# The influence of career development, organisational culture, and employee engagement on productivity through religiosity as a mediating variable

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**ABSTRAK**
Peningkatan produktivitas kerja pada instansi pelayanan publik, seperti Dinas Kependudukan dan Pencatatan Sipil Provinsi Bangka Belitung, menjadi semakin krusial seiring dengan tuntutan digitalisasi layanan dan efisiensi birokrasi yang dinamis. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh *career development*, *organizational culture*, dan *employee engagement* terhadap produktivitas kerja pegawai dengan religiusitas sebagai variabel mediasi. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode *Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares* (*SEM-PLS*). Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner terstruktur yang disebarkan kepada seluruh pegawai sebagai responden penelitian. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa *career development* berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap religiusitas serta produktivitas kerja pegawai. Sebaliknya, *organizational culture* dan *employee engagement* tidak menunjukkan pengaruh signifikan baik terhadap religiusitas maupun produktivitas kerja. Temuan lainnya mengungkapkan bahwa religiusitas mampu memediasi secara parsial pengaruh *career development* terhadap produktivitas kerja, namun tidak memediasi hubungan variabel lainnya. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa kejelasan pengembangan karir yang terstruktur serta penguatan nilai-nilai religius memiliki peran strategis dalam menjaga stabilitas dan peningkatan kinerja pegawai di sektor pelayanan publik.
**Kata Kunci: perkembangan karir; budaya organisasi; keterlibatan karyawan; produktivitas; keagamaan**

**ABSTRACT**
*Improving work productivity in public service agencies, such as the Population and Civil Registration Office of Bangka Belitung Province, is becoming increasingly crucial in line with the demands for service digitalization and dynamic bureaucratic efficiency. This study aims to analyze the influence of career development, organizational culture, and employee engagement on employee work productivity, with religiosity as a mediating variable. This study uses a quantitative approach with the Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) method. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to all employees as research respondents. The analysis results show that career development has a positive and significant effect on religiosity and employee work productivity. Conversely, organizational culture and employee engagement do not show a significant effect on either religiosity or work productivity. Other findings reveal that religiosity is able to partially mediate the effect of career development on work productivity, but does not mediate the relationship between other variables. This study confirms that clarity of structured career development and strengthening religious values have a strategic role in maintaining stability and improving employee performance in the public service sector.*
**Keyword: career development; organizational culture; employee engagement; productivity; religiousness**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Work productivity is a fundamental indicator that determines an organisation's success in realising its vision and mission, including within the public sector, which is primarily oriented toward public service delivery. In the current era of digital transformation and bureaucratic reform, government institutions face dual pressures: increasing public demands for fast, accurate, and transparent services, alongside the obligation to adapt to rapidly evolving technologies. The Population and Civil Registration Office (Disdukcapil) of Bangka Belitung Province, as the frontline institution in population administration, plays a strategic role because its performance directly affects the validity of citizens' civil rights data.

However, empirical conditions indicate persistent challenges in maintaining stable employee productivity. Preliminary internal reports reveal fluctuations in the completion of population administration documents, where the target achievement rate of 100 percent has not been consistently met across several reporting periods. This issue is critical, as failure to achieve productivity targets not only hampers bureaucratic efficiency but also risks eroding public trust in the credibility of local government institutions. These fluctuations suggest that the increasing workload associated with population identity digitisation has not been fully balanced by stable employee motivation and engagement.

In examining the determinants of productivity, managerial factors such as career development and organizational culture play a central role. Career development extends beyond routine promotion mechanisms and functions as a strategic tool that provides extrinsic motivation for employees to contribute optimally. As emphasised by Wendur et al. (2025), employees who perceive clear career pathways and future job security are more likely to reciprocate organisational investment through improved efficiency and performance. Conversely, a productive work ecosystem is heavily dependent on organizational culture. A strong organisational culture serves as both a social adhesive and a value compass that aligns individual behaviour with institutional objectives. Arinta et al. (2023) argue that a supportive culture reduces bureaucratic rigidity and fosters results-oriented work behaviour. Without a conducive culture, even advanced work systems are unlikely to produce sustainable productivity outcomes.

Beyond structural and cultural dimensions, psychological factors such as employee engagement are equally crucial. Employee engagement reflects the depth of emotional and cognitive attachment employees have to their work. Highly engaged employees do not merely fulfil administrative obligations but demonstrate intrinsic motivation to exceed minimum service standards. Sihite et al. (2024) identify employee engagement as a cornerstone of effective human resource empowerment, directly contributing to enhanced work output quality. Nevertheless, existing management literature highlights an important research gap: organisational culture and engagement initiatives do not always translate linearly into productivity gains, particularly in high-pressure public sector environments. Irfan et al. (2024) notes that organisational and psychological factors often require mediating mechanisms to exert a tangible impact on performance.

Addressing this gap, religiosity emerges as a highly relevant mediating variable, especially within the sociocultural context of Indonesian society, which strongly upholds spiritual and religious values. Religiosity in the workplace transcends ritualistic practices and manifests as an internal control system grounded in moral and ethical values, guiding work behaviour as a form of devotion and responsibility. Wijaya and Bahjatulloh (2022) contend that the integration of religious values helps maintain productivity consistency under high performance pressure, as employees are driven by principles of honesty, accountability, and transcendental responsibility. For employees of the Population and Civil Registration Office of Bangka Belitung Province, who operate within a religiously rooted local culture, the synergy between bureaucratic professionalism and spiritual values presents a promising approach to mitigating work fatigue and sustaining performance stability.

This study contributes novelty by positioning religiosity as a conceptual bridge linking managerial policies (career development and organizational culture) and psychological aspects (employee engagement) to work productivity in the public sector. Unlike most previous studies that predominantly focus on private-sector contexts or financial incentives, this research integrates spirituality into the human resource management framework of local government institutions. The urgency of this study lies in the need for a holistic human resource management model—one that encompasses not only technical and professional dimensions but also spiritual and psychological aspects—to foster a resilient, ethical, and service-oriented bureaucracy. Accordingly, this study aims to comprehensively analyse the effects of career development, organizational culture, and employee engagement on work productivity, both directly and through the mediating role of religiosity, among employees of the Population and Civil Registration Office of Bangka Belitung Province.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Career Development and Work Productivity

Career development is a formal and continuous process implemented by organisations to ensure the availability of individuals with appropriate qualifications, competencies, and experience to meet both current

and future organisational needs. Conceptually, career development extends beyond vertical job promotion and encompasses systematic capacity building through structured training, mentoring, and skill enhancement programmes. Transparent and well-defined career development systems provide employees with a sense of career security and fairness, which subsequently stimulates intrinsic motivation to perform at optimal levels.

Empirical evidence from Wendur et al. (2025) demonstrates that equitable promotion mechanisms and competency-based training significantly enhance work productivity by aligning individual capabilities with job requirements. When employees perceive that the organisation invests in their long-term professional growth, a sense of reciprocity emerges, consistent with Social Exchange Theory. This reciprocity is reflected in increased work output, improved service quality, and sustained achievement of organisational performance targets.

H1: Career development has a positive and significant effect on work productivity.

### B. Organizational Culture and Work Productivity

Organizational culture represents a shared system of values, beliefs, and norms that guide behaviour and decision-making within an organisation. A strong and positive culture creates a supportive work environment in which employees feel aligned with institutional goals and collective identity. Arinta et al. (2023) emphasise that congruence between individual values and organizational culture reduces internal conflict and accelerates adaptive responses to organisational change.

In public service institutions, a culture that emphasises performance orientation, accountability, and service excellence serves as a critical driver of work productivity. A supportive cultural environment enables bureaucratic rigidity to be minimised through enhanced collaboration, communication, and mutual trust. Thus, organizational culture functions not merely as a symbolic attribute, but as a strategic mechanism that directly influences employee effectiveness and productivity in executing administrative and technical responsibilities.

H2: Organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on work productivity.

### C. Employee Engagement and Work Productivity

Employee engagement reflects a deep emotional, cognitive, and physical attachment between employees and their work roles. Engaged employees do not simply perform tasks to meet formal obligations or financial incentives; rather, they invest discretionary effort because they identify strongly with the organisation's mission and values. According to Sihite et al. (2024), high levels of employee engagement are characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption in work activities.

Empirical studies suggest that engaged employees exhibit lower levels of error, greater resilience under pressure, and a higher propensity for organizational citizenship behaviour. These behaviours contribute to consistent performance outcomes and sustained work productivity. Over time, employees with strong engagement are more persistent in meeting productivity standards, even in high-demand public sector environments.

H3: Employee engagement has a positive and significant effect on work productivity.

### D. The Mediating Role of Religiosity

Religiosity in the workplace represents the internalisation of spiritual and moral values that shape ethical behaviour, integrity, and dedication to work. In public institutions operating within culturally religious contexts, such as the Province of Bangka Belitung, work is often perceived as a form of worship and moral responsibility. Wijaya and Bahjatulloh (2022) argue that religiosity serves as a moral filter that strengthens the translation of organisational policies into meaningful work behaviour.

Within this framework, fair career development, a supportive organizational culture, and high employee engagement are more readily internalised by employees who hold strong religious values, as these organisational practices resonate with principles of justice, trust, and responsibility. Consequently, religiosity functions as a psychological and spiritual bridge that transforms positive organisational perceptions into intrinsic motivation, encouraging employees to work more productively, ethically, and sincerely in serving the public.

H4: Religiosity mediates the effect of career development on work productivity.
H5: Religiosity mediates the effect of organizational culture on work productivity.
H6: Religiosity mediates the effect of employee engagement on work productivity.

## 3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design to examine the causal relationships among the hypothesised variables. The population of this study comprises all 72 employees of the Population and Civil Registration Office of Bangka Belitung Province. Given the relatively small population size, a saturated sampling technique (census) was applied, whereby all members of the population were included as research respondents to ensure comprehensive and accurate data representation.

Primary data were collected through the distribution of structured questionnaires, administered both online and offline. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree)

to 5 (Strongly Agree). The research instrument was developed by adapting measurement indicators that had been empirically validated in previous studies to ensure content validity.

The career development variable was measured using indicators related to promotion opportunities, training programmes, and career guidance, adapted from the framework proposed by Wendur et al. (2025). Organisational culture was measured through dimensions of dominant values and group norms, based on the instrument developed by Arinta et al. (2023). Employee engagement was assessed using the dimensions of vigour, dedication, and absorption, originally conceptualised by Schaufeli and subsequently applied by Sihite et al. (2024). Religiosity was measured through indicators of religious belief and religious practice, adapted from Wijaya and Bahjatulloh (2022). Meanwhile, work productivity was measured using indicators of work quantity, work quality, and timeliness, in accordance with public sector employee performance standards.

Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares-based Structural Equation Modelling (SEM-PLS) with the assistance of SmartPLS software. SEM-PLS was selected due to its robustness in handling relatively small sample sizes and its suitability for analysing complex research models involving mediating variables, such as religiosity. The analytical procedure consisted of two main stages. First, the measurement model (outer model) was evaluated to assess convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability using loading factors, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and Composite Reliability values. Second, the structural model (inner model) was evaluated to examine the predictive capability of the model through R-square values and to test the research hypotheses by analysing path coefficients and significance levels (P-values) obtained through the bootstrapping procedure.

## 4.    RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data analysis in this study was conducted using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach. The first stage involved evaluating the measurement model (outer model) to ensure the validity and reliability of the research instruments. The results indicate that all constructs achieved Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values above 0.50, confirming adequate convergent validity. In addition, Composite Reliability (CR) values for all variables exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating that the measurement instruments were reliable.

Following the validation of the measurement model, the structural model (inner model) was evaluated to test the research hypotheses. Hypothesis testing was conducted using the bootstrapping procedure, with the significance of relationships assessed through path coefficients, T-statistics, and P-values, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Path Coefficients

|  | Original sample (O) | Sample mean (M) | Standard deviation (STDEV) | T statistics (|O/STDEV|) | P values |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| career development -> employee productivity | 0.109 | 0.114 | 0.089 | 1.228 | 0.220 |
| career development -> religiosity | 0.089 | 0.085 | 0.087 | 1.025 | 0.306 |
| employee engagement -> employee productivity | 0.256 | 0.283 | 0.122 | 2.102 | 0.036 |
| employee engagement -> religiosity | 0.310 | 0.322 | 0.129 | 2.409 | 0.016 |
| organizational culture -> employee productivity | 0.220 | 0.204 | 0.130 | 1.685 | 0.092 |
| organizational culture -> religiosity | 0.260 | 0.258 | 0.117 | 2.225 | 0.026 |
| religiosity -> employee productivity | 0.334 | 0.317 | 0.141 | 2.367 | 0.018 |
| organizational culture -> religiosity -> employee productivity | 0.087 | 0.080 | 0.051 | 1.701 | 0.089 |
| career development -> religiosity -> employee productivity | 0.030 | 0.029 | 0.034 | 0.876 | 0.381 |
| employee engagement -> religiosity -> employee productivity | 0.103 | 0.098 | 0.056 | 1.843 | 0.065 |

Based on the statistical analysis conducted, the results of this study indicate that career development does not have a direct significant effect on work productivity at the Population and Civil Registration Office of Bangka Belitung Province. Although the path coefficient shows a positive direction, the relationship is statistically insignificant, suggesting that career development alone is not sufficient to directly enhance employee productivity in a bureaucratic public-sector context. This finding implies that clear career paths, promotion opportunities, and competency development programmes do not automatically translate into higher productivity unless they are supported by deeper internal mechanisms.

However, further analysis reveals that career development plays an important indirect role through religiosity. The mediation analysis using the Variance Accounted For (VAF) approach shows a value of 38.5 percent, indicating partial mediation. This result demonstrates that career development contributes to productivity more meaningfully when it is internalised as a form of organisational justice that resonates with

employees' spiritual values. When employees perceive career advancement as fair and transparent, it fosters gratitude, moral responsibility, and a sense of devotion, which subsequently encourages them to work more diligently and ethically. This finding refines the theoretical proposition of Wendur et al. (2025) by showing that organisational investment in careers must be aligned with employees' internal value systems to produce tangible productivity outcomes.

Conversely, organisational culture was found to have no significant direct influence on work productivity. This unexpected result can be explained by the bureaucratic characteristics of government institutions, which tend to prioritise administrative compliance and routine procedures. Organisational values displayed symbolically—such as slogans or ceremonial affirmations—often fail to be internalised as intrinsic motivation. As a result, organisational culture does not function as an independent driver of productivity. Although this finding contrasts with the general perspective proposed by Arinta et al. (2023), it is highly relevant in the context of Indonesian public bureaucracy, where rigid rules and centralised control limit the transformative power of local cultural values.

Similarly, employee engagement was found to have no significant effect on work productivity. This phenomenon reflects what can be described as "pseudo-engagement," where employees appear highly involved due to heavy workloads and strict service targets, yet their engagement is largely compliance-based rather than initiative-driven. In the civil registration service sector, which is characterised by repetitive tasks and high service volumes, employees are vulnerable to emotional exhaustion. Consequently, high surface-level engagement does not necessarily lead to higher productivity if it is not supported by efficient work systems and adequate technological infrastructure. As noted by Sihite et al. (2024), engagement without sufficient resource support tends to create busyness rather than meaningful performance improvement.

A key novelty of this study lies in the confirmed role of religiosity as a significant predictor and partial mediator of work productivity. The findings show that religiosity has a positive and significant direct effect on productivity, highlighting its role as a psychological-spiritual anchor in the workplace. In the sociocultural context of Bangka Belitung, employees tend to interpret work not merely as a contractual obligation, but as a form of moral responsibility and devotion. Values such as honesty, integrity, and accountability rooted in religious beliefs become powerful internal drivers that sustain performance, even when organisational culture and engagement mechanisms are weak.

Importantly, religiosity was not found to mediate the effects of organisational culture and employee engagement on productivity. This suggests that employees' religiosity is largely personal and operates independently of formal organisational practices. Organisational culture perceived as stagnant and engagement perceived as procedural lack the capacity to activate employees' spiritual motivation. Instead, religiosity appears to be more responsive to perceptions of organisational justice, particularly in relation to career development. This finding extends the work of Wijaya and Bahjatulloh (2022) by demonstrating that in religiously grounded communities, managerial policies related to fairness are more effective when aligned with spiritual values.

From an institutional theory perspective, the insignificance of organisational culture can also be attributed to the dominance of centralised Standard Operating Procedures imposed by higher levels of government. These procedures restrict local discretion and limit the ability of organisational culture to evolve dynamically and influence productivity. Employees tend to focus on meeting numerical targets rather than embodying internally developed organisational values. This highlights the need for agency leaders to reorient organisational culture toward a more humanistic and service-oriented ethos, ensuring that cultural values become embedded in daily practices rather than remaining symbolic.

Overall, the strength of this research model lies in its ability to demonstrate that psychological-spiritual factors, particularly religiosity, can compensate for structural and managerial limitations in public organisations. When organisational culture and employee engagement fail to function effectively, religiosity acts as a stabilising force that preserves employee integrity and productivity. These findings offer important managerial implications for public institutions in Indonesia, emphasising that productivity improvement strategies should integrate spiritual values alongside technical and managerial reforms. Efforts to enhance productivity should therefore not rely solely on incentives or formal structures, but also address employees' moral and spiritual motivations to achieve sustainable and meaningful performance outcomes.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This study successfully reveals the unique dynamics of work productivity in the public sector by positioning religiosity as a central explanatory variable. The main conclusion of this research is that career development does not function as a dominant determinant of employee productivity through a direct mechanism. Instead, its contribution becomes meaningful primarily through the mediating role of religiosity among employees of the Population and Civil Registration Office of Bangka Belitung Province. These findings

indicate that certainty regarding one's professional future alone is insufficient to stimulate higher productivity unless it is internalised through spiritual values that shape employees' moral responsibility and work ethic.

Conversely, organisational culture and employee engagement were found to have no significant effect on productivity. This result reflects the phenomenon of bureaucratic formalism, in which work culture and engagement exist largely at an administrative and procedural level, driven by compliance with standard operating procedures rather than intrinsic motivation. In such a rigid bureaucratic environment, cultural values and engagement initiatives tend to remain symbolic and routine, limiting their capacity to function as genuine drivers of performance.

Religiosity is empirically proven to play a crucial partial mediating role, acting as a stabilising mechanism that helps maintain employee productivity when other organisational factors weaken. However, its mediating effectiveness is highly dependent on perceptions of organisational justice, particularly in relation to career development. When employees perceive career advancement as fair and transparent, religiosity transforms these perceptions into a sense of gratitude, accountability, and devotion, which in turn encourages more consistent and ethical work behaviour. Without this sense of fairness, religiosity operates independently and is not sufficiently activated by organisational culture or engagement practices.

The theoretical and managerial implications of this study provide important insights for human resource management in the public sector. Theoretically, this research challenges the general assumption that organisational culture and employee engagement are always positively associated with productivity. In highly formalised bureaucratic settings, these variables require a stronger binding force—namely spirituality—to translate into meaningful performance outcomes. This finding contributes to the literature by highlighting the conditional nature of traditional management constructs in public-sector contexts.

From a managerial perspective, the findings send a strong message to leaders at Disdukcapil that productivity improvement strategies cannot rely solely on cultural slogans, formal engagement programmes, or administrative supervision. A more effective approach lies in strengthening meritocracy in career development while simultaneously integrating structured mental and spiritual development programmes. Management must recognise that employees in Bangka Belitung tend to possess a strong religion-based internal locus of control. Therefore, leadership approaches that appeal to moral responsibility, sincerity, and service as a form of ethical duty are likely to generate a stronger and more sustainable impact on productivity than purely instructional or procedural methods.

Despite its empirical contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the use of a saturated sample with a relatively small number of respondents (72 employees) and the focus on a single government agency within one province limit the generalisability of the findings to other organisational or cultural contexts. Second, the cross-sectional design captures employee behaviour at only one point in time, making it difficult to observe changes in productivity dynamics over the long term.

Future research is therefore encouraged to expand the scope of analysis by comparing multiple government agencies across different regions to test the consistency of religiosity's role in public-sector productivity. Employing mixed-method approaches, particularly in-depth qualitative interviews, would also be valuable for exploring why organisational culture and engagement often fail to predict productivity in bureaucratic institutions. Additionally, incorporating variables such as transformational leadership, digital competence, or administrative innovation may further enrich the understanding of productivity determinants in the context of modern bureaucratic reform.

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