



EXPLORATION OF HUMANISTIC LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AMONG THE HEADS OF PRODUCTION UNITS IN THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY IN BEKASI CITY

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Abstract

This study aims to explore humanistic leadership practices implemented by production unit heads in the textile industry in Bekasi City. The research approach used was qualitative, using in-depth interviews, observation, and internal document analysis. Data were analyzed using NVivo to obtain systematic and in-depth findings. The results showed that production unit heads with medium to high experience and at least a high school or diploma education were able to implement humanistic practices consistently. These practices encompassed pre-shift briefings, burden modifications, non-material incentives, and individual consultations, all of which fostered enhanced motivation, job satisfaction, and interpersonal relationships among employees. Supporting factors for humanistic practices encompassed the unit head's expertise, management endorsement, and a collaborative work environment, whereas obstacles were identified as production target pressures and resource limitations. The impact of humanistic practices was seen in increased productivity, operational stability, and worker well-being. This study highlighted the significance of including unit head attributes, leadership methodologies, and organizational support in fostering a productive and compassionate workplace. These findings are anticipated to provide a framework for the advancement of humanistic leadership approaches within the manufacturing industry.

Keywords: Humanistic Leadership, Head of Production Unit, Textile Industry, Worker Motivation, Organizational Performance

INTRODUCTION

Managing human resources, often known as human resource management (HRM), is a strategic foundation for the success of a business, notably in manufacturing industries such as textiles. Human resource management (HRM) involves not only the processes of recruiting and selection, but also the management of performance, the development of competencies, and the management of labor relations (Ardiyansyah et al., 2023). A competency-based HRM approach has been proven to increase organizational productivity (Wahyudi et al., 2022). The implementation of technology-based HRM is also a crucial strategy for improving workforce competency in the digital era (Satriya & Rindaningsih, 2024). In the textile industry, effective HRM management is a key tool for enabling the workforce to carry out production functions effectively, efficiently, and adaptively to rapid dynamics.

Humanistic leadership is the subject of this study. Humanistic leadership is a leadership strategy that emphasizes human values, respect for individuals, open communication, empathy, and the development of human potential at the core of leadership practice. According to the findings of research conducted on humanistic leadership, for instance, humanistic leadership places an emphasis on human values, interpersonal interactions, and self-development inside businesses (Nurchahyo et al., 2024). Furthermore, other research shows that leadership with humanistic values and respect for

organizational members can reduce negative behavior and increase innovation (Himawan, 2024). In the manufacturing sector, although there are not many exploratory studies, the relevance of this approach is very high due to intensive production conditions and tight targets.

For this study, the heads of production units in the textile sector in Bekasi City, which is located in the province of West Java, participated. Due to the fact that Bekasi City is one of the centers of the textile and garment industry in Indonesia, it is very relevant as a research place to investigate leadership methods in actual production units. Heads of production units in the textile industry are responsible for planning, organizing, controlling, and directing production operations, including managing labor, machinery, raw materials, processes, and achieving quality and quantity targets. Due to the nature of the production environment, which is dense and often faces competitive pressures, how heads of production units apply a humanistic leadership style is an important issue that deserves in-depth research.

Factors influencing the practice of humanistic leadership in textile production units include: the competency and character of the production unit head (including interpersonal skills, empathy, and understanding of people as resources); organizational culture and prevailing norms (whether the organization prioritizes respect for individuals and open communication); work structure and production pressures (high targets, work shifts, monitoring systems); worker characteristics (competence level, motivation, expectations of leaders); and technology and digital transformation (which can shift the focus from humans to systems) (Ramadhani & Kuswinarno, 2023). Target pressure and highly technical reward/punishment systems can limit the application of humanistic values, so it is important to understand how these contexts influence production unit heads in implementing a humanistic leadership style.

As a first step, a survey was conducted among several production unit heads in the textile industry in Bekasi City to identify practices and perceptions of humanistic leadership. Preliminary results indicate that most production unit heads recognize the importance of good relationships with workers, open communication, and attention to working conditions. However, many also feel constrained by high production targets and a lack of systematic humanistic training or development. These findings indicate a gap between the ideals of humanistic leadership and practices in the textile industry. From this preliminary data, key issues emerged: the level of awareness of unit heads about humanistic values in leadership; the challenges in implementing humanistic values when production targets are high; the formal/informal mechanisms that support or hinder humanistic leadership styles; and the relationship between unit head leadership styles and worker job satisfaction and production performance.

The phenomenon occurring in the textile industry in Bekasi City shows that heads of production units play a central role in managing the workforce, the production process, and achieving operational targets. In daily practice, unit heads face the pressure of high production targets, dynamic work shifts, and strict quality demands, but are still required to maintain good interpersonal

relationships with workers. This phenomenon demonstrates the need for humanistic leadership, where attention to worker welfare, open communication, and the development of individual potential are part of an effective management strategy. The results of a preliminary survey showed that most unit heads recognize the importance of humanistic values, but in their implementation, they are often hampered by production pressures and a mechanistic reward-punishment system, so that the practice of humanistic leadership is not entirely optimal.

The problems arising from this phenomenon encompass several key aspects. First, there is a gap between unit heads' understanding of the concept of humanistic leadership and its actual implementation in the field. Second, the pressure of production targets, long working hours, and the need for operational efficiency often lead unit heads to focus more on technical results than on human relationships with workers. Third, there are limited training or development programs that emphasize humanistic values in leadership in the textile industry. It poses the risk of decreased worker motivation and job satisfaction, interpersonal conflict, and the potential for a sustained decline in production performance. These conditions emphasize the need for in-depth research to explore humanistic leadership practices and the factors influencing them in the context of the textile industry in Bekasi.

Strengthening of this phenomenon and problem can be obtained from previous studies. Nurcahyo et al. (2024) found that humanistic leadership, emphasizing human values and the development of individual potential, contributes to improved organizational performance and employee well-being. Himawan (2024) emphasized that the application of humanistic values in leadership can build harmonious interpersonal relationships and increase the motivation of organizational members. Ardiyansyah et al. (2023) stated that competency-based HR management and humanistic values strengthen work effectiveness in organizations with high target orientation. Furthermore, Ramadhani and Kuswinarno (2023) highlighted that the main challenge in implementing humanistic leadership arises when operational pressure is high, so that leadership success is highly dependent on the unit head's ability to balance production targets and attention to worker welfare. These various findings strengthen the relevance of exploratory research to understand humanistic leadership practices contextually in the textile industry production unit in Bekasi City.

Based on the literature review and previous research, several gaps need to be addressed in the context of humanistic leadership in the textile industry in Bekasi City. Previous research has focused heavily on humanistic leadership in the education sector or service organizations, while the context of the manufacturing industry, particularly textiles, remains sparsely researched. Furthermore, previous research has focused more on theoretical perceptions of humanistic leadership, while underexploring actual practices in the field, particularly in the face of high production targets and demanding work hours. Furthermore, the impact of humanistic leadership on motivation, job satisfaction, and production performance in the manufacturing industry remains minimal. This gap highlights the need

for exploratory studies to understand how production unit heads implement humanistic values in operational contexts that demand high output.

By conducting an empirical investigation into the humanistic leadership practices of heads of production units in the textile industry in Bekasi City, this study makes a novel contribution to the field. When compared to previous research, which has primarily been carried out in the education sector or service organizations, this study is distinctive because it focuses on the manufacturing industry, which is characterized by high-pressure and demanding operational conditions. In addition, this research highlights the importance of incorporating humanistic values into leadership practices, as well as human resource management practices, and the implications that these practices have for job satisfaction, motivation, and production performance. As a result, it is anticipated that this study will not only serve as a reference for the development of more effective humanistic leadership practices in the textile industry and manufacturing in general, but it will also provide new insights into how heads of production units balance the demands of operational targets with concerns for worker welfare.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human Resource Management (HRM)

Human resource management serves as a strategic foundation for ensuring organizational sustainability and effectiveness through the management of employee competency, motivation, and well-being. A competency-based HR management approach has been proven to increase organizational productivity and adaptability to change (Ardiyansyah et al., 2023). Furthermore, the implementation of technology-based HR management can strengthen competency development and work effectiveness in facing industry dynamics (Wahyudi et al., 2022). In the textile industry context, HR management is a crucial tool for production unit heads to balance the demands of production targets with attention to employee well-being.

Humanistic Leadership

Humanistic leadership emphasizes humanitarian values, empathy, open communication, and the development of individual potential as core leadership practices (Nurcahyo, Anis, & Malik Thoha, 2024). These values help build harmonious working relationships, increase motivation, and create a collaborative work environment (Himawan, 2024). Heads of production units in the textile industry who apply humanistic principles are able to maintain a balance between production demands and concern for employee welfare, thus maintaining a productive and conducive organizational environment.

Integration of Humanistic Leadership and Human Resources

Humanistic leadership practices combined with sound human resource management can create a work culture that supports innovation, employee loyalty, and team collaboration (Ramadhani &

Kuswinarno, 2023). Production unit heads who are able to apply humanistic values in managing their teams are able to maintain motivation and work enthusiasm, even under high operational pressure (Ardiyansyah et al., 2023). It underscores the importance of integrating humanistic values with human resource management practices for effective and sustainable production unit operation.

METHOD

Research Approach

This study uses an exploratory qualitative approach to deeply understand the humanistic leadership practices implemented by heads of production units in the textile industry in Bekasi City. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows researchers to capture complex and contextual experiences, perceptions, and social interactions (Allsop et al., 2022). Furthermore, the use of qualitative analysis software such as NVivo is crucial in increasing the transparency and structure of the interview and document data analysis process (Dhakal, 2022). Thus, this study not only describes practices but also analyzes the meaning and patterns behind the application of humanistic leadership in the context of a high-volume textile production environment.

Location and Participants

The research location was the heads of textile production units in Bekasi City, West Java Province. Bekasi City was chosen because it is one of the centers of the textile and garment industry in Indonesia, thus providing a relevant context for exploring humanistic leadership practices in production units. Participants consisted of heads of production units with at least two years of experience leading production units. Participant selection was conducted using purposive sampling to ensure that informants had relevant experience relevant to the research theme and were able to provide rich and in-depth data.

Data collection technique

Primary data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews that explored how unit heads perceive and apply humanistic values in their leadership, how they manage relationships with workers, and how they address production target challenges. Furthermore, participant observation was conducted to directly observe interactions between unit heads and workers in daily production unit activities, such as production meetings, shift briefings, and work procedures. Secondary data in the form of internal documents (work procedures, HR records, training programs) were also analyzed to complete the contextual picture. Source and method triangulation techniques were integrated to strengthen the validity of the data (Vivek, Nanthagopan & Piriyaatharshan, 2023).

Data analysis

Interview data were transcribed verbatim and then uploaded to NVivo for analysis using a thematic approach. The analysis consisted of three stages: open coding to identify initial codes from the text, axial coding to group codes into themes related to humanistic leadership practices, and selective coding to connect key themes into a unified narrative (Allsop et al., 2022). NVivo facilitated node mapping, theme networks, and visualizations such as word clouds or relationship models between themes, making the analysis process more transparent and well-documented (Dhakal, 2022). Thus, the analysis was not only descriptive but also interpretive in nature to understand how unit heads functioned humanistic leadership in demanding production and operational conditions.

Data Validity and Validity

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research, a triangulation strategy was applied between methods and data sources, as well as member-checking techniques with informants to ensure the researcher's interpretations aligned with the participants' intended meanings (Arias Valencia, 2023). Method triangulation was realized through a combination of interviews, observation, and document analysis, while source triangulation involved multiple unit heads, documentation, and field observations. By using this approach, the research sought to ensure the credibility, transferability, and dependability of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study are presented to provide an in-depth understanding of humanistic leadership practices among heads of production units in the textile industry in Bekasi City. The analysis was conducted based on the characteristics of unit heads, humanistic leadership practices, supporting and inhibiting factors, and the impact of humanistic practices on the work environment. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews, observations, and internal documents, then organized into tables to facilitate understanding of the qualitative findings.

Characteristics of the Head of Production Unit

The characteristics of production unit heads are important because they influence their ability to implement humanistic practices. Research shows that varying experiences and education underpin unit heads' readiness to lead production teams.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Head of Production Unit

No	Criteria	Information
1	Experience	Some unit heads have less than five years of experience, while others have more experience.
2	Education	The majority have at least a high school/vocational school education, with some having a diploma or bachelor's degree.

Source: Field results, 2025

The combination of experience and education of unit heads supports their ability to understand production processes, manage teams, and apply humanistic leadership principles. Experienced unit heads are able to adapt work strategies to worker conditions and production target pressures, enabling effective humanistic practices.

Humanistic Leadership Practices

Humanistic leadership practices are at the heart of this research. Unit heads employ various forms of attention and communication to improve motivation and interpersonal relationships within production units.

Table 2. Forms of Humanistic Leadership Practice

No	Practice	Information
1	Pre-shift briefing	Delivering information, instructions, and motivation before starting production.
2	Workload adjustment	Balancing tasks so that they are fair and do not burden workers.
3	Non-material awards	Giving appreciation in the form of praise or recognition for good performance.
4	Personal consultation	Maintain open communication regarding individual and work issues.

Source: Field results, 2025

This table shows the humanistic practices most frequently implemented by unit heads. Regular briefings are a key activity for maintaining communication and motivation. Adjusting workloads and non-material rewards demonstrate concern for employee well-being, while personal consultations foster harmonious interpersonal relationships.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors of Humanistic Practice

Humanistic practices are influenced by various internal and external factors. Supporting factors facilitate implementation, while barriers require unit heads to adjust operational strategies and employee well-being.

Table 3. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

No	Factor	Category
1	Unit head experience	Supporters
2	Management support	Supporters
3	Production target pressure	Inhibitor
4	Limited resources	Inhibitor

Source: Field results, 2025

Internal factors such as the experience of unit heads and management support strengthen the implementation of humanistic values. Meanwhile, obstacles such as production target pressures and limited resources require strategic adjustments to ensure humanistic practices remain effective and do not compromise productivity.

The Impact of Humanistic Practices on the Work Environment

The application of humanistic leadership impacts employee motivation, satisfaction, and interpersonal relationships. This impact is also evident in the efficiency and stability of the unit's production process.

Table 4. Impact of Humanistic Practices

No	Impact	Indicator
1	Work motivation increases	Workers are more actively participating in production.
2	High job satisfaction	Workers demonstrate loyalty and retention.
3	Harmonious interpersonal relationships	Teamwork is smooth, and there is minimal conflict.
4	Production efficiency increases	Production errors are reduced, and processes are more efficient.

Source: Field results, 2025

Humanistic practices improve motivation, job satisfaction, and interpersonal relationships. Increased motivation is reflected in active employee participation, while satisfaction is reflected in loyalty. Harmonious relationships foster teamwork, and production efficiency increases as conflict and errors are reduced.

Discussion

The discussion compares the research findings with the literature to strengthen the interpretation. The discussion is structured around the characteristics of unit heads, humanistic leadership practices, supporting and inhibiting factors, and the impact of humanistic practices on the work environment. The analysis emphasizes how unit heads implement humanistic values in the context of the target-intensive textile industry.

Characteristics of the Head of Production Unit

The characteristics of experienced production unit heads with secondary to higher education facilitate the implementation of humanistic practices. This finding aligns with Nurcahyo, Anis, and Malik Thoha (2024), who emphasized that experienced leaders with a strong understanding of management can implement humanistic values more effectively. Himawan (2024) added that experience supports the development of harmonious interpersonal relationships. Professionally

prepared unit heads are able to balance production demands with employee attention, enabling consistent humanistic practices to be implemented and positively impact the production team, even under pressure from high targets.

Humanistic Leadership Practices

Practices such as regular briefings, workload adjustments, non-material rewards, and personal consultations demonstrate the unit head's genuine concern for employee well-being. It is consistent with Ardiyansyah et al. (2023), who emphasized that integrating humanistic values increases motivation and work engagement. Ramadhani and Kuswinarno (2023) also emphasized that caring for employees impacts loyalty. Routine activities enable open communication, reduce conflict, and build a sense of psychological safety for employees, demonstrating that humanistic practices are effectively implemented in production unit operations.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

Internal factors such as unit head experience and management support support humanistic practices, while production target pressures and limited resources are key barriers. This finding aligns with Ramadhani and Kuswinarno (2023), who emphasized the need for a balance between operational targets and employee well-being. Nurcahyo et al. (2024) highlighted the organizational context as key to successful humanistic leadership. Unit heads who are able to adapt their strategies can still implement humanistic values, safeguard employee well-being, and effectively meet production targets.

Impact of Humanistic Practices

The application of humanistic values increases motivation, job satisfaction, and interpersonal relationships in production units. These findings align with Himawan (2024), who asserted that humanistic leadership strengthens teamwork and employee loyalty. Ardiyansyah et al. (2023) also noted that attention to employee well-being supports operational efficiency. Thus, humanistic leadership not only improves individual well-being but also increases productivity, unit stability, and operational sustainability in production-intensive industries.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings of the research, humanistic leadership practices are effectively implemented among heads of production units in the textile industry in Bekasi City. These practices include paying attention to the welfare of workers, maintaining open communication, and training employees to become more motivated. Humanistic values can be consistently implemented by unit heads who have some level of experience ranging from intermediate to advanced and who have

completed at least a high school or diploma program. These characteristics are an essential basis for achieving a balance between the demands of production targets and the requirements of workers, which ultimately results in the formation of harmonious working relationships and the preservation of productivity.

Dominant humanistic practices include regular pre-shift briefings, workload adjustments, non-material rewards, and personal consultations. These activities increase employee motivation, job satisfaction, and loyalty, while reducing conflict and production errors. Key supporting factors for humanistic practices include the unit head's experience, management support, and a cooperative work culture. Meanwhile, obstacles arise from the pressure of high production targets and limited resources, requiring unit heads to adjust operational strategies flexibly.

The effects of adopting humanistic leadership are reflected in enhanced motivation, greater job satisfaction, and improved interpersonal relationships, thereby influencing the efficiency and stability of unit operations. This research demonstrates that humanistic leadership enhances individual well-being while also promoting overall organizational effectiveness. These findings underscore the significance of incorporating unit head attributes, leadership methodologies, and organizational backing in fostering a productive, humane, and sustainable work environment. Thus, this study contributes to the development of humanistic leadership practices in the manufacturing industry, particularly the textile sector, and serves as a reference for policies that emphasize worker well-being without sacrificing production targets.

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