

EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TOGETHERNESS ACTIVITIES IN STRENGTHENING SPIRITUAL BONDING AT BANK INDONESIA, NORTH MALUKU



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Abstract

This study aims to analyze employee perceptions of the effectiveness of togetherness activities in strengthening spiritual bonding, identify the factors that influence it, and understand the efforts made by the organization and employees at Bank Indonesia, North Maluku Province. This study used a qualitative method with a descriptive approach through interviews, observation, and documentation techniques. The results showed that employee perceptions of togetherness activities were considered positive and effective in strengthening spiritual bonding, which was reflected in an increased sense of togetherness, kinship, and emotional connectedness among employees. Diverse and flexible activities were able to create comfortable and meaningful interactions. Factors that influenced the effectiveness of activities included driving factors such as the role of leadership and internal employee motivation, inhibiting factors such as limited time and workload, and supporting factors such as a culture of togetherness and consistency in activity implementation. Efforts to increase effectiveness were carried out through structured programs, improving the quality of activities, providing motivation, and active employee participation in building social interactions. Thus, togetherness activities play an important role in building a harmonious, productive, and spiritually based work environment.

Keywords: Spiritual Bonding, Togetherness Activities, Employee Perceptions, Effectiveness

INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly complex and competitive work environment, organizations are required to excel not only intellectually and technically, but also spiritually. Workplace spirituality is a crucial foundation for developing positive work behaviors, as it is linked to employee loyalty, productivity, and integrity (Shohib, 2020). Workplace spirituality reflects organizational values internalized in the work culture, enabling employees to feel a meaningful connection with others and achieve personal wholeness and happiness at work (Babar et al., 2022).

As a central bank, Bank Indonesia plays a strategic role in maintaining monetary stability and the national financial system, thus requiring human resources who are not only professionally competent but also possess strong integrity and spirituality. Strengthening the spiritual aspect can be done through togetherness activities that encourage employees to understand the meaning of their work while building a sense of togetherness within the organization (Caracaş et al., 2009, in Raharjo et al., 2024). In this context, Bank Indonesia in North Maluku Province organizes various togetherness activities such as morning briefings with joint prayers, congregational prayers, spiritual studies, sports, and gatherings to strengthen spiritual bonds among employees.

Previous research has shown that spirituality built through values of togetherness, harmony, and meaningfulness can strengthen interpersonal relationships, increase engagement, and encourage positive moral behavior (Lata & Chaudhary, 2020). Therefore, organizations need to develop a holistic work climate so that spiritual values can be optimally internalized in work activities (Garg, 2017, in Pratidina et al., 2023).

However, based on initial observations during the internship, the implementation of togetherness activities at Bank Indonesia in North Maluku Province has not been optimal. Although activities have been carried out routinely, employee participation remains uneven due to work commitments. This indicates that the activities' effectiveness in building spiritual and emotional bonds has not been optimal.

On the other hand, the results of initial interviews showed that the activities were perceived positively by employees. One informant stated that the togetherness activities *“besides relieving fatigue from work routines, also serve as a form of togetherness to strengthen the sense of brotherhood as a large family of the Bank Indonesia Representative Office of North Maluku Province”* (Organic Employee). Another informant added that the activities *“are very helpful in strengthening relationships among fellow employees considering that sometimes family members are also included and there are prizes given”* (Organic Employee). In addition, religious activities such as BI Religi are also considered important for maintaining relationships, as stated that *“Every Monday and Thursday we have BI Religi activities such as religious studies and congregational prayers which are expected to continue to maintain relationships among employees”* (Non-Organic Employee). This indicates that togetherness activities are perceived positively not only in strengthening social relationships, but also as a means of recreation and spiritual reflection for employees.

The discrepancy between positive employee perceptions and suboptimal participation levels indicates a gap between expectations and implementation of togetherness activities. Therefore, this study aims to analyze employees' perceptions of the effectiveness of togetherness activities in strengthening spiritual bonding, identify factors that influence this effectiveness, and determine the efforts made by the organization and employees to improve

the effectiveness of togetherness activities at Bank Indonesia in North Maluku Province. The findings of this study are expected to provide practical recommendations in improving the effectiveness of togetherness activities to create a harmonious and spiritually-based work environment, as well as contribute to the development of spirituality studies in the workplace, particularly related to spiritual bonding in the context of public organizations.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Spiritual bonds in an organizational context can be understood as a manifestation of the concept of workplace spirituality, which emphasizes the individual's inner dimension as an integral part of work activities. Spirituality is understood as an individual's experience in finding meaning, purpose, and moral values derived from transcendent values (Kadir, 2023). In an organizational context, spirituality is reflected in an individual's ability to bring their whole selves to work, so that work becomes not only a formal activity but also a means of developing meaning in life (Prakoso, 2018). Ashmos and Duchon (2000 in Shohib, 2020) emphasize that workplace spirituality encompasses an inner life that develops through meaningful work and interconnected social relationships. This condition encourages the formation of relationships based on trust, caring, and togetherness, which are important foundations of organizational dynamics.

Over time, workplace spirituality has not only impacted individuals but also fostered deeper interpersonal relationships between employees, known as spiritual bonding. Spiritual bonding refers to the emotional, ethical, and spiritual attachment between individuals built on shared values, fostering harmonious and meaningful relationships (Mulyadi, 2025). This bond is formed through emotional connectedness and universal values such as empathy, shared goals, and a sense of belonging within the work community (Koul, 2024). Furthermore, relationships based on trust and emotional support strengthen a sense of togetherness and psychological safety within the workplace (Setiabudhi et al., 2022). Thus, spiritual bonding is a crucial element connecting the individual's spiritual dimension with the social dynamics of the organization.

The effectiveness of spiritual bonding in an organization is measured not only by the achievement of work goals but also by the success of building quality interpersonal relationships. Effectiveness itself refers to the level of success of an effort in achieving predetermined goals (Fathia, 2025). In an organizational context, the effectiveness of interpersonal relationships is a crucial foundation for creating deeper bonds between individuals, characterized by openness, empathy, and positive communication (Nasichah et al., 2024). Spirituality in the workplace contributes to the formation of relationships that are not only formal but also based on moral values and empathy, thereby strengthening emotional and social bonds between employees (Otae-Ebede et al., 2020). Furthermore, the implementation of workplace spirituality has been shown to improve psychological well-being, job satisfaction, and create a more harmonious and conducive work environment (Syahir et al., 2025). In line with this, Muqoffa (2024) stated that spirituality in the workplace contributes to increasing organizational effectiveness, loyalty, job satisfaction, and creating a conducive work environment. Thus, the effectiveness of spiritual bonding can be understood as the organization's success in building spiritual bonds between employees through quality interpersonal relationships and the application of spiritual values in the workplace.

The formation of spiritual bonding is influenced by various interrelated factors, both at the individual and organizational levels. Workplace spirituality encompasses experiences of wholeness, connectedness, and deep values that guide employee behavior, reflected in the meaning of work, togetherness, and alignment between individual and organizational values (Milliman et al., 2003, in Sofiana, 2024). Intrapersonal factors such as self-awareness and personal values, interpersonal factors in the form of supportive social relationships, and institutional factors such as organizational culture and value-based leadership are key determinants in shaping spirituality in the workplace (Khotimah, 2025). Furthermore, there are three main dimensions that strengthen spiritual bonding: meaningful work, a sense of community, and alignment with organizational values (Milliman et al., 2003 in Fanggidae, 2023). These three dimensions demonstrate that spiritual bonding is formed not only from the meaning of work but also from a sense of togetherness and alignment of values between the individual and the organization, which ultimately drives employee commitment, loyalty, and engagement.

To increase the effectiveness of spiritual bonding, organizations need to integrate practices that support the strengthening of spiritual values in the workplace. Activities such as self-reflection, mindfulness, and internalization of ethical values have been shown to increase employee engagement and strengthen interpersonal relationships (Syahir et al., 2025). Furthermore, creating a spiritually conducive organizational climate can reduce stress levels and improve employee psychological well-being, which impacts the quality of work relationships (Thanki & Pestonjee, 2022). The role of leadership is also crucial in fostering the formation of these values through a meaning-oriented approach and work ethics (Pertiwi et al., 2025). Therefore, strategic organizational efforts to integrate spiritual values are key to increasing the effectiveness of employee bonding.

Togetherness activities are collective activities aimed not only at achieving organizational goals but also at building social relationships, a sense of belonging, and cooperation between individuals (Nugroho & Pramesti, 2024). Through shared experiences, individuals can develop stronger emotional connections and strengthen collective identity within the organization (Nyman, 2020). In an organizational context, togetherness activities such as religious activities, routine interactions, and other collective activities serve as social spaces that enable the internalization of spiritual values while strengthening bonds between employees.

In this context, employee perception and participation are supporting factors that determine the success of implementing togetherness activities. Perception is an individual's cognitive process in understanding and giving meaning to their surroundings (Puspitasari et al., 2023), thus influencing how employees assess and respond to the activities carried out. Meanwhile, participation reflects an individual's active involvement in every organizational activity, demonstrating commitment and a sense of belonging to the organization (Shairiyah, 2026). Thus, the effectiveness of togetherness activities in strengthening spiritual bonding is determined by the extent to which employees understand and are actively involved in these activities.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a descriptive qualitative approach. A qualitative approach aims to explore and understand the meaning of a social phenomenon from an individual or group

perspective (Creswell, 2018), while a descriptive approach is used to describe facts systematically, factually, and accurately (Sugiyono, 2013). This approach was used to understand employee perceptions regarding the effectiveness of Togetherness activities in strengthening spiritual bonding in the workplace.

The unit of analysis in this study is the employees of Bank Indonesia, North Maluku Province, both organic and non-organic. Informants were selected purposively based on the following criteria: (1) actively participating in Togetherness activities, (2) understanding their implementation, and (3) experiencing the development of spiritual values in the work environment. There were five informants from the Internal Management Unit (UMI), the Rupiah Money Management Unit (PUR), and the Public Relations Unit, with varying positions ranging from management to assistant manager/section head, to obtain diverse perspectives.

Data collection techniques in qualitative research are essentially carried out through observation, interviews, and documentation (Sugiyono, 2013). In this study, observations were conducted directly during the internship period at Bank Indonesia, North Maluku Province, from February 2 to June 2, 2025, by observing interactions between employees, participation in togetherness activities, and a work atmosphere that reflects spiritual and community values. Interviews were conducted semi-structured using open-ended questions to both organic and non-organic employees who were actively involved in togetherness activities. The interview process was conducted face-to-face and through online media such as telephone, chat, Zoom, and Google Meet, with the help of writing tools and recorders to ensure data accuracy, while documentation was used as supporting data derived from official documents, social media, and activity archives.

Data analysis used the interactive model of Miles & Huberman (1992 in Alamsyah, 2023), which includes continuous data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was tested through source triangulation by comparing interview results between informants from different backgrounds to ensure the consistency and credibility of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Employee Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Togetherness Activities

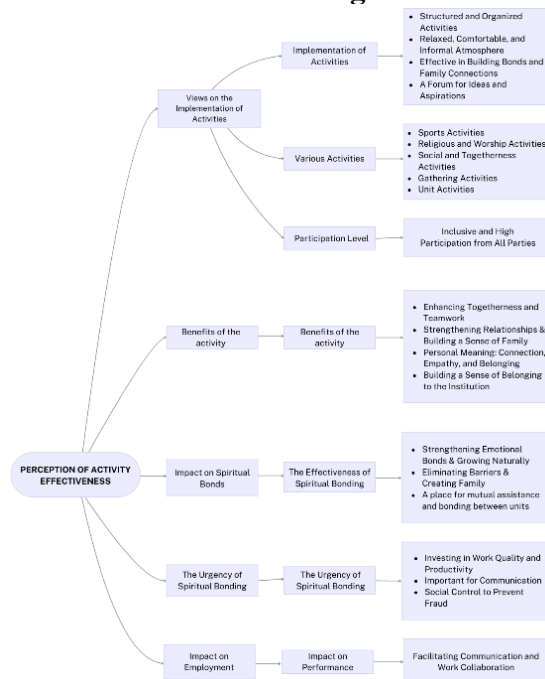


Figure 1.

Data Display on Employees Perceptions of Togetherness Activities

Employee Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Togetherness Activities Research results indicate that Togetherness activities at Bank Indonesia in North Maluku Province are perceived as effective in strengthening spiritual bonds among employees. This effectiveness is reflected in the diversity of activities encompassing sports, religious, social, and intellectual aspects, structured yet relaxed implementation, and inclusive participation from all organizational elements. This is reflected in the statements of informants 1 and 5 regarding the implementation of "routine exercise, joint worship, religious studies, and annual gatherings." The findings indicate that activities are designed in a multidimensional and sustainable manner. This diversity of activities demonstrates that the organization not only meets the physical and social needs of employees but also accommodates the overall spiritual dimension. This finding is in line with the opinion of Milliman et al. (2003, in Sofiana, 2024) that the concept of spirituality in the workplace emphasizes the connectedness and wholeness of individuals in the workplace, where employees can display all aspects of themselves in the work environment.

Furthermore, the relaxed and informal atmosphere of the activities encouraged more open, egalitarian, and authentic interactions. This strengthened interpersonal relationships, not only formal but also grounded in empathy and togetherness. Voluntary participation and the involvement of all organizational elements demonstrated that the togetherness activities had been internalized as a work culture. This involvement was also demonstrated through participation that "involved all parties, from employees to support staff," as conveyed by informant 1, thus strengthening a sense of togetherness across roles. This finding reinforces the formation of a sense of belonging and togetherness resulting from shared collective

experiences (Nyman, 2020). Thus, the effectiveness of togetherness activities is determined not only by the program implemented but also by the meaning generated from these shared experiences.

In terms of benefits, Togetherness activities have been shown to improve teamwork, strengthen relationships between employees, and build a sense of family within the organization. Employees feel an emotional connection that fosters a sense of belonging to the organization, even viewing the office as a "second home." This is reinforced by the statements of informants 3 and 4 that work relationships have become "closer, less awkward, and feel like a family." This finding aligns with the opinion of Milliman et al. (2003 in Fanggida, 2023) who reflected the formation of a sense of community characterized by trust, caring, and emotional connectedness in the work environment. Furthermore, Togetherness activities also serve as a means of social adaptation, especially for new employees, thereby accelerating the process of socialization and integration within the organization.

The deeper meaning of this finding is the formation of spiritual bonding, namely a meaningful relationship that impacts employee commitment and attachment to the organization (Mulyadi, 2025). This spiritual bonding is not only formed through formal religious activities, but also through informal daily interactions such as gathering, chatting, and joking in a relaxed atmosphere. This finding shows that spiritual bonds can grow naturally through interpersonal relationships based on the values of togetherness and sincerity. Furthermore, togetherness activities can also eliminate structural barriers within the organization, such as differences in employee status or work units, thereby creating a more inclusive, harmonious, and integrated work environment.

In an organizational context, spiritual bonding plays a strategic role as an investment in work quality and a social control mechanism. Strong bonds between employees foster a collective awareness of maintaining integrity and the courage to remind each other to carry out tasks. This finding is in line with Otaye-Ebede et al.'s (2020) view that workplace spirituality can strengthen individuals' prosocial behavior and moral judgment. Thus, spiritual bonding not only serves to strengthen interpersonal relationships but also serves as a foundation for maintaining organizational quality and integrity.

Furthermore, the spiritual bonding formed through Togetherness activities also improves work quality, particularly in employee communication and collaboration. Emotional closeness makes communication more open and flexible without diminishing professionalism. As informant 5 stated, when a bond is formed, "work communication becomes more fluid, less rigid, but remains serious." This finding suggests that spiritual bonding not only has social and spiritual significance but also makes a significant contribution to organizational effectiveness. This aligns with research by Rifuddin et al. (2022), which shows that workplace spirituality strengthens employee attachment, which impacts the quality of work interactions. Thus, Togetherness activities can be understood as a strategic instrument that not only strengthens relationships between employees but also improves overall organizational performance.

Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of Togetherness Activities

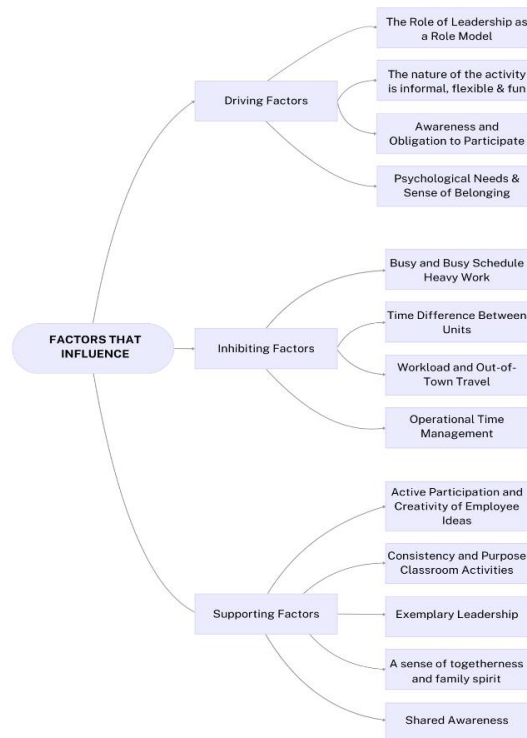


Figure 2.

Data Display of Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of Togetherness Activities

The research results show that the effectiveness of Togetherness activities is influenced by a combination of driving, inhibiting, and supporting factors that interact to shape the level of participation and quality of interactions between employees. These findings indicate that the success of Togetherness activities is not determined by a single factor, but rather is the result of dynamics involving structural, cultural, and individual aspects within the organization.

The primary motivating factor identified was participatory leadership and role modelling. The presence of leaders in activities, coupled with a non-coercive approach, has been shown to foster intrinsic employee motivation to participate. This is reflected in Informant 1's statement that leaders are "always present, supportive and not pushy," so that activities are perceived as important to participate in. This finding is in line with Rahmawati et al. (2024) view that participatory leadership can increase individual engagement by creating an inclusive and supportive environment. Furthermore, direct leadership involvement contributes to strengthening a sense of community, so that activities are viewed not only as formal activities but also as spaces for socially and emotionally meaningful interactions. Thus, leadership functions not only as a director but also as a catalyst in building social cohesion within the organization.

Furthermore, the flexible, informal, and enjoyable nature of the activities was a significant motivating factor. Flexibility allowed employees to tailor their participation to their workload, while the relaxed atmosphere created a more open space for interaction. Informant 1 described the activities as "not too formal, flexible" and still respecting work-

life balance. This environment supported the formation of more positive interpersonal relationships through effective and empathetic communication (Nasischah et al., 2024). This finding strengthens the argument that a relaxed interaction environment can improve the quality of social relations within an organization. On the other hand, internal factors such as individual awareness, sense of responsibility, and the psychological need to interact indicate that participation is not solely influenced by external factors but also by the intrinsic drive inherent in each individual. This underscores the importance of the psychological dimension in understanding employee participatory behavior.

On the other hand, the main inhibiting factors identified were time constraints, busy workloads, and differences in workloads between units, all factors influencing the implementation of Togetherness activities. Informants stated that time adjustments were a major obstacle because each unit had different workloads and characteristics, making it difficult to involve all employees simultaneously. Variations in job characteristics and the complexity of organizational structures meant that not all employees had equal opportunities to participate optimally. This finding was also supported by Chandra and Kumar (2025), who showed that workload and job stress influenced involvement in informal activities. Therefore, the effectiveness of Togetherness activities depends not only on the activity design but also on the extent to which the organization is able to manage the distribution of workload and time proportionally.

Meanwhile, supporting factors include active employee participation and creativity, consistent activity implementation, clarity of objectives, exemplary leadership, and an internalized "one family" culture. Active participation reflects a sense of belonging to the organization, which contributes to improving the quality of interactions and social bonds among employees. Consistent activity implementation also plays a role in forming collective habits that strengthen social relationships through repeated shared experiences. Furthermore, a family culture is an important foundation because it creates a supportive, warm, and mutually supportive work environment, thus enabling the formation of a deeper emotional connection (sense of community). These findings indicate that organizational culture plays a strategic role in supporting the sustainability and effectiveness of Togetherness activities.

Efforts to Increase the Effectiveness of Togetherness Activities

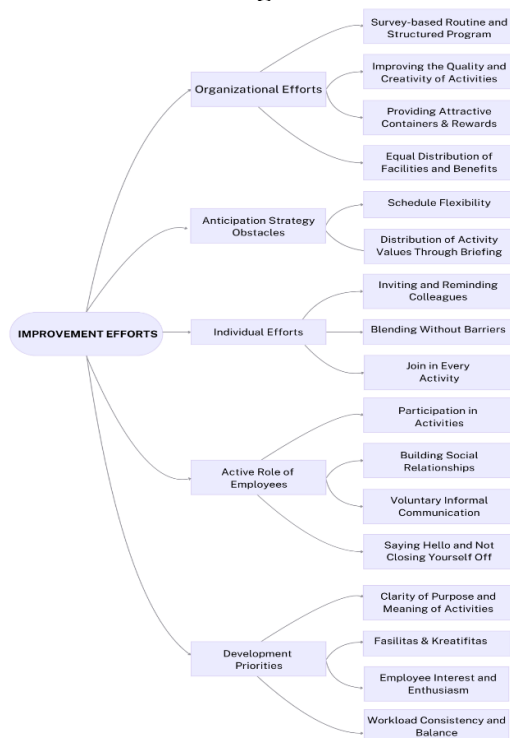


Figure 3.

Data Display of Efforts to Increase the Effectiveness of Togetherness Activities

Research findings indicate that efforts to increase the effectiveness of Togetherness activities in strengthening spiritual bonding at Bank Indonesia, North Maluku Province, are the result of structured, sustainable, and values-based synergy between the organization and employees. The organization's efforts to build effectiveness are carried out through structured, sustainable, and employee-needs-based program design. Routine activities such as group prayer and morning briefings serve not only as formal activities but also as a means of cultivating values that strengthen inter-employee connectedness. This approach demonstrates that the success of activities lies in the alignment of individual and organizational values, as explained in the concept of alignment with organizational values (Milliman et al., 2003 in Fanggidae, 2023). Consistently practicing spiritual activities also strengthens the internalization of values and employee loyalty (Mulyadi, 2025), so that Togetherness activities have a sustainable impact.

Furthermore, improving the quality of activities through creative concepts, providing facilities, and adding value, such as competent presenters, demonstrates that organizations focus not only on participation but also on the quality of the resulting experience. Engaging and relevant activities encourage meaningful work, where employees engage not only physically but also emotionally and value-wise (Milliman et al., 2003 in Fanggidae, 2023). Organizational support through providing a platform for interests and hobbies and providing rewards also strengthens employee engagement, as employees feel a sense of fulfillment of personal values in the work environment (Rifuddin et al., 2022). Furthermore, implementing the principle of equality through equal distribution of facilities and opportunities expands

inclusive interactions, which, according to Nasichah et al. (2024), are the foundation for harmonious and quality interpersonal relationships.

However, the effectiveness of activities is inseparable from structural limitations such as time and workload. In response, organizations are shifting their focus from physical presence to internalizing values. Values of togetherness are still conveyed through routine communication, such as morning briefings, so activities remain impactful even if not attended by all employees. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of activities is determined more by the extent to which these values are understood and felt, rather than solely by the level of participation. This aligns with Mulyadi (2025) view that spiritual bonding is formed through a consistent process of internalizing values.

From an individual perspective, the effectiveness of activities is strengthened by employee initiatives in building togetherness through mutual engagement, reminders, and mingling without barriers. Informal interactions that occur in daily life also play a crucial role in building connectedness, which is the core of workplace spirituality (Milliman et al., 2003, in Sofiana, 2024). Furthermore, the active role of employees through communication, caring, and social engagement demonstrates that spiritual bonding develops from interactions grounded in human values such as empathy and trust.

Thus, the effectiveness of Togetherness activities can be understood as the result of the interaction between organizational design and individual involvement in bringing shared values to life. Activities that have clear objectives, are participatory, and are implemented consistently but not burdensome have been shown to be more effective in creating meaningful experiences for employees. Academically, these findings confirm that spiritual bonding in the workplace is not formed instantly, but rather through an integrated social process involving organizational structure, quality of interactions, and ongoing internalization of values.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, employee perceptions of the effectiveness of Togetherness activities at Bank Indonesia, North Maluku Province, showed a positive and effective assessment in strengthening spiritual bonding. This is reflected in employee experiences with diverse activities, encompassing physical, spiritual, social, and intellectual aspects, and carried out in a structured yet relaxed, inclusive, and informal manner. These conditions encourage active participation and create comfortable interactions, so that activities do not only become routine but also a means of strengthening relationships, improving teamwork, and fostering a sense of belonging to the institution. These findings reinforce the importance of a holistic approach in building spiritual bonds in the workplace, while having practical implications for improving work quality, communication, and collaboration among employees.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of Togetherness activities is influenced by interacting driving, inhibiting, and supporting factors. These driving factors include the participatory role of leadership, the flexible and enjoyable nature of the activities, and internal employee motivation. However, major obstacles include time constraints, dense workloads, and differences in characteristics between units, indicating structural and managerial challenges. On the other hand, supporting factors such as active participation, employee creativity, clarity of activity objectives, and a culture of togetherness contribute to the success of the activities.

These findings confirm that the effectiveness of organizational activities is influenced by a combination of individual and structural factors, while practically requiring organizations to manage time and activity design adaptively.

Furthermore, efforts to increase effectiveness are carried out synergistically between the organization and employees. The organization plays a role through structured programs, improving the quality of activities, and a flexible approach, while employees contribute through active participation, social initiatives, and open communication. Going forward, clarity of objectives, consistency of implementation, balanced with workload, and increased interactivity and creativity are needed. The limitations of this study lie in the limited number of informants and the specific context; therefore, further research is recommended to expand the participants and scope of the study.

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