ELEVATING HALAL INDUSTRY PERFORMANCE THROUGH INCLUSIVE HR PRACTICES AND DIGITAL INVESTMENT IN THE INDONESIAN

CONTEXT

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Abstract

Purpose

This study examines the relationships among workforce diversity, inclusive HR practices, digital transformation investments, and organizational performance in the Indonesian halal industry. Additionally, it investigates the moderating influence of organizational culture on these relationships.

Design/methodology/approach

A quantitative survey of 254 halal-certified firms from diverse industries was used in the study. The poll used verified items from earlier research to measure workforce diversity, inclusive HR practices, digital transformation investment, and organizational success. The associations between these factors were examined using structural equation modeling.

Findings

Research shows that workforce diversity, inclusive HR policies, and digital transformation investments boost corporate success. Employee diversity and performance are highly moderated by organizational culture. While inclusive practices and digital transformation improve performance, corporate culture does not significantly attenuate these associations. These data imply that workforce diversity and inclusive HR practices improve performance, with corporate culture amplifying diversity's benefits.

Research limitations/implications

The study sample of 254 respondents may not fully represent the Indonesian halal industry. As such, the findings should be interpreted cautiously and may not apply to other industry segments. To better comprehend the factors driving performance, future research should employ larger sample sizes and examine additional moderating variables. The study highlights the critical role of organizational culture in leveraging diversity to enhance performance, which offers valuable insights for halal industry stakeholders despite the study's limitations. This expands the understanding of these relationships and provides guidance for industry progress strategies.

Originality/value

This study investigates the effect of inclusive human resource strategies and digital investment on the performance of the Indonesian halal business. The results could offer significant

perspectives for industry players aiming to improve their competitiveness in this fast-growing market.

Keywords: Halal Industry, Workforce Diversity, Inclusive HR Practices, Digital Transformation, Organizational Performance, Organizational Culture

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INTRODUCTION

The halal industry has received significant worldwide recognition in recent years. This phenomena can be explained by the continuous rise in the demand for halal products from both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers, along with the rapid growth of the global Muslim population (Utari et al., 2022). Moreover, the research suggests that Indonesia possesses significant prospects for the worldwide growth of the halal industry (Kurnia et al., 2023). This can stimulate intense competition among halal industry players in Indonesia, encouraging them to enhance their performance and competitiveness in order to gain a larger market share and solidify their positions within the growing halal industry (Charina & Charisma, 2023). Given the growing demand for halal products in Indonesia, it is imperative that halal industry players, irrespective of their religious affiliation, improve their operational efficiency, product quality, and customer service to sustain a competitive advantage and capitalize on the profitable opportunities in this dynamic market (Vanany et al., 2020). Consequently, in order to enhance its overall performance and establish itself as the world's largest Sharia-based economic hub, Indonesia's halal industry necessitates a comprehensive strategy.

Food, beverages, fashion, cosmetics, finance, tourism, media, and entertainment comprise Indonesia's halal industry (Nugroho et al., 2023). Indonesian consumers' substantial demand for halal products has generated substantial growth opportunities for the halal industry (Trimulato, 2021). This is due to Indonesia's status as the nation with the world's largest Muslim population, which is estimated to be approximately 256.82 million individuals (Kurnia et al., 2023). Nevertheless, research indicates that the halal industry in Indonesia cannot be enhanced solely through the use of government policy support (Erwaedy et al., 2021). Industry stakeholders must assume a crucial role in overseeing their human resources by implementing inclusive HR practices and allocating resources towards digital technologies to enhance efficiency and productivity (Charina & Charisma, 2023).

The halal industry's performance depends entirely to the efficient administration and utilization of its human resources (Parajuli et al., 2023). Implementing inclusive HR practices that embrace employee diversity and investing in digital technologies can significantly impact productivity, operational efficiency, and overall competitiveness within the halal industry (Zavyalova et al., 2022). Such strategies enable halal firms to efficiently oversee their personnel, optimize procedures, and adapt quickly to a rapidly changing market. This ultimately improves their ability to take advantage of the growing demand for halal products and services (Mustun, 2021). However, research suggests that diversity management, inclusivity, and digital investment may not always be the primary drivers of organizational performance (Mustun, 2021). The overall performance of companies can be more significantly influenced by other factors, such as effective leadership, a strong organizational culture, and appropriate business strategies (Zhang & Jin, 2023).

Although other factors have been identified in prior research, the halal industry considers diversity and inclusivity to be essential for achieving optimal performance (Bidin et al., 2021). Embracing employee diversity and implementing inclusive HR practices can significantly impact productivity, operational efficiency, and overall competitiveness within the Indonesian halal industry (Yuli & Wojtyla, 2020). These strategies enable halal enterprises to efficiently oversee their personnel, optimize procedures, and remain adaptable in response to a rapidly changing market. This enhances their ability to take advantage of the growing demand for halal products and services (Ali et al., 2022).

Another critical strategy for improving the performance of the halal industry in Indonesia is to invest in digital transformation (Murti, 2023). In the rapidly evolving halal industry, it is imperative to maintain a competitive edge by substantially improving operational efficiency, streamlining business processes, and enhancing customer experience through the adoption of digital technologies (Qosim, 2022). By leveraging innovative digital solutions, halal industry players can optimize their operations, expand their market reach, and better serve their target customers, ultimately driving improved overall organizational performance (Salindal, 2019). Digital investment enables halal businesses to remain agile, responsive, and adaptable in the face of evolving market dynamics, thereby effectively positioning them to capitalize on the increasing demand for halal products and services (Hew et al., 2020).

However, the implementation of these strategies is not the sole determinant of their success. The relationship between organizational performance, digital investment, and diversity management is significantly influenced by organizational culture (M. S. Khan et al., 2021). A culture that fosters inclusivity, innovation, and a growth mindset can amplify the positive impacts of diversity and digital transformation, enabling halal industry players to maximize their performance and competitiveness (Azmi et al., 2020). An organizational culture that encourages transparent communication, cooperative decision-making, and ongoing learning can establish a conducive setting for incorporating diverse viewpoints and effectively implementing digital technologies (Azeem et al., 2021). When the culture of an organization is in harmony with and supports the advantages of having a diverse workforce and embracing digital innovation, halal firms may effectively utilize these strategic tools to achieve excellent organizational results and stay ahead in the fast-changing sector (Rahman et al., 2017).

The primary purpose of this research paper is to thoroughly analyze the complex connections between workforce diversity, inclusive HR practices, and investment in digital transformation and how they collectively impact the organizational performance of halal industry players in Indonesia. This study aims to clarify the crucial role of organizational culture in moderating these key characteristics and their influence on the overall performance and competitiveness of halal firms in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section outlines the conceptual framework underpinning the current research. The Resource-Based View Theory is a prominent theoretical lens that has been extensively applied to examine organizational performance and competitive advantage. Within this framework, workforce diversity and inclusive human resource practices can be conceptualized as valuable, scarce, inimitable, and non-substitutable organizational resources that contribute to enhanced organizational performance (Lamichhane, 2021).

Resource-Based View Theory

The Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory posits that businesses can attain a lasting competitive advantage by acquiring and utilizing resources and talents that are valuable, unusual, difficult to imitate, and cannot be easily substituted (Barney, 1986; Wernerfelt, 1984). According to this perspective, organizations can gain a sustainable competitive edge by effectively leveraging and deploying their unique and valuable resources, including their workforce (Mahmood, 2022). Furthermore, the theory suggests that the combination of diverse organizational resources, such as employee knowledge, skills, and experiences, can generate synergies and lead to superior organizational outcomes (Wan et al., 2011). Previous research has shown that diversity in the workforce can positively influence various performance metrics, including productivity, innovation, and financial performance (Lu et al., 2015). It means diverse employees with different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives can contribute to the organization's overall capabilities and performance in unique ways.

Workforce Diversity and Organizational Performance

The existing scholarly literature has consistently demonstrated the beneficial influence of a diverse workforce on organizational performance (Hanif et al., 2023). For instance, one study found that racial diversity within the banking sector interacted with the organization's strategic approach to enhance productivity, profitability, and market valuation (Filbeck et al., 2017). Similarly, teams with a variety of backgrounds and experiences can utilize a wider array of viewpoints, abilities, and understanding, leading to the development of more creative solutions, improved decision-making, and greater overall performance within the business (Turi et al., 2022). Nevertheless, it is crucial to acknowledge that the correlation between worker diversity and organizational performance is not consistently direct or predictable. This is due to the complex dynamics and potential challenges associated with managing a diverse workforce, such as communication barriers, conflict, and integration issues (Yadav & Lenka, 2020). Accordingly, this research proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: Workforce diversity has a positive impact on the organizational performance of the halal industry in Indonesia.

Inclusion Practices and Organizational Performance

Implementing inclusive human resource practices is another critical strategy for leveraging workforce diversity to enhance organizational performance (Eshete, 2024). Inclusive practices, such as providing equal opportunities, promoting cross-cultural understanding, and fostering a sense of belonging, can help organizations effectively harness the benefits of a diverse workforce (Aghazadeh, 2004; McCann & Kohntopp, 2017). When employees feel valued, respected, and able to contribute their unique perspectives, it can lead to increased job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and overall performance (Chrobot-Mason & Aramovich, 2013; Shore et al., 2011). Previous research shows that inclusive HR practices are positively associated with organizational outcomes, including productivity, innovation, and financial performance (Brimhall & Mor Barak, 2018). Furthermore, inclusive practices can create an environment that promotes collaboration, innovation, and effective decision-making, ultimately contributing to improved organizational outcomes (Li & Tang, 2022). Therefore, this research hypothesizes:

H2: The use of inclusive practices has a beneficial effect on the overall performance of the halal business.

Digital Transformation and Organizational Performance

The rapid digital transformation of the business landscape is another crucial factor influencing organizational performance. Investing in digital technologies, such as automation, data analytics, and cloud computing, can improve operational efficiency, support data-driven decision-making, and enable the development of innovative products and services (Zhu, 2024). In the halal industry, digital transformation can streamline supply chain processes, enhance traceability, and improve customer engagement, leading to enhanced organizational performance (Ratnaningtyas et al., 2022). Prior studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between digital transformation and various organizational performance metrics, including productivity, profitability, and market competitiveness (Imran et al., 2021). Therefore, this research proposes the following hypothesis:

H3: Investment in digital transformation has a positive impact on the organizational performance of the halal industry.

Organizational Culture as a Moderator between workforce diversity and organizational performance.

Organizational culture plays a critical role in how a diverse workforce is managed and utilized within an organization, ultimately impacting its performance (Aurangzeb et al., 2021; Sethi et al., 2021; Seti Nugroho & Hamidah Rustiana, 2023). The alignment of organizational culture with diversity initiatives can significantly affect employee well-being, job satisfaction, and overall organizational effectiveness. Additionally, a strong organizational culture can moderate the effects of workforce diversity on managerial performance, highlighting the importance of cultural factors in driving organizational outcomes.

Research has shown that organizational culture can mediate the relationship between workforce diversity and organizational effectiveness. Factors such as cultural diversity, team building, and group training have been identified as mediators between workforce diversity and organizational efficiency (Inegbedion et al., 2020). Furthermore, the impact of a diverse climate on organizational culture among university teachers has been linked to performance, communication, and cooperation within the organization, underscoring the role of trust in fostering positive relationships.

Existing research has highlighted the moderating role of organizational culture in the relationship between workforce diversity and organizational performance. Research shows that the effect of cultural diversity on company performance is influenced by the strategies used for corporate socialization, highlighting the significance of organizational culture in determining the results of diversity efforts (McMillan-Capehart, 2008). Furthermore, strategic efforts to manage diversity, reshape organizational culture, and enhance problem-solving capabilities have been found to positively influence organizational performance (Park & Liang, 2020). In the context of the halal industry, an organizational culture that fosters inclusiveness, teamwork, and a shared sense of purpose can amplify the benefits of a diverse workforce, leading to improved organizational outcomes. Therefore, this research proposes the following hypothesis:

H4: The organizational cultural environment can serve to amplify or constrain the relationship between workforce diversity and organizational performance.

Organizational culture moderates the relationship between inclusion practices and organizational performance.

Organizational culture has a crucial role in determining how inclusion strategies affect the

performance of a business (Scott et al., 2011). When the cultural environment is supportive of inclusiveness, diversity, and equitable treatment, inclusion practices are more likely to thrive and positively influence organizational outcomes (Kuknor & Bhattacharya, 2022).

Existing literature suggests that organizational culture can either enhance or impede the effectiveness of inclusion initiatives (Chung et al., 2021). A culture that values diversity, collaboration, and psychological safety is more likely to reap the benefits of inclusive practices, such as improved team dynamics, innovation, and overall organizational performance (Ashikali et al., 2021). Conversely, a culture that is resistant to change or does not prioritize inclusiveness may limit the impact of such practices (Nishii, 2013).

An inclusive corporate culture in the halal business, which values diversity, promotes a sense of belonging, and facilitates open communication, can enhance the positive impact of inclusion strategies on organizational performance (Usmanova et al., 2022). This type of culture has the ability to establish a setting in which individuals have a sense of worth, authority, and drive to make meaningful contributions towards the achievement of the organization's goals (S. I. Khan et al., 2022). Therefore, this research proposes the following hypothesis:

H5: The organizational cultural environment can serve to amplify or constrain the relationship between inclusion practices and organizational performance.

Organizational culture moderates the relationship between digital transformation and organizational performance.

Finally, organizational culture can also influence the impact of digital transformation on organizational performance. A culture that is open to innovation, adaptable to change, and supportive of technological advancements is more likely to leverage the benefits of digital transformation fully (Lingling & Ye, 2023).

Prior research has shown that organizational culture plays a significant role in shaping the outcomes of digital transformation initiatives (Zhang & Jin, 2023). A culture that fosters collaboration, risk-taking, and continuous learning can enable organizations to effectively implement and integrate digital technologies, leading to improved operational efficiency, enhanced customer experiences, and increased profitability (Türk, 2023).

In contrast, the successful adoption and utilization of digital technologies may be impeded by a culture that is resistant to change or lacks the requisite digital capabilities, thereby limiting their impact on organizational performance (Masoud & Basahel, 2023).

In the context of the halal industry, an organizational culture that embraces digital transformation, encourages experimentation, and supports the development of digital skills can amplify the positive impacts of digital investments on organizational performance. Therefore, this research proposes the following hypothesis:

H6: The organizational cultural environment can serve to amplify or constrain the relationship between digital transformation and organizational performance.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study will employ a quantitative research methodology to investigate the relationships between workforce diversity, inclusion practices, digital transformation, and organizational

performance within the halal industry context. The research sample will consist of 385 respondents.

$$n = \frac{Z^2 \cdot P \cdot (1 - P)}{E^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1,96^2 \cdot 0,50 \cdot (1 - 0,50)}{0,05^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3.8416 \cdot 0,25}{0,0025}$$

$$n = \frac{0,9604}{0,0025}$$

$$n = 384.16$$

Survey instruments will be used to obtain data from employees of halal-certified firms in diverse areas such as food & beverage, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals. Workforce diversity will be assessed using a validated measure Alghazo et al., (2016) that evaluates the extent to which leaders involve individuals from diverse age groups in problem-solving and decision-making processes. Employee perceptions of inclusion will be evaluated using a statement that has been validated in prior research (Chaudhry et al., 2021), assessing the degree to which employees feel their contributions are appreciated. Digital transformation investment will be measured by an item that captures the presence of organizational budgets for employee digital skills training. Organizational performance will be gauged using verified items from prior literature (Rehman et al., 2019), including a measure of the organization's financial stability and cash flow. Finally, organizational culture will be assessed using an item that reflects the degree to which employees are encouraged to take risks and explore new ideas.

Due to the limited research timeline, a total of 254 respondents out of the planned 385 participated in the survey and returned the questionnaires. The demographic details of the respondents are provided in Table 1:

Table 1. Respondent Demographics

Age	N	%	Total	
15-22	78	38	203 (100%)	
23-30	42	21		
31-38	53	26		
39-45	30	15		
Gender				
Man	113	56	202 (100%)	
Man	90	44	203 (100%)	
Education				
Junior High School	20	10		
Senior High School	94	46	203 (100%)	
Bachelor Degree	89	44		

FINDINGS

Result

This research conducted a preliminary assessment of the model's quality through validity testing. Specifically, it applied the criterion that no factor loading should exceed 0.70, and the Average Variance Extracted should be greater than 0.50. Based on these standards, the analysis required the removal of several measurement items due to unsatisfactory scores. Additional test results are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Validity Test

Items	Workforce Diversity	Inclusion Practices	Digital Transformation	Organizational Culture	Organizational Performance	AVE
X1.1	0.784					
X1.4	0.796					0.608
X1.5	0.765					0.008
X1.6	0.775					
X2.11		0.752				
X2.13		0.732				
X2.17		0.737				0.566
X2.3		0.766				0.500
X2.6		0.755				
X2.9		0.771				
X3.2			0.762			
X3.3			0.751			
X3.4			0.773			0.564
X3.6			0.752			
X3.9			0.714			
Z1.10				0.765		
Z1.12				0.726		
Z1.4				0.758		0.583
Z1.6				0.794		
Z1.7				0.772		
Y1.1					0.769	
Y1.2					0.726	
Y1.4					0.770	0.560
Y1.5					0.746	
Y1.7					0.730	

The first assessment of the model's quality through validity testing shows positive findings. All factor loadings for the items within their respective constructs exceed the acceptable threshold of 0.70, and the Average Variance Extracted values for all constructs are above the recommended 0.5 benchmark. This indicates that the measures demonstrate good convergent validity, suggesting the constructs are well-represented by their corresponding indicator variables. These positive psychometric properties provide confidence in the reliability and validity of the measurement model, laying a strong foundation for the subsequent analysis of the structural relationships.

Table 3. Reliability Test

Cronbach's **Composite Reliability** Alpha **Digital Transformation** 0.806 0.866 **Inclusion Practices** 0.887 0.847 Organizational Culture 0.821 0.875 Organizational Performance 0.804 0.864 Workforce Diversity 0.785 0.861

The reliability analysis demonstrates that all the constructs measured in this study have satisfactory Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values. Specifically, Cronbach's Alpha for Digital Transformation, Inclusion Practices, Organizational Culture, Organizational Performance, and Workforce Diversity each exceeds 0.7, indicating good internal consistency. In addition, the Composite Reliability ratings for these structures exceed 0.8, indicating outstanding reliability. In summary, the research instrument utilized in this study is deemed to be dependable. The study subsequently examined the internal structural model in order to assess the hypothesis. The bootstrapping method was employed to assess the statistical significance of the observed relationships, as presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Hypothesis Test

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Digital Transformation -> Organizational Performance	0.160	0.156	0.093	1.723	0.043
Inclusion Practices -> Organizational Performance	0.196	0.188	0.088	2.224	0.013
Moderating Effect 1 -> Organizational Performance	0.209	0.202	0.121	1.728	0.042
Moderating Effect 2 -> Organizational Performance	0.003	0.021	0.116	0.027	0.489
Moderating Effect 3 -> Organizational Performance	-0.131	-0.121	0.111	1.178	0.120
Workforce Diversity -> Organizational Performance	0.338	0.330	0.078	4.305	0.000

The hypothesis testing results show several significant relationships between independent variables and Organizational Performance with Organizational Culture as a moderating variable. Digital Transformation has a significant positive effect on Organizational Performance, with a T-value of 1.723 and a P-value of 0.043. Inclusion Practices also have a significant positive effect, with a T-value of 2.224 and a P-value of 0.013. Workforce Diversity shows a highly significant positive effect on Organizational Performance, with a T-value of 4.305 and a P-value of 0.000.

The influence of Organizational Culture on the link between Workforce Diversity and Organizational Performance is statistically significant, as indicated by a T-value of 1.728 and a P-value of 0.042. The statistical analysis reveals that the moderating influence of Organizational Culture on the link between Inclusion Practices and Organizational Performance is not significant. This is supported by a T-value of 0.027 and a P-value of 0.489.

Similarly, the moderating effect on the relationship between Digital Transformation and Organizational Performance is also statistically insignificant, with a T-value of 1.178 and a P-value of 0.120.

Overall, these results indicate that Digital Transformation, Inclusion Practices, and Workforce Diversity have a significant positive influence on Organizational Performance. Organizational Culture enhances the impact of Workforce Diversity on Organizational Performance, but it does not significantly modify the association between Inclusion Practices and Digital Transformation with Organizational Performance.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that digital transformation, workforce diversity, and inclusion practices can all positively influence organizational performance within the halal industry context. Specifically, the integration of digital technologies can enhance operational efficiency, improve decision-making, and drive innovation, while a diverse workforce that brings together different skills, perspectives, and backgrounds can foster creativity, problem-solving, and better decision-making (Demirkan & Spohrer, 2018). Furthermore, an inclusive organizational culture that values and integrates diverse talents can amplify the benefits of both digital transformation and workforce diversity, leading to improved organizational performance (Jayne & Dipboye, 2004).

The positive impact of digital transformation on organizational performance supports prior research showing that the integration of digital technologies can enhance operational efficiency, improve decision-making, and drive innovation (Warner & Wäger, 2019). An organizational culture that is open to change and supportive of digital initiatives can amplify these benefits, as evidenced by the significant moderating effect observed in this study.

The significant relationship between workforce diversity and organizational performance is consistent with existing literature, which suggests that diversity in skills, perspectives, and backgrounds can foster creativity, problem-solving, and better decision-making. Furthermore, an inclusive organizational culture that values and integrates diverse talents can further strengthen this relationship, as indicated by the moderating effect found in the study (Lightner-Laws et al., 2024).

The findings suggest that the benefits of inclusion practices, such as enhanced employee engagement, commitment, and motivation, may be sufficient to improve organizational performance, regardless of the prevailing organizational culture. This indicates that the positive impact of inclusion on performance may not depend on the cultural environment (Lee & Yu, 2004). Even in organizations that do not fully embrace diversity and inclusion, the inherent benefits of inclusion, like improved morale, commitment, and productivity, can still enhance performance (Ely & Thomas, 2001). This highlights the importance of implementing inclusive practices as a standalone strategy to improve outcomes, rather than relying solely on cultivating a supportive culture.

The findings of this study offer practical implications for halal industry organizations seeking to improve their performance. Leaders should prioritize investments in digital transformation initiatives, as well as fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce, in order to unlock the potential for enhanced organizational performance.

CONLUSION(S)

The integration of digital technologies, a diverse workforce, and inclusive practices can all contribute to improved organizational performance in the context of the halal industry. Digital

transformation, workforce diversity, and inclusion practices were found to have significant positive effects on organizational performance. Furthermore, research has revealed that organizational culture amplifies the relationship between workforce diversity and organizational performance, indicating that cultural factors might intensify the benefits of having a diverse team.

These findings offer valuable insights for halal industry organizations seeking to enhance their performance. Prioritizing investments in digital transformation, fostering a diverse and inclusive organizational culture, and implementing inclusive practices can all serve as effective strategies to drive improved outcomes. Future research should explore the interplay between these factors in greater depth, as well as examine their applicability across other industry contexts.

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