



Navigating Human Resource Transformation in Indonesia's Hybrid Work Era

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the transformation of human resource management (HRM) in Indonesia's hybrid work era, focusing on adaptation strategies, performance management, and employee engagement. Using a qualitative multi-case study of three organizations—a bank in Jakarta, a university in Semarang, and a telecommunications company in Surabaya—data were collected through interviews, observations, and document analysis. The findings reveal key challenges in managing work flexibility, digital technology use, and balancing productivity with employee well-being. Effective strategies include digital-based performance systems, adaptive flexibility policies, and a collaborative culture. The study concludes that successful HRM transformation in hybrid settings requires continuous innovation and adaptive leadership to support sustainable organizational policies.

INTRODUCTION

Major changes in global work patterns in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic have forced organizations to adjust the way they operate. One prominent form of adaptation is the implementation of hybrid work, where employees divide their time between working in the office and working remotely. In Indonesia, this transition has become increasingly crucial due to the impact of mobility restriction policies during the pandemic that required organizations to be more flexible while maintaining the welfare of the workforce. The results of surveys in several major cities such as Jakarta, Surabaya, and Bogor show fluctuations in satisfaction and productivity levels after the hybrid system was implemented (Dwinugraha & Lastiati, 2023). Meanwhile, international research underlines that hybrid work can improve work-life balance when supported by adaptive human resource policies and adequate digital infrastructure (Wang et al., 2021). However, challenges that cannot be ignored include communication barriers, decreased face-to-face interactions, and the risk of decreased employee engagement if organizational culture is not managed properly (Febriana, 2022; Spataro, 2021).

Although more and more research highlights hybrid working in terms of job satisfaction or motivation, there are still gaps in studies that address the transformation of human resource management as a whole. For example, research by Susanto et al., (2022) on state-owned companies only emphasizes adaptability and commitment factors, while strategic dimensions such as performance management and the formation of a new work culture have not been explored. Another study by Ruchiyat (2024) that focuses on startups focuses more on developing strategic human capital, but has not paid attention to the differences in challenges between sectors. Literature research by Hasyim and Bakri (2023) even confirms that contextual factors such as urban location, technological readiness, and organizational capacity can greatly influence the success of hybrid work, but this is still rarely empirically tested through a multi-case approach. As such, a more comprehensive study is needed to understand how organizations are actually navigating this transformation.

In addition to organizational factors, the dynamics of government policies and the acceleration of digitalization have also shaped the new face of the Indonesian workforce. The digital transformation program launched by the government, for example through the "Making Indonesia 4.0" roadmap, encourages many companies to invest in communication technology and online collaboration platforms (Ministry of Industry of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022). However, the reality is that implementation in the field does not always go smoothly. In big cities such as Jakarta, Semarang, and Surabaya, organizations face digital competency gaps, uneven infrastructure, and resistance from some employees who are used to conventional work culture (Andriany et al., 2023). This makes the implementation of hybrid work in Indonesia different from developed countries that are more technologically and culturally prepared (Choudhury et al., 2021). Therefore, a more contextual understanding is needed so that the transformation strategy implemented does not just imitate the global model, but is in accordance with local realities.

This research aims to explore how organizations in various sectors and major cities in Indonesia manage the transformation of human resource management in the hybrid work era. The focus of the research includes adaptation strategies carried out by leaders and human resource management units, digital-based performance management mechanisms, and how to maintain employee involvement in the midst of work flexibility. In addition, the research will also explore the challenges that arise, ranging from communication barriers to differences in readiness between sectors. Case studies will be conducted in banking, higher education, and telecommunications sector organizations in cities such as Jakarta, Semarang, and Surabaya to provide a richer cross-context picture.

Furthermore, the urgency of this research is related to the global demand for organizations to be more agile and resilient in the face of uncertainty. Hybrid work is not only a technical change in the workplace, but also a paradigm transformation regarding productivity, collaboration, and life balance. Recent research shows that organizations that are able to adapt their human resource policies to digital technologies tend to be more competitive in a sustainable manner (Chang & Wang, 2023; Waizenegger et al., 2020). However, in developing countries such as Indonesia, limited digital investment costs, labor regulations that are not yet fully adaptive, and hierarchical work culture are still obstacles (Liu & Chen, 2024). This gap needs to be bridged through empirical research based on real cases in order to produce more applicable recommendations.

Theoretically, this research is expected to enrich the academic framework regarding the transformation of human resource management, especially in the aspects of organizational culture, adaptive leadership, and employee engagement in hybrid work. In addition, this research can expand the application of agile organizational theory in the context of developing countries. From a practical perspective, the research findings are expected to provide guidance for managers, leaders, and policymakers in designing hybrid work policies that are more balanced, effective, and in accordance with local conditions. Using a multi-case approach, this study will combine in-depth interviews, observations, and analysis of organizational documents to present contextual and comprehensive data.

The novelty of this research lies in the integration of cross-urban and sectoral analysis that is rarely done in Indonesia. By combining aspects of policy adaptation, technology application, and work culture formation, this research seeks to make an empirical contribution that is not only relevant to the academic literature, but also practical to organizations. Adaptive leadership and continuous innovation are seen as the key to success, especially in the face of the complexity of work in the hybrid era (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2021; Liu & Chen, 2024). Thus, this research has the potential to be a bridge between theory and practice, as well as provide direction for organizations in Indonesia to navigate work transformation with more confidence.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Human Resource Management Transformation in the Digital Era

The transformation of human resource management cannot be separated from the acceleration of digitalization that changes almost all aspects of the organization. Recent research emphasizes that digitalization is forcing organizations to redesign performance management practices, reward systems, and communication mechanisms to fit the needs of flexible working (Kelliher et al., 2020). According to Tavoletti et al. (2021), technology adaptation is not just an addition to infrastructure, but a strategic process that integrates technology with work culture. This is even more important in the hybrid work era, where the human resource management system must be able to facilitate coordination across locations and times.

Hybrid Work Dynamics in Developing Countries

The implementation of hybrid work in developing countries faces different challenges compared to developed countries. Limited infrastructure, inflexible labor regulations, and digital competency gaps are the main obstacles (Nguyen et al., 2021). Research in Southeast Asia shows that differences in technology access between regions also affect the success of remote and hybrid work (Rahim et al., 2022). In Indonesia itself, the still hierarchical work culture factor slows down the adaptation process, because traditional leadership patterns tend to rely on direct control (Yuliani & Hartono, 2023). Therefore, the transformation of human resource management needs to consider local conditions so that it does not simply adopt global practices.

Employee Engagement and Well-Being in Hybrid Work

One of the main issues in hybrid work is maintaining employee engagement and their psychological well-being. According to Chung and van der Lippe (2020), flexibility can increase job satisfaction when supported by role clarity and effective communication. However, research by Parker et al. (2022) warns that hybrid work can lead to social isolation, potentially lowering employee motivation and attachment to the organization. A study by Putri and Wahyudi (2023) in Indonesian technology companies shows that organizational support in the form of digital training and welfare programs has a significant effect on the level of engagement in the hybrid work system.

Adaptive Leadership and Organizational Culture

The success of human resource management transformation also relies heavily on adaptive leadership and the formation of a new organizational culture. According to Carnevale and Hatak (2020), responsive leadership is able to create trust in the midst of the uncertainty of remote work. Furthermore, Leonardi's (2021) research confirms that the formation of a collaborative culture is the foundation for reducing communication fragmentation in hybrid work. In Indonesia, the Nugroho study (2024) emphasizes the importance of work unit leaders in directing the transition to a digital work culture, so that innovation can go hand in hand with increasing productivity.

Research Gaps and Multi-Case Urgency

Although the literature on hybrid work is growing, most research is still focused on the context of developed countries or on single aspects such as job satisfaction and productivity (Galanti et al., 2021). Cross-sectoral and cross-urban studies in developing countries are still rare, even though the local context greatly influences the success of the implementation of hybrid work (Saks, 2022). Thus, multi-case studies in Indonesia's major cities are important to fill these gaps, as well as make an empirical contribution to organizational transformation theory and human resource management practices.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study uses a qualitative approach with a multi-case study design, which is considered appropriate to understand in depth the phenomenon of human resource management transformation in the context of hybrid work in Indonesia. The design of the case study allows researchers to compare differences in practices between organizations, while also finding strategic patterns that emerge in various contexts (Yin, 2021). This approach was chosen because hybrid work is a complex phenomenon influenced by organizational culture, management policies, and technological readiness (Torraco, 2020). Thus, this research is not only descriptive, but also analytical in finding the main themes related to organizational adaptation in the hybrid work era.

Research Sites and Cases

The study was conducted on three organizations that were selected purposively with consideration of sector diversity and digital readiness. First, banking companies in Jakarta were chosen because the financial sector faces strict regulatory pressures and the need to accelerate digital transformation. Second, universities in Semarang represent the education sector, which is experiencing significant challenges in integrating learning and administration into a hybrid system. Third, telecommunication companies in Surabaya were chosen because they are considered more ready to face hybrid work, but still face challenges in maintaining a balance of productivity and employee well-being (Kniffin et al., 2021). The selection of these different organizational contexts enriches the understanding of the variety of strategies and challenges in the implementation of hybrid work.

Participants

The study participants were selected using purposive sampling techniques based on their direct involvement in the implementation of the hybrid work policy. There were a total of 18 informants, which were divided into: 6 people from banking companies in Jakarta (2 HR managers, 2 work unit leaders, 2 employees), 6 people from universities in Semarang (2 heads of faculty/departments, 2 HR staff, 2 lecturers/administrative employees), and 6 people from telecommunications companies in Surabaya (2 HR managers, 2 team leaders, 2 operational employees). The purposive sampling approach allows

researchers to obtain relevant information from individuals who have direct experience related to research phenomena (Palinkas et al., 2021). The number of participants is determined until data saturation is achieved, which is when the interview no longer produces significant new information.

Data Collection

Data collection was carried out through three main techniques, namely in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis. In-depth interviews were conducted with semi-structured guidance to explore participants' experiences related to adaptation strategies, performance management, and employee engagement in hybrid work. Observations are carried out in the work environment of each organization to understand the dynamics of employee interaction and policy implementation in real terms. Meanwhile, document analysis includes internal policies, performance reports, and hybrid working guidelines owned by the organization. The use of these three techniques is also a triangulation strategy to increase the validity of research (Creswell & Poth, 2021).

Data Analysis

Data analysis is carried out through thematic analysis, which allows researchers to identify key patterns and themes from qualitative data. The analysis process begins with the reduction of data from interviews, observations, and documents, then continues with the coding process to find important categories. Furthermore, a cross-case analysis was carried out by comparing the findings of the three organizations to find similarities and differences in the transformation strategy of human resource management (Nowell et al., 2022). The final result of the analysis is in the form of conclusions that connect empirical findings with the theoretical framework of human resource management in the context of hybrid work.

Trustworthiness

To ensure the validity of the research, four trustworthiness criteria are used, namely credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 2020). Credibility is maintained through data triangulation and information collection techniques. Transferability is strengthened by providing detailed contextual descriptions so that research results can be understood in a broader context. Dependability is maintained by keeping audit trails of the entire research process, while confirmability is maintained through the researcher's critical reflection to minimize bias. This approach is in line with the latest qualitative research standards that emphasize transparency and reliability in the research process (Korstjens & Moser, 2021).

RESEARCH RESULTS

Organizational Adaptation Strategy in Hybrid Work

The results of the study show that the three organizations pursued different adaptation strategies according to the characteristics of the sector and their operational needs. In banking companies in Jakarta, the adaptation strategy is focused on implementing a flexible working hours policy combined with a

digital attendance system. The system is intended to ensure regulatory compliance, while still making room for employees to work remotely. One HR manager said: *"We continue to implement digital attendance even though employees are working from home. The goal is to maintain discipline while providing flexibility so that they can manage their working hours better"* (MP-01, interview July 12, 2025).

In universities in Semarang, the main focus of adaptation lies in the integration of online learning technology and an administrative system based on the Learning Management System (LMS). However, resistance is still encountered, especially from senior lecturers. To overcome this, universities organize intensive training. A senior lecturer said: *"The LMS system was good, but I struggled a bit at first. Fortunately, the campus provides training, so slowly I can adapt"* (DU-04, interview July 20, 2025).

Meanwhile, telecommunication companies in Surabaya emphasize the flexibility of work locations (work from anywhere) with adequate digital device support. The company also conducted work rotation trials to maintain team collaboration. A team leader explained: *"We provide the option for team members to work from anywhere, but every month there is a work rotation so that everyone still has direct interaction"* (PT-02, interview August 5, 2025). Thus, while both emphasize flexibility, the focus of adaptation is different: regulatory compliance in banking, technology integration in universities, and full flexibility in telecommunications.

Performance Management in the Hybrid Era

In terms of performance management, this study found that there are variations in implementation between organizations. In Jakarta banking companies, employee performance is monitored through an internal dashboard-based application that allows monitoring of individual and team targets in real time. The system reinforces transparency, but some employees feel burdened as targets become stricter. One employee said: *"Our targets are easier to monitor now, but to be honest the pressure is also increasing. It seems that the boss can immediately know who is left behind"* (KP-06, interview July 14, 2025).

In Semarang universities, performance is assessed through academic reports and digital administration achievements. However, there is still debate about the consistency of performance indicators, especially in assessing lecturers who work in a hybrid manner. An HR staff member said: *"The performance appraisal is not yet fully clear. For lecturers who mostly teach online, there are often differences in the interpretation of the assessment standards"* (SU-02, interview July 18, 2025).

Meanwhile, in Surabaya telecommunications companies, digital-based Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been implemented that are more flexible, including team collaboration and innovation assessments. Operational employees consider this to be fairer: *"Here what is judged is not only the work of the individual, but also how we can collaborate. It makes the system feel fairer"* (KT-06, August 7, 2025 interview). This difference shows that while digitalization makes it easier to monitor performance, perceptions of the fairness of the assessment system still vary between sectors.

Employee Engagement and Well-being

Research has found that hybrid work affects engagement and well-being levels in diverse ways across sectors. In Jakarta banking, employees recognize the benefits of hybrid work because it gives them more time with their families. However, psychological pressure due to increasingly stringent targets is also felt. One employee said: *"I have been able to be with my family more often since the hybrid was implemented, but the pressure of work is also getting heavier because the targets feel tighter"* (KP-05, interview July 13, 2025).

At Semarang universities, some senior lecturers feel socially isolated due to reduced direct interaction with students and colleagues. However, the existence of digital mentoring programs helps reduce these barriers. One of the lecturers explained: *"Since teaching hybrid, I rarely meet students in person. Sometimes it feels lonely, but the digital mentoring program is quite helpful"* (DU-03, interview July 21, 2025).

In contrast to the previous two sectors, employees of telecommunication companies in Surabaya show a relatively high level of engagement. This is associated with the organization's support in the form of mental health programs, online workshops, and team-based incentives. An operational employee said: *"We feel cared for because there are regular mental health programs and workshops. It keeps us motivated even though we work remotely"* (KT-06, August 9, 2025 interview). These findings confirm that well-being factors are strongly related to organizational support, not just work flexibility.

Adaptive Leadership and Organizational Culture

Another important finding is how leadership plays a role in maintaining organizational culture in the midst of a hybrid work transition. In Jakarta banking, leadership is formal and regulatory-oriented. This maintains compliance, but makes communication between employees and managers feel rigid. A unit leader stated: *"We have to follow the rules of regulation strictly, but indeed as a result communication feels more rigid"* (PP-01, interview July 15, 2025).

In Semarang universities, leadership plays a more role as a facilitator, especially in encouraging staff and lecturers to adapt to digitalization. However, the generation gap is still visible. One HR staff explained: *"Leaders are trying to be facilitators in the digital transition, but there is a difference in perspective between senior lecturers and the younger generation"* (SU-02, July 19, 2025 interview).

Meanwhile, in Surabaya telecommunications, adaptive leadership is more prominent. Active team leaders use digital platforms to build informal communication, which is considered to help maintain a collaborative culture. A team leader said: *"We deliberately created informal groups on digital platforms to keep communication fluid, even though most of them worked remotely"* (PT-01, August 8, 2025 interview). This shows that adaptive leadership is a key factor in maintaining employee engagement while maintaining organizational culture in the hybrid work era.

Key Challenges Faced

Based on cross-case analysis, there are three main challenges that consistently arise. First, the digital competency gap is still an obstacle, especially

in the education sector with a more diverse age range of employees. A head of a faculty unit in Semarang revealed: *"Many senior lecturers are still stuttering with technology, so this hybrid transition needs extra assistance"* (KU-02, interview July 22, 2025).

Second, fragmented communication is felt in all sectors. In Jakarta's banking, an HR manager said: *"The informal communication that usually happens in the office is gone. Now everything is more formal through email or official applications"* (MP-01, July 11, 2025 interview).

Third, the balance of productivity and welfare is a crucial issue. In Surabaya telecommunications companies, although productivity is increasing, there is awareness of the risk of psychological distress. One HR manager emphasized: *"Productivity is indeed rising, but we are also worried that the psychological well-being of employees is being neglected"* (MT-01, August 10, 2025 interview). In general, the three organizations agree that the success of hybrid work is highly dependent on human resource policy innovation, adaptive leadership, and inclusive technology support.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study confirm that the transformation of human resource management in the context of hybrid work in Indonesia is influenced by sectoral factors, leadership, and organizational readiness in managing change. The cross-case findings show that while the three organizations face different contexts and challenges, there is a common pattern of the need for flexibility, digitalization of work processes, and a balance between productivity and employee well-being.

The adaptation strategy taken by each organization shows a distinctive emphasis according to the characteristics of the sector. Banks in Jakarta tend to emphasize regulatory compliance, so adaptation is more directed at performance supervision through digital systems. This is in line with the argument of Tavoletti et al. (2021) that the adoption of technology in hybrid work in heavily regulated sectors should consider the integration between compliance and flexibility. On the other hand, universities in Semarang focus more on the integration of learning technology, which shows a transition of academic culture towards digitalization. This is in line with research by Rahim et al. (2022) which emphasizes the importance of technological readiness in the education sector of developing countries. Meanwhile, telecommunications companies in Surabaya showed the most progressive adaptation with the implementation of work from anywhere, which confirms that the readiness of digital infrastructure affects the level of flexibility that can be implemented (Nguyen et al., 2021).

Variations in performance management show a paradigm shift from individual outputs to collaboration-based indicators. Banking emphasizes strict monitoring of targets through digital dashboards, which strengthens accountability but creates psychological pressure. In contrast, telcos assess performance based on team innovation and collaboration, which is in line with the view of Parker et al. (2022) that hybrid performance appraisal systems should emphasize the collective aspect to maintain engagement. Universities still face

inconsistencies in assessing the performance of hybrid lecturers, indicating the need for a more adaptive evaluation mechanism in the academic context (Putri & Wahyudi, 2023).

The findings of the study show that hybrid work flexibility does not necessarily increase engagement, but is strongly influenced by organizational support. This is in line with the findings of Chung and van der Lippe (2020) who said that flexibility is only effective when accompanied by clear communication and organizational support. In banking, flexibility provides personal benefits, but target pressure lowers psychological well-being. In universities, social isolation is experienced by senior lecturers, emphasizing the importance of digital mentoring as an inclusive strategy. Meanwhile, in telecommunications, engagement is relatively high because organizations provide welfare programs, in line with the argument of Parker et al. (2022) that organizational support is the main determinant of engagement in hybrid work.

Leadership has proven to play a crucial role in maintaining organizational culture in the hybrid era. Formal leadership in banking maintains compliance, but limits open communication. Universities display a facilitative leadership style, although the generation gap is still an obstacle. In contrast, telecommunications companies show adaptive leadership that is proactive in building digital informal communication, in accordance with Leonardi's (2021) findings that collaborative culture must be maintained through digital communication strategies. This reinforces the findings of Carnevale and Hatak (2020) that adaptive leadership is a key factor in maintaining trust in the midst of uncertainty.

Across cases, the main challenges that arise are the digital competency gap, communication fragmentation, and the tension between productivity and well-being. The digital divide is especially visible in the education sector, supporting the argument of Yuliani and Hartono (2023) that employee demographic factors affect hybrid work readiness. The fragmentation of communication across all sectors suggests that the loss of informal communication is one of the main disadvantages of hybrid work, in line with the findings of Waizenegger et al. (2020). Meanwhile, the issue of balancing productivity and welfare shows the risk of work intensification, which if not addressed can reduce long-term engagement (Saks, 2022).

Although this study provides a comprehensive cross-case picture, there are a number of limitations that need to be noted. First, the number of participants was limited to three organizations in three major cities, so the generalization of results to other sectors or regions still needed to be tested further. Second, research data is primarily obtained through interviews, so the potential for subjective bias cannot be completely avoided. Third, this study has not quantitatively measured the long-term impact of hybrid work on employee retention and organizational performance. Therefore, further research is recommended to expand the scope of organizations (especially the manufacturing and public service sectors), use mixed-method methods to reinforce the findings, and involve longitudinal analyses to understand the dynamics of hybrid work adaptation over a longer period of time.

Thus, the results of this study confirm that the success of hybrid work is not just the application of flexibility, but depends on three main factors, namely: first, organizational adaptation strategies that are appropriate to the sector. Second, adaptive leadership that maintains a work culture. And third, organizational support for employee welfare. This study enriches the literature on the transformation of human resource management by providing empirical evidence across cities and sectors in Indonesia, while confirming that local contexts (digital infrastructure, regulations, work culture) play a major role in determining the effectiveness of hybrid work.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This research confirms that the transformation of human resource management in the context of hybrid work in Indonesia is a complex process influenced by sector dynamics, leadership, and organizational technological readiness. Cross-case studies of banks in Jakarta, universities in Semarang, and telecommunications companies in Surabaya show that organizational adaptation strategies vary, but all emphasize the importance of a balance between work flexibility, digital performance management, and employee engagement. The main challenges that consistently arise include regulating flexibility, utilizing digital technology, and maintaining a balance between productivity and well-being.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of organizational transformation studies by highlighting the role of adaptive leadership and sustainable innovation in the hybrid work era, especially in the context of developing countries. From a practical perspective, these findings are the basis for policymakers and human resource management practitioners in designing relevant, adaptive, and sustainable hybrid work policies. Thus, the transformation of human resource management in Indonesia not only serves as a response to post-pandemic changes, but also as a strategic foothold in building organizational competitiveness in the future.

FURTHER STUDY

Future studies could further explore the longitudinal impact of hybrid work transformation on employee well-being, productivity, and organizational culture across different sectors in Indonesia. Comparative research between developing and developed countries would also provide deeper insights into how socio-economic contexts and technological infrastructures shape the success of hybrid work implementation. Additionally, future research could focus on the role of digital leadership competencies and change management strategies in sustaining innovation and engagement within hybrid organizations. Employing mixed-method or longitudinal designs may enrich understanding of how human resource management practices evolve over time and contribute to long-term organizational resilience.

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