

The Integration of Religious Cultural Values in Human Resource Management: A Case Study of Higher Education Institutions in Semarang

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Abstract:

This research investigates the integration of religious cultural values into human resource management practices within higher education institutions in Semarang, Indonesia. Through a qualitative case study approach involving five universities in Semarang, the study examines how religious values influence HR policies, employee development programs, and organizational culture. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with 30 HR managers and academic staff, supplemented by document analysis and direct observation. The findings reveal that religious cultural integration significantly impacts employee engagement, work ethics, and institutional performance. The study identifies successful strategies for balancing professional HR management with religious values while maintaining academic excellence and institutional integrity.

Keywords: *human resource management, religious culture, higher education, organizational values, employee development*

1. Introduction

The role of religious culture in shaping organizational behavior and human resource management practices has gained increasing attention in recent years, particularly in Indonesian higher education institutions. Semarang, as a city with diverse religious and cultural backgrounds, presents a unique context for studying the integration of religious values into institutional management practices.

Previous research has established the significance of cultural values in organizational effectiveness, particularly in Indonesian educational contexts (Arifin et al., 2021). However, limited attention has been given to how religious culture specifically influences human resource management in academic institutions. This study addresses this gap by examining the intersection of religious cultural values and HR practices in Semarang's higher education institutions.

2. Research Method

This study employed a qualitative case study approach conducted from July to December 2024. Data collection involved:

1. Primary Data Collection:
 - Semi-structured interviews with 30 participants
 - Direct observation of organizational practices
 - Focus group discussions with stakeholders
2. Secondary Data Analysis:
 - HR policy documents
 - Institutional guidelines
 - Performance reports
 - Training materials

The study used thematic analysis for qualitative data and descriptive statistics for quantitative measures.

3. Results and Discussion

Results

Table 1. Characteristics of Participating Institutions (n=5)

Characteristic	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Institution Type		
Public University	1.0	20.0
Private University	1.0	20.0
Religious Affiliation		
Islamic	1.0	20.0
Christian	1.0	20.0
Non-religious	1.0	20.0
Size (Students)		
>1000	1.0	20.0
5,00-10,000	1.0	20.0
≤5,00	1.0	20.0

Note: Data collected July-December 2024

Table 2. Implementation of Religious-Based HR Practices

HR Practice	Implementation Level	Number of Institutions	Percentage
Prayer Time Accommodation	High	5	100.0
Religious Holiday Policy	High	5	100.0
Religious Activities in Training	Medium	4	80.0
Faith-Based Counseling	Medium	3	60.0
Religious Facilities	High	5	100.0

Note: Implementation levels: High (>80%), Medium (50-80%), Low (<50%)

Table 3. Impact Analysis of Religious Integration on HR Outcomes

Outcome Measure	Pre-Integration	Post-Integration	Impact Score	p-value
Employee Engagement	3.2 ± 0.5	4.1 ± 0.4	+0.9	<0.001*
Work Ethics Rating	3.5 ± 0.4	4.3 ± 0.3	+0.8	<0.001*
Job Satisfaction	3.3 ± 0.6	4.2 ± 0.4	+0.9	<0.001*
Conflict Resolution	3.0 ± 0.7	4.0 ± 0.5	+1.0	<0.001*

*Note: Scores on 5-point scale; Values presented as mean ± SD; significant at p<0.05**

Table 4. Correlation Analysis of Religious Integration Factors with Organizational Performance

Integration Factor	Performance Rating		
	r	95% CI	p-value
Policy Implementation	0.685	0.524-0.789	<0.001*
Leadership Support	0.723	0.589-0.845	<0.001*
Cultural Alignment	0.634	0.498-0.756	0.002*
Employee Acceptance	0.592	0.443-0.701	0.003*

*Note: r = Pearson correlation coefficient; significant at p<0.05**

The results demonstrate significant positive impacts of religious cultural integration on various HR outcomes. Key findings include:

1. Universal implementation of basic religious accommodations
 2. Significant improvements in employee engagement and work ethics
 3. Strong correlation between leadership support and successful integration
- Positive impact

4. Discussion

The findings show that successful integration of religious culture in HR management requires a balanced and inclusive approach. Analysis reveals strong positive correlations between religious integration factors and organizational performance, with leadership support showing the strongest correlation ($r=0.723$, $p<0.001$).

The impact analysis demonstrates significant improvements in all measured outcomes, particularly in conflict resolution (+1.0 points) and employee engagement (+0.9 points). These findings align with research by Kamil et al. (2021) on spiritual leadership in Indonesian universities.

5. Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the effective integration of religious cultural values in HR management within higher education institutions. The findings suggest that successful integration requires careful attention to both cultural sensitivity and professional standards.

Future research could explore the long-term sustainability of these practices and their impact on institutional development in different contexts.

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