

Inclusive leadership and workers' safety behaviour during Covid-19 pandemic

Inclusive leadership on safety behaviour

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Abstract

Purpose – COVID-19 pandemic underlines the need for effective leadership to resolve the crisis. This study aims to examine the impact of inclusive leadership on safety behaviours via the mediating role of the safety climate.

Design/methodology/approach – This research studied and compared two of the industries most affected by the pandemic, specifically banking and education. The questionnaire was undertaken among 111 from the education sector and 159 from the banking sector. Structural equation modelling – partial least square (SEM – PLS) was used to analyse the results.

Findings – The study suggested that inclusive behaviour shaped the safety behaviours among employees through the safety climate. However, the influence of inclusive leadership on the safety environment and safety behaviours of education staff in the company was not as powerful as in the banking sector.

Practical implications – There's a connection between inclusive leadership and worker protection. Besides, inclusive leadership and its effect on safety behaviour are culturally based. High levels of collectivism encourage leaders to care deeply for their employees' well-being, as demonstrated in this study by the promotion of a healthy working atmosphere, especially in times of crisis.

Originality/value – This research potentially adds to the current literature on leadership and safety behaviour and offers valuable management recommendations.

Keywords Inclusive leadership, Safety climate, Safety behaviours, COVID-19, Indonesia

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

The world faced the direst global emergency in 2019 when COVID-19 brought havoc to communities and nations, resulting in millions of deaths worldwide. Now in 2022, the world has gone back to normal after vaccines were discovered and eventually distributed to save countless more lives. Nevertheless, the reality remains that many experiences and lessons were learned during this period. This is especially true of leaders who had to act in decisive ways to deal with unpredictable and overwhelming conditions (Bennett and Lemoine, 2014). Threats to organisational viability needed strong leaders to analyse unprecedented effects at the micro- and macro-levels and the ability to respond assertively to these threats (Stoker *et al.*, 2019).

This study reports on the experiences of Indonesian industry leaders as they weathered the storm brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, from the viewpoint of inclusive leadership practices that influenced safety behaviours, and the mediating effect of the safety climate during the pandemic. It is important to document inclusive leadership behaviours in a crisis, and how these behaviours were performed within existing cultural scripts. The study argues that although the pandemic crisis is nearly over, inclusive leadership practices performed during this period could still apply in the recovery phase because the nature of the Indonesian collectivist and nurturing society will continue to influence leaders' behaviour and practices.

In times of crisis, leaders must work towards greater visibility in promoting multidisciplinary and inter-professional collaborative decision-making (Rosser *et al.*, 2020), and the visibility of an empathic, caring leader is more important than ever. Moreover,



leadership actions in decision-making in a crisis could not be gendered – male and female leaders' voices and resolve could strengthen both global and local COVID-19 efforts and ensure greater engagement in the planning of response and recovery (Bali *et al.*, 2020).

Inclusive leadership is a leadership style that refers to as exhibiting openness, accessibility, availability in their interactions with followers and creating a positive impact on employee well-being (Choi *et al.*, 2017). Through constant communication and connectivity, inclusive leaders encourage their followers to practice safety behaviour (Bourke and Espedido, 2020) under a positive safety climate that leaders promote as part of their primary concern (Amponsah-Tawaih and Adu, 2016; Yeboah-Kordee *et al.*, 2018; Lee *et al.*, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic made it a necessity for everyone to practice safety behaviour to reduce the spread of contamination, and inclusive leaders must drive the effort.

Safety climate can be defined as the characteristic of the organisation and its functionaries that ensure an acceptable level of safety for employees (Avci and Yayli, 2014). A positive safety climate can improve safety awareness and reduce employees' unsafe behaviour (Zhou *et al.*, 2010). Safety behaviour is defined as the willingness of employees to follow safety regulations and will not take shortcuts to increase their productivity which might result in work accidents (Wu *et al.*, 2008; Lyu *et al.*, 2018). Thus, improper application of safety behaviour is considered a significant cause of most work accidents (Lee *et al.*, 2019). Exercising safety behaviour is often seen as a reflection of an organisation's positive safety climate, which leads to a significant effect on interactions from the leader to the follower (Fang *et al.*, 2015; Lee *et al.*, 2019) as well as help in reducing the incidents of work accidents (Feng and Chang, 2018). The study argues that it is the leader's display of inclusive leader's traits that promote safety behaviour.

Earlier work had shown that inclusive leaders had a significant impact on employees' feelings of psychological safety (Carmeli *et al.*, 2010), willingness to express their concerns or employee voice (Yin, 2013) and employees' helping behaviour under psychological diversity climate (Randel *et al.*, 2018). Inclusive leadership is an influential driver of employee well-being when leaders encourage social support systems to become innovative in looking for solutions to organisational problems (Choi *et al.*, 2017). Encouraging positive organisational support when faced with a dilemmatic situation is one of the enduring traits of an inclusive leader (Qi *et al.*, 2019).

The extant literature on inclusive leadership and safety behaviour show studies have been conducted in many countries outside of Indonesia (Choi *et al.*, 2017; Jing *et al.*, 2018; Qi *et al.*, 2019; Ye *et al.*, 2019; Alshoukri *et al.*, 2020). We argue this is a research gap that our study can address. There is no current research on inclusive leaders and safety behaviours in a pandemic crisis which is telling because safety behaviour is a necessity in a medical crisis. Our study, therefore, contributes to extending the theoretical study of inclusive leadership to safety behaviour in an Asian context where people have similar cultural traits (Hofstede, 2007) but may have a different approach to safety behaviour in a crisis, thereby introducing a novel contribution to the study of inclusive leaders and safety behaviour during a pandemic.

Theoretically, our study will confirm whether there is a positive association between inclusive leadership and employee safety behaviour, and such association is felt more strongly during moments of volatility, anxiety, confusion and lack of certainty when employees looked up to their caring leaders for support. This paper will first discuss the extant literature on inclusive leaders and their relation to other leadership styles, safety behaviour and safety climate, followed by the study's research approach and corresponding data analysis. After that, implications to theory and practice are discussed.

2. Literature review

2.1 Leadership and inclusive leaders

Jackson and Parry (2008) broadly define leadership as mobilizing human, intellectual, and social capital and resources to achieve some desired future state. Leadership has three

dimensions: (1) the exercise of leadership requires both leaders and followers; (2) the capacity to mobilize requires communication and interpersonal skills; and (3) to lead requires actions towards goals (Jackson and Parry, 2008). Leadership has shown significant influence in shaping organisational behaviour (Downe *et al.*, 2016). For instance, a leader affects their followers through the example they demonstrate based on his/her knowledge and awareness from their experience (Amit *et al.*, 2009). Moreover, Kane-Urabazzo (2006) mentioned that to be effective, leaders must also provide supportive systems, for example, open communication channels, enabling employees to contribute to the organisation's effectiveness.

Inclusive leaders are defined as those leaders who are open, accessible and available to talk and discuss employees' ideas, enabling better quality relationships between the leader and the followers (Carmeli *et al.*, 2010). Inclusive leaders are known to show care and concern to their followers, are willing to listen and discuss with employees about work expectations and desired behaviours and are amenable to suggestions that make employees feel they are listened to, and their voices are heard. These kinds of leaders are different from authoritarian leaders, where employee voice is stifled and feelings of psychological safety are reduced (Wu *et al.*, 2020). Studies show that these kinds of leaders contribute to employee well-being (Carmeli *et al.*, 2010; Choi *et al.*, 2017). Several studies have been undertaken proving the utility of inclusive leaders, such as their effect on increased psychological safety and creativity (Carmeli *et al.*, 2010), more innovative behaviour under psychological safety contexts (Yin, 2013; Javed *et al.*, 2017).

2.2 Safety climate

Safety climate is an important element in safety management. A positive safety climate can improve safety awareness and reduce employees' unsafe behaviour (Avci and Yayli, 2014; Zhou *et al.*, 2010). Safety climate can be defined as the characteristic of the organisation and its functionaries to ensure an acceptable level of safety for employees (Avci and Yayli, 2014). Organisations that value safety must, therefore, create the system, maintain their commitment to safety and communicate the safety system to all of the employees (Wu *et al.*, 2008; Avci and Yayli, 2014). Wu *et al.* (2008) pointed out that in the higher education setting, to develop an engaged safety climate and achieve high safety performance, the leader must display outstanding safety leadership. Further, Wu *et al.* (2007) revealed that organisational elements such as the presence of a safety manager and safety committee, and safety training significantly affect the safety climate.

The relationship between leadership and safety climate has been investigated in previous studies and has been shown a consistent result, leadership affects safety climate (Wu *et al.*, 2008; Martínez-Córcoles *et al.*, 2011; Wu *et al.*, 2011). The leadership style also varied from the full range model (Zohar, 2002), the transformational model (Kelloway *et al.*, 2006), safety leadership (Wu *et al.*, 2008) and empowering leadership model (Martínez-Córcoles *et al.*, 2011). On the other hand, Carmeli *et al.* (2010) described the traits of inclusive leaders as open, available and accessible which can encourage employees to propose new ideas and take risks by emphasizing the value of such actions and ensuring them that there would be no negative consequences. Moreover, an inclusive leader's style is paired with empathy (Nakamura *et al.*, 2020) and also showing allowing collaboration (Bourke and Espedido, 2020). As a result, inclusive leadership is significantly linked to psychological safety (Carmeli *et al.*, 2010; Khan *et al.*, 2020). In the higher education space, a positive association between education and safety perception (Gyekye and Salminen, 2009). It is also proven that safety climate is not only an important predictor of safety behaviour that influence safety outcomes like reduced accidents and injury in the workplace, but also other organisational outcomes for instance productivity, innovation and organisational change (Griffin and Curcuruto, 2016). Our initial hypothesis will be the following, based on the foregoing grounds.

H1. Inclusive leadership has a significant positive effect on the safety climate

2.3 Safety behaviour

The organisational climate may influence the members' behaviour due to the effect of a group behaviour norm that comes from the result of interaction between the organisation and its members (Wu *et al.*, 2008). Many accidents happened due to employees often choosing to ignore safety regulations and take shortcuts to increase their productivity and fulfil the organisation's expectations. Safety behaviour is promoted not only in organisations but more predominantly in the education sector, especially in the areas of safety compliance and safety behaviour in schools where the potential for accidents is high. The study further found that safety motivation, safety concern and safety policy influence both dimensions of safety behaviour. Safety policy had the highest influence on safety compliance whilst safety concern had the highest influence on safety participation in polytechnic schools (Zulkifly *et al.*, 2017).

Martínez-Córcoles *et al.* (2011) found that to manage safety issues, organisations must understand the different parts, such as physical units of the organisation, environmental context, human interaction and individual behaviours involved in the organisation. There is a correlation between the environment, people and behaviour. This theoretical framework explains three mechanisms of organisational safety management: hazardous environment, safety climate and employee safety behaviour (Cui *et al.*, 2013; Zhou *et al.*, 2010). Zhou and Jiang (2015) found that safety climate showed a significant moderating effect on the relationship between Leader-Member Exchange and safety behaviour. When the safety climate was strong, the high quality of LMX will lead to more safety behaviour, but when the safety climate was low, the high quality of LMX may not lead to high safety behaviour.

H2. Safety climate has a significant positive effect on safety behaviour

2.4 The mediating role of safety climate between inclusive leadership and safety behaviour

Leadership has been closely linked to safety climate as the antecedent in many previous studies (Zohar, 2010; Clarke, 2010). The link between leadership and safety climate has been generally interpreted as an extension of the concern of leaders who have developed a high-quality connection with their team members for their psychological welfare and physical welfare in heightened-risk situations (Zohar, 2002, 2010; Zohar and Luria, 2004). Moreover, Flin and Yule (2004) argued that leadership is a fundamental socio-psychological organisational aspect capable of affecting and/or determining safety outcomes.

Previous studies have investigated the role of safety climate as a mediating factor between leadership and safety behaviours (Kelloway *et al.*, 2006; Clarke and Ward, 2006). Leadership not only assures one of safety behaviours aspects like safety compliance but also plays a critical role in determining employees' perceptions concerning the importance of safety (Clarke, 2013). Martínez-Córcoles *et al.* (2011) found that an appropriate safety climate is established when leaders act as empowering leaders, and it leads to a larger number of safety behaviour. This has been proven in several settings, for instance, a safety climate created safety consciousness and reduces occupational injuries among workers in the restaurant (Barling *et al.*, 2002), nuclear power plants (Martínez-Córcoles *et al.*, 2011) and among ethnic minority construction workers, as safety climate leads to the increase in safety knowledge, and reduced violation of safety rules, which leads to safety compliance and participation (Lyu *et al.*, 2018). One of the ways for leaders to establish an appropriate safety climate which eventually results in safer employee behaviour is by offering positive emotional assistance and arranging tasks that will allow people to accomplish achievement (Martínez-Córcoles *et al.*, 2011). This is in line with the virtues of the inclusive leadership style which is the feature of being able to give socio-psychological assistance to employees. As a result, the relationship

between inclusive leadership, safety climate and safety behaviours can be viewed as a social interaction process based on reciprocity, as when employees believe their leaders are genuinely concerned about their well-being, they are more likely to reciprocate by enhancing their job/task performance (Brown *et al.*, 2017).

H3. A safety climate will mediate the relations between inclusive leadership and safety behaviours.

3. Research design

3.1 Research model

This research uses a quantitative approach to research design. This research uses a stimulus (inclusive leadership), organism (safety climate) and response (safety behaviour) or SOR model. The SOR model can describe those changes in the organism's actions that are affected by the stimulus quality, and it is comparable to the learning process (Hetharie *et al.*, 2019). PLS-SEM analysis was utilised to handle the complex model, which contains many indicators with a small sample size (Ringle *et al.*, 2018). As shown in Figure 1, this study uses inclusive leadership as the independent variable and safety climate as the mediating variable to assess safety behaviour as the dependent variable.

3.2 Sampling

In carrying out this research, the sample population are the workers in specific service industries. In this case, banking and education in Indonesia. The data were collected for six weeks (June–July 2020) from workers in the banking and education industry all over Indonesia. The study had 270 respondents representing 159 workers in the banking sector and 111 workers in the education sector.

Two industries were chosen because of the magnitude of the pandemic effect felt on both sectors and the changes in carrying out work during the pandemic. Although both sectors are categorised as public services, the comparison between these two industries is visible (Fitriyanti, 2020). The banking sector is considered an essential business during the pandemic. Thus, the activities must be carried out as usual, even during the pandemic (Jiang, 2020). In contrast, even though it is crucial in education, the implementation of activities, as usual, is prohibited (Andhika, 2020). Although there is an adjustment in the operational hours in banking sectors in Indonesia, all banks are still open as usual, but following some health protocols, and supporting services employees at banks are still working at the office in some regions with low-risk conditions in Indonesia (Laucereno, 2020; Umar, 2020).

Conversely, according to the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia, 97.6% of schools all over Indonesia have implemented learning activities from home (otherwise known



Figure 1. Theoretical framework

as work from home (WFH), and for students, a study from home (SFH). Nevertheless, some schools will remain closed until January 2021 (Al Faqir, 2020; Ariefana, 2020). The difference between the business activities implementation during the pandemic thus draws a thought-provoking question of whether inclusive behaviour affects the workers' safety behaviour in each sector.

The sampling technique used in this study is the purposive sampling technique. Researchers used a questionnaire on an online platform as the research tool, which was then spread through instant-message platforms and social media. From a total of 396 responses, only 270 respondents, who work in the banking and education sector, were considered valid respondents. Table 1 is the respondent profile of this study for both the banking and education sector.

3.3 Demographic profile

There were 128 male respondents (47%) and 142 (53%) female respondents. The majority of the respondents (64%) were aged 24–39 years old. Most of them (78.14%) worked on Java Island. 58.9% (159) respondents work in the banking sector and 41.1% (111) respondents in education. The result shows that 36.29% of respondents work in their current company for 2–5 years, while 5.18% for more than ten years. It means most respondents in this research have enough information about their current companies which suggests they are reliable respondents that provided this research with information-rich data.

Background	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	128	47
	Female	142	53
Age	<23	8	3
	24–39	173	64
	40–55	73	27
	56–74	16	6
	>75	0	0
Length of Employment (years)	<1	11	4
	1	14	5
	2–5	98	36
	6–9	52	19
	>10	95	35
Industry Sector	Bank	159	58.9
	Education	111	41.1
Location	North Sumatera	2	0.7
	South Sumatera	2	0.7
	Riau	2	0.4
	Jambi	1	0.7
	Lampung	2	0.7
	Banten	5	1.9
	Jakarta	55	27.0
	West Java	73	20.4
	Central Java	27	10.0
	East Java	51	18.9
	West Kalimantan	36	13.3
	Central Kalimantan	27	1.5
	North Kalimantan	3	1.1
Others	7	2.6	

Table 1.
Demographic profile of respondents

3.4 Instrument

The initial questionnaire was written in English and therefore had to be back-translated to Bahasa Indonesia, the national language that most respondents use. The questionnaire had a five-point Likert scale with “1 = totally disagree to 5 = totally agree” to evaluate each measure.

3.4.1 Inclusive leadership. There were 15 questions to measure the inclusive leadership variable. Inclusive leadership in this study is measured by openness, availability, accessibility (Carmeli *et al.*, 2010; Choi *et al.*, 2017), empathy and collaboration (Martínez-Córcoles *et al.*, 2011). The Cronbach’s α of this study’s scale was 0.970 for the banking sector and 0.949 for the education sector.

3.4.2 Safety climate. Twenty items were used to measure the variable of safety climate. The basic dimensions are management commitment to safety, safety communication and safety system (Martínez-Córcoles *et al.*, 2011; Kines *et al.*, 2011; Wu *et al.*, 2008). The Cronbach’s α of this research’s scale was 0.985 and 0.966 for the banking and education sectors.

3.4.3 Safety behaviour. To measure safety behaviour, seven items from Wu *et al.* (2008) and Martínez-Córcoles *et al.* (2011) were used. Two basic dimensions in this variable are safety compliance and safety participation. The Cronbach’s α of this study’s scale was 0.948 for the banking sector and 0.933 for the education sector.

3.5 Data analysis

This research examines the influences of inclusive leadership and safety climate in the organisation on the workers’ safety behaviour in two different sectors: banking and education. Empirical analysis implemented PLS (Partial Least Squares) focused on a structural equation modelling (SEM) method.

4. Findings and discussion

4.1 Validity and reliability

The validity and reliability of the measurement models were tested to ensure the quality of the measure. To test employees’ knowledge of the questions, face validity was determined. The researcher used a questionnaire to ask 20 personnel from the education and banking industries to fill out. Convergent and discriminant validity tests are needed to assess the validity of the measures. Convergence validity aims to explain whether the factor loading value of the variables to its measurement items is reasonably high. Each item should have an outer loading of more than 0.7 and an average variance extracted (AVE) higher than 0.5 (Hair *et al.*, 2014). The final result of the convergent validity of this study is shown in Table 2.

Conversely, the discriminant validity determines the degree to which a specific construct’s measure arises from the other indices of variables so the AVE-value had to be used. The discriminant validity assessment used Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) correlation ratio. HTMT can achieve higher specificity and sensitivity levels compared to the Fornell–Larcker

Construct	Number of items		Cronbach’s alpha		Average variance extracted (AVE)		Composite reliability	
	Bank	Education	Bank	Education	Bank	Education	Bank	Education
IL	15	15	0.970	0.949	0.767	0.623	0.973	0.955
SC	20	20	0.985	0.966	0.793	0.636	0.986	0.969
SB	7	7	0.948	0.933	0.768	0.821	0.958	0.948

Table 2. Convergence validity and reliability: comparison of banking and education sector

cross-loading criterion (Henseler *et al.*, 2015). The values of HTMT in this study have fulfilled the suggested threshold, which is lower than one. It indicates that this study's discriminant validity is not lacking. Based on the criterion above, Table 3 (a and b) presents that the scales developed in this research had sufficient discriminant validity for both the banking and education sector.

Furthermore, the construct reliability test is to measure the latent variable by using the scale of internal consistency. This study used Cronbach's alpha as well as composite reliability (CR), as suggested by the criteria of Fornell and Larcker (1981) and Cronbach (1951), to examine the construct reliability. A good reliability indicator is Cronbach's alpha, and CR values ought to be equal to or higher than 0.7 (Cronbach, 1951; Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Table 2 exhibits the reliability result of the final model.

The multicollinearity test is used to examine whether there are significant links between the independent components of the structural model (inner model). This study followed Kock (2015) in ensuring that the variance inflation factors (VIFs) are less than 3.3 to establish a model that is not tainted by common method bias (CMB). The results of VIF for both banking and education sectors are all 1.000, hence meeting the acceptable criteria (see Table 4).

4.2 Hypothesis testing

The next step after assessing the reliability, validity and common method bias is path analysis. This step is also known as hypothesis testing. The variance explained (R^2) was developed to indicate the amount of strength to illustrate the specific endogenous nature and safety behaviour. In the banking sector, the value of R^2 in this study was 0.353. It implies that 35.3% of the variance in Safety Behaviour is supported by the mediating variable of this study, safety climate. On the other hand, the result of R^2 for safety climate was 0.760, which signifies that inclusive behaviour can explain 76% of the safety climate variable (see Tables 5 and 6).

The value of R^2 in the education sector was 0.048 indicating that the safety climate can explain only 4.8% of the variance in safety behaviour. However, the safety climate can be explained by inclusive leadership by 54.7% in the education sector (see Table 6).

Table 3. Discriminant validity

	IL	SC	SB
<i>a – Banking sector</i>			
IL	–		
SC	0.648	–	
SB	0.888	0.610	–
<i>b – Education sector</i>			
IL	–		
SC	0.074	–	
SB	0.759	0.207	–

Table 4. Multi-collinearity statistics

Construct name	Banking sector		Education sector	
	VIF		VIF	
Safety Climate	1.000		Safety Climate	1.000
Safety Behaviour	1.000		Safety Behaviour	1.000

4.3 The goodness-of-fit test

To date, PLS-SEM does not have a global fitness index, and critical threshold values are not entirely known. Blindfolding and bootstrapping methods are being pursued to resolve these problems, and so does the test of validity and reliability in the initial phase (Hair et al., 2013). Nevertheless, researchers used the standardised root mean square residual (SRMR), and Normed Fit Index (NFI) as performance indicators to determine the model fit. An SRMR value of less than 0.1 or 0.08 (Hu and Bentler, 1999; Henseler et al., 2014) and an NFI value between 0 and 1 (closer to 1) (Henseler et al., 2016; Dash and Paul, 2021) imply good fits. In this study, the SRMR values were 0.057 for the banking sector and 0.073 for the education system, which reflected acceptable values as they are lower than 0.08. Moreover, the NFI values in this study are 0.764 and 0.737 for the banking and education sectors. The results are considered a good fit for this study’s model.

4.4 Hypothesis testing result

This study used SEM to extract the structured model and check the relationship between variables. Furthermore, using PLS-SEM and defining *t*-test values, a bootstrapping test was carried out to determine the path coefficient’s significance. The hypothesis test was performed upon completing the measurement model’s evaluation through path coefficient (β), *p*-values and *t*-values. The hypothesis test indicates that all hypotheses were supported both in the banking and education sectors, as shown in Tables 6 and 7.

This study also included mediation analysis and used the approach by Hair et al. (2021) to test the mediating role of safety climate. MacKinnon et al. (2002) stated that the relationship between X and Y is mediated by Z if X to Z and Z to Y direct path is significant. Moreover, Matthews et al. (2018) argued that full mediation happens when the direct effect is insignificant, but the indirect effect is significant, while partial mediation is when both direct and indirect effects are significant. Hair et al. (2021) also argued that complementary mediation happens if the mediation has the same direction or has a positive beta coefficient. Therefore, this study shows safety climate partially mediated the relationship between inclusive leadership and safety behaviour, and there is a complimentary mediation (see Tables 7 and 8).

Hypothesis	R square	Adjusted R squared
Inclusive Leadership → Safety Climate	0.760	0.758
Safety Climate → Safety Behaviours	0.353	0.349

Table 5.
R square banking sector

Hypothesis	R square	Adjusted R squared
Inclusive Leadership → Safety Climate	0.547	0.543
Safety Climate → Safety Behaviours	0.048	0.039

Table 6.
R square education sector

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path coefficient (β)	<i>t</i> -statistics	<i>p</i> -value	Hypothesis result
H1	IL → SC	0.872	28.722	0.000	Supported
H2	SC → SB	0.594	7.033	0.000	Supported
Mediation	IL → SC → SB	0.518	6.563	0.000	Supported

Table 7.
Hypothesis testing result: banking sector

conducted during the pandemic, and it demonstrates how inclusive leadership can help bring balance, predictability and moderation to their teams and organisations amid a crisis (Sukhera *et al.*, 2020).

Inclusive leaders who are supportive, show empathy and are easily reachable by their subordinates, creating a feeling of psychological safety (Carmeli *et al.*, 2010) can positively promote a safety climate, which can be argued as the product of a strong leadership commitment to ensure the well-being and welfare of their employees (Hollander, 2009). This is consistent with previous findings (Griffin and Curcuruto, 2016), suggesting that employees' discretionary safety participation is highly influenced by a strong safety climate. This is shown by the significant effect of inclusive leadership on safety climate, both in the banking sector ($\beta = 87.2\%$) and education ($\beta = 73.9\%$).

This study also includes management commitment to safety, safety communication and safety systems as the safety climate dimension. A workplace that shows a strong commitment to safety will give a sense of assurance to its workers. Likewise, having clear communication with the employees also indicates that employers care about their workers' well-being. When an organisation has a well-managed safety system, its workers know how they are being protected at work, which translates into safety behaviour performance among workers. Leaders need to ensure that employee needs for connectivity are provided (Arquisola *et al.*, 2019; Planz *et al.*, 2020).

This study found that the promotion of safety climate in the workplace influences the workers' safety behaviours is higher in the banking sector ($\beta = 59.4\%$) than in the education sector ($\beta = 22.0\%$). Inclusive leadership in the banking sector shows a more significant influence on the safety climate than in the education sector. This means that the safety climate promoted in the education sector is not as strong as in the banking sector to shape the workers' safety behaviour. Although organisations in both sectors have a serious commitment to creating a safety climate in the workplace, safety communication may be dissimilar. Safety communication indicators are the regularity of leaders conveying safety information, frequent communication about safety between leaders and subordinates and providing a lot of safety information in the workplace. All of those activities can be found in the bank sector working environment.

Several factors can explain this difference. Compared to the education sector, where 97.6% of institutions were closed during the pandemic, and work-from-home policies were applied (Al Faqir, 2020; Ariefana, 2020; Laucereno, 2020), banks continued to open during the pandemic, even if they had to make adjustments in operational hours. For example, all banks provided masks and pick-up services for employees, disinfect all offices, and active socialisation through internal communication media related to the coronavirus (CNBC Indonesia, 2020). Because the banks have remained open and operational, the employees can physically feel if their environment is safe or not. Moreover, this situation showed bank employees that banks must continue to serve the public despite pandemic threats. Yet, banking leaders must also assure their employees that appropriate health protocols were being undertaken to ensure their safety.

While bank leaders were physically present in the bank branches and were available for consultation, requests or employees' suggestions, such was not the case with the education sector. The study found that during the work from home situation where interaction was mostly in the virtual space, Indonesian educational leaders are not able to show effective agency in reaching out to their employees compared to those working in the banking sector. This finding is interesting and though-provoking. A country's national culture can affect personal values, attitudes, behaviour, as well as organisational practice (Choi *et al.*, 2017). Indonesian culture that is high on collectivism encourages Indonesian leaders to have a great concern for the welfare of their employees, and in this study, it is evident in the promotion of a safety climate, especially in this time of crisis. The relationship is one of protection and

nurturing, as shown by previous studies on educational leaders' roles. This means that Indonesian educational leaders will generally show care and concern for employees' welfare despite the instrumental deficiencies they face, such as a lack of funding for greater employee welfare (Arquisola *et al.*, 2019). Yet the finding seems to point to decreased inclusive leaders' behaviour. It could be argued that because employees had to work remotely away, many employees did not feel the safety climate in the campus. The lack of visibility of leaders and the ensuing distant interaction with their employees might have contributed to decreased affinity, and a lack of empathy between people compared to physical interaction as shown in the banks (Schumann *et al.*, 2014). In virtual interactions, employees will still feel secluded from their group (Grenny and Maxfield, 2017), misunderstanding could arise (Breward, 2020) and trust issues towards the leader may occur (Shin, 2018).

5. Conclusion

5.1 Theoretical and practical implications

Theoretically, our study confirmed the positive association between inclusive leadership and employee safety behaviour, and a such association was felt more strongly during the pandemic. Although education and banking are from the same service industry, the circumstances surrounding the activities to handle them were different for both sectors. The banking industry employees felt it stronger than employees in the education sector. This indicates that inclusive leadership behaviours are contingent on the contexts where these are visibly seen and felt by employees. Thus, it is important not to generalise why inclusive leadership will work for one sector and may not work for another to influence employees' safety behaviours. Our study also adds theoretical knowledge to the assumptions made (Griffin and Curcuruto, 2016) that safety behaviour translates to discretionary safety participation than compliance.

Further, our study extends the theoretical application of inclusive leadership on the role of cultural contexts in safety behaviour. Asian culture, which includes Indonesian culture, is predominantly high on collectivism (Hofstede, 2007), a community value expressed through a caring and nurturing relationship with members of the community. Collectivism encourages leaders to have a great concern for the welfare of their employees, and in this study, it is evident in the promotion of a safety climate, especially in this time of crisis. This is because the national culture can affect personal values, attitudes, behaviour, as well as organisational practice (Choi *et al.*, 2017).

This study's practical application demonstrates that inclusive leadership and safety climate can shape people's safety behaviours in the organisation. Leaders, especially in the education sector, based on our findings should exhibit the inclusiveness traits even more, for example, reaching out to workers and showing empathy, showing that they are available for discussion, collaboration and also consultation, and most importantly displaying a commitment that they apply the safety behaviour daily, or lead by example. Therefore, it behoves on leaders to pool together their resources to create a more crisis-ready organisation through communication, training, codification of safety and crisis management procedures, investing in technology to enable rapid decision-making, or launching technology-enabled learning systems, and investing in knowledge management and sharing infrastructure and crisis experts. *First*, safety information needs to be codified in an easily accessible form, for instance, safety protocols, prevention and mitigation measures must be communicated continuously to all employees, maybe as part of an onboarding process, or embedded in the company values and strategic agenda. *Second*, as employees work from home, or flexible working arrangements (FWA) will become the norm. Recent studies on industry perceptions of the readiness of Indonesian companies to implement FWA (Arquisola *et al.*, 2022) have found that employees who transition to this working arrangement need empathetic and

caring leaders who can understand the different challenges employees face while juggling professional and personal demands and roles. Due to advancements in technology and other web-sharing platforms, working from home is made easier as employees can directly communicate with their leaders and colleagues (Planz *et al.*, 2020). *Third*, leaders must offer sensitivity training as part of leadership development where the values of empathy, openness, availability, collaboration and accessibility can be ingrained as leadership values. This study has demonstrated how inclusive leadership can help bring balance, predictability and moderation to teams and organisations amid a crisis (Sukhera *et al.*, 2020).

5.2 Limitations and directions for future research

This study is limited in scope because only two industries were included. Thus, further studies need to be undertaken to determine if the results are also evident in different sectors such as in manufacturing, telecommunications or aviation industries, where performing safety behaviours and promoting safety climate are paramount objectives of inclusive leaders. Moreover, the research design used single-source data. Thus, the researchers suggest for future research to explore and utilise another method like the experimental method in which the real score of correlation between constructs is manipulated and known (Avolio *et al.*, 1991). Besides, to avoid bias, data should be collected from two sources, for example, the subordinates and the supervisors for future research. Moreover, this study was conducted at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, thus it may have different outcomes when people are more used to the post-pandemic working situations.

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