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The Role of Interfaith Law and Policy in Managing Human Resources: Addressing Religious Diversity in the Workplace

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Abstract

The increasing religious diversity in Indonesia poses significant challenges to human resource (HR) management in the workplace. This paper explores the role of interfaith law in addressing these challenges and promoting inclusivity in the Indonesian workplace. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the intersection of religious diversity and HR management within the legal framework of Indonesia, particularly through the lens of interfaith law. By examining the current legal provisions and practices surrounding religious rights and freedoms, the paper underscores the critical

role that interfaith law plays in creating an environment where employees from diverse religious backgrounds can coexist harmoniously. The urgency of addressing religious diversity in HR management is highlighted by the potential risks of discrimination, conflict, and marginalization, which can negatively impact organizational performance and employee well-being. With Indonesia being a predominantly Muslim country, but home to various other religious communities, the challenge of balancing religious rights and organizational goals remains ever-present. This paper contributes to the growing body of literature on diversity management by proposing legal frameworks and HR practices that not only comply with religious laws but also enhance organizational effectiveness. The findings call for more robust policies that integrate interfaith principles to manage religious diversity effectively, ensuring equitable treatment of all employees and fostering an inclusive workplace culture. By addressing the gaps in existing HR strategies, this study offers valuable insights for practitioners, policymakers, and scholars in managing religious diversity in Indonesia's dynamic workplace environment.

KEYWORDS *Human Resources, Religious Diversity, Workplace Environment, Policy*

Introduction

Indonesia is widely recognized as one of the most religiously diverse nations in the world, home to a majority Muslim population alongside significant communities of Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, and adherents of indigenous faiths.[1] This diversity is not merely a demographic characteristic but is deeply embedded in the nation's social, cultural, and political fabric. Religion plays a central role in

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[1]   Mazya, Thita M., Kholis Ridho, and Ali Irfani. "Religious and cultural diversity in Indonesia: Dynamics of acceptance and conflict in a multidimensional perspective." *International Journal of Current Science Research and Review* 7, no. 7 (2024): 4932-4945; Hoon, Chang-Yau. "Putting religion into multiculturalism: Conceptualising religious multiculturalism in Indonesia." *Asian Studies Review* 41 no. 3 (2017): 476-493; Arifin, Ridwan, et al. "The adversity on establishing places of worship: has religious freedom failed in Indonesia?." *Legality: Jurnal Ilmiah Hukum* 29 no. 1 (2021): 93-113.

shaping the values, identities, and day-to-day lives of its citizens, influencing both public and private spheres of activity.[2] In the workplace, religious diversity presents both opportunities and challenges, as organizations must navigate a complex landscape of beliefs, practices, and rituals that can vary widely across different employee groups.[3] This challenge becomes even more pressing in a globalized economy, where the need for inclusivity, mutual respect, and shared organizational goals are paramount.

In Indonesia, religious observances such as prayer times, fasting during Ramadan, and holidays like Christmas and Nyepi, play an integral role in daily life and can significantly influence employee routines. However, managing these religious practices within the workplace has not always been straightforward.[4] A few

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[2] Gökarıksel, Banu. "Beyond the officially sacred: religion, secularism, and the body in the production of subjectivity." *Social & Cultural Geography* 10 no. 6 (2009): 657-674; Kale, Sudhir H. "Spirituality, religion, and globalization." *Journal of Macromarketing* 24 no. 2 (2004): 92-107.

[3] Gelb, Betsy D., and Teri Elkins Longacre. "Acknowledging religious diversity: Opportunities and challenges." *Business Horizons* 55 no. 5 (2012): 509-518; Héliot, YingFei, et al. "Religious identity in the workplace: A systematic review, research agenda, and practical implications." *Human Resource Management* 59 no. 2 (2020): 153-173. *See also* Prasetyani, Rurin Sisilia, and Shally Saniyya Novina. "The Interpretation of Freedom of Religion and Believe: How Do University Understand This to Society?." *The Indonesian Journal of International Clinical Legal Education* 2 no. 1 (2020): 15-28; Arvante, Jeremy Zefanya Yaka, Maulana Fuad Nugraha, and Andrew Sergei Rostislav. "A Comparative Study of Religious Freedom Between Indonesia-Russia and Its Limitations." *Jurnal Scientia Indonesia* 8 no. 2 (2022): 197-222; Indrayanti, Kadek Wiwik, Anak Agung Ayu Nanda Saraswati, and Eka Nugraha Putra. "Questioning human rights, looking for justice: Analyzing the impact of supreme court circular letter on interfaith marriages in Indonesia." *Journal of Indonesian Legal Studies* 9 no. 1 (2024): 385-416.

[4] Sari, Desika Arum. "The Doctrine of Belief as a Vulnerable Group: How do the Human Rights Laws Accommodate this Group?." *Unnes Law Journal* 5 no. 2 (2019): 165-182. *See also some related cases* Anwar, Ahmad Khoirul. "Protection of the right to freedom of religion in Indonesia (case study: destruction of the Ahmadiyah Mosque in Balai Harapan Village, Temunak District, Sintang District, West Kalimantan)." *Journal of Creativity Student* 6 no. 1 (2021): 111-130; Mukhlis, Mukhlis, et al. "Rejection of Former Shia Community in Sampang Perspective on Human Rights Law: Discourse of Religious Rights and Freedom in Indonesia." *Lex Scientia Law Review* 7 no. 2 (2023): 959-994; Saman, Moh, et al. "Prevention of Radicalism and Terrorism in Higher Education: Regulation and Implementation." *Indonesian Journal of Advocacy and Legal Services* 5 no. 2 (2023): 241-260; Sefriani, Sefriani, et al. "The Conundrum to Wear Religious Uniform in Indonesia: International Human Rights Law and Islamic Law Perspective." *Journal of Indonesian Legal Studies* 9 no. 1 (2024): 31-62.

notable cases reflect the challenges faced in integrating religious diversity in the workplace. For example, in 2018, a Christian employee of a large retail company in Jakarta filed a complaint after being denied a day off to celebrate Christmas, citing a lack of accommodation for religious observances. This case highlighted the absence of clear policies on religious accommodation and revealed how such issues can lead to dissatisfaction and potential legal disputes.[5]

The importance of religion in Indonesia's culture is not only reflected in its religious institutions but also in the day-to-day decisions of individuals and organizations. However, in the context of a rapidly modernizing and diversifying workforce, there is a growing tension between preserving religious practices and ensuring organizational efficiency. While religious diversity enriches the workplace by offering varied perspectives and experiences, it also raises questions about how to manage potential conflicts and misunderstandings that may arise from differing religious practices and beliefs.

Despite the richness of Indonesia's religious diversity, there exists a critical gap in legal and institutional frameworks designed to address religious inclusion in the workplace. While Indonesia's Constitution guarantees freedom of religion (Article 29)[6], the lack of specific and comprehensive laws governing religious diversity in the workplace has left many organizations ill-equipped to manage the complexities of religious inclusion.[7] In some instances, employers may inadvertently overlook or inadequately address the

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[5] *See* Hoon, Chang-Yau. "Contested Religious Space in Jakarta." In *Handbook of religion and the Asian city: Aspiration and urbanization in the twenty-first century* (California: University of California Press, 2015), pp. 201-218.

[6] Indonesia's Constitution guarantees freedom of religion under Article 29, ensuring that every citizen has the right to embrace and practice their religion. It emphasizes the state's obligation to protect religious freedom, while maintaining the principle of religious tolerance. This provision aims to foster a harmonious, diverse society.

[7] *See* Colbran, Nicola. "Realities and challenges in realising freedom of religion or belief in Indonesia." *The International Journal of Human Rights* 14 no. 5 (2010): 678-704; Bagir, Zainal Abidin, and Renata Arianingtyas. "Limitations to freedom of religion or belief in Indonesia: Norms and Practices." *Religion & Human Rights* 15 no. 1-2 (2020): 39-56; Maula, Bani Syarif. "Religious freedom in Indonesia: between upholding constitutional provisions and complying with social considerations." *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 7 no. 2 (2013): 383-403.

religious needs of their employees, resulting in alienation, discrimination, or even exclusion. Conversely, some companies may impose policies that unintentionally conflict with employees' religious rights or practices, thereby hindering their overall well-being and productivity.

For example, a case in 2017 involving an Indonesian tech startup drew national attention when a Muslim employee requested a break during working hours to pray, only to be told that the company had a strict no-interruption policy that disallowed personal time for religious observance.[8] This decision sparked protests both internally and externally, leading to a revision of the company's policies to allow religious accommodations. However, such incidents highlight the absence of consistent, universally applicable guidelines on how to balance religious rights with organizational performance and operational needs. Without clear regulations or guidelines, companies continue to struggle with finding a middle ground between accommodating religious observances and maintaining efficiency.

At the heart of this challenge lies the difficulty of balancing organizational policies, which often focus on efficiency, performance, and uniformity, with the religious beliefs of employees. The lack of clear, enforceable regulations to guide employers in managing religious diversity has resulted in practices that are either overly rigid or insufficiently sensitive. This highlights a pressing need for the development of legal frameworks and guidelines that address the nuances of religious diversity in the workplace and promote inclusivity. The challenge is not simply one of policy-making but also one of ensuring that these policies are

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[8] *See* Abdillah, Muhammad Torieq. "Kontroversi Pemotongan Gaji karena Salat Jumat: Pelanggaran Hak dan Perspektif Agama", *Badamai Online,* April 29, 2025. Retrieved from https://badamai.com/kontroversi-pemotongan-gaji-karena-salat-jumat-pelanggaran-hak-dan-perspektif-agama/; Syaifullah, Syaifullah. "Gus Aab Pertanyakan Perusahaan yang Halangi Karyawan Shalat Jumat", *NU Jatim Online,* February 17, 2021. Retrieved from https://jatim.nu.or.id/tapal-kuda/gus-aab-pertanyakan-perusahaan-yang-halangi-karyawan-shalat-jumat-Pvv04; Wiryono, Singgih, and Agus Yulianto. "Tugas Pemerintah Atur Regulasi Perusahaan Terkait Waktu Ibadah", *REPUBLIKA,* May 22, 2017. Retrieved from https://khazanah.republika.co.id/berita/oqcd4a396/tugas-pemerintah-atur-regulasi-perusahaan-terkait-waktu-ibadah.

effectively implemented and understood across all levels of the workforce.

There are several critical gaps that this research seeks to address in relation to religious diversity in Indonesia's workplace, including social, legal and policy gaps. One of the primary social gaps in Indonesia's workplace diversity is the ongoing lack of awareness and understanding among both employers and employees regarding the significance of religious rights and practices.[9] While Indonesia is known for its religious pluralism, workplace cultures often remain monolithic, especially in secular or multinational companies that may not fully comprehend the importance of religious observances for Indonesian employees.

Furthermore, legally, Indonesia's laws regarding religious diversity in the workplace remain insufficiently developed. While the Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, the application of this right within private and corporate environments remains unclear.[10] Current regulations do not mandate that employers provide formal accommodation for religious observances, leaving it up to individual employers to decide whether to allow flexibility. This legal ambiguity was highlighted by a case in 2020 when an Indonesian airline pilot of Christian faith filed a lawsuit after his request for a day off to celebrate Christmas was refused, citing a lack of clear legal protection for religious observances in the workplace. The absence of specific legal provisions governing religious diversity in employment can lead to inconsistent practices and potential violations of individual rights.

In terms of organizational policies, many companies in Indonesia have yet to develop comprehensive, inclusive policies

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[9]   Ghumman, Sonia, et al. "Religious discrimination in the workplace: A review and examination of current and future trends." *Journal of Business and Psychology* 28 no. 4 (2013): 439-454; Singh, Reetesh K., and M. A. N. S. I. Babbar. "Understanding religious diversity and its implications at the workplace." *NMIMS Journal of Economics and Public Policy* 5 no. 4 (2020): 10-21.

[10] Butt, Simon, and Tim Lindsey. *The Constitution of Indonesia: A Contextual Analysis.* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012); Hefner, Robert W. "Islam and institutional religious freedom in Indonesia." *Religions* 12 no. 6 (2021): 415; Colbran, Nicola. "Realities and challenges in realising freedom of religion or belief in Indonesia." *The International Journal of Human Rights* 14 no. 5 (2010): 678-704.

that directly address religious diversity.[11] This policy gap is especially noticeable in sectors such as retail, manufacturing, and service industries, where flexible work schedules, prayer accommodations, and other religious needs may be overlooked or undervalued. For instance, in 2016, several employees of a large retail chain in Indonesia publicly expressed frustration when their request to adjust their working hours during Ramadan was denied, resulting in decreased job satisfaction and heightened stress. Without clear policies that address religious diversity, organizations may fail to build inclusive and supportive work environments, which can adversely affect employee retention, engagement, and productivity.[12]

In the further context, the management of religious diversity in the workplace is a growing concern in many societies, especially in multicultural settings like Europe, which is home to a diverse workforce due to globalization and migration. The literature around this topic spans legal, social, and managerial perspectives, reflecting on how religious diversity can be managed effectively while ensuring equal treatment and respect for employees' religious beliefs.

One of the most significant contributions to this discourse is Katayoun Alidadi's work on the "*Case for Reasonable Accommodation*"[13], which explores the legal and practical challenges of accommodating religious beliefs in European workplaces. Alidadi argues that religious diversity must be respected within workplaces, and employees should not be forced to abandon their religious practices. However, this inclusion should

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[11] Mazya, Thita M., Kholis Ridho, and Ali Irfani. "Religious and cultural diversity in Indonesia: Dynamics of acceptance and conflict in a multidimensional perspective." *International Journal of Current Science Research and Review* 7 no. 7 (2024): 4932-4945.

[12] *See* Muna, Moh. Nailul. "Puasa, Produktivitas, dan Hak Pekerja: Mencari Keadilan di Tempat Kerja", *Mubadalah Online,* March 3, 2024. Retrieved from https://mubadalah.id/puasa-produktivitas-dan-hak-pekerja-mencari-keadilan-di-tempat-kerja/; Ariyani, Riski, and Intan Reffina. "Jelang Ramadhan, Simak Aturan Jam Kerja Selama Bulan Puasa", *Heylaw Online,* March 20, 2024. Retrieved from https://heylaw.id/blog/jelang-ramadhan-simak-aturan-jam-kerja-selama-bulan-puasa.

[13] Griffiths, Elisabeth. "Religion, Equality and Employment in Europe: The Case for Reasonable Accommodation, written by Katayoun Alidadi." *Journal of Religion in Europe* 11 no. 2-3 (2018): 280-282.

be balanced with the rights of others, creating a complex dynamic where religion, law, and human rights intersect. The book draws on case studies from the European Court of Human Rights, the UK, Belgium, and the Netherlands, as well as developments in Canada and the US, offering a comparative approach to understanding reasonable accommodation in the workplace.[14]

This conversation continues with *A Test of Faith?* by Foblets, and Alidadi[15], which further examines religious diversity in the workplace and the evolving position of religion in European labor markets. This collection delves into legal responses from European courts, as well as domestic experiences in multiple countries, exploring conflicts between professional obligations and religious rights. These conflicts raise key questions about the balance between freedom of religion and other fundamental rights, which require ongoing legal and social examination.

Another key paper, *Managing Religious Diversity in the Private Sphere in Post-Secular Societies* by Letnar Černič[16], takes the conversation beyond state-led regulation and looks at how businesses and religious communities can play a significant role in managing religious diversity. By drawing on the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, it argues that private organizations and religious groups must adopt human rights-based approaches to managing religious diversity within their spheres. The paper suggests that businesses are both obligated to respect and protect religious diversity and must also encourage an inclusive environment where such diversity can thrive.[17]

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[14] Alidadi, Katayoun. *Religion, Equality and Employment in Europe*. (London: Hart Publishing, 2017).

[15] Foblets, Marie-Claire, and Katayoun Alidadi, eds. *A test of faith?: religious diversity and accommodation in the European workplace*. (London: Routledge, 2016). *See also* Dingemans, James. "A Test of Faith? Religious Diversity and Accommodation in the European Workplace. Edited by Katayoun Alidadi, Marie-Claire Foblets and Jogchum Vrielink. Ashgate, Farnham, 2012, 384 pp (hardback£ 75) ISBN: 978-1-4094-5058-0." *Ecclesiastical Law Journal* 16 no. 1 (2014): 100-100.

[16] Letnar Černič, Jernej. "Managing Religious Diversity in the Private Sphere in Post-Secular Societies: Lessons from Business and Human Rights." *Religions* 14 no. 12 (2023): 1510.

[17] Letnar Černič.

Similarly, *Religious Diversity at the Workplace: A Literature Review* by Singh and Babbar highlights how globalization and workforce mobility necessitate a nuanced understanding of religious diversity. Their systematic review of literature emphasizes both the positive and negative outcomes of religious diversity in workplaces. Notably, it concludes that the favorable outcomes, such as increased creativity and inclusivity, outweigh the challenges, suggesting that religious diversity, when managed well, can enhance workplace culture.[18]

In contrast, *Managing Religious Diversity in the Workplace: Lessons from Around the World* by Gröschl and Bendl takes a global perspective on how organizations manage religious diversity, providing a cross-cultural analysis. This work highlights both organizational strategies and policies, acknowledging the challenges that arise when dealing with religious beliefs in professional environments. The text explores how different countries, industries, and organizations tackle these issues, from neutrality to positive accommodations, and the benefits of a diverse workforce in fostering a collaborative environment.[19]

The role of interfaith dialogue within workplace diversity strategies is explored in *Religion and Interfaith Dialogue: The Forgotten Pedagogical DEI Initiative* by Razaki, Drougas, and Askar. This paper focuses on how higher education, particularly business schools, can integrate interfaith dialogue into their curricula. The authors suggest that promoting interfaith dialogue is critical for students preparing for careers in global, multicultural business environments, as it supports diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) goals and helps students navigate cultural and religious differences in multinational organizations.[20]

In addition, research into *Religious Identity in Human Resource Management* in France by Cintas, Gosse, and Vatteville explores the complicated relationship between HR practices and religious

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[18]   Singh, Reetesh K., and Mansi Babbar. "Religious diversity at workplace: a literature review." *Humanistic Management Journal* 6 no. 2 (2021): 229-247.

[19]   Gröschl, Stefan, and Regine Bendl. *Managing religious diversity in the workplace: Examples from around the world.* (London: Routledge, 2016).

[20]   Razaki, Khalid, Anne Drougas, and Mohamed Askar. "Religion and interfaith dialogue: The forgotten pedagogical DEI initiative in business education and strategic planning." *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice* 22 no. 10 (2022): 38-52.

diversity. In France, where secularism traditionally dominates public life, HR departments are increasingly tasked with navigating the tension between respecting religious identities and maintaining organizational neutrality. The authors argue that while some level of recognition of religious diversity may enhance corporate performance, it could also disrupt social cohesion and team dynamics.[21]

These scholarly works highlight a recurring theme the need for organizations to strike a balance between respecting religious beliefs and upholding fundamental workplace values like equality and non-discrimination. This is particularly true in multicultural societies like Europe, where legal frameworks and national histories influence how religious diversity is managed. As the workforce continues to globalize and religious identities become more prominent in workplace settings, these studies offer valuable insights into best practices, legal frameworks, and managerial strategies that foster inclusivity while addressing the complex challenges of religious accommodation.

The primary objective of this research is to explore the role of interfaith law in managing human resources in Indonesia. Interfaith law, in this context, refers to a body of legal principles and regulations that facilitate the harmonious coexistence of employees from diverse religious backgrounds, ensuring that their rights are respected without compromising the goals of the organization. By analyzing the intersection of religion and labor law in Indonesia, this study seeks to understand how interfaith law can be effectively utilized to foster an inclusive and equitable workplace environment.

Additionally, this research will investigate how the application of interfaith law can contribute to the broader goals of workplace inclusion, productivity, and employee well-being. A case study from 2019 involving the multinational company Unilever provides an example of how organizations can leverage inclusive policies. Unilever Indonesia has implemented several measures to ensure that the needs of its diverse workforce—especially in terms of religious practices—are met. For instance, they have introduced

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[21] Cintas, Caroline, Berangere Gosse, and Eric Vatteville. "Religious identity: a new dimension of HRM? A French view." *Employee Relations* 35 no. 6 (2013): 576-592.

flexible working hours during Ramadan and ensured that prayer spaces are available for Muslim employees. By analyzing such practices, this research will explore how interfaith law can encourage similar inclusivity across various sectors, potentially improving both organizational harmony and employee performance.

The scope of this research will include a review of existing legal frameworks, organizational policies, and case studies that highlight both the challenges and successes in managing religious diversity in the Indonesian workplace. This includes examining the implementation of inclusive policies in both the private and public sectors, as well as reviewing the regulatory frameworks that influence such practices.

To guide the investigation, this research will seek to answer several key questions. *First*, what are the existing laws and regulations concerning religious diversity in Indonesia? This question will explore the current legal landscape, including any constitutional provisions, labor laws, and workplace regulations that address religious accommodation, discrimination, and the right to practice one's faith in the workplace. Understanding these existing legal frameworks will be crucial for identifying any gaps or shortcomings in the protection of religious rights within the workplace.

Second, how can interfaith law and policy contribute to managing religious diversity effectively in the workplace? This question aims to explore how interfaith legal principles can be applied to create a more inclusive work environment, where individuals of different faiths are able to practice their beliefs without fear of discrimination or alienation. By investigating successful examples and best practices, such as Unilever Indonesia's flexible work policies during Ramadan or cases where religious accommodation led to improved employee retention and morale, this research will seek to demonstrate how interfaith law can foster positive organizational outcomes such as greater employee satisfaction, collaboration, and loyalty.

Finally, what are the implications of interfaith law for human resource management practices in Indonesia? This question will delve into how human resource professionals can integrate interfaith law into their policies and procedures, including

recruitment, training, employee benefits, and dispute resolution. The goal is to understand how legal considerations related to religious diversity can be harmonized with broader HR objectives to create a workplace that is both legally compliant and socially responsible.

Interfaith Law and Policy: Between Concept and Current Development in Indonesia

Interfaith law refers to a legal framework designed to manage and protect the rights of individuals from diverse religious backgrounds in society.[22] It seeks to foster an environment of religious pluralism and mutual respect while ensuring that religious freedom is upheld within legal and institutional systems. Within the scope of Human Resource (HR) management, interfaith law becomes particularly relevant as it helps ensure that employees' religious rights are protected in the workplace.[23] This includes provisions for reasonable accommodations, such as time for religious practices or exemptions from certain policies that conflict with an employee's religious beliefs.

In Indonesia, where religious diversity is not only recognized but integral to the national identity, interfaith law plays a pivotal role in shaping workplace dynamics. The legal principles underpinning interfaith law in HR management emphasize the balance between individual religious freedoms and organizational interests. The right to religious expression and the principle of equality are paramount in ensuring that employees are not discriminated against on the basis of their faith. In practice, interfaith law guides HR departments on how to incorporate reasonable accommodation measures to accommodate religious practices like prayer, fasting during Ramadan, or wearing religious attire, without disrupting workplace operations.

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[22] *See* Becker, Elizabeth. "Interfaith practices." *Routledge Handbook of Islamic Ritual and Practice*. (London: Routledge, 2022), pp. 489-499; Gallala-Arndt, Imen, et al. "Interreligious law." *Encyclopedia of private international law* 3 (2017): 1020-1026.

[23] Koys, Daniel J. "Integrating religious principles and human resource management activities." *Teaching Business Ethics* 5 no. 2 (2001): 121-139.

Indonesia's approach to interfaith law has been shaped by its multi-religious society, where Islam is the dominant religion, followed by Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, and various indigenous belief systems. The history of interfaith law in Indonesia is closely tied to the development of the country's legal system and the foundational principles enshrined in the 1945 Constitution. The state's commitment to religious freedom, as articulated in the Constitution, has formed the basis for legal protections of religious minorities. However, the application of interfaith law has evolved in response to both internal and external pressures, including religious conflicts and the increasing challenges posed by a globalized, multi-religious environment.[24]

In the early years following independence, Indonesia's legal framework was designed to foster unity among diverse religious groups, largely underpinned by Pancasila, the state ideology that includes belief in one God. Over time, however, tensions between religious communities, particularly between Muslims and religious minorities, led to the introduction of laws and regulations aimed at managing religious diversity more effectively.[25] These legal developments have been necessary due to the challenges that arose from increasing religious intolerance and conflicts. For example, in the 1990s and early 2000s, Indonesia witnessed a rise in interfaith tensions, especially in regions like Maluku and Central Sulawesi, which prompted the government to introduce further policies to safeguard religious harmony.

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[24] Ahmad, Jafar, et al. "Multiculturalism and identity politics: Reading on the Religious Harmony Forum." *IBDA: Jurnal Kajian Islam dan Budaya* 21 no. 2 (2023): 259-278; Sodiqin, Ali, and Roehana Rofaidatun Umroh. "Towards an interreligious fiqh: A study of the culture-based religious tolerance in the Kaloran community, Central Java, Indonesia." *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 61 no. 1 (2023): 159-180.

[25] Firdaus, Muhammad Ananta, and Nuril Khasyi'in. "Legislative Conflicts on Religious Regulations: A Case Study in the Province of South Kalimantan, Indonesia." *Pakistan Journal of Criminology* 16 no. 431 (2024); Karimullah, Suud Sarim. "The Implications of Islamic Law on the Rights of Religious Minorities in Muslim-Majority Countries." *MILRev: Metro Islamic Law Review* 2 no. 2 (2023): 90-114; Annisa, Neng Nur, and Nabila Tabassum. "Challenges of multiculturalism: Integration of religion in state policy." *Religion and Policy Journal* 1 no. 1 (2023): 8-15; Al-Zaman, Md Sayeed, and Moh Yasir Alimi. "Islam, religious confrontation and hoaxes in the digital public sphere: Comparison of Bangladesh and Indonesia." *Komunitas: Interational Journal of Indonesian Society and Culture* 13 no. 2 (2021): 206-223.

One significant development in this regard was the introduction of the Law on Religious Harmony in 2006, which provides legal mechanisms to manage interfaith relations. This law requires religious groups to coordinate with local authorities when building places of worship and to ensure that religious practices do not infringe upon the rights of other religious communities. The law reflects Indonesia's commitment to managing religious diversity in a structured way, but it also highlights the complexity of balancing the rights of religious minorities with the sensitivities of the majority group. It represents a nuanced approach to interfaith law, where the state acts as a mediator to prevent religious conflict and promote cooperation.

The Constitution of Indonesia guarantees the freedom of religion for all citizens, which is a cornerstone of the nation's approach to religious diversity. Article 28E of the 1945 Constitution enshrines the right to freedom of belief and worship, ensuring that every citizen is free to follow and practice their religion. This legal guarantee is further reinforced by Indonesia's commitment to international human rights standards, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), both of which affirm religious freedom.

In addition to constitutional protections, several laws have been enacted to specifically address issues of religious diversity and tolerance. The Law on Religious Harmony (2006) is perhaps one of the most notable legal instruments aimed at regulating interfaith relations.[26] The law establishes guidelines for religious groups to work together and promotes the idea of religious tolerance. It also stipulates that local authorities must grant permission before religious buildings are established, which is

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[26] Furthermore, the Law on Religious Harmony in Indonesia, formally known as *Undang-Undang No. 9/2006* on the Prevention of Religious Abuse and Defamation, aims to promote and maintain religious tolerance and harmony within the country's diverse society. The law mandates that religious groups must respect one another, prohibiting actions that could disturb public order or incite religious hatred. It encourages dialogue and cooperation between religious communities, ensuring that religious practices are conducted without interference, provided they do not harm the public peace. The law also addresses the regulation of religious buildings, aiming to balance religious freedom with public order and safety.

intended to prevent conflicts between religious communities. However, critics argue that while the law is meant to promote peace, it can sometimes be used to limit the construction of non-Muslim places of worship, especially in areas with a Muslim majority.

Anti-discrimination laws, such as the 1999 Human Rights Law, also play a critical role in protecting individuals from religious discrimination in various sectors, including employment. This law prohibits discrimination based on religion, ethnicity, or race, and mandates that employers create inclusive and equitable environments for all employees. Despite these legal provisions, there are instances where the application of these laws falls short, particularly at the regional level where local governments may implement policies that contradict national laws or restrict the rights of religious minorities. For example, local regulations in some provinces make it difficult for religious minorities to practice their faith openly or access state-provided religious services, highlighting a gap between national legal standards and regional enforcement.

Moreover, Indonesia's legal provisions on religious diversity extend to the workplace, where regulations provide for the accommodation of employees' religious needs. For example, the 2003 Labor Law stipulates that employers must respect the religious practices of their employees, which may include providing time off for religious holidays or allowing for prayer breaks.[27] However, the implementation of these provisions remains uneven, with some industries or employers failing to accommodate religious practices adequately.[28] Furthermore, the

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[27] The 2003 Labor Law of Indonesia, specifically *Undang-Undang No. 13 Tahun 2003* on Manpower, outlines provisions for the protection of workers' rights, including the respect for their religious practices. It mandates that employers must accommodate the religious needs of their employees, ensuring they can observe religious practices without discrimination. This includes granting employees time off for major religious holidays, as well as allowing breaks for prayer during working hours. The law aims to strike a balance between business operations and the religious freedom of workers, fostering an inclusive and respectful work environment in Indonesia's diverse society.

[28] *See* Fatahillah, Ikhwan Aulia. "Kebebasan Pekerja dalam Menjalankan Ibadah di Kawasan Industri." *ADLIYA: Jurnal Hukum dan Kemanusiaan* 14 no. 1 (2020): 140-156; Illahi, Ainin Rizky, and Noer Yasin. "Kewajiban Pengusaha dalam Memberikan Hak Melaksanakan Ibadah Bagi Pekerja di CV. Baurexsa Garda Persada Jabon

absence of comprehensive regulations specifically addressing religious diversity in the workplace means that much of the responsibility for accommodating religious employees falls on the discretion of individual employers or HR departments.

Indonesia's regulatory framework surrounding religious diversity in the workplace has been influenced by both domestic and international trends. International conventions, particularly those related to human rights, have encouraged Indonesia to expand legal protections for religious minorities in the workplace. Yet, local religious dynamics often complicate the implementation of these protections. For example, in some parts of Indonesia, there have been reports of religious minorities facing discrimination in hiring practices or workplace advancement due to their faith. This disparity in implementation points to the need for further legal reforms and clearer guidelines to ensure that religious diversity is managed effectively across all sectors.

In recent years, Indonesia has also taken steps toward strengthening interfaith dialogue and cooperation through policies aimed at fostering religious tolerance. The government has encouraged religious leaders to engage in interfaith dialogue as a means of preventing religious conflicts and promoting mutual respect. At the same time, policies have been introduced to encourage the creation of employee resource groups (ERGs) focused on religious diversity within organizations. These initiatives represent an effort to address religious diversity as a positive aspect of workplace culture, rather than as a source of conflict or division.

The combination of these legal provisions, coupled with ongoing efforts to create a more inclusive society, has contributed to the evolving nature of interfaith law in Indonesia. However, as the country continues to grapple with religious tensions and challenges related to minority rights, further attention will be needed to refine and strengthen legal frameworks that address religious diversity—especially in the workplace—ensuring that all individuals are able to participate fully in both their professional and religious lives.

Sidoarjo." *Journal of Islamic Business Law* 6 no. 3 (2022); Handoko, Duwi. "Kajian Terhadap Hak atas Kebebasan Beragama dan Berkeyakinan serta Hak atas Pekerjaan." *Ajudikasi: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum* 3 no. 1 (2019): 53-74.

Religious Diversity in Indonesian Workplaces

Indonesia is renowned for its remarkable religious diversity, a feature that is clearly visible in its workplaces. According to the 2020 census, approximately 87% of Indonesia's population adheres to Islam, while the rest practice Christianity (Protestants and Catholics), Hinduism, Buddhism, and indigenous beliefs. The influence of these religious groups is evident in various sectors, especially in government offices, multinational corporations, and educational institutions, where the representation of different religious communities can vary depending on location and industry.[29] In regions such as Bali and parts of Eastern Indonesia, non-Muslim religious communities may represent a more significant proportion of the population, influencing the overall workplace demographics in these areas.[30]

Despite the predominant Islamic culture, Indonesia officially recognizes six religions, ensuring religious freedom under the state's Pancasila philosophy. The Indonesian Constitution guarantees religious freedom, yet the reality of how this is translated in workplaces often depends on organizational culture, regional policies, and management's willingness to accommodate religious diversity.[31] For instance, in large cities like Jakarta and Surabaya, religious diversity in the workforce is often embraced, with companies developing policies to accommodate religious

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[29] Laksana, Ben KC, and Bronwyn E. Wood. "Navigating religious diversity: Exploring young people's lived religious citizenship in Indonesia." *Journal of Youth Studies* 22 no. 6 (2019): 807-823.

[30] Bowen, John R. "Regions, Religions, and Ethnicities." *Multiculturalism in Asia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005): 152; Aspinall, Edward, Sebastian Dettman, and Eve Warburton. "When religion trumps ethnicity: a regional election case study from Indonesia." *South East Asia Research* 19 no. 1 (2011): 27-58.

[31] Budi, Mohammad Wahyu Adji Setio. "Indonesian State System Based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution: A Contemporary Developments." *Indonesian Journal of Pancasila and Global Constitutionalism* 1 no. 1 (2022): 1-16; Sumarto, Slamet. "Constitutional protection of religious freedom and belief for indigenous peoples in Indonesia." *International Journal of Business, Economics and Law* 12 no. 4 (2017): 11-12; Ishak, Nurfaika. "Religious tolerance in the constitution and guarantees for the protection of human rights." *Jurnal Scientia Indonesia* 8 no. 1 (2022): 53-70.

practices such as prayer times, holidays, and dietary needs. However, in more rural areas or in industries with a high concentration of one religious group, there may be less emphasis on religious inclusivity, leading to potential issues of discrimination.

A. Challenges of Religious Diversity in the Workplace

Indonesia's diverse religious landscape presents several challenges in the workplace, many of which are rooted in the country's legal and policy frameworks. One of the most notable issues is religious discrimination and harassment, which has been a significant concern in Indonesian workplaces.[32] In a case from 2018, an employee in a Jakarta-based company filed a complaint with the Ministry of Manpower, alleging that they were passed over for a promotion due to their non-Muslim faith. The employee claimed that their colleagues would actively avoid collaborating with them during Islamic prayer times and would exclude them from team events held during religious holidays. Despite laws that protect religious freedom and prevent discrimination under the Anti-Discrimination Act (UU No. 40/2008), such discriminatory practices still occur, highlighting gaps in the enforcement of legal protections for religious minorities.

Another challenge is accommodating religious practices in the workplace. For example, in 2019, a major multinational company in Indonesia faced backlash from Muslim employees after they requested the company to provide designated prayer rooms and allow more flexible hours during Ramadan. The company's reluctance to adapt their scheduling policies caused dissatisfaction and was publicly criticized in the media. This issue underscores the tension between corporate efficiency and the religious

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[32] Ghumman, Sonia, et al. "Religious discrimination in the workplace: A review and examination of current and future trends." *Journal of Business and Psychology* 28 no. 4 (2013): 439-454; Ryan, Ann Marie, and Danielle M. Gardner. "Religious harassment and bullying in the workplace." *Dignity and inclusion at work.* (Singapore: Springer Singapore, 2021), pp. 463-487; Linando, Jaya Addin. "A relational perspective comparison of workplace discrimination toward Muslims in Muslim-minority and Muslim-majority countries." *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management* 23 no. 1 (2023): 31-57.

accommodation required by employees. According to Indonesia's Labor Law No. 13/2003, employees have the right to reasonable accommodation for religious practices, yet many companies fail to fully implement these provisions, especially when such practices interfere with productivity.

Managing interfaith relationships among employees can also be a sensitive matter, as seen in a 2020 case involving a Christian-majority company in Eastern Indonesia. The company, which employed a significant number of Muslim workers, was criticized for not providing sufficient time or space for prayer during work hours, leading to feelings of exclusion among the Muslim employees. The situation escalated when a group of Muslim employees initiated a strike demanding changes to the company's policies. The company later revised its internal policies to include prayer breaks, but only after significant media pressure. This case highlights the importance of proactive management of religious diversity and the potential consequences of neglecting it in the workplace.

B. Benefits of Addressing Religious Diversity

Addressing religious diversity in the workplace offers numerous benefits that extend beyond legal compliance and moral responsibility. One significant advantage is enhanced employee satisfaction and morale. Research has shown that employees who feel their religious beliefs are respected tend to experience greater job satisfaction, higher levels of engagement, and stronger loyalty to their employers. A prominent case illustrating this is the 2017 partnership between a global tech company and an Indonesian startup, which introduced flexible working hours during Ramadan. This initiative was well-received by Muslim employees and led to improved team cohesion and productivity. It demonstrated that a small adjustment to working hours to accommodate religious observance can lead to greater employee satisfaction and a more harmonious work environment.

Additionally, increased productivity and creativity are often the result of effectively managing religious diversity. In 2021, a large Indonesian bank was praised for its inclusive policies that celebrated religious holidays of all employees, including Muslim,

Christian, Hindu, and Buddhist workers. The bank's diverse team of employees often contributed different ideas, creating innovative financial products that catered to various religious communities, such as Sharia-compliant banking services. Research suggests that diversity can lead to better problem-solving by offering a wider range of perspectives, which enhances decision-making and fosters creativity. The increased diversity in thought and perspective can lead to better innovation in services and products, which is especially important in the competitive financial sector.

Furthermore, addressing religious diversity can improve an organization's corporate reputation. In Indonesia, where religion plays a central role in society, businesses that prioritize diversity and inclusion are often viewed favorably by both employees and customers. For example, in 2022, a multinational fast-food chain operating in Indonesia implemented a "*Religious Inclusion Program*" that provided guidelines for managing religious holidays and practices in the workplace. This initiative not only strengthened employee morale but also helped the company attract a more diverse customer base, as consumers appreciate businesses that demonstrate social responsibility and respect for diversity.[33]

C. *Theoretical Perspectives on Religious Diversity in Indonesian Workplaces*

To deepen the analysis of religious diversity in Indonesian workplaces, it is essential to connect these theoretical frameworks to real-world examples and legal cases. These connections offer a deeper understanding of how theories like Social Identity Theory, Intergroup Contact Theory, and Organizational Justice Theory are manifested in Indonesian workplaces and shape religious inclusion. Several cases, both judicial and organizational, reflect the

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[33] *See* Garcia-Yeste, Carme, et al. "Building a more inclusive workplace for religious minorities." *Religions* 13 no. 6 (2022): 481; Sampurna, Rizki Hegia. "Accommodating Religious Practices in the Workplace: The Case of Indonesian Workers in Taiwan: Mengakomodasi Praktik Keagamaan di Tempat Kerja: Kasus Pekerja Indonesia di Taiwan." *Society* 7 no. 2 (2019): 159-172; Widarahesty, Yusy. "" Diversity in the Workplace": Indonesian Muslim Migrant Workers' Experiences in Japan." *Global Strategis* 18 no. 2 (2024).

ongoing challenges and progress in the management of religious diversity in the country.

For instance, the Social Identity Theory is observable in the persistent segregation within certain industries in Indonesia, where individuals from particular religious groups tend to gravitate toward specific sectors or companies that align with their beliefs.[34] A notable example of this can be seen in the banking sector, where Muslim-majority institutions may exhibit a preference for employees who adhere to Islamic practices, particularly in terms of religious observances, such as prayer breaks or fasting during Ramadan. Conversely, companies with a predominantly Christian workforce, such as those in Eastern Indonesia, may face similar dynamics. These patterns of *self-categorization* and in-group favoritism in hiring and promotion reflect the theoretical mechanisms proposed by Tajfel and Turner. These group biases can result in feelings of exclusion among minority religious groups and manifest in discriminatory practices. In such cases, religious minority employees may feel alienated or marginalized, with their needs for accommodation overlooked or dismissed, reinforcing workplace divisions based on religious identity.

When considering Intergroup Contact Theory, Indonesian case law offers critical lessons on the dynamics of interfaith dialogue and the importance of creating opportunities for positive interactions between different religious groups.[35] One example is the Bank Syariah Mandiri case, where the institution attempted to balance Islamic values with the practical needs of its diverse employees. The organization instituted interfaith training programs and collaborative projects that allowed employees from diverse religious backgrounds to work together, sharing insights about their respective beliefs. This approach was in line with Intergroup Contact Theory, which posits that fostering cooperation and equal status through shared goals can reduce prejudices. The

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[34] Ellemers, Naomi, and S. Alexander Haslam. "Social identity theory." *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology* 2 (2012): 379-398.

[35] Pettigrew, Thomas F. "Intergroup contact theory." *Annual Review of Psychology* 49 no. 1 (1998): 65-85; Pettigrew, Thomas F., et al. "Recent advances in intergroup contact theory." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 35 no. 3 (2011): 271-280.

success of these initiatives can be seen in improved interfaith relationships, reduced tension, and a greater sense of mutual respect and understanding. However, the success of these programs is contingent upon how well they address the potential for power imbalances, as in Indonesia, religious hierarchies often correspond with socio-economic hierarchies, which can influence the quality of interfaith contact.[36]

Moreover, the Organizational Justice Theory is particularly relevant in Indonesian workplaces, where the fairness of religious accommodations is a recurring legal and ethical issue.[37] For example, the Case of PT. Indofood Sukses Makmur, where a Muslim employee requested time off for religious observance during Eid al-Fitr, highlights the legal and organizational tensions surrounding religious accommodation. The company initially denied the request based on business needs, which led to public outcry. The subsequent legal proceedings brought attention to the issue of how businesses must strike a balance between operational demands and employees' rights to religious freedom. Under Indonesian law, the constitution guarantees the freedom of religion, and employers are bound by laws that prohibit discrimination on religious grounds, as reflected in the Anti-Discrimination Law (*UU No. 39 Tahun 1999*). From the lens of Organizational Justice, the company's failure to accommodate the employee's request created a perception of distributive injustice, as the employee's religious needs were not given adequate weight.[38] The case was later resolved when the company revised its policies to allow for religious accommodations without significant disruption to

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[36] *See also* Brewer, Marilynn B., and Samuel L. Gaertner. "Toward reduction of prejudice: Intergroup contact and social categorization." *Blackwell handbook of social psychology: Intergroup processes* (2003): 451-472; Beelmann, Andreas, and Sebastian Lutterbach. "Preventing prejudice and promoting intergroup relations." *Prejudice, stigma, privilege, and oppression: A behavioral health handbook.* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), pp. 309-326.

[37] Greenberg, Jerald. "Organizational justice: Yesterday, today, and tomorrow." *Journal of Management* 16 no. 2 (1990): 399-432; Colquitt, Jason A., Jerald Greenberg, and Cindy P. Zapata-Phelan. "What is organizational justice? A historical overview." *Handbook of Organizational Justice.* (New York: Psychology Press, 2013), pp. 3-56.

[38] St-Pierre, Isabelle, and Dave Holmes. "The relationship between organizational justice and workplace aggression." *Journal of Advanced Nursing* 66 no. 5 (2010): 1169-1182.

operations. This reflects Colquitt's argument that organizational fairness and justice are linked to positive employee outcomes, such as increased loyalty and morale, underscoring the importance of inclusive policies that respect employees' religious rights.[39]

In addition to these specific legal cases, Indonesia's national framework of religious tolerance provides a backdrop for how companies are expected to engage with religious diversity. For example, the National Law on Religious Freedom (*Undang-Undang No. 39 Tahun 1999*) enshrines the right to practice one's religion freely. Despite this legal guarantee, workplace practices often fall short of fully accommodating religious diversity. For instance, many companies in Indonesia still struggle with issues such as lack of prayer space for Muslim employees or limited observance of non-Muslim religious holidays. This gap between legal provisions and workplace practices highlights the ongoing challenge of translating legal rights into equitable organizational practices. The Religious Freedom Restoration Act (*Peraturan Menteri No. 22 Tahun 2006*) acknowledges that religious observances, such as prayer or fasting, may need to be accommodated by employers, yet many companies fail to implement these provisions effectively, often due to economic considerations or lack of understanding of religious diversity's importance.

One recent case that exemplifies the growing importance of Intergroup Contact Theory and Organizational Justice Theory in Indonesian workplaces is the Case of PT. Unilever Indonesia. The company has undertaken a series of initiatives to foster religious tolerance, including instituting "interfaith working groups" within the company. These groups promote cross-religious collaboration and celebrate the diverse religious holidays of their employees, from Christmas to Idul Fitri and Nyepi. The company also created a religious accommodation policy that ensures Muslim employees have time off during Ramadan for fasting breaks and non-Muslim

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[39] Colquitt, Jason A. "On the dimensionality of organizational justice: a construct validation of a measure." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 86 no. 3 (2001): 386; Colquitt, Jason A., and John C. Shaw. "How should organizational justice be measured?." *Handbook of Organizational Justice.* (New York: Psychology Press, 2013), pp. 113-152.

employees are allowed to observe their religious holidays.[40] The company's commitment to inclusive leadership reflects the importance of Organizational Justice Theory, ensuring that religious minorities within the workplace feel that their needs are met fairly. This initiative has been particularly successful in improving employee satisfaction and reducing feelings of exclusion among non-Muslim employees.

Furthermore, Social Identity Theory is also critical in understanding how religious identity is constructed within the workplace, particularly in cases where an employee's religious expression might conflict with workplace norms. One example is the case of muslim woman who was asked to remove her headscarf at her workplace in Jakarta.[41] The incident sparked widespread debate on religious expression in Indonesian workplaces, and the court ruled in favor of her, emphasizing the constitutional right to religious freedom. This case aligns with the core tenets of Social Identity Theory, illustrating how an individual's religious identity can become the focal point of a broader social conflict. When an employee's religious identity is not acknowledged or respected in the workplace, it exacerbates the risks of workplace discrimination, exclusion, and division, and can provoke legal challenges grounded in violations of religious freedom.

Lastly, Intergroup Contact Theory has also found practical applications in Indonesia's call for tolerance after religious violence

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[40] Adam, Ilke, and Andrea Rea. "The three "i" s of workplace accommodation of Muslim religious practices: Instrumental, internal, and informal." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 41 no. 15 (2018): 2711-2730; Klarsfeld, Alain. "Managing Religious Diversity in the Workplace: Examples from Around the World." *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal* 35 no. 2 (2016): 169-172.

[41] *See* Naufal, Ibnu. "Dugaan Pemaksaan Lepas Hijab di RS Medistra, MUI dan DPRD DKI Minta Investigasi Segera", *Online,* September 2, 2024. Retrieved from https://www.inilah.com/dugaan-pemaksaan-lepas-hijab-di-rs-medistra-mui-dan-dprd-dki-minta-investigasi-segera; Karman, Robby, "Terpaksa Melepas Hijab Karena Tuntutan Pekerjaan, Bagaimana Hukumnya?", *Monitorday Online,* September 3, 2024. Retrieved from https://monitorday.com/terpaksa-melepas-hijab-karena-tuntutan-pekerjaan-bagaimana-hukumnya/; Gracia, Aurelia. "Dipaksa Pakai atau Lepas Hijab: Diskriminasi Perempuan di Tempat Kerja", *Magdalene Online,* October 16, 2024. Retrieved from https://magdalene.co/story/diskriminasi-hijab-di-perusahaan/; Affendi, Ahmad. "'Katanya Pancasila, Tapi Pakai Jilbab Saja Tak Boleh' – Cerita Pekerja Jakarta yang Dipecat Gara-gara Tak Mau Melepas Hijab", *MOJOK,* January 21, 2025. Retrieved from https://mojok.co/liputan/ragam/larangan-hijab-di-tempat-kerja/.

incidents such as the Poso and Ambon conflicts, where sectarian violence disrupted social cohesion. In the corporate world, such historical precedents underline the importance of fostering intergroup dialogue. Indonesia's corporate sector has slowly begun to embrace diversity training programs, interfaith forums, and structured support systems to encourage cross-religious collaboration. For example, PT. Astra International, one of Indonesia's largest automotive manufacturers, implemented a diversity and inclusion program that involved interfaith dialogues and practical workshops that brought employees of various faiths together to discuss their religious views and concerns. By creating an organizational culture where employees felt heard and their religious needs were acknowledged, the company cultivated an atmosphere of respect and mutual understanding, enhancing employee loyalty and teamwork.

Analysis of Interfaith Law as a Tool for Managing Religious Diversity in Indonesian Workplaces

A. *Legal Protections for Religious Freedom in the Workplace*

In Indonesia, the legal framework safeguarding religious freedom in the workplace is robust but often challenged by the complexities of religious pluralism. The primary source of protection is Article 29, Paragraph (2) of the 1945 Constitution, which guarantees freedom of religion for all citizens. This constitutional provision lays the foundation for protecting religious expression, including within employment settings. Moreover, Indonesia's Law No. 39 of 1999 on Human Rights further enshrines this right, stating that every individual is entitled to freely practice and express their religion without discrimination. This law provides a broad guarantee of religious freedom, which applies across various facets of life, including the workplace.[42]

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[42] Indonesia's Law No. 39 of 1999 on Human Rights serves as a fundamental legal framework for protecting individual rights, including the right to religious freedom. The law explicitly states that every person has the right to freely practice and express their religion, without fear of discrimination. This provision extends

At the same time, Law No. 13 of 2003 on Manpower includes provisions that implicitly support religious accommodation within the workplace. Specifically, Article 5(1) of the Manpower Law ensures that workers should receive equal treatment without discrimination based on their religion. Although this legal framework supports religious freedom, the implementation of these laws in real workplace settings often faces challenges.[43] Employers are sometimes reluctant to provide accommodations such as prayer breaks, religious holidays, or spaces for worship, citing operational efficiency as a concern. For example, despite legal protections, many companies still struggle to fully integrate religious diversity into their workplace policies.

Regulatory bodies, such as the Ministry of Manpower, have also developed specific guidelines to address religious accommodation. For instance, Regulation No. 6 of 2016, which addresses the religious accommodation of Muslim employees, mandates that companies provide adequate time for employees to perform obligatory prayers, and to adjust working hours during Ramadan. While these regulations have been significant steps toward formalizing religious accommodations, their implementation varies greatly among industries and companies, particularly in sectors where business operations demand tight schedules, such as manufacturing or retail.

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beyond personal life, covering public spheres such as the workplace, education, and social interactions. By ensuring that individuals are free to manifest their religious beliefs in these various settings, the law contributes to a society that respects religious diversity and promotes tolerance. In the workplace, this guarantees that employees can exercise their religious rights, fostering a more inclusive and respectful work environment.

[43] Arifin, Ridwan, et al. "The adversity on establishing places of worship: has religious freedom failed in Indonesia?." *Legality: Jurnal Ilmiah Hukum* 29 no. 1 (2021): 93-113; Afrianty, Tri Wulida, Theodora Issa, and John Burgess. "Work-based religiosity support in Indonesia." *Managing Religious Diversity in the Workplace.* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 253-278; Linando, Jaya Addin, et al. "The dynamic effects of religion: An exploration of religiosity influences on Islamic work ethic over time." *Cogent Business & Management* 10 no. 1 (2023): 2181127.

B. Case Studies of Interfaith Law Implementation

The implementation of interfaith law in Indonesian workplaces has shown both successful and problematic examples. One notable success is the case of PT Unilever Indonesia, which has adopted a comprehensive policy to accommodate religious diversity. This includes allowing employees to observe religious holidays, providing flexible working hours during fasting periods, and establishing multi-faith prayer rooms. These policies are aligned with the principles outlined in the Manpower Law and Human Rights Law, ensuring that religious rights are not only respected but integrated into the corporate culture. Furthermore, the company's initiatives reflect the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which advocate for businesses to respect and protect the religious rights of their employees.

However, the situation is not without its challenges. For instance, PT Indofood, a leading food processing company, faced controversy when it failed to provide adequate accommodations for Muslim employees during Ramadan, particularly with regard to meal breaks during fasting hours. The company was taken to task by Komnas HAM (National Commission on Human Rights), which intervened and reminded the company of its obligations under Article 5(1) of the Manpower Law and Article 29 of the Constitution. This case highlights the tension between business operations and religious accommodation, particularly in industries where the nature of the work may conflict with religious practices.

In these cases, the role of Komnas HAM and the Industrial Relations Court has been crucial in mediating religious accommodation disputes. By enforcing national laws related to religious freedom and non-discrimination, these institutions help ensure that companies comply with legal requirements and protect workers' rights. In this context, the use of interfaith law as a conflict resolution tool has been effective, although the consistency of its application remains an ongoing concern.

C. *Best Practices for HR Managers in Managing Religious Diversity*

For Human Resource (HR) managers in Indonesia, developing policies that foster religious inclusion is vital. The first best practice is to explicitly incorporate religious accommodation provisions into company employee handbooks and codes of conduct. This includes clear guidelines on prayer times, religious holidays, and the provision of prayer rooms or spaces for reflection. By establishing such policies, companies not only comply with Law No. 13 of 2003 but also create an environment where religious diversity is viewed as an asset rather than a challenge.

HR managers should also prioritize training programs on religious sensitivity and diversity. These training programs should be mandatory for both employees and managers, as they are crucial for fostering a respectful workplace. The training should cover the legal rights of employees concerning religious practices and provide practical guidance on how to manage interfaith relationships in the workplace. Training on cultural competence and intergroup dialogue can also help employees appreciate religious differences and reduce the potential for misunderstandings or conflict.

Another critical aspect of managing religious diversity is the development of conflict resolution strategies. HR managers must establish clear, confidential channels for employees to report grievances related to religious discrimination. Mediation and dialogue are often the most effective methods for resolving such issues, with the involvement of neutral parties such as HR professionals or external mediators. These mechanisms align with principles of Organizational Justice, which emphasize the importance of fairness and transparency in managing workplace disputes. By fostering an open and inclusive dialogue around religious issues, HR managers can prevent conflicts before they escalate into legal disputes.

Additionally, companies like PT Astra International have successfully integrated religious diversity policies into their broader corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Astra has not only provided flexible working hours during religious holidays but has also supported interfaith activities that promote mutual

respect among employees. Such initiatives demonstrate how Organizational Justice Theory can be applied in practice: when employees perceive that their religious needs are being accommodated fairly, they are more likely to experience job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

In sum, HR managers play a critical role in ensuring that their companies comply with Indonesia's legal framework regarding religious diversity. By adopting proactive policies and best practices, they can create a workplace that is both legally compliant and culturally inclusive, which ultimately contributes to the company's overall success.

Implications of Interfaith Law for HR Practices

A. Impact on Recruitment and Hiring

The implementation of interfaith law significantly influences HR practices, particularly in the recruitment and hiring process. One of the primary implications is the need to ensure non-discriminatory recruitment practices, particularly with regard to religion. Indonesian law, such as Article 5 of the Manpower Law and the Human Rights Law of 1999, prohibits discrimination on the basis of religion. These legal frameworks mandate that HR professionals conduct recruitment processes that are inclusive and free from religious bias. Companies must ensure that recruitment advertisements, selection criteria, and hiring practices do not inadvertently favor one religion over others. The challenge is to establish a fair recruitment process that both adheres to legal requirements and accommodates the diversity of religious practices in a manner that is seen as equitable by all parties.

Moreover, creating a welcoming environment for diverse religious groups is essential to promoting inclusion and attracting talent from various religious backgrounds. An inclusive environment is not only a legal necessity but also a competitive advantage in the globalized economy. Companies with diverse religious representations are likely to benefit from broader perspectives and experiences, which can contribute to creativity and innovation. HR professionals must actively cultivate a

workplace that values diversity by promoting awareness programs, supporting religious diversity initiatives, and ensuring that recruitment policies do not inadvertently create barriers to employment for candidates from minority religious groups. For example, companies that provide prayer facilities, flexible holidays for different religious observances, and a respectful approach to religious symbols can attract talent from all faiths, thus fostering a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

B. Workplace Policies on Religious Observances

In the context of interfaith law, developing workplace policies that accommodate religious observances is a key challenge and responsibility for HR professionals. Legal provisions such as Article 29 of the Indonesian Constitution and Regulation No. 6 of 2016, which mandates religious accommodations, necessitate that companies ensure their policies are both inclusive and practical. This includes providing employees with the necessary time and space to practice their religious rituals, such as designated prayer times, fasting breaks, or facilities for religious worship. HR managers must navigate the challenge of accommodating these practices without compromising business efficiency. For instance, allowing Muslim employees to take time for prayers during the workday, or permitting flexible hours during Ramadan, may require careful planning and coordination to ensure business operations are not disrupted.

At the same time, policies on religious holidays must account for the different religious observances that employees may follow. For example, while Islamic holidays such as Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha are widely observed, other religious holidays like Christmas or Diwali may be less universally recognized but still significant for certain employees. A flexible work schedule that respects these observances without hindering business operations is a delicate balancing act. The introduction of rotating holidays, compensatory days off, or flexible work-from-home policies during religious observances can provide employees with the freedom to observe their traditions while maintaining productivity. By aligning policies with interfaith law and ensuring that they are adaptable to a range

of religious needs, companies not only comply with legal requirements but also demonstrate a commitment to respecting the religious identity of their employees.

C. Employee Relations and Conflict Management

Managing employee relations in a religiously diverse workplace requires HR professionals to proactively address potential conflicts that may arise from religious differences. The introduction of interfaith law into the workplace has led to greater emphasis on promoting religious tolerance and cooperation among employees. One of the most effective strategies for managing religious diversity is to encourage interfaith dialogue, which fosters mutual understanding and respect among employees of different faiths. According to Intergroup Contact Theory,[44] positive interactions between employees from different religious backgrounds can reduce prejudice and enhance workplace harmony. HR managers can facilitate such interactions through structured programs such as interfaith workshops, cultural exchange sessions, and team-building activities focused on religion and diversity.

In situations where religious conflicts do occur, HR managers must be equipped with effective conflict resolution strategies. Mediation is often the preferred method of resolving disputes, as it allows employees to voice their concerns in a neutral setting and find common ground. HR professionals must be trained in cultural sensitivity and conflict management techniques to handle religious disputes impartially. An essential aspect of mediation is the consideration of both legal rights and the cultural sensitivities of the involved parties. For example, in cases where employees disagree over religious practices such as dress codes or prayer breaks, HR managers can use legal frameworks such as Article 5 of the Manpower Law and Article 29 of the Constitution to guide their decisions while also addressing the emotional and cultural aspects of the conflict. Through these mediation strategies, HR managers

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[44] Pettigrew, Thomas F. "Future directions for intergroup contact theory and research." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 32 no. 3 (2008): 187-199.

can ensure that employees feel heard and respected, while also maintaining a cohesive work environment.

Challenges and Limitations of Interfaith Law

A. Legal and Cultural Barriers

One of the most significant challenges to the effective implementation of interfaith law in Indonesian workplaces is the potential conflict between legal provisions and deeply ingrained cultural practices. While Indonesian law guarantees freedom of religion and religious accommodation, the country's strong religious homogeneity can sometimes create tension between legal requirements and cultural expectations. In more conservative regions or industries, religious minorities may face subtle or overt resistance to expressing their beliefs at work. For example, the presence of religious symbols, such as Islamic headscarves or Christian crosses, can sometimes trigger resistance among certain groups within the workforce, despite the legal protections in place.

This cultural resistance poses a challenge for HR professionals who are tasked with implementing interfaith policies in a manner that is both legally compliant and culturally sensitive.[45] In some cases, employees may face informal discrimination or social exclusion for practicing their religion in ways that are not widely understood or accepted by their colleagues. To overcome these barriers, HR professionals need to engage in continuous education and advocacy, ensuring that both managers and employees understand the importance of religious inclusion, not only as a legal obligation but also as a cultural benefit that can enhance the workplace atmosphere.

B. Implementation Challenges

The implementation of interfaith law in Indonesian workplaces also faces practical challenges, particularly due to the

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[45] Hadi Kusuma, Jamaludin, and Sulistiyono Susilo. "Intercultural and religious sensitivity among young Indonesian interfaith groups." *Religions* 11 no. 1 (2020): 26;

lack of clear and standardized guidelines for managing religious diversity.[46] While the Manpower Law and Human Rights Law offer broad protections, they do not always provide the specific, actionable guidance that companies need to implement religious accommodations effectively. As a result, many companies lack detailed procedures for accommodating religious practices such as prayer times, fasting, or religious holidays. HR managers often have to interpret these laws on a case-by-case basis, which can lead to inconsistencies in how religious diversity is managed across different organizations.

Moreover, enforcement of religious diversity laws and regulations remains an ongoing issue. While legal frameworks exist, they are not always rigorously enforced in the private sector. For instance, companies may not face significant legal consequences if they fail to accommodate religious practices, unless a formal complaint is filed. This lack of enforcement weakens the efficacy of interfaith laws and makes it difficult for employees to hold their employers accountable for discriminatory practices. To address these challenges, there is a need for more comprehensive regulatory guidelines and stricter enforcement mechanisms to ensure that companies are fully compliant with religious accommodation laws.

C. *Potential for Legal Overreach*

A potential risk associated with interfaith law is the possibility of legal overreach, where government intervention could restrict the autonomy of businesses in managing their workplace policies. While it is important for laws to protect employees' religious rights, there must be a balance between legal protections and business needs. Overregulation could lead to unnecessary complexities and administrative burdens for companies, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises that lack the resources to implement extensive religious accommodation policies.

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[46] Ma'ruf, Azwar Amar. "Promoting interfaith dialogue and mitigating religious conflicts in Indonesia." *JLAST: Journal of Law and Social Transformation* 2 no. 1 (2024): 1-7; Dharta, Firdaus Yuni, et al. "MUI's fatwa on interfaith greetings and religious tolerance: can Indonesia find a middle ground?." *Frontiers in Communication* 10 (2025): 1537568.

Additionally, some businesses may feel that their operational flexibility is compromised if they are forced to accommodate too many religious observances. For instance, accommodating multiple religious holidays could disrupt schedules in industries that require continuous service or production, such as healthcare or manufacturing.[47] Striking a balance between religious accommodation and business efficiency is a critical challenge for HR professionals. In this regard, it is crucial for policymakers to ensure that interfaith law provides sufficient room for businesses to exercise discretion while ensuring that religious freedoms are not violated. This balance is necessary to prevent legal overreach from stifling the adaptability and autonomy of companies in Indonesia's diverse economic landscape.

Conclusion

In conclusion, interfaith law plays a crucial role in fostering religious diversity within Indonesian workplaces, serving as both a protective mechanism and a guide for promoting inclusivity. Despite its importance, there remain significant challenges related to legal and cultural barriers, lack of clear implementation guidelines, and resistance from certain groups. Best practices, such as non-discriminatory recruitment processes, flexible work schedules to accommodate religious observances, and conflict management strategies, are essential for navigating Indonesia's diverse religious landscape. However, these practices must be continually refined to address emerging issues, such as resistance to religious symbols or the complexities of accommodating multiple faith-based observances.

To strengthen interfaith law and improve HR management, it is essential to create more detailed regulatory guidelines that clarify religious accommodation requirements, as well as enhance enforcement mechanisms to hold companies accountable. Policy recommendations include introducing mandatory training programs on religious sensitivity, promoting interfaith dialogue,

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[47] Cash, Karen C., and George R. Gray. "A framework for accommodating religion and spirituality in the workplace." *Academy of Management Perspectives* 14 no. 3 (2000): 124-133. *See also* Lansing, Paul, and Maureen Feldman. "The ethics of accommodating employees' religious needs in the workplace." *Labor Law Journal* 48 no. 6 (1997): 371.

and ensuring workplace policies that respect the diverse needs of employees. Ultimately, a robust legal framework that encourages religious tolerance and inclusion is critical for building a harmonious and productive workforce, contributing not only to workplace well-being but also to Indonesia's broader social cohesion and economic growth.

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DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS
The authors state that there is no conflict of interest in the publication of this article.

GENERATIVE AI STATEMENT
This paper uses generative AI to explore religious diversity and interfaith law in Indonesian workplaces. AI helped refine the language, structure, and clarity of the analysis, ensuring a cohesive and accessible presentation. By combining legal insights and HR practices, the study identifies best practices for managing religious differences and fostering inclusion. The use of AI enhanced both data processing and the refinement of key concepts, offering valuable insights into how businesses can create more inclusive policies aligned with religious tolerance and equality in a multicultural setting.