as well as the terms Justice and Normalize Equality. Visibility was emphasized by using the hashtags #sayhername, #saytheirnames and #sayhisname.

305,857	#icantbreathe
99,174	#nojusticenopeace
99,143	#sayhername
65,499	#justice
64,580	#saytheirnames
41,520	#normalizeequality
34,243	#sayhisname

Solidarity and Activism Hashtag Co-Occurrence
(Bowman Williams et al, 2021)

"As the nation recognizes the anniversary of George Floyd's death, many corporate executives who vowed to change the course on diversity, equity and inclusion are still trying to figure out how to take bolder actions to create more diverse and inclusive companies."

(Fierce, 2021)

BLM had and still has a huge impact not only on online communication, but also on the way we speak and the way we look at, e.g., colonial monuments, education and corporations:

"Statues were toppled, curators forced to reexamine their exhibits and collections, university vice-chancellors and directors issued statements about their commitment to tackle racial inequality, and courses were scrutinized for decolonization. Everywhere symbolic gestures were made toward anti-racism."

(Shah & Lerche, 2021: 94)

After the death of George Floyd, the movement spread online and – even amid the first height of the COVID-19 pandemic – on-site protest spread globally with a focus on North America and Europe.

Global Black Lives Matter protests
25 May 2020 – 18 November 2020

(Black Lives Matter Map, 2020)

S&P 500 companies' reaction to BLM
in Summer 2020 (As You Sow, 2021)

66%	issued statements after the murder of George Floyd	**17%**	reference the phrase "systemic racism"
50%	were posted on their websites	**28%**	acknowledge pervasive racism
16%	on social media	**55%**	did not refer to structures
60%	of statements included CEO's responsibility for racial justice	**6%**	claim to be or to become an antiracist organization
40%	named victims of police violence	**36%**	donated to racial justice organizations
14%	stated Black Lives Matter	**6%**	have joined #stophateforprofit

Visibility: Give voice in meetings – and listen

Black Lives Matter as a social movement leads to inquiring about the visibility of Black employees as well as their position in emerging talent and leadership positions. This urges organizations to review, among others, their meeting culture to allow different voices to be heard, so that all talent can be seen as potential leaders and to emphasize listening with humility in inclusive leadership.

Visibility: Access to leadership positions

We know that race-based data is hard to obtain in all countries. As a result, organizations may miss valuable data to enhance racial equity. Nevertheless, in light of scarce concrete data, organizations may challenge themselves on how well they identify and develop Black talent across the globe, how well their uniqueness is fostered and how the visibility of Black employees is ensured – especially Black women, who remain more invisible than black men as data shows (McKinsey & Lean In, 2020) and as will be outlined below.

Take a stand – and back it up

With BLM exposing the blatant disregard toward Black people in North America, many companies felt compelled to take a stand. Stepping up as a visible ally and vocal advocate is as helpful to demonstrate inclusion as it is necessary to develop inclusive leadership. However, with BLM accelerating the debate, organizations are ever more scrutinized, their statements are fact-checked and accountability is increased – by customers, employees, partners, and other stakeholders. Hence, taking a stand without walking the talk can easily lead to accusations of "woke-washing" (Dowell & Jackson, 2020). Organizations must have sound internal policies for these enhanced expectations, as "statement fatigue" is emerging and critics and activists alike demand and fact-check authenticity of those who speak up.

Inclusive leadership: Educate yourself

In general, it is not the task of members of underrepresented groups to educate members of a majority, rather everyone should educate themselves and get acquainted with areas that they are not familiar with. Educating yourself starts with listening with humility .

Psychological safety: Discussing systemic racism and white privilege is a necessary evil

Similar to the push from the #MeToo movement, addressing systemic racism and white privilege within a corporate context is an unavoidable yet necessary evil to challenge both visible and invisible hurdles in an effort to create truly inclusive cultures. Here too, creating a psychologically safe environment is a key component for open and constructive discussions.

Systemic racism: Focus on measuring fairness and equity

To address systemic racism, fairness and equity are core components to measure inclusion and inclusive leadership.

2 BLM pointing to intersectionality: Gender, LGBTQ+ and socioeconomic background

Central to BLM from its very beginning was contesting the invisibility of Black women as victims of police violence:

Black feminist Professor Kimberley Crenshaw – the scholar who coined the term intersectionality (Crenshaw 1998 [1989]) – launched the hashtag #SayHerName in 2014 to make Black women visible (Kennedy-Macfoy & Zarkov, 2020).

Similarly, two of the three initial founders of the Black Lives Matter movement identify as queer women, a fact that oftentimes went unnoticed but is in line with the invisibility of Black queer subjects in societies (Petermon & Spencer, 2019).

The intersection of race and socioeconomic background became apparent in the critique of company statements that were issued in solidarity with the BLM movement.

Criticized as unauthentic, such statements that Black lives matter "would be news to their workers" (Gilpin, 2020) as these companies have a long history of employing Black people at the lower ranks but showed no concern for their issues prior to BLM. With deprivileged demographic groups found predominantly at the lower ranks of organizations (Munir, 2021), Black Lives Matters calls unavoidably for taking the specific socioeconomic background into account.

Visibility of Black women	Just as Black women were initially rendered invisible within the BLM movement, organizations need to ask themselves whether Black women are similarly rendered invisible in their midst – as research has shown (see, e.g., Sesko & Biernat, 2010). Hence, knowing what we know now, another look at meeting participation, talent reviews and promotions is encouraged to enhance their inclusion.
Intersectionality and inclusive culture	Diversity can no longer be addressed in silos, and various intersections should be taken into consideration. While proper data on ethnicity or race may not be available everywhere (e.g., across continents), it does not mean that diversity cannot be addressed through changes in behavior and fostering an inclusive culture.
Intersectionality: Focus on measuring uniqueness	The debate sparked by BLM around the intersection of race with gender, sexual orientation and socioeconomic background calls for uniqueness to be a higher priority than in the past – while, again, being aware that even seemingly unique intersectional experiences are embedded in structural inequalities.

3 **BLM fuels local debates on racism – globally**

Originated in the US to give visibility to the oppression of Black people, BLM spread across the globe and relates to specific local constellations of racism and xenophobia.

Hence, both the online activism and the global demonstrations in May 2020 also "protest police violence against Black and Brown bodies and against institutional racism in their own countries" (Kennedy-Macfoy & Zarkov, 2020: 2). For instance, protests in France in June 2020 connected BLM to the death of Adama Traoré and the country's colonial history (Jeune Afrique, 2021; Le Monde, 2020).

A look around the world – without aiming to be exhaustive – shows that BLM in Asia can be seen in light of the economic rise of the region and new "intraregional and intercontinental flows and new interracial encounters" (Raghuram, 2021: 2) that coin a new situation for race and ethnicity in the region.

Studies look at racism between "co-ethnic Chinese" in Singapore (Ang, 2018), Sinophobia in Australia and Singapore (Ang & Colic-Peisker, 2021) or how in Japan racism is "dismissed" by claiming its inexistence (Kawai, 2015). The direct impact of Black Lives Matter can be seen in India, where famous Bollywood stars spoke in solidarity with the BLM movement – to be criticized next for their hypocrisy as they earn money as testimonials for bleaching creams (Raghuram, 2021).

"We may see it not so much as race, people understand Chinese, Malays, and Indians, which is the race, which are community races in the population. But I think from a company perspective, we might see race, from a corporate perspective, as whether it's Asians or non-Asians. [...]

So we [in contrast, AF] see the race differentiation to be a little bit different. Therefore, to actually make a difference, you almost have to localize or regionalize your action plan and first understand what race and ethnicity, well, means to people."

Interview with PMI ERGs

In Europe the BLM discourse is interacting with migration after World War II, the refugee movements peaking in 2015 and anti-Muslim racism, what Genova (2018) calls an "unresolved racial crisis that derives fundamentally from the post-colonial condition of 'Europe' as a whole" (p. 1765).

Also within a US discourse, Black Lives Matter is embedded in other anti-racist struggles, e.g. against anti-Asian racism in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic (Ho, 2021).

The need for local implementations can also be seen in the different terminologies used in different geographies and regions.

Europe: BLM interacts with migration and refugee discourses

Global movement demanding local answers

Even though BLM brought different forms of racism to the global agenda, organizations are encouraged to avoid simply referring to the North American discourse across all continents. Instead, listening to, and teaming up with, local advocates and social movements is a sound way to address the racial issues locally, and personalize the solutions to racism and xenophobia as much as possible.

4 BLM as a contested field: From acknowledging white privilege to resistance

Black Lives Matter sparked a wave of solidarity of allies and advocates and provoked debates around white privilege (Cole, 2020) and how white people are complicit in perpetuating systemic racism (Cornelius, 2020).

As could be expected, countermovements also emerged: #AllLivesMatter (Giorgi, Guntuku, Rahman, Himelein-Wachowiak, Kwarteng, & Curtis, 2020) accuses BLM of implying that only Black lives would matter and thereby dilutes the specific racist structures Black people are exposed to (Atkins, 2019).

#BlueLivesMatter emerged (Giorgi et al., 2020), which focuses on police officers being killed and advocating for making these acts part of hate crime legislation. Looking at 42 million tweets between January 2013 and June 2020 reveals that 85% (36.9 million) can be attributed to BLM, vs. 8% (3.4 million) to BlueLivesMatter and 7% (3 million) to AllLivesMatter. These numbers put the conversation back into perspective.

85 % of tweets pro Black Lives Matter

white privilege in perspective

When white employees express that they are the "real victims of discrimination" – at times as the result of equal opportunities or affirmative action initiatives – the issue of white privilege is raised.

As perception, not reality, structures how employees respond to such initiatives, it is crucial to bring "everyone on the same page as to what the reality is and why it is a problem for the organization" (Livingston, 2020: 67), i.e. pointing to the absence of Black employees and people with a minority background in leadership positions as well as giving this transparency and visibility and why it matters to organizations.

Fostering allyship and advocacy

To bring more white employees actively on board, fostering and rewarding visible allyship and vocal advocacy helps to nurture inclusion and inclusive leadership.

Fostering psychological safety to create space for critical debates

Cultivating a culture of psychological safety should establish a safe arena to discuss contested issues. In addressing topics like systemic racism and white privilege, the key is to "chose justice over comfort" in processes of "self-reflection, cultural humility, action, and re-engagement after disconnections" (Suyemoto, Hochman, Donovan, & Roemer, 2021) – aspects that relate to the key features of inclusive leadership discussed in Part I.

Socioeconomic inequalities

Socioeconomic inequalities: Highlighted and exacerbated by COVID-19

On a broad level, inequalities can be defined as "the ways in which access to resources and opportunities are differentially distributed across a particular population" (Amis, Brickson, Haack, & Hernandez, 2021: 431). Over the past decade, several empirical studies have shown how wealth and income are distributed ever more unequally across the globe – with Piketty's (2014, 2020) work among the most influential.
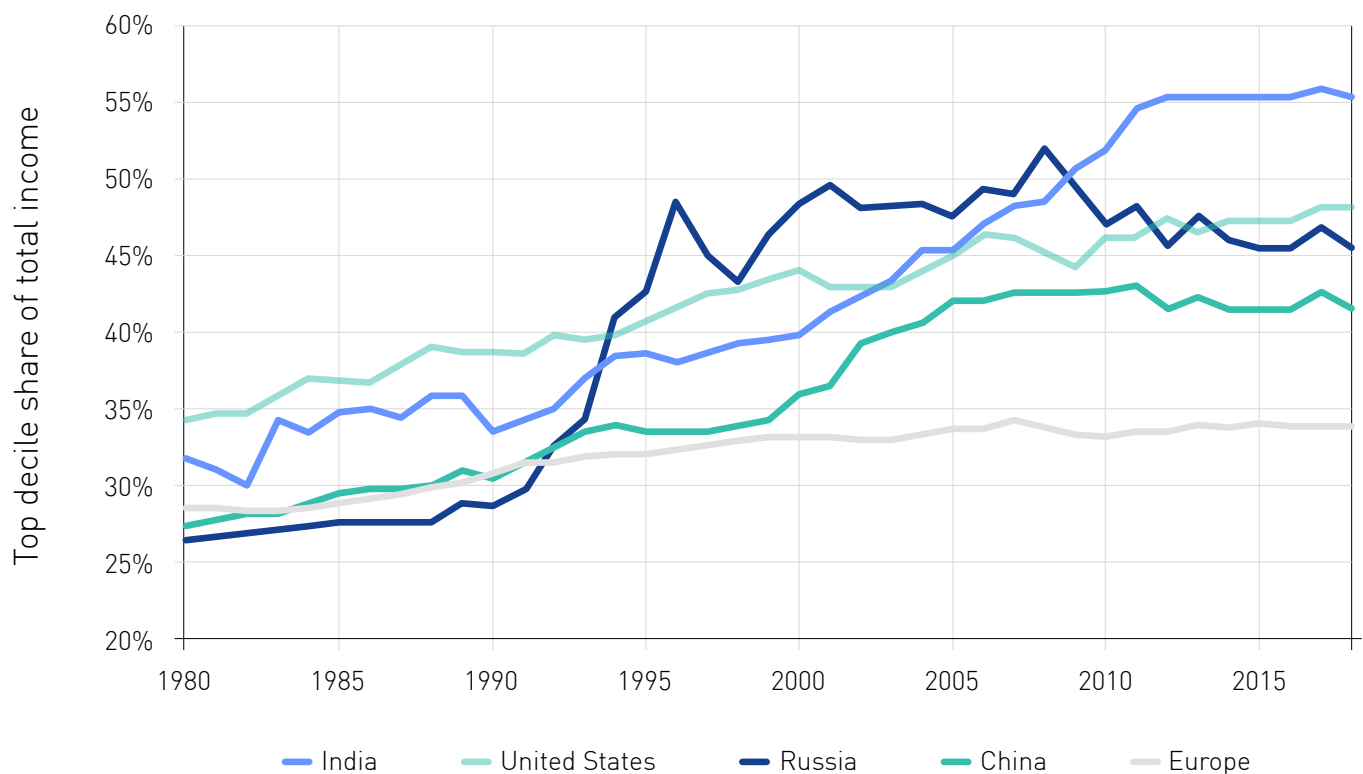
Share of Top 10 Percent Highest Earners of Total National Income (Piketty, 2020: 21)

While the unequal distribution of wealth and income has become greater, extreme poverty has been reduced globally. This double-edged trend can be seen in the graph below. While the top 1% captured 27% of global growth in 1980–2018, also the bottom 50% were able to capture some. In comparison, the "global middle class" did not benefit much.

The top 1% have captured 27% of growth.

The bottom 50% have captured 12% of growth.

Growth in emerging countries

Decline of lower and middle classes in wealthy countries

Prosperity of top 1% in all countries

Cumulative income growth per adult, 1980-2018

Percentile of the global per adult income distribution
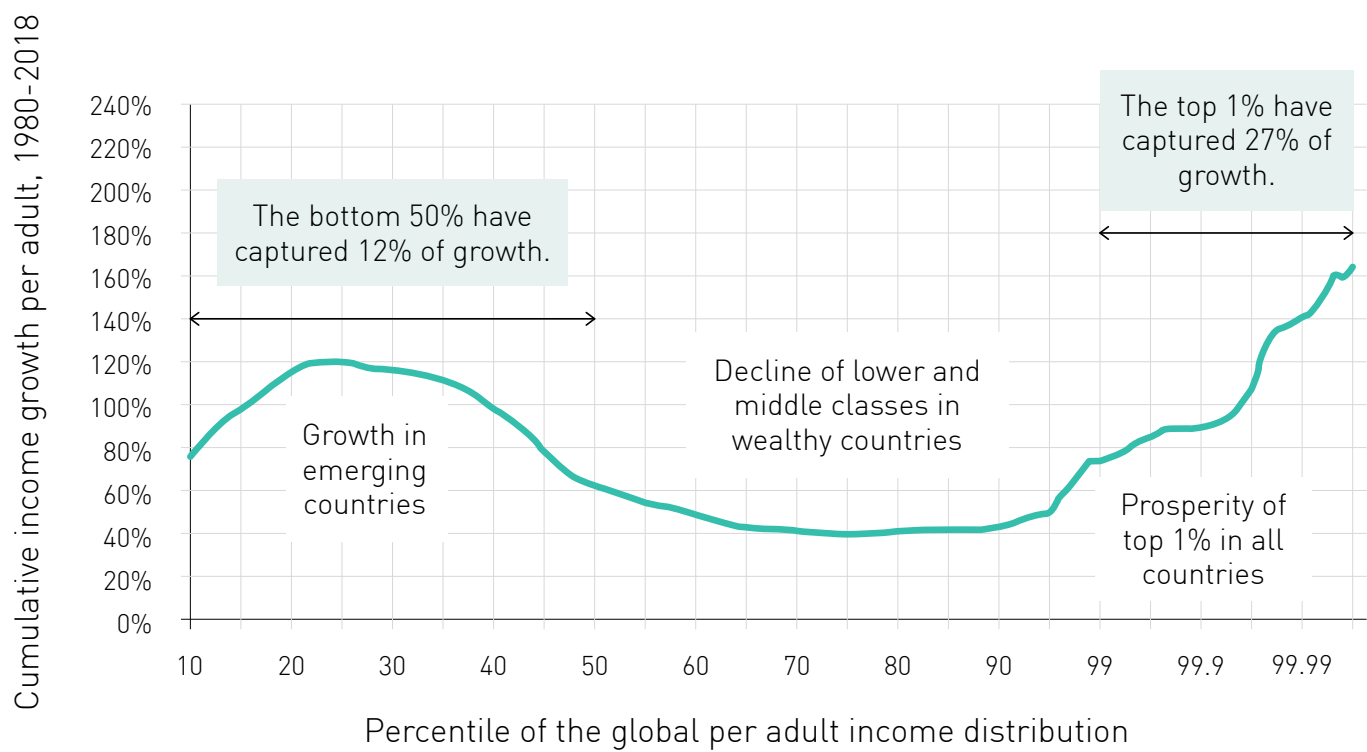
Global Distribution of Growth (Piketty, 2020: 25)

However, with the recent COVID-19 pandemic shaking up the global economy, the pre-COVID projections to reduce extreme poverty are revoked again.

To summarize, inequality can be seen as "one of the most pernicious threats to our society" (Amis et al, 2021: 431), as a threat to democracy (Wolf, 2017), and to the global liberal order (Flaherty & Rogowski, 2021) with the IMF seeing inequality of opportunity as the biggest threat to economic growth (Aiyar & Ebeke, 2019).

For organizations and their journey toward inclusion and inclusive leadership this means that

- Organizations are inadvertent drivers of socioeconomic inequalities, as much as they have the potential to act on them.

- Inclusion and diversity strategies have so far – with a few exceptions – ignored socioeconomic inequalities and social class as a dimension of diversity.

Extreme poverty under COVID-19

COVID-19-downside COVID-19-baseline Pre-COVID-19
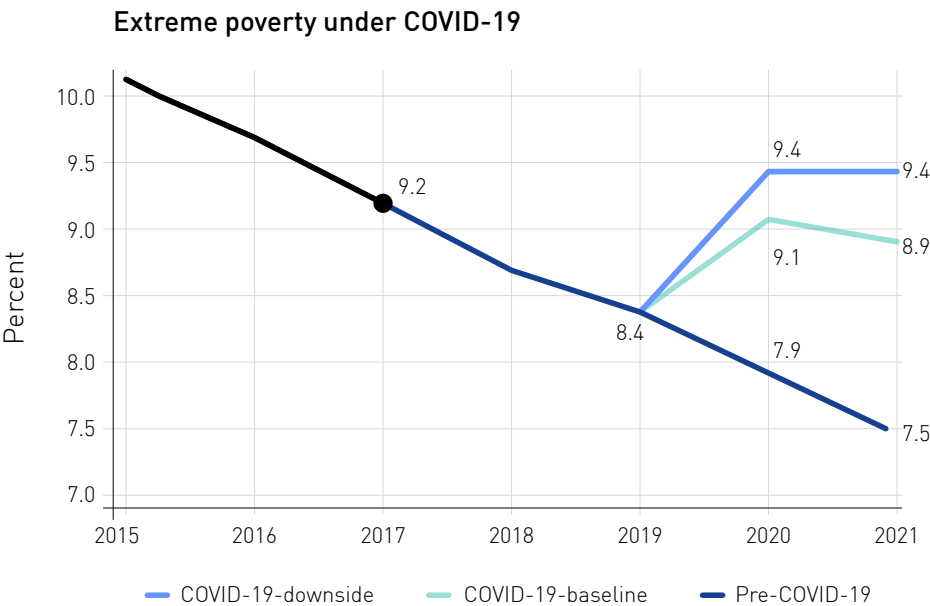
COVID-19 Extreme Poverty Reduction Losses

(World Bank, 2020)

Inequalities and organizations

It is widely stated that organizations may inadvertently perpetuate socioeconomic inequalities, which means at the same time they are part of the solution. For instance, organizations shape individual employment opportunities which define the socioeconomic status of individuals. Inequalities within organizations must, moreover, be seen as reproduced in everyday practices.

Amis, Mair, and Munir (2020) identify in this regard five major practices that reproduce inequalities:

Hiring practices	• Evaluation based on cultural similarity • Recruitment tools and instruments • Informal networks
Promotion	• Informal networks • Mentoring • Socialization
Role allocation	• Organizational demands • Task assignment
Compensation	• Remuneration structure • Exploitative and discriminatory practices
Organizational structuring	• Organization cultures • Hierarchies and bureaucracies

Socioeconomic background as new diversity dimension

With organizations being identified as central sites for the reproduction of socioeconomic inequalities, the role of socioeconomic background in inclusion and diversity becomes apparent. Ingram and Oh (2021) show how in the US individuals with a disadvantaged social class background (in particular with a low educational background) are substantially less likely to become managers – a disadvantage that is comparable to the one of women and Black Americans.

This calls for organizations to include socioeconomic background in talent identification, such as expanding universities graduates are sourced from and their subsequent access to leadership positions as well as allowing for different behaviors and language styles.

Moreover, EI&D efforts should be implemented at all levels of an organization.

First conclusion: Social movements and socioeconomic inequalities

First conclusion: Social movements and socioeconomic inequalities

Without aiming to ignore the specificities of #MeToo and Black Lives Matter, the in-depth look taken above shows similarities in how they impact inclusion and inclusive leadership, as summarized in the graph on the next page. Both social movements take individual cases to problematize underlying systemic issues – and socioeconomic inequalities also point to a systemic problem.

Hence, to address and measure inclusion these phenomena urge organizations to focus on the uniqueness of intersectional experiences at the individual level – while being aware that this is embedded in calls for justice. Accordingly, organizations are advised to focus on fairness and equity to reflect these calls of social movements. Psychological safety is positioned again as the linchpin to allow for open discussions.

For inclusive leadership this means on the individual level focusing on humble listening and urging individuals to educate themselves. At the team level, the social movements and inequalities call for inclusive leadership as a collective process to establish an inclusive culture. At the organizational level, taking a stand and backing it up means that organizations themselves become visible allies.

	Inclusion	Inclusive leadership	

#MeToo

- Visibility to sexual harassment and sexism
- Power inequalities at the workplace
- Intersectionality

- **Patriarchy**
- **Toxic masculinity**

Black Lives Matter

- Visibility to police violence
- Demands for racial justice
- Intersectionality
- Global phenomenon calling for local actions

- **Systemic racism**
- **White privilege**

Socioeconomic inequalities

- So far mostly absent from EI&D focus
- Organizations as drivers and those that can act on it

- **Reproduction of socioeconomic inequalities**

Social movements and socioeconomic influence

Uniqueness

- Visibility
- Intersectional experiences
- Adding socioeconomic background to diversity

Humble, educated listeners

- Listening with humility
- Active advocates
- Crediting input from underrepresented colleagues
- Educate themselves

Individual

Psychological safety

- Creating an environment where it is safe to speak up
- Discuss toxic masculinity, systemic racism, white privilege

Il as collective process

- Create inclusive culture
- Everyone can take leadership on inclusion
- Everyone is safe to call out micro-inequalities
- Everyone contributes to an inclusive culture

Team

Fairness & equity

- Addressing calls for justice
- Addressing systemic power inequalities
- Inclusion for all - not only those with talent and high potential

Take a stand and back it up

- In potentially dichotomized debates
- Reflecting that organizations are increasingly scrutinized, fact-checked and held accountable

Organization

Unforeseen disruptor: COVID-19

COVID-19 impacts organizations and their journey toward inclusion and inclusive leadership in the following ways:

1. COVID-19 disrupted the labor market unequally
2. COVID-19 impacted underrepresented groups in the workplace
3. COVID-19 accelerated the pace of digitalization: Hybrid work as the new normal

Unforeseen disruptor: COVID-19

COVID-19 is a pandemic of historic dimensions (Feehan & Apostolopoulos, 2021) with tremendous health-related consequences exacerbated by socioeconomic inequalities. People of color in the US, for instance, were more likely to get sick, be hospitalized and die from COVID-19 (CDC, 2021) and in the UK, the mortality rate of Black and South Asian people was two times higher compared to other ethnic groups (ONS, 2020).

The disruption of the global economy put a spotlight on and exacerbated already existing inequalities (Adams-Prassl, Boneva, Golin, & Rauh, 2020; Blundell, Costa Dias, Joyce, & Xu, 2020), the same inequalities that can also be found in organizations (Bapuji, Ertug, & Shaw, 2020; Bapuji, Patel, Ertug, & Allen, 2020).

Moreover, COVID-19 speeded up the pace of technological transformation.

unequal health impact of COVID-19

1 COVID-19 disrupted the labor market unequally

The latest figures from the International Labour Organization as per end of October (ILO, 2021) show that the global recovery of the labor market has stalled in 2021:

- For the third quarter of 2021 working hours remain 4.7% lower compared to pre-pandemic levels (Q4/2019) – which still equals 137 million full-time jobs lost as of Q3/2021

- There is also a large international inequality: While high and upper-middle-income countries recovered comparatively well, in lower-middle and low-income countries job losses remain salient

Women, Black people, young, less-educated and precarious workers hit hardest:

- Younger people, especially younger women have most difficulties to regain work (ILO, 2021)

- Low-wage and less-educated people were hit worst (OECD, 2021)

  - Hours worked in low-paying occupations fell 18 percentage points

  - Less-educated people's hours lost were three times those of higher educated people

- Younger (15-24 yo) and precarious workers hit harder (OECD, 2021)

  - Hours worked by young people fell by over 26%

  - Difficulties entering the labor market

- Sectors affected by lockdown (among them non-food retail, restaurants and hotels, passenger transport, personal services, and arts and leisure services) are populated by women and younger workers (Joyce & Xu, 2020)

- In the UK, the unemployment rate of young Black people surged from 24.5% in Q3/2019 to 41.6% in Q4/2020 (ONS, 2021)

- Data from the US shows that Black people recover slower (Lee, Park, & Shin, 2021)

- Long-term predictions estimate that by 2030 more women, young, less-educated workers as well as ethnic minorities and migrants will face higher pressure to change occupations due to COVID-19 (Lund et al, 2021).

In addition, labor market recoveries in high-income countries are happening against the backdrop of 41% of the global workforce thinking about leaving their employer (Microsoft, 2021) and higher than average numbers in the US are actually quitting their job. While some analysts suggest that this is just a recalibration of the labor market after a vacuum produced by COVID-19 (BBC, 2021), others see this as the Great Resignation (see, e.g., Cook, 2021).

A recent US survey by Mercer shows that three in ten employees are considering quitting their job, a figure similar to pre-pandemic rates. However, low-wage and entry-level Black and Asian Americans and those in the healthcare and food/retail/hospitality business show above-average rates (Mercer, 2021) – exactly those employees and sectors affected hardest by the pandemic. With above-average people leaving their jobs, more and more employers in the Global North are having problems finding suitable workers (Deloitte, 2021). With this post-pandemic labor shortage, it is likely that the power will shift from employers to employees, which puts pressure on organizations to attract and retain employees – at least for the short, foreseeable future.

Moreover, Millennials and Gen Zs plan to switch their jobs in above-average rates (Adobe, 2021). Similarly, in China late Millennials and Gen Z workers "flee" to freelance jobs (SCMP, 2021) and China is currently facing a shortage in skilled labor (Bloomberg, 2021).

Hence, as reasons to quit are physical health, work-life balance, control over work schedule, mental health and personal fulfillment and purpose, together with better pay for low-paid employees (Adobe, 2021; Mercer, 2021), it is likely that we are witnessing a radical shift in the relationship to work induced by the disruptions caused by COVID-19.

unequal impact on the labor market - and Great Resignation

Check internal workforce distribution post-COVID-19

To pursue inclusion consistently, organizations should review their internal workforce to analyze whether they lost more talent from underrepresented groups – and what role they could play in countering the negative effects of the pandemic for all demographic groups.

Develop a perspective on work-life balance and purpose

In light of the Great Resignation, organizations are advised to revisit work-life balance sustainably and how to realign their purpose – as this is prioritized by younger generations entering the labor market and management positions, as will be discussed on the following pages.

2 COVID-19 impacted underrepresented groups in the workplace

COVID-19 impacted those who lost their jobs during the economic turmoil as well as those who were able to remain in their roles. Factories closed down and office workers shifted to working from home. Women were most impacted by this as they still carry the majority of social responsibilities such as care work for children and the elderly (see, e.g., Chauhan, 2020; Xue & McMunn, 2021), are in charge of domestic work and the social agenda.

"Especially during COVID times, that was particularly challenging, when schools were shut and working moms were on Microsoft Teams the whole day with young children. I mean, it was really an impossible situation."

Interview with PMI ERGs

In general, women felt more stressed, exhausted, excluded, "in the dark" and suffered from burnout compared to men. Here too, intersectional inequalities become visible: LGBTQ+ women and women with disabilities reported an even higher negative impact on their wellbeing, Black women reported feeling more exhausted and excluded (McKinsey & Lean In, 2020: 32).

How different groups of women are feeling during COVID-19

Better experience ▭▭▭▭▭ Worse experience

% of employees who have felt...

Comparison of LGBTQ+ women and women with disabilities to men and women overall

All men	All women	LGBTQ+ women	Women w/ disabilities		White women	Asian women	Latinas	Black women
				Comparison of women by race and ethnicity				
46%	53%	58%	61%	Stressed	55%	47%	49%	47%
31%	37%	43%	46%	Exhausted	37%	37%	34%	40%
28%	32%	37%	40%	Burned out	33%	30%	27%	33%
10%	11%	12%	22%	Excluded	11%	10%	10%	17%
20%	22%	25%	36%	In the dark	22%	18%	19%	23%
7%	9%	16%	15%	Can't talk about impact of current events	7%	7%	8%	22%
9%	13%	20%	24%	Discomfort sharing challenges	13%	12%	14%	16%

Intersectional effects of pandemic (McKinsey & Lean In, 2020: 32)

Work-life balance and mental health for underrepresented groups

Organizations can act on the higher impact of negative effects of COVID-19 on specific demographic groups by identifying tailored measures such as taking into account individual needs in an effort to foster work-life balance, mental health and wellbeing.

3 COVID-19 accelerated the pace of digitalization: Hybrid work as the new normal

Baldwin (2020) argues that the pandemic disrupted working life through four shocks that will have a lasting impact:

• Tremendous job losses will lead to further automatization

• People and organizations have learned to work remotely, and they will keep this knowledge

• Office space got more expensive which pushes for remote work

• Balance sheets were hit hard, recovery could mean further cuts

In light of losses made during the pandemic, firms may be under pressure to cut costs. With remote work established as the new normal, artificial intelligence and robotics will gain importance and lead to job cuts. Moreover, the prevalence of remote work means that "remote intelligence" (RI) will also gain a foothold and more and more office work will be sourced out to "telemigrants" working in lower-paid countries (Baldwin, 2020). COVID-19 also accelerated shifts in consumer behavior (e-commerce, restaurant delivery, online grocery, etc.) and advanced the use of online education and remote medicine (Lund et al, 2021) – all adding to the speed of digital transformation.

With companies reopening their office spaces in some localities and allowing remote work for some of their employees and/or parts of the week and the pandemic far from being over, hybrid forms of work will become the new normal – in around 90% of companies (McKinsey, 2021). In advanced economies, also in the long run, around 25% of employees could work remotely more than three days a week (Lund et al, 2021).

In theory, hybrid forms of work could combine many positive aspects of a sustainable, productive, innovative and healthy working life - as the quote on the next page illustrates.

"Pushed by COVID-19, firms and workers have invested in, say, ten years' worth of digital transformation in just a few months."

(Baldwin, 2020)

"When in the office, prioritize relationships and collaborative work like brainstorming around a whiteboard. When working from home, encourage people to design their days to include other priorities such as family, fitness, or hobbies. They should take a nap if they need one and step outside between meetings. Brain studies show that even five-minute breaks between remote meetings help people think more clearly and reduce stress."

Jaime Teevan, Chief Scientist
Microsoft Research
(Teevan, 2021)

So hybrid forms would allow time for exchange on site as well as time for secluded, concentrated work at home. Thus for some employees work-life balance would mean more time in the office and for others more time at home (Teevan, 2021). Empirical studies prior to COVID-19 show that blended work arrangements make employers more attractive. This holds true, however, only for employees with a strong orientation toward autonomy and those with a low personal need for structure (Wörtler, van Yperen, & Barelds, 2021).

In a longitudinal empirical study in the UK during the pandemic (May–August 2020), researchers found that the levels of self-reported performance decreased over the initial three-month period, but levels of engagement, job satisfaction, turnover intention and burnout indicators remained the same – on average. However, extrovert and conscientious (i.e. highly diligent) workers became less productive, less satisfied, and less engaged and reported higher degrees of burnout. With sociability being one key aspect of extroversion, remote and hybrid forms of work affect different personality types differently (Evans, Meyers, van Calseyde, & Stavrova, 2021).

Virtual and hybrid forms of work do, indeed, also pose a challenge for inclusive work environments. Meister and Sinclair (2021) suggest that "virtual meetings can reduce barriers for people to speak and to have their voice and presence heard and felt" as everyone is visible in similarly sized windows and virtually raising your hand and chats allow for various forms of participation. However, such settings also need inclusive leadership by everyone present so that these possibilities are realized and individuals who normally do not speak up are actively engaged. Moreover, managers showing openness and vulnerability helps to create a psychologically safe virtual environment.

> "To avoid one person's flexible working hours becoming another person's after-hours messaging, managers can set norms around the times of day responses are expected."

Jaime Teevan, Chief Scientist
Microsoft Research (Teevan, 2021)

An additional challenge arises in hybrid meetings if some participants are present on site and others are joining virtually. To ensure they are inclusive, Teevan (2021) advises assigning a separate moderator for the online chat, in particular when those joining online are more junior, to ensure their participation. Using individual devices for in-person attendees and broadcasting the pre-meeting in the room to allow online participants to join the informal part is also a possibility to increase inclusion.

This challenge was also addressed in the interviews with ERGs, pointing to not being able to join the informal conversations, jokes, etc. in hybrid meetings:

> "It's not always malicious, but it's just not inclusive"

Interview with PMI ERGs

Despite increased accessibility of hybrid meetings (automatic subtitling, text recognition, etc.) managers need to proactively foster inclusion to deliver inclusive hybrid and online meetings.

Hybrid work and inclusion: Opportunities and threats

COVID-19 introduced many (white collar) employees to remote forms of work – and these are here to stay. This increases the opportunity to enhance the inclusion of employees from around the world. However, with hybrid forms gaining foothold there is a threat of 'pseudo-inclusion' when meetings are held online, but key interactions still take place on site between those privileged to be there.

Inclusive leadership as a collective process in a psychologically safe environment

As during face-to-face meetings, inclusive leadership – as a collective process – is equally important in hybrid meetings to ensure that everyone's voice is heard, that offline conversations are shared with those participating online, and that all contributions are credited and that the most optimum output is reached.

Creating and sustaining a psychologically safe environment ensures that everyone can speak up – also to give voice to those who remain silent.

Hybrid work: Tailored accommodations

As care responsibilities are still distributed unevenly among women and men and work-life balance for some means more time at the office and for others more at home, organizations should explore possibilities to accommodate for specific demographic groups as well as for different work styles to leverage productivity.

Hybrid work: Ensure accessibility

To allow equal access for all employees, organizations are encouraged to use state-of-the-art technologies (e.g., automatic subtitling, text recognition, etc.) to ensure that hybrid work is accessible for all employees, including those with impairments.

Measuring the inclusivity of hybrid work settings

As hybrid work settings pose new challenges to inclusion, this calls for specific ways to measure whether hybrid work settings are inclusive.

Accelerators: Millennials, Generation Z and technological transformation

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Two accelerators further impact inclusion and inclusive leadership: Millennials and Generation Z in the workforce as well as the technological transformation.

Even though broad characterizations of generations are a gross oversimplification, a general look at generational differences makes it possible to project how the trends characterized so far will further shape the near future.

Baby boomers are described as "loyal and competitive workaholics" and at the same time as entitled and self-absorbed, dedicated to success and driven by promotions and positions.

The next generation – Generation X – is already characterized as prioritizing a work-life balance over a pure focus on career (Whitney Gibson, Greenwood, & Murphy, 2009).

Generation Z

- Born after 1996
- Age in 2022: 25 and younger

Millennial

- Born 1981 - 1996
- Age in 2022: 26 to 41

Generation X

- Born 1965 to 1980
- Age in 2022: 42 to 57

Baby Boomer

- Born 1946 to 1964
- Age in 2022: 58 to 76

As Millennials grow into management positions (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021), new leadership styles will gain a broader foothold. Generally described as the first digital native generation, Millennials are characterized as striving to express themselves at work and are driven by entrepreneurial thinking (Leslie et al., 2021). As managers, they are driven by purpose and aiming to make a difference not only in their organizations, but also in society (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021). Both Millennials and their successors – Generation Z – have some characteristics in common, e.g., achievement-oriented, interested in constant development while maintaining a good work-life balance. Gen Zs demand not only frequent but constant feedback and have a high need for social connection (Gabrielova & Buchko, 2021).

With Generation Z a generation enters organizations in which (as data for the US shows) 90% support the Black Lives Matter movement (Business Insider, 2020), 91% see equality as central and EI&D issues are more relevant than for previous generations (Schroth, 2019). Together with Millennials they push for climate change action (Pew Research Center, 2021).

In addition to the acceleration of digital change induced by COVID-19 as discussed above, technological transformation has an accelerating impact on the changes we witness in relation to inclusion and inclusive leadership. It allowed the emergence and global spread of hashtag activism (Jackson, Bailey, Foucault Welles, & Lauren, 2020), of which #MeToo and Black Lives Matter are prominent examples discussed in this report. Internet activism allows marginalized groups to voice their concerns on a global arena, mobilize supporters and call for advocates to step up.

Within organizations, technological transformation allows employees that are not listened to internally to voice their concerns publicly – which gives rise to employee activism (Krishna, 2021). In the US, 39% of employees report that they criticized or supported their employer regarding an issue that affects society – with nearly half of Millenials acting as employee activists compared to 33% of Generation Xers and 27% of baby boomers (Weber Shandwick, 2019). Related to inclusion, prominent cases include #AppleToo, a campaign started by female Apple employees to gather cases of sexual harassment, verbal abuse and pay inequality (New York Times, 2021).

In addition, technological change also accelerates the way organizations are scrutinized and fact-checked as well as publicly held accountable for their actions – or for their inactivity.

Millennials stepping into management and Gen Zs entering the workforce accelerate inclusive cultures that value diversity and fairness, work-life balance and purpose

Among the ubiquitous impact of technological change on societies, organizations and the workplace, related to inclusion and inclusive leadership, new technologies allow employees to voice their grievance publicly and make organizations prone to scrutiny. Certainly, the impact on inclusion and inclusive leadership is clear and warrants further exploring by organizations.

technological change facilitates employee activism and fact-checking organizations

Conclusion: New avenues for defining and measuring inclusion and to inclusive leadership

Conclusion: New avenues for defining and measuring inclusion and to inclusive leadership

Looking at the impact of the social movements (#MeToo and Black Lives Matter) as well as socioeconomic inequalities together with COVID-19 as an unforseeable disruptor on the one hand, and newer generations and technological transformation as accelerators on the other, we are able to highlight the increased importance of inclusion and inclusive leadership for organizations to attract and retain talent and represent customers, stakeholders and partners alike. While the underlying social structures – like sexism and racism – have been pervasive in the past, the sense of urgency to address them and the widespread debate are new phenomena.

Even though #MeToo and Black Lives Matter have their own specific characteristics, they both bring visibility to individual cases to focus on underlying systemic issues – as do socioeconomic inequalities. Hence, to enhance inclusion and inclusive leadership, to improve measuring taking the social movements and socioeconomic inequalities seriously means focusing on the uniqueness of intersectional experiences – while being aware that these experiences are structured by broader inequalities.

Hence, together with uniqueness, the impact analysis has shown that organizations do well to focus on fairness and equity in defining and measuring inclusion to account for the heightened calls for justice – issues also brought forward in the interviews with PMI ERGs:

"In every crisis there is a message. Crises are nature's way of forcing change — breaking down old structures, shaking loose negative habits so that something new and better can take their place."

Susan L. Taylor

"I think [in an inclusive organization] there would be clear transparency on who actually does the work and who should be rewarded for that. I'm not sure that's always clear."

Interview with PMI ERGs

"[The company] could identify people who are from, let's say, intersectionally oppressed minorities […] Like they could have a system where they highlight talent […] like identify them as people to support."

Interview with PMI ERGs

"Maybe most of the company don't feel like they have a lot of growth in the organization anyways, regardless of [their background]. Maybe like, straight white men also don't feel like they're getting recognized for their work. So if we had like an encouraging place to be more recognized and champion and if we stopped hiring and firing like all the time, then maybe people would feel more recognized and positive."

Interview with PMI ERGs

To allow for an inclusive culture to emerge, psychological safety is positioned once more as a linchpin to allow for open discussions.

"I think we've had some critical voices [at the ERG's events], which is very good I think, because that's where the dialogue can start."

Interview with PMI ERGs

Indeed, both the #MeToo and the BLM movement gave visibility to structural inequalities that previously often remained silent in everyday discourses – those times are over.

For inclusive leadership this means at the individual level focusing on humble listening and urging individuals to educate themselves. As already pointed out in Part I, the lack of the ability to listen was a common theme reported in the interviews. Hence, also in light of the macro trends discussed in this report, additional effort should be taken to increase inclusive leadership skills – skills that some already have, as the quotes below show:

"And then on the other hand, the majority leaders should pause, um ... should be conscious to say, 'Maybe let's ask this Thai colleague. I see some leaders at PMI, some, let's call them majority leaders at PMI, being very fluent in doing that, very culturally sensitive. And I see how they pause and say, 'Oh, what do you think?' [...] And I see how the recipient blossoms, I see how the whole environment just generally gets more inclusive. So, I think, there's a role both for the majority and the minority to play, it's not just one way. The minority needs to take that bold step out, um, of their comfort zone. But one would only do that if one feels that, you know, I'm not gonna be humiliated."

Interview with PMI ERGs

"And I see that the new leadership is listening. They're encouraging maybe younger members of teams to present to them. They give constructive feedback as opposed to a three-hour monologue of, you know..."

Interview with PMI ERGs

At the organizational level, taking a stand and backing it up means that organizations become themselves visible advocates. In light of countermovements and discussions around privilege, organizations may need to delve into unknown and unpleasant discussions – and ask themselves if it is feasible to exclude those who are exclusionary in order to foster an inclusive culture and develop inclusive leadership where everyone feels safe.

"We should therefore claim, in the name of tolerance, the right not to tolerate the intolerant."

(Popper, 2013 [1945]: 581)

"You can speak, but... it has to be a two-way equation of speaking up and then being heard."

Interview with PMI ERGs

Millennials and Gen Z as accelerators

- support social movements   - purpose and making a difference in society   - affinity to EI&D

#MeToo

- Visibility to sexual harassment and sexism
- Power inequalities at the workplace
- Intersectionality

- **Patriarchy**
- **Toxic masculinity**

Black Lives Matter

- Visibility to police violence
- Demands for racial justice
- Intersectionality
- Global phenomenon calling for local actions
- **Systemic racism**
- **White privilege**

Socioeconomic inequalities

- So far mostly absent from EI&D focus
- Organizations as drivers and those that can act on it

- **Reproduction of socioeconomic inequalities**

Social movements and socioeconomic influence

COVID-19 as unforeseeable disruptor

- Impacts demographic groups unequally – at work and on the labor market

- Accelerates digitalization (inclusive hybrid work)

- Great Resignation and new focus on work-life balance and purpose

Technological Transformation as accelerator

- global spread of #activism   - employee activism   - digitalization of work

Millennials and Gen Z as accelerators

- support social movements   - purpose and making a difference in society   - affinity to EI&D

Inclusion

Uniqueness

- Visibility
- Intersectional experiences
- Adding socioeconomic background to diversity

Psychological safety

- Creating an environment where it is safe to speak up
- Discuss toxic masculinity, systemic racism, white privilege

Fairness & equity

- Addressing calls for justice
- Addressing systemic power inequalities
- Inclusion for all - not only those with talent or high potential

Participation*

Authenticity*

Belongingness*

Inclusive leadership

Humble, educated listeners

- Listening with humility
- Active advocates
- Crediting input from underrepresented colleagues
- Educate themselves

Il as collective process

- Create inclusive culture
- Everyone can take leadership on inclusion
- Everyone is safe to call out micro-inequities
- Everyone contributes to an inclusive culture

Take a stand and back it up

- In potentially dichotomized debates
- Reflecting that organizations are increasingly scrutinized, fact-checked and held accountable

Individual

Team

Organization

Inclusive Future

Technological Transformation as accelerator

- global spread of #activism   - employee activism   - digitalization of work

* These components will be discussed again in Part III.

In addition to the vectors of influence discussed in detail in this report, several others are likely to have an impact on inclusion and inclusive leadership, and organizations ought to be vigilant. Among them is climate change (Pew Research Center, 2020), a global phenomenon affecting everyone around the world – while being highly related to global socioeconomic inequalities (IMF, 2021; Oxfam, 2020). The frequency of natural disasters has increased over the past 50 years fueled by climate change (WMO, 2021), which calls on organizations to prepare for this in their EI&D efforts, e.g. when facilities are cut off or destroyed. The heightened awareness of the harmful impact of (business) travel on the climate might further limit the possibilities to bring employees physically together, which hampers traditional approaches to foster inclusion. Also, political instability is another vector of influence that has an impact on inclusion and inclusive leadership across the globe. So while this report identified the key debates that currently shape inclusion and inclusive leadership and impact how it is conceptualized and measured, organizations are called on to be humble listeners (and actors) themselves to prepare for future unforeseeable challenges.

In the long run, in particular the call of social movements for justice and the threat of rising socioeconomic inequalities accelerated by the impact of COVID-19 (Great Resignation) and newer generations gaining a foothold in workplaces, hint at the need for substantial changes. An inclusive future seeks to question socioeconomic inequalities and what the purpose of an organization in the 2020s will be (Business Roundtable, 2019; Henderson, 2021; Mayer, 2021). Inclusion as well as inclusive leadership can take a central role in contributing to a redefined purpose of an organization and to tackling socioeconomic inequalities.

Last but not least, taking in the lessons from the recent social movements leads to questioning whether inclusion and diversity should only focus on those with talent and high potential or whether inclusion may be conceptualized in broader terms from here – for example, giving way to new forms of participation and organizational structures. Moreover, also seeing inclusive leadership as a collective process is a way to show awareness for these calls for justice.

> "I really think we are going to change a lot. You know, I really believe in this transformation, not just the business transformation but the cultural transformation that goes with it."
>
> **Interview with PMI ERGs**

> "We must expand the way we think about productivity to focus on wellbeing, social connections, and collaboration and the innovation they bring to drive business success."
>
> **Jaime Teevan, Chief Scientist**
> **Microsoft Research (Teevan, 2021)**

> "I do [think that PMI has changed over the last years] and I don't think it's only cosmetic. I think we've realized that we need to be much more inclusive in our approach to many different things."
>
> **Interview with PMI ERGs**

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Appendix: Methodological background Google Trends

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Google Trends allows to acquire data on the relative search volume of a topic or search term for a specific region or globally. With Google being the most used search engine worldwide (Statista, 2021), analyzing this data allows to see what people search for in order to assess the global importance of a topic over time and in relation to other topics. However, Google Trends does not provide the actual amount of search volume but compiles an index in which 100 depicts the peak for the search items, which makes it possible to identify the peak of one or several search terms over time.

Google Trends as a data source has been used over the past 15 years in a vast number of research papers: Jun, Yoo, and Choi (2018), for instance, analyzed 657 studies in various fields, among them economics and business. A study by Vosen and Schmidt (2011) compared Google Trends data to the University of Michigan Consumer Sentiment Index and the Consumer Confidence Index and concluded that Google Trends data has a higher predictive power regarding consumer consumption.

In their meta-analysis, Jun et al. (2018) point, however, to some caveats when using Google Trends, among them that the data is only representative of a specific population that uses Google and that the number of searches is not available, only the relative importance rescaled from 0 to 100. This means that when comparing various topics' respective search terms, all the search terms are put into relation to each other – and if search terms are analyzed independently, their respective peak is attributed 100.

Hence, Google Trends makes it possible to use the data of the most widely used search engine globally to assess search interests. However, with this global scope, the selection of search items to be analyzed is central to provide meaningful analyses. For this report, preference was given to analyzing "topics" instead of "search terms" (in line with the suggestion of Brodeur, Clark, Fleche, and Powdthavee (2021)). Topics "are a group of terms that share the same concept in any language" (Google Trends, 2021), hence, Google Trends accumulates various searches globally into a topic.

Top 10 Global searches 2020	Topic area
1. Coronavirus	Coronavirus pandemic
2. Election results	Politics
3. Kobe Bryant	Sports (basketball player deceased in 2020)
4. Zoom online	Communication tool
5. IPL	Sports
6. India vs New Zealand	Sports
7. Coronavirus update	Coronavirus pandemic
8. Coronavirus symptoms	Coronavirus pandemic
9. Joe Biden	Politics
10. Google Classroom	Online communication tool

Top 10 Global searches 2020

To choose among the various items connected to the issues this report analyzes, correlations among similar items were calculated to see if the chosen item correlates to similar search terms and topics. In addition, the overall relative search interest calculated by Google (denoted in brackets in the tables below) for the items was used to choose the most relevant item:

Black Lives Matter

	Racism: (topic)	**Racism: (search term)**	**Black Lives Matter: (topic)**	**Black Lives Matter: (search term)**
Racism: (topic, 11)	1			
Racism: (search term, 3)	0.985507931	1		
Black Lives Matter: (topic, 6)	0.957348486	0.966418976	1	
Black Lives Matter: (search term, 3)	0.958025522	0.975222327	0.993192682	1

As all items show a very high correlation ($\rightarrow$ 0.9), Black Lives Matter (topic) was selected in line with the aim of the report, even though racism has generated a higher search volume.

#MeToo

	Me Too movement: (topic)	me too: (search term)	#metoo: (topic)	Sexism: (topic)	Sexism: (search term)
Me Too movement: (topic, 27)	1				
me too: (search term, 69)	0.277007064	1			
#metoo: (search term, 4)	0.444057975	0.08679242	1		
Sexism: (topic, 54)	0.238326727	-0.2206428	0.02498646	1	
Sexism: (search term, 10)	0.412496479	0.18051135	0.2360896	0.59966901	1

For topics related to the #MeToo movement, the decision was more difficult as the correlations between the items considered are comparatively low, with the one between sexism (topic) and me too (search term) negative, implying that the two terms were searched for alternatively. As the Me Too movement (topic) had at least moderate correlations with the other terms and in line with the above suggestions to choose topics, this item was chosen.

Economic inequality

	Inequality: (search term)	Economic inequality: (topic)	Social inequality: (topic)	Poverty: (topic)
Inequality: (search term, 9)	1			
Economic inequality: (topic, 6)	0.790319553	1		
Social inequality: (topic, 1)	0.480749608	0.508367049	1	
Poverty: (topic, 59)	0.760875908	0.77766724	0.398677838	1

Among the items considered, poverty (topic) would have had the highest comparative search volume, but as it conveys a slightly different meaning than inequality, economic inequality (topic) was chosen as it correlated not only highly with poverty and inequality (search term) but also moderately with social inequality.