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Spiritual leadership in forming organizational identity

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SERAMBI

207

Abstract

This research explores the role and implementation of spiritual leadership in shaping the organizational identity of SMP DT Boarding School in Batam. The goal is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the school's culture and identity. The study employs a qualitative research method with a case study approach, featuring two respondents: the Headmaster and the Director of Finance and HR. Data collection techniques include interviews guided by general questions and a review of relevant literature. The findings indicate that DT School possesses a strong and well-defined organizational identity, and spiritual leadership is crucial for shaping and maintaining this identity. The focus is on character development, spiritual values, and fostering supportive relationships among members. Key factors that enhance the school's image and distinctive characteristics include its unique identity, a holistic approach to education, the founder's influence, and an organizational culture that reflects high values. These elements underscore DT School's commitment to spiritual values and character development.

Public interest statements

This study advocates for a transformative approach to education that prioritizes the development of both the mind and the spirit, benefiting individual students and the broader community.

Keywords: Spiritual leadership, organizational identity, culture organizational, spiritual values, character development.

Paper type: Case study

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi peran dan implementasi kepemimpinan spiritual dalam membentuk identitas organisasi SMP DT Boarding School di Batam. Tujuannya adalah untuk memahami budaya dan identitas sekolah secara komprehensif. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus, dengan melibatkan dua responden: Kepala Sekolah dan Direktur Keuangan dan SDM. Teknik pengumpulan data meliputi wawancara yang dipandu oleh pertanyaan umum dan telaah pustaka yang relevan. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Sekolah DT memiliki identitas organisasi yang kuat dan terdefinisi dengan baik, dan kepemimpinan spiritual sangat penting untuk membentuk dan mempertahankan identitas ini. Fokusnya adalah pada pengembangan karakter, nilai-nilai spiritual, dan pembinaan hubungan yang mendukung di antara para anggota. Faktor-faktor utama yang meningkatkan citra sekolah dan karakteristik khasnya meliputi identitasnya yang unik, pendekatan holistik terhadap pendidikan, pengaruh pendiri, dan budaya organisasi yang mencerminkan nilai-nilai tinggi. Elemen-elemen ini menggarisbawahi komitmen Sekolah DT terhadap nilai-nilai spiritual dan pengembangan karakter.

Pernyatan kepentingan publik

Studi ini mendorong pendekatan transformatif dalam pendidikan yang memprioritaskan pengembangan baik aspek intelektual maupun spiritual, yang memberikan manfaat bagi siswa secara individu maupun masyarakat secara luas.

Kata kunci: Teknologi finansial, pemasaran, perbankan.

Introduction

Organizational identity is fundamentally linked to the essence of who individuals are as members of an organization. This core, enduring characteristic distinguishes one organization from another, helping it cultivate a strong identity that can last over time (Djohantini et al., 2021). As noted by Stensaker (2015), organizational identity is not static; instead, it is a dynamic concept that evolves, influenced by factors such as changes in leadership, market conditions, and community expectations. This evolution requires ongoing assessment and adaptation to ensure the organization remains relevant and practical in a constantly changing environment. In this context, a study by Sharma highlights the role of spiritual leadership in fostering a robust organizational identity and culture (Sharma & Kumra, 2020).

Spiritual leadership comprises three interrelated components: interpersonal relationships, meaning and purpose, and ethics and values culture (Sharma & Kumra, 2020). These elements shape the leadership style and influence the organization's identity. Moreover, spiritual leadership significantly impacts organizational identity by enhancing the culture within the organization, reinforcing core values, and boosting employee commitment to the organization's vision and mission. Supporting this perspective, Sapta et al. (2021) research shows that spiritual leadership positively influences spirituality in the workplace. Leaders who embody spiritual leadership qualities inspire employees to find meaning in their work and consider the balance between their natural and social environments. This approach motivates employees to reflect on their roles within the organization, fostering a deeper connection to their work and enhancing their commitment to the organization's objectives.

Therefore, integrating spiritual leadership strengthens organizational identity and cultivates a more engaged and purpose-driven workforce.

The establishment of the Junior High School DT Boarding School Batam is deeply rooted in the history of the DT Islamic Boarding School, which operates as a legal entity under a foundation dedicated to educational, da'wah (Islamic outreach) and social activities. The foundation is committed to developing educational and da'wah concepts through structured and systematic character building. It has become a cornerstone of its mission and the foundation for formal education at DT.

The journey of formal education began in 2000 with the introduction of kindergarten, marking the first step in a broader educational initiative. This was followed by establishing a Vocational High School in 2009 specializing in Computer Network Engineering (TKJ) competencies. In 2011, the expansion continued with launching a Junior High School strategically designed to enhance the educational and da'wah efforts initiated by the DT Islamic Boarding School in Bandung. The academic model adopted is that of a boarding school, emphasizing a holistic approach to learning and character development. In 2019, the DT Foundation, through its Education Directorate, established the DT Boarding School Batam Junior High School. This initiative aimed to extend the reach of DT's da'wah, particularly in Batam.

DT Boarding School Batam offers a valuable alternative for students in the Riau Islands and Sumatra regions. It allows them to pursue their education at DT without traveling to Bandung. This local establishment facilitates access to quality education and makes it more cost-effective for families by reducing transportation expenses. Thus, the Junior High School serves as a vital link in the educational framework of DT, promoting its mission of character-building and spiritual development within the community.

Organizational identity is a crucial factor in an organization's success. Organizational identity encompasses the fundamental, unique, and lasting traits that characterize and set an organization apart. It embodies the essence of "who we are" as an organization, offering a consistent sense of self that directs the behaviors and decisions of its members (Aust, 2004; Çakır, 2016; Margolis, 2009; Suryani et al., 2021). Leadership plays a significant role in both forming and maintaining this identity. The relationship between spiritual leadership and organizational identity presents a valuable opportunity for further in-depth study. This research aims to provide a deeper understanding of how spiritual leadership influences the identity of school organizations. Additionally, the present study offers recommendations for strategies and actions that leaders can take to strengthen organizational identity based on spiritual values.

Case description

Spiritual leadership

Spiritual leadership is an approach that intrinsically integrates values, attitudes, and behaviors to motivate oneself and others. It cultivates a sense of spiritual fulfillment through feelings of calling and belonging, enabling individuals to discover meaning in their lives, recognize their impact, and feel understood and valued. In this model, leaders and followers are

interconnected and committed to the group's well-being, fostering a spirit-filled lifestyle that encourages positive transformation (Aidoo, 2017; Fry et al., 2005). Spiritual leadership is fundamentally characterized by its focus on intrinsic motivation. This approach inspires leaders and followers to seek more profound meaning and purpose in their work. It encourages individuals to align their aspirations with their professional responsibilities, fostering a sense of fulfillment beyond mere job performance. By nurturing intrinsic motivation, spiritual leaders help create an environment where individuals are engaged and passionate about their contributions.

A key aspect of spiritual leadership is value congruence, which involves aligning individuals' values with the organization's overarching values. This alignment enhances commitment and productivity as individuals feel more connected to the organization's mission and goals. When employees see their personal beliefs reflected in the organization's values, they are more likely to invest their time and energy into their work, resulting in a more cohesive and motivated workforce (Fry et al., 2005). Ethical behavior is another cornerstone of spiritual leadership. Leaders who embody ethical practices set a standard for the organization, promoting integrity and accountability at all levels. This commitment to ethical conduct fosters trust and respect among team members, creating a safe space for individuals to express their ideas and concerns. Consequently, the organization cultivates a culture of transparency and fairness, which is essential for long-term success.

Moreover, spiritual leadership emphasizes personal and organizational growth by fostering a culture of continuous improvement and well-being. Leaders encourage their teams to pursue professional development opportunities and support their personal growth journeys. This dedication to growth enhances individual capabilities and strengthens the organization. By prioritizing well-being and development, spiritual leaders create an environment where individuals can thrive, ultimately leading to a more resilient and innovative organization. In essence, spiritual leadership integrates these elements to create a holistic approach that nurtures the individual and the collective, driving positive organizational change and transformation (Duthely, 2017; Makkar & Singh, 2020).

Organizational identity

Morgan describes organizational identity as a representation that encapsulates an organization's unique characteristics, encompassing its mission, vision, goals, and core values it upholds (Oswick & Grant, 2016). This identity is a foundational element that guides the organization's actions and decisions. In addition, Schein (2019) emphasizes that organizational identity reflects how an organization articulates its values, norms, symbols, and rules, collectively shaping its culture. This articulation is crucial as it influences how these elements are internalized by the organization's members, fostering a shared understanding and commitment to the organization's ethos (Schein, 2019).

Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003) further assert that a robust organizational identity creates a positive impression among stakeholders, which is essential for achieving organizational success. A well-defined identity enhances the organization's reputation and builds credibility and trust with external parties. Another author highlights that a strong and consistent organizational identity can be a significant source of competitive advantage. When

an organization possesses a clear and well-articulated identity, it can enhance employee loyalty and foster stakeholder trust, effectively differentiating itself from competitors. This differentiation is vital in a crowded marketplace, as it allows the organization to stand out and attract talent and customers who resonate with its values and mission.

A complex interplay of external and internal factors shapes organizational identity. External factors include institutional forces such as regulatory frameworks, market dynamics, and sector affiliations, which significantly influence how an organization is perceived and operates within its industry. These external influences often set the standards and expectations organizations must navigate to remain relevant and competitive. Internally, organizational identity develops through its members' social interactions and interpretations. Employees' beliefs, values, and experiences contribute to a shared understanding of what the organization represents. This understanding can evolve as members interact with each other and engage with the organization's mission. The social construction of identity is crucial because it reflects the organization's collective consciousness and influences how members align their behaviors with its goals (Dhalla, 2007). Moreover, organizational identity is not static; it is dynamic and flexible, enabling organizations to adjust to changing circumstances and environments. This adaptability is essential for organizations seeking a competitive advantage, as it allows them to respond effectively to shifts in market conditions, consumer preferences, and technological advancements. By embracing a fluid identity, organizations can innovate and reposition themselves in the marketplace, ensuring they remain relevant and capable of meeting the evolving needs of their stakeholders. This capacity for adaptation enhances organizational resilience and fosters a culture of continuous improvement and growth (Min et al., 2020).

Organizational identity is crucial for guiding change and continuity in educational institutions like universities and colleges. It helps navigate stability and transformation by providing a straightforward narrative of the institution's mission, values, and goals. A well-defined identity enables effective management of policy changes, demographics, and technology, aligning stakeholders with the institution's vision. It fosters a sense of belonging, reduces resistance to change, and increases commitment among faculty, staff, and students. This alignment facilitates successful strategic initiatives and supports the institution's evolution in response to external and internal challenges. Overall, organizational identity is a stabilizing force that aids adaptability in an ever-changing landscape (Fumasoli et al., 2015; Min et al., 2020).

A clearly defined organizational identity dramatically enhances performance by ensuring that an institution's mission, values, and goals align closely with its actions. This alignment creates a cohesive framework that guides decision-making and behavior at all levels of the organization. For instance, hospitals with clear mission statements that reflect their organizational identity often demonstrate superior performance across various metrics, including patient satisfaction, operational efficiency, and overall health outcomes. A strong identity unifies staff around common objectives, fostering a culture of accountability and excellence (Hendryadi, 2022; Min et al., 2020).

Similarly, educational organizations that develop a robust organizational identity are better equipped to achieve educational and administrative goals. When the identity of an educational institution is clearly articulated and embraced by its members, it facilitates a shared understanding of its purpose and priorities. This clarity enables faculty and staff to align their efforts with the institution's strategic objectives, leading to improved student engagement, retention, and academic achievement outcomes. Furthermore, a strong organizational identity can enhance stakeholder trust and loyalty, as students, parents, and the community are more likely to support an institution that effectively communicates its values and mission (Fumasoli et al., 2015).

How spiritual leadership affect organizational identity in education institution

Spiritual leadership fosters employees' sense of belonging and commitment by aligning their values with the organization's mission. This alignment is essential as it creates a shared purpose that resonates with individuals on a deeper level. When employees feel that their values and beliefs are in harmony with the organization's mission, they are more likely to develop a strong emotional connection to their work and the organization itself (Fry et al., 2005). This sense of alignment enhances organizational commitment and leads to increased productivity. Employees who feel a strong sense of belonging are more engaged in their tasks, motivated to contribute to the organization's success, and willing to go above and beyond (S. Chen et al., 2019). Spiritual leadership's positive impact on employee morale and motivation can result in a more collaborative and innovative work environment where individuals are empowered to share ideas and support one another (Wang et al., 2020). Moreover, organizations that embrace spiritual leadership often experience lower turnover rates. Employees are more likely to remain with an organization that reflects their values and provides a supportive community. This stability contributes to a more experienced and cohesive workforce, enhancing productivity and performance (C.-Y. Chen & Yang, 2012).

Spiritual leadership fosters a sense of purpose and belonging, encouraging employees to engage in proactive and supportive behaviors. This positive behavior strengthens a cohesive organizational identity. Additionally, spiritual leadership is key to developing an ethical organizational culture, which is essential for a solid organizational identity. Ethical behavior and decision-making are fundamental aspects of the organization's identity within this framework (S. Chen et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2020).

Methods

The case study approach is particularly valuable for researchers aiming to comprehensively understand complex issues, such as the dynamics of spiritual leadership and its impact on organizational identity. This qualitative research method allows for an in-depth exploration of individual interactions within a specific social unit, providing a holistic view of the studied phenomena (Hendryadi et al., 2019). Using a case study approach in the DT School context enables researchers to investigate deeply how spiritual leadership influences the formation of the school's organizational identity. By focusing on a single case, researchers can gather rich, detailed data that captures the lived experiences of individuals within the organization. This method facilitates an exploration of the subtleties of spiritual leadership, including how leaders embody and promote values that resonate with the community and how these values contribute to a cohesive organizational identity. The qualitative nature of the case study

approach allows for flexibility in data collection, enabling researchers to utilize various methods such as interviews, observations, and document analysis to gather insights.

In line with the objectives of this study, the selected respondents included the Principal of SMP DT Boarding School Batam and the Director of Finance and Human Resources at the Foundation. The informants were teachers and students from SMP DT Boarding School Batam. Qualitative data analysis involves selecting, sorting, and organizing data collected from field notes, in-depth interviews, and documentation. This process aims to achieve a deep, meaningful, and unique understanding, leading to descriptive new findings that help identify categories or patterns of relationships among the studied objects.

Results and discussion

Organizational culture and identity of DT Batam School

Organizational identity is closely tied to organizational culture, which significantly affects the behavior and perceptions of its members. A positive and cohesive culture, supported by a strong identity, can improve employee productivity, student performance, and overall success within the institution. For instance, high-achieving schools typically exhibit a healthy organizational culture that guides members' behavior toward achieving the school's objectives (Onaga, 2020; Tzianakopoulou & Manesis, 2018; Van Der Westhuizen et al., 2005).

DT Batam School is part of the DT Foundation (DT), headquartered in Bandung. The foundation operates several schools and Islamic boarding schools across various cities in Indonesia, including the DT in Batam. The foundation emphasizes similar values and cultural practices at all locations, ensuring consistent guidance throughout the institution. This approach helps internalize and apply these values evenly across all branches. The DT curriculum aims to integrate these cultural values into the learning experience, allowing students to feel and practice the same principles regardless of location. Research indicates that the organizational culture at SMP DT is significantly influenced by spiritual values internalized by all community members—not just the students. Organizational culture encompasses the values and assumptions that inform the behaviors of its members. A strong and positive culture shapes the organization's identity while fostering loyalty and commitment among its members toward common goals. A robust culture can be a foundation for a clear and consistent organizational identity.

The distinctive culture of DT is evident in various daily practices, such as religious study sessions, leadership training, and character development programs. This culture, rooted in spiritual values, guides decision-making and everyday behavior. The organizational identity at DT Junior High School is shaped by its stated vision and mission and how these values are embodied in daily practices. This aligns with the views of Morgan (2019)and Schein (2010), who state that organizational identity reflects an organization's unique characteristics, including its mission, vision, goals, and values. Furthermore, it encompasses how the organization articulates its values, norms, symbols, and rules, shaping the organizational culture and how its members internalize these elements.

Implementation of spiritual leadership

The implementation of spiritual leadership at DT Boarding School significantly influences the formation of organizational identity. The study's results indicate that leaders apply the principles of spiritual leadership to achieve organizational goals and develop the members' character and spiritual values. This research highlights the important role of spiritual leadership in shaping and maintaining organizational identity. Leaders who emphasize spiritual values in their leadership style can create an environment that fosters the development of organizational character and identity. Consequently, spiritual leadership contributes to establishing a strong and unique organizational identity that sets DT apart from other educational institutions. In this study, the analysis of spiritual leadership focuses on understanding its implementation in developing organizational identity, drawing upon Fairholm's 8-character theory. Fairholm's 8-character theory of spiritual leadership provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how spiritual leadership can be effectively applied to form organizational identity, as illustrated in Appendix 1.

DT practices strong spiritual leadership elements and characteristics in alignment with Fairholm's spiritual leadership model, which encompasses tasks, process technology, and the overarching purpose of spiritual leadership. This approach to spiritual leadership at SMP DT Boarding School in Batam reflects the traits identified in Fairholm's eight-character theory, emphasizing spiritual values, ethics, and community development. Each character is vital in shaping a strong and sustainable organizational identity. Implementing spiritual leadership at DT Junior High School Batam significantly contributes to developing its organizational identity. Leaders have effectively created a robust organizational culture and a clear identity by applying spiritual values and fostering supportive relationships.

Implications of spiritual leadership on human resources

Spiritual leadership enhances employee morale and well-being, strengthening the organization's identity by creating a supportive and positive work environment (Jiang et al., 2023). Spiritual leadership fosters the development of a shared vision and core values throughout the organization, which are vital for a robust organizational identity. This shared vision promotes unity and a collective sense of purpose among employees (Grojean et al., 2004; Makkar & Singh, 2020). The study results indicate that spiritual leadership positively influences HR activities at DT. Core spiritual values such as sincerity and purity of heart are crucial in leadership and decision-making. These values are applied in practices like istighfar, Quran recitation, and the intention of transforming every action into an act of worship. Spirituality is the foundation for all organizational actions and decisions, helping forge a strong character and a distinct organizational identity.

The coaching process empowers individuals to grasp the essence of leadership, prepare themselves to be led, and cultivate their leadership abilities. Furthermore, the spiritual leadership model enhances member loyalty and organizational commitment. Continuous improvement efforts are made to elevate member competencies. Spiritual leadership fosters robust relationships between leaders and members, promoting effective collaboration. As members face challenges, they become more receptive to guidance from leaders, viewing it as an opportunity for growth and learning. Research conducted by Sapta et al. (2021) indicates that spirituality in the workplace can enhance employee loyalty and commitment to the

organization. The study revealed that implementing spiritual practices, such as training and seminars, can improve employee loyalty, commitment, and performance. Overall, spiritual leadership significantly impacts human resource activities at DT. The spiritual values applied in leadership shape the organization's character and identity and foster loyalty, commitment, and enhanced performance. Therefore, spiritual leadership can serve as a strong foundation for human resource management at DT Batam.

Discussion

Leaders in dynamic organizations play a crucial role in shaping and maintaining organizational culture. By implementing principles of spiritual leadership, these leaders create an environment that fosters the development of strong and unique character and a distinct organizational identity. Leaders who embrace spiritual values focus on achieving organizational goals and nurturing their members' character and spiritual growth. Internalizing spiritual values among organizational members helps cultivate a strong sense of character and identity. Members act not merely as employees; they are part of a community that shares common goals and a unified vision. By integrating spiritual values into its leadership approach, DT has successfully established a unique and sustainable organizational identity that sets it apart from other educational institutions. In summary, spiritual leadership plays a vital role in shaping and preserving the organizational identity at DT, emphasizing character development, spiritual values, and supportive relationships among members.

The implications of spiritual leadership on human resources (HR) activities at DT (DT) reveal the transformative effects of integrating spiritual values into organizational management. Spiritual leadership fosters a positive organizational environment that significantly influences HR activities by emphasizing sincerity and a pure heart. One key impact of this approach is shaping the organization's character and identity. Spiritual leadership is crucial in defining DT's character and identity by instilling core values that resonate with the institution's mission. This alignment helps create a cohesive organizational identity that reflects the school's spiritual and educational goals.

Additionally, spiritual leadership enhances member loyalty and commitment. When employees and members feel that their values align with their spiritual values, their loyalty and commitment to the organization increase. This sense of belonging fosters a supportive community where individuals are motivated to contribute to the organization's success. Moreover, spiritual leadership contributes to improving member competence. By promoting a continuous personal and professional development culture, the organization enhances its members' competencies, equipping them to perform their roles more effectively. This focus on growth not only benefits individual members but also strengthens the organization as a whole.

The emphasis on spiritual values also cultivates strong relationships within the organization. Members are encouraged to build trust, empathy, and collaboration for a harmonious and productive work environment. These strong interpersonal relationships create a sense of community that supports the organization's mission.

Furthermore, a spiritually grounded organization is better prepared to face challenges. The strong sense of community and shared values provides resilience, enabling members to navigate difficulties together while focusing on the organization's objectives. DT possesses a

distinct image and characteristics shaped by its spiritual leadership. Integrating spiritual values has led to a well-defined organizational identity recognized and respected within the community. The school adopts a holistic approach to education, encompassing academic excellence, character development, and moral education, reflecting its spiritual foundations. The founder's significant role in shaping the organizational identity cannot be overlooked. The founder's vision and values have ensured that spiritual leadership remains a core of the institution's ethos. Consequently, the culture at DT is characterized by high ethical standards and values, which are evident in the behaviors and attitudes of its members.

Conclusion

The organizational culture at DT is profoundly shaped by the spiritual values internalized by all members, including students and faculty. Core values such as morality, cleanliness, discipline, and a commitment to spiritual education serve as the foundation of this culture. It emphasizes academic excellence, character development, and integrating afterlife values into daily life. This organizational culture manifests in various daily practices, including religious study activities, leadership training, and character development programs. These initiatives guide decision-making and member behavior while reinforcing the organization's identity. DT's identity is formed by incorporating spiritual values in all its operations, fostering an inclusive environment that values diversity while adhering to established principles.

A strong and positive culture not only shapes organizational identity but also enhances the loyalty and commitment of members toward shared goals. Members feel a sense of belonging and responsibility towards the organization's vision and mission. Overall, the organizational culture and identity at DT result from integrating spiritual values into every facet of its life, creating an environment that supports individual and collective growth and nurtures characters aligned with the institution's objectives. In conclusion, DT possesses a strong and clearly defined organizational identity and has demonstrated a solid commitment to its adopted values in all operations.

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