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## Inspiring Leadership: Values in Building the Excellent Inclusive Higher Education

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**Abstract:** This study investigates the inspiring leadership values in building an excellent inclusive higher education, including proactiveness, high-spiritedness, visionary, and humanist mindset. This was a case study where data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observation, document analysis, and audiovisual material observation. The analysis was carried out by making data transcription, notes, video recordings, and documents; generating ideas, codifying data, designing themes, and interpreting data. Results show that inspiring leadership with a proactive mindset in policymaking can create original ideas, realize them actively and innovatively as well as solve problems creatively. High motivation leadership is seen through its activeness in asking the academic community to work together in building an inclusive higher education such as by attending activities related to special needs students. Visionary leadership is seen from its ability to build clear and measurable vision, mission, and organizational goals. In addition, it is also capable to see opportunities related to inclusive higher education's future development by generating appropriate policies and finding job opportunities for special needs students. Humanist leadership is an ability to manage challenges, conflicts, and resistance often arising during the process to build an inclusive higher education. Regarding the results, this study implies that inspiring leadership serves as one of the key factors to build an excellent inclusive higher education. However, due to limitations of this study, it is required further studies.

**Keywords:** *Inclusive higher education, inspiring leadership, proactive mindset, visionary leadership, humanist leadership.*

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### Introduction

Higher education is an institution whose activities cannot be separated from society in which it should positively contribute to it, including overcoming social problems. Higher education performance closely relates to leadership as it affects the policymaking and actions, including in building inclusive institutions. According to Blessinger (2016) and Essex et al. (2019), nowadays, higher education management gradually shifts its mindset from an elitist and exclusive to a democratic and inclusive. In many countries in the world, the system of higher education management implements an inclusive model, such as providing equal opportunities for people to access educational services regardless of physical condition and background meaning that this model allows special needs students to participate in the same learning activities with normal students. However, in Indonesia, inclusive higher education is relatively new and has not been implemented by many. Success in building and managing inclusive higher education closely relates to organizational leadership. This idea is in line with Ainscow and Sandill (2010) who agree that leadership becomes an important aspect to create an inclusive and sustainable educational institution. Accordingly, its role becomes very important to ensure the development of inclusive higher education. Good leadership is able to implant values in the members of the organization; thus, to build an inclusive organization, inclusive values and mindsets should exist in the leadership. Leadership highly affects the success of higher education institutions. Leadership should provide inspiration and positive influence for the members of the organization, so it allows its members to develop potential and motivation which ensures personal and organizational success (Al Ishaqi et al., 2021).

One of the important issues to build an excellent inclusive higher education is inspiring leadership. Leadership that carries out inclusive values certainly represents these values in its organization. This can be seen from the no distinguished barriers between superiors and subordinates' relationships, indicated by good relations among members

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(vertically and horizontally), members' involvement in any activity related to the development of the organization in order to develop a sense of belonging and equal opportunities to express ideas and opinion regarding policymaking and decision-making (Ryan, 2006). To build an inclusive higher education, leadership has to create inclusive organizational culture by providing equal treatment to any member of the organization without discriminating (Blessinger, 2016). According to Hardy and Woodcock (2014), leadership should be able to design systematic and supportive policies for inclusive education by eliminating or reducing boundaries and differences between normal and special needs students; inducing the relationship among them (Temple & Ylitalo, 2009); and actively involving all members (without any discrimination) in organization development (McCauley & Van Velsor, 2004).

Leadership should focus on designing strategic steps to strengthen institutional values, improve quality, and develop innovation in order to build excellent inclusive higher education (Pawenang et al., 2020). In Indonesia, some obstacles to build inclusive higher education are found, such as the absence of facilities and infrastructure for physically special needs students (Andayani, 2018; Syafi'ie, 2014). Moreover, there are policies that have not accommodated the needs of special needs students (Soleh, 2014). These problems occur due to the lack of inclusive values and mindset in the leadership of the organization because leadership is able to encourage stakeholders to involve in developing the organization and overcoming conflicts (Stefani & Blessinger, 2017). This fact, further, highlights the important role of leadership to prevent problems in building inclusive higher education institutions. Previous studies show that leadership is an important key in encouraging and realizing inclusive organizations (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010; Ashikali & Groeneveld, 2013; Ashikali et al., 2020; Brimhall, 2021). Higher education institutions that are led by inclusive leadership have a positive performance and innovative abilities in their members (Aboramadan et al., 2021). However, in Indonesia, few studies conducted regarding this issue, especially on the values needed to build an inclusive higher education and the efforts to realize these in policies or programs. Several studies mostly brought up the issues of how the leaders in higher education institutions examine and analyze the learning facilities and infrastructure to support the learning process for special needs students (Riyadi, 2020; Sastradiharja et al., 2020). Therefore, this study aims to find out the values of inspiring leadership at Universitas Negeri Surabaya (UNESA).

## Literature Review

### *Inspirational Leadership in Inclusive Higher education*

Inspirational leadership is the ability to have a positive influence on the people around and be able to motivate others towards success (Finney, 2017). An inspiring leader should be able to listen and accommodate complaints from members as well as involve them in actualizing both vision and mission of the institution. This is called inclusiveness so that inspiring leaders must have an inclusive nature. Basically, there is no member who gets inspired by a leader if he does not care about the members and their institutions. The key factor of inspiring leadership is the values possessed and reflected by the leader. According to Searle and Hanrahan (2011), the main values of leaders is to inspire others. While Rose et al. (2014) define the values possessed by inspiring leaders are communication, integrity, inclusiveness, and sensitivity to the needs of members. Ahmad and Chopra (2004) argue that the main values of inspiring leadership are to possess a clear vision and mission, proactive and positive mindset, passion and ambition, open to change, focused on sustainable and comprehensive institutional development, and team-based in building institutions. Values possessed by leaders in inclusive higher education institutions have to be able to underlie policymaking that encourages inclusive higher education policy (Tugli et al., 2016). Thus, it supports Marquis et al. (2016) who conclude that leaders of inclusive higher institution have to design policies with the objective is to increase the capacity and ability of lecturers in understanding the behavior of special needs students, especially related to teaching and learning activities. These policies need to involve all members of institution in order to promote inclusive education. Although many studies were previously conducted related to inclusive education, most of them discussed the inspiring leadership at the primary and secondary education levels. Accordingly, this study would like to focus on values inspiring leadership for inclusive higher education.

### *The Main Values in Inclusive Higher education*

Values are basic and fundamental beliefs that guide and motivate a person's attitude to act. Values reflect performance, culture, or various other aspects of a service, so that customers are willing to commit to the organization (Mintz, 2018). The values possessed by an organization form an organizational culture that is able to influence the way the organization works, organizational life, and various organizational life practices in order to achieve organizational goals. Every organization has a strong value base that has been determined and mutually agreed upon in order to build a strong, solid, and future-minded institution that is clear and measurable. Robbins et al. (2019) states that organizational values are a reflected of beliefs, hopes to be realized, and goals to be achieved by the organization. In a value-based organization, a leader must be able to facilitate members of the organization so that their needs are satisfied or facilitated (satisfying their needs), both material and non-material needs (Barrett, 2017). If they are able to fulfill it, members of the organization will respond back in the form of full involvement and voluntarily give their commitment and energy to the organization, full of enthusiasm and creativity in doing work for the organization, bringing enthusiasm and into their work. Based on the research that has been done, it is known that the involvement of organizational members will greatly

affect the achievement of organizational performance (Amah & Ahiauzu, 2013; Phipps et al., 2013). Still this research has not explained how the leadership of inclusive universities can increase the involvement of members in the organization.

Values are part of the culture of a higher education and organizational culture plays an important role in building an excellent inclusive higher education organization. According to Hongboontri and Keawkhong (2014), a collaborative culture among lecturers in carrying out academic functions creates qualified lecturers in which certainly influence the quality of universities. Collaboration between lecturers and students (both normal and special need) possibly encourages positive academic climate, so comfortable learning environment can be created. This idea is in line with MacNeil et al. (2009) who state that good organizational culture and climate positively correlate to student academic and non-academic achievement. However, these studies did not find how leadership has its roles to encourage the actualization of inclusive higher education. Meanwhile, Majdoubeh (2021) states that universities open their access to normal and special needs students to participate in educational process, provide skills, independency, and mastery of technology, as well as facilitate learning experiences for students to gain international experience. Yet, she did not explain how the policies made to realize the various things above. Similarly, the European Commission (2021) states that inclusive universities have to ensure inclusive values well-maintained by creating a mechanism for student admissions, learning processes, and learning assessments that were adapted to inclusive values, providing guidance to students with special needs, and providing comprehensive support for both academic and non-academic to all students without exception. Students should be given a sense of security and comfort in learning, including being kept away from bullying, especially cyberbullying which is rife in the era of information and technology (Giménez-Gualdo et al., 2018).

### Methodology

This study uses qualitative research method with case study approach to analyze the inspiring leadership in inclusive higher education management. This method was selected due to its nature of exploring an entity such as individual, group, organization, or an inter-institutional partnership (Creswell, 2020). This study identifies, examines, describes, and understands the study of one organizational entity, UNESA focus on inspiring leadership in inclusive universities. The steps taken in this study are as shown in the research flowchart.

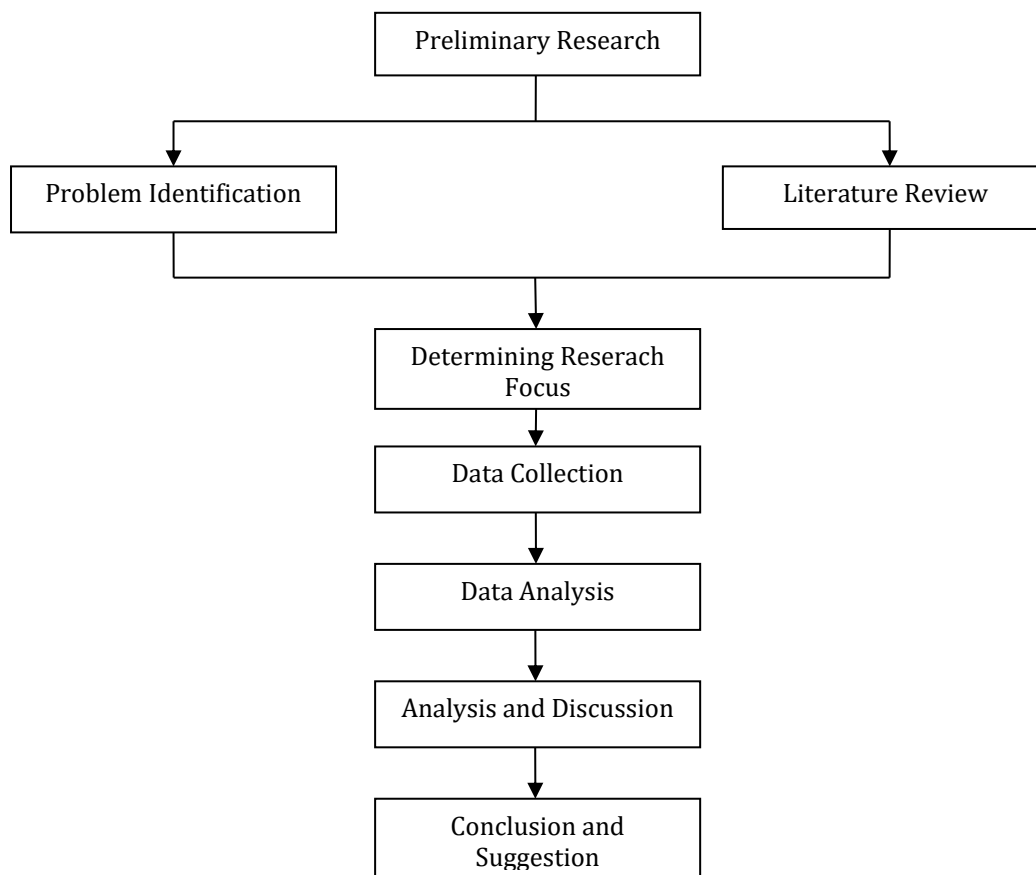


Figure 1. Research Flowchart

*Research Site and Participants*

This study was conducted at UNESA, Indonesia. UNESA stands for Universitas Negeri Surabaya is categorized as an inclusive higher education institution in which is seen from its higher education enrollment (having enrollment test for special needs students specialized for graduates from Special Needs Senior High School, Special Needs Vocational School, and Inclusive Madrasah Aliyah or Inclusive Islamic Senior High School). In addition, UNESA established the Study and Services Center for Special Needs Students (PSLD) aiming to develop campus with inclusive environment and providing special services for special needs students. Moreover, UNESA was awarded with “Inclusive Award” by the Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Indonesia in 2012 due to its actions in promoting inclusive education. Research participants were selected using purposive sampling where the participants involved voluntarily. It is mentioned that purposive sampling emphasizes the selection criteria for selected participants in order to find, understand, and gain more insights to the issues brought in the research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Accordingly, the informants were higher education president, vice president, deans, heads of departments, heads of study programs, heads of study centers for disability services, lecturers, and students who related variable observed in this study (inspiring leadership at UNESA) in which is gradating according to the level of leadership (see Table 1).

*Table 1. Gradation of Leadership Levels of Research Informants*

<b>Abbreviation of Position</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Leadership Level</b>
RE	Rektor (Higher education President)	Top Management
WR	Wakil Rektor (Vice President)	Top Management
DE	Dekan (Deans)	Middle Management
KD	Ketua Jurusan (Heads of Departments)	Middle Management
KP	Ketua Program Studi (Heads of Study Programs)	Low Management
KAPSLD	Kepala Pusat Studi Layanandisabilitas (Heads of Study Centers for Disability Services)	Low Management
DS	Dosen (Lecturers)	Non-Management
MH	Mahasiswa (Students)	Non-Management

*Data Collection and Analysis*

Data were collected using semi-structured in-depth interview, observation, document analysis, and audiovisual materials. This is in line with Merriam and Tisdell (2016) who explains that interviews are the main technique to collect data in qualitative research. In this study, each interview session lasted for 60-90 minutes for each informant and its schedule was adjusted according to the availability of the informant. For the purpose of ensuring the originality of data, the interviews were recorded using a smart phone. The form of in-depth interview for this study is according to “the general interview guide approach” by Gall et al. (2007). This type of approach is known as the semi-structured interview approach. Questions asked during the interview were developed from the main question, i.e., how are the values in leadership inspire to Build Excellent Inclusive Universities?

Data were collected through observation and used to determine the process of managing inclusive higher education, in terms of physical, verbal interactions, and institutional objects. In the observation process, field notes were used as media to record the things observed in the field. The type of observation used is non-participant where the researcher is an observer who is not directly involved in the management process carried out by the informant. The objects observed included: 1) leadership implementation, 2) academic and non-academic activities related to the implementation of inclusive education, 3) application of technology in managing institutions, and 4) development of an inclusive culture by leaders. Document analysis techniques were used to search for secondary data related to the management of inclusive universities, including: the vision and mission of the institution, policies, programs, and the agenda of the institution’s activities. In addition, audiovisual material techniques were used in the form of observing materials such as video and sound recorder related to the management of institutions, such as videos containing institutional profiles, activities related to the management of inclusive higher education, as well as activities involving students with special needs which are attended directly by the leadership.

In data analysis, data were copied and transcribed manually. As consequence, it required longer times. After data were carefully transcribed, they were codified and divided into themes to be presented. Codification is used as a code for each interview result that has been adjusted to the themes. The following step was to describe the results of interview, connect the themes and interpret them into a complete result. To test the validity of the data, the credibility test was conducted by examining data from several informants, cross-checking the data of the same informant using different techniques, checking the data obtained by the researcher to the informant in order to find out the fitness of the data. Validity and reliability tests include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability testing. Gall et al. (2007) state that the checking is done by giving data transcripts to interviewed informants to ensure its truth. In addition, triangulation was carried out by comparing or cross-checking data from one informant and other informants and cross-checking data

from informants using different techniques. Transferability is done by making research reports that are described in detail, clearly, systematically and can be trusted. Dependability is carried out by an audit by an external auditor, namely Masitoh (inclusive education management expert) covers the entire research process starting from determining the focus of research, field activities, at the time of determining data sources, conducting data analysis. While Confirmability is done by tracing and describing negative examples that contradict previous observations as well as data audits that test data collection and data analysis procedures.

## Results

This study found that there were indicators of inspiring leadership from Ahmad and Chopra (2004), namely a proactive and positive mindset, high-spiritedness, visionary, and humanist. These four characteristics will be described in the explanation below.

### *Proactive and Positive Mindset*

UNESA leadership is able to convince all stakeholders that its policy can transform UNESA into an inclusive higher education. From the interview, it is known that the university president who represent the highest level of leadership believed that by transforming UNESA into an inclusive higher education, it opens opportunities for this institution as well as serves as a differentiator to other universities in Indonesia. This decision was obtained after analyzing the strength of the institution to seize external opportunities as seen from the interview below.

“... the higher education president was good at seizing opportunities, thought from many perspectives and strengths. During his leadership, he found out what characteristics were owned by UNESA compared to others. Well, he believed that inclusive education was an opportunity to highlight and promote this higher education. .... In the future, UNESA will provide a disability-friendly campus. And this was our shared vision.” (W.KPSLD)

“... at graduation or in the judiciary, if any disabled graduate, a special award is given by the higher education president, such as scholarship to continue their master program as a form of the president's appreciation for them (disabled graduates) because most of them predicate as cum laude.” (W.DE)

These data show the existence of proactive and positive mindset in UNESA's leadership which is proved by how they internalize inclusive values in many academic aspects, for example during the meeting in the beginning of new semester.

“... Before the new semester is started, the higher education president invites all lecturers to meet and discuss any possible problem/situation. This is done purposely to provide reinforcement and motivation as well as highlight the cultivation of inclusive values to lecturers in the following semester, including motivating lecturers who have special needs students.” (W.DE)

Proactive leadership showed its proactiveness in internalizing inclusive values to its stakeholders, especially lecturers. This was because lecturers were the front line who directly face students as seen from the interview below.

“...I followed the direction from the higher education president to design innovative learning media and approaches for special needs students, one of which was by using subtitled videos to help students who have a hearing impairment to learn independently. For slow learners, I set the different standards of assessment.” (W.DS)

Lecturers who teach in inclusive classes should have proactive mindset in order to manage their classes so it can be carried out favorably despite the obstacles. The proactive mindset included on how to convey material to special needs students or slow learners. In addition, this value allows lecturers to solve problems during teaching in inclusive classes. One of solutions is by making learning innovations for special needs students through subtitled videos which allows hearing impairment students understand the material and are able to learn independently. Proactive mindset as a value in leadership should be found not only in high level managements (presidents and his vices) but also in other levels managements (mid and low level) such as deans, heads of departments, heads of study programs, and heads of laboratories. This is because proactive mindset can ensure the stability of the organization as it can assist the leaders in policymaking and problem solving. This is proved by the data obtained from the interview as follows:

“... I immediately invited lecturers at beginning of the new academic year during the new student orientation period. I coordinated with the lecturers to strengthen and motivate them on the existence of a student with hearing impairment in our department.” (W.DS)

“... Currently there were special needs students in their last academic year who prepared for the thesis exam. .... when he did his proposal exam yesterday, I brought a volunteer from the Center for the Study of Disability Services (PSLD) to assist him during the exam, so the examiners understood his presentation. Thank God we did this and it went smoothly. Later, I plan to do similar things during his thesis exam by inviting a PSLD volunteer to interpret his explanation for the examiners.” (W.DS)



Above statements illustrated on how proactive leaders are able to solve problems. From the mentioned situation, there was a condition where lecturer felt resistance to involve in inclusive education (resist to teach a class that admits special needs students). However, after discussion and persuasion from the leader (considering humanities, laws, regulations, and policy at UNESA), he finally agreed to teach the class. The action of this leader represented a proactive mindset in leadership.

#### *High-Spiritedness*

High-spiritedness to actualize the inclusive education in higher education institutions should be found in all managerial levels (high, mid, and low). This value is seen from how UNESA open special enrollment for new students' admission by using computer-based written examination. High-spiritedness of UNESA's leadership was reflected in this policy. It is proved by the appearance of the university president during the test location to monitor the activities (OV.RE) seen from the interview below.

"...I directly reviewed the implementation of the computer-based Written Examination for the enrollment test for the special needs students. I purposely talked to one of the participants. There was a blind participant and I asked him his reason to study at UNESA. I explained that UNESA is ready to assist special needs students during their studies. I even told him that there is a magister scholarship for outstanding students with disabilities. That's why I motivated him to study seriously ..." (W.RE)

This spirit is showed not only by his attendance during the enrollment test but also through his enthusiasm and commitment to facilitate the special needs students in completing their studies. Another evidence is seen from how UNESA engaged the special needs students to actively join campus activity such as to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> Indonesian Independence Day, UNESA held singing activity using sign language which later recorded by MURI record.

"...The higher education president initiated to hold a ceremony in commemorating the 75th Indonesian Independence Day by the singing Indonesian national anthem using sign language. This event is a form of UNESA partiality towards students with disabilities. As a form of gratitude for the government of the Republic of Indonesia in providing full support from the implementation of the teaching and learning system for disabled people." (W.HM)

UNESA's President promised to fully support the special needs students to study such as by providing facilities to in regard to their needs physically and non-physically. These supports were actualized by building physical facilities for special needs students, providing scholarships for further study, as well as services for special needs students. This enthusiasm shown inspired UNESA's stakeholders and were indirectly able to eliminate the resistances of others in engaging in inclusive education policy. High-spirit and enthusiasm represents the value of inspiring leadership.

"...We are committed to *facilitating* all special needs students to complete their education. Teaching and learning facilities have also been built and designed to accommodate them (special needs students)." (W.RE)

#### *Visionary*

Regarding visionary leadership, UNESA is provably to have a clear and measurable vision related to the development of inclusive education. It is proved from how the leaders were not only actively and enthusiastically in actualize this program, but also eagerly to make inclusive education the higher education as an excellent program. This evidence is obtained from the statement of informant in the interview as below.

"...The higher education president has a clear and measurable vision seen from how he established three campus programs, namely: in the field of sports, in the arts, and in the inclusive or disability-friendly education services" (W.DE)

UNESA's university presidents has made great efforts to realize the formation of a disability-friendly higher education. It is proved by how this program serves as one of major program in UNESA. Although, other higher education institutions in Indonesia were confused and less responsive in building inclusive higher education, UNESA set its vision as to form a disability-friendly campus. Moreover, other programs proposed at UNESA have similar vision as proved by interview below.

".... We have planned to build a swimming pool and buy horses for therapy purpose of special needs students. We have also budgeted to create bicycles and electric cars specialized for special needs students." (W.RE)

Visionary leadership is not only limited to fulfilling facilities, but also preparing experts in inclusive education, including by adding lecturers with inclusive education background nationally and internationally. In addition, it encourages the presence of inclusive education professors as stated by an informant as follows:

"... We will show that UNESA is a disability-friendly campus by adding experts in their fields. Yesterday, UNESA inaugurated four professors and one of them is Prof. Dr. Budiyanto, M.Pd who specializes in inclusive education. Hopefully, these additional experts in inclusive education strengthened our vision." (W.RE).

Visionary leadership is not only able to increase the number of experts in inclusive education but also considers the future graduates with disabilities. One of which is by directing career opportunities after graduation. This action is seen from how the leader has designed a program to connect graduates with disabilities with the companies/industries that requires disabled workers which can be seen from the statement of an informant during interview.

“...Currently, we are developing an application named JOB. This Apps is a platform for special needs students to seek job vacancy which connects the networks for disabled applicants (job seekers) to State-owned company (BUMN) that need disabled workers.” (W.SPLSD).

The data indicate that at UNESA, the leadership shows its visionary values. This value was depicted from the extraordinary vision, its efforts in realizing them into various programs, the number of experts related to inclusive education, as well as its action to facilitate disabled graduates in job seeking so they can get opportunities to earn their living either by connect them to the industrial world or equip them with practical skills which later allows them to be independent according to their expertise.

### *Humanist*

Regarding the implementation of inclusive education in higher education institution, not all members of institution were readily to accept, but there are some who declined. Because each member has individual characters that differ from one another, so it is difficult to manage them. However, the humanist leadership is generally able to ease it and turn the resistance to acceptance. This idea is seen from an interview with the informant as below.

“.... Yesterday, something happened and it felt me out. ...., there is a lecturer who ignored his special needs students. We asked him to join us and involve in our activity. Fortunately, he realized and opened his heart. .... The important thing is we remain focus and enthusiast in educating and providing equal opportunity for special needs students in which benefits UNESA.” (W. SPLSD)

Always involving experts from respective fields is one of the characteristics of a humanist leadership. Regarding the involvement of experts, every policymaking process always involves experts, for example in the enrollment process of new students with disabilities; such as by involving the Center of Study Centers for Disability Services from the preparation (question instruments and pre-facilities) to test assistance.

“..., regarding the admission of new students with disabilities, we involve people majoring in Special Education. Moreover, we provide assistance from the Center for Disability Services Studies which its members enclosed all departments and faculties. It means there is community that is ready to help special needs students during their admission process. Usually, the first vice president, Prof. Budiyanto, coordinates with all parties regarding the number of special needs students who enroll and the enrollment test such as, types of tests, its scheduled (time and location), and its method.” (W.UNESA.DE)

From the analysis, it is found that the involvement was not only from expert lecturers, but also the leadership proved by how the leader directly proposed a peering tutor for special needs students. It is seen from an interview to informants below.

“..., there is a student with hearing impairment. To help him, I made a peer tutor by asking one of classmates to re-explain the lesson and materials taught. In the end, this student thought that the lesson is less difficult. Furthermore, this activity eases lecturers in carrying out teaching-learning activity.” (W.KD)

Humanist leadership is one indicator of an inspiring leader. This character is friendly to anyone without discriminating others and engaging others (experts from all sectors) to collaborative activities. By having this value, leadership is certainly able to realize the vision of UNESA which is to become a disability-friendly higher education institution.

### **Discussion**

The findings show that the leadership at UNESA has a proactive mindset to build inclusive universities in which affects the decision-making. This is relevant to the study conducted by Kim et al. (2009) who state that leaders with a proactive mindset own the indicators of inspiring leadership. It is proved by how the higher education president, representing the highest leader at UNESA, promotes inclusive education as a major program. He transforms UNESA into an inclusive higher education that serves as an embodiment of inspiring leadership. In the mid-level management, deans also intend to promote inclusive education which represents their proactive mindset and embodies the value of inspiring leadership proved by how the dean of the Faculty of Education set inclusive education courses as a compulsory course for all majors in his faculty. In addition, this faculty actively collaborate with the Hellen Keller Indonesia Foundation to provide training for lecturers with no inclusive education background, so they own the ability to teach special needs students. This action shows his support for the development of inclusive education at UNESA. While at a low management level, the heads of the departments show their proactive mindset to realize the inclusive classes. They design policies to ease the special needs students in participating in classroom activities starting from enrollment to graduation. One of which is by encouraging lecturers to make digital technology-based learning innovations. This effort is to assist students with hearing

impairment to learn independently. This result is consistent with Fernandez (2021) who mentions that digital technology increases the creativity, accessibility, and self-confidence of special needs students to participate in learning as well as to build a collaborative culture between normal and special needs students so they can co-exist during the learning process.

To build an inclusive classroom, lecturers representing the leadership in teaching-learning activities are important. According to Visković (2021), to build an egalitarian and inclusive classroom, teachers need to provide individual support for all children, respect their diversity, and collaborate with parents. In higher education, the proactive mindset of lecturers was seen in how they carried out their teaching activities and innovated their teaching method and approach to facilitate special needs students. This finding is consistent with Anyau et al. (2021) who state that the main role of lecturers in inclusive classes is to manage classes and learning activities in order to optimize the results of all students (normal and special needs students). Monitoring student learning progress was done by course lecturers who collaborated with academic advisory lecturers. A proactive and positive mindset closely relates to the ability in generating ideas. Proactive leadership shows its ability to accommodate the members' ideas and effectively discover the unique and potential ones. The novelty of the findings for the value of a proactive mindset is the ability of the UNESA leadership in interpreting and actualizing government policies related to inclusive education into practical ideas. In addition, the persistence showed by the highest level of leadership at UNESA was mostly come from the belief and vision at the needs of inclusive higher education institutions in the future.

In addition to a proactive mindset, this study found another value in UNESA's leadership which is high-spiritedness. An action representing this value is how the top management (university president) often directly observed and monitored inclusive education activities as well as provided support to inclusive education. In addition, the top management visited many countries to establish cooperation aiming to ensure the development of inclusive education at UNESA. This finding is consistent with Karadimou and Tsioumis (2021) who agree that leaders' ability to communicate and build networks strongly supports their success in performing their duties. Moreover, high-spirited leadership is performed through a high commitment to provide facilities for special needs students including creating disability-friendly classrooms and facilities. Besides high-spiritedness, enthusiasm is also a form of showing high-spirit value. Leadership enthusiasm from mid and low management levels was seen from the providence of lecturers who understand and want to assist special needs students. Consequently, this value can inspire students to learn in any heterogeneous environment which is able to ensure every student gets fair opportunities in the learning process (Ryan, 2006). High-spirited leadership from UNESA's leaders also builds in branding the institution as a disability-friendly higher education institution, such as by engaging in any social activity involving special needs students, providing scholarships for special needs students, and building facilities for special needs students.

Regarding inclusive higher education, UNESA's leadership promoted a clear and measurable vision to build an inclusive institution that provides excellent programs before other universities. This statement is in line with Bourke and Titus (2020) who define one of the characteristics of an inclusive leader is to have a clear vision and commitment. The clarity of the vision of the UNESA's leadership induced the vision and encouraged UNESA's development as inclusive higher education. This understanding is actualized by their commitment to build good inclusive facilities and to collaborate among all members involved (lecturers and experts who control inclusive education). Preparing experts of inclusive education and lecturers with respective backgrounds became a form of visionary leadership. Good leaders need to provide information and training on inclusive education for all members of the institution in order to correspond with the policy made (Díaz & Morgado, 2021). Another visionary action is to provide opportunities for graduates with disabilities to have careers or work by opening networks from the job providers (industries or offices) as well as training their vocational skills to ensure them live independently.

The policy designed by the university president encourages lecturers to obtain their professional credibility (granted as professors) in the inclusive education area. This policy proved that UNESA's leadership has a visionary mindset because one of the requirements for inclusive higher education is the existence of professors in the area of inclusive education. In addition, UNESA's leadership has a clear vision of providing guidance to special needs students by preparing programs to connect graduates with disabilities to work providers. This finding support study conducted by Taylor et al. (2014) who agree that a visionary mindset encourages organizational performance achievement. Another leadership value showed by UNESA's leaders is humanism. This value underlies the leadership's attitude in managing various conflicts and challenges regarding inclusive education. In managing inclusive higher education institutions, resistance commonly emerges but it can be dealt with a humanism approach. A humanist attitude of UNESA's leadership is showed by holding a discussion room and accommodating the aspirations of special needs students which is consistent with Smith et al. (2021) who mention that special needs students should be given the opportunity to personally and express what they feel during learning.

### Conclusions

Inspiring leadership has several values that form the basis for building and managing inclusive higher education. A proactive mindset in leadership is important to build an inclusive institution. From the analyses, it is found that the high-spiritedness of the leadership in UNESA is seen in its policymaking, financial and infrastructure support, its roles in the academic community, and its persuasive actions to create inclusive institutions to all members including managerial staff,



academic staffs, lecturers, and students. While visionary leadership is the ability owned by leaders to oversee the potential and future opportunities to build an excellent inclusive higher education, including commitment, consistency, and power to realize vision into policies and programs. Although many obstacles hinder the process in building inclusive higher education institutions, humanists and collaborative attitudes need to be seen in leadership to ensure a conducive organizational climate in the institutions.

Finally, from this conclusion, this study has several implications, such as: first, as leadership serves as a key factor in building inclusive higher education, it should be able to direct all organizational resources in realizing its goals. The second is to ensure the embodiment of inclusive values to all members of the institution in order to create harmony in the learning environment. The last is to provide reinforcement for lecturers and academic staff; thus, good and disability-friendly services and facilities can be created and make guidelines for the management of the institution to build an excellent inclusive higher education institution. In addition, this study is to contribute to the development of leadership values in higher education in order to build an inclusive higher education institution.

### Recommendation

In building an excellent inclusive higher education, it is recommended to not only focus on providing physical facilities and infrastructure, but also build an inclusive mindset, values, and culture for leaders and the entire academic community of higher education. Best practices of leadership in an effort to build superior inclusive universities need to be recorded so that they can be used as lessons learned for other higher education leaders. For further research, it is recommended to investigate other values that play a role in building inclusive universities, including innovative strategies, collaboration, and organizational identity.

### Limitations

Data had been collected during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Due to physical and social restrictions, interviews were conducted online using zoom meeting, so it affected the observation on facial expression and psychological of the informants. In addition, field observation cannot be done fully due to restriction because most activities were performed online.

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### Author Contribution Statement

Muhimmah: Conceptualization, design, writing. Budiyanto: Supervision, critical analysis. Mudjito: Supervision, final approval. Supriyanto: Editing/reviewing, material support.

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