Research Article

The Role of Organizational Ethics and Human Resource Social Responsibility in Enhancing Employee Commitment

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Abstract: A Employee commitment has become a critical concern for organizations operating in increasingly competitive and dynamic business environments. Beyond economic incentives, contemporary organizations are required to strengthen ethical values and social responsibility in human resource management to sustain long-term employment relationships. Organizational ethics and human resource social responsibility (HR-SR) have emerged as strategic dimensions that shape employees' perceptions, attitudes, and psychological attachment to the organization. However, existing studies tend to examine these constructs separately, with limited efforts to synthesize their integrated role in enhancing employee commitment. This study aims to address this gap by conducting a comprehensive literature review on the role of organizational ethics and human resource social responsibility in fostering employee commitment. This study adopts a qualitative descriptive approach using a literature review method. Relevant academic books and peer-reviewed journal articles were collected from reputable databases, including Google Scholar, SINTA-accredited journals, and internationally indexed publications. The literature selection focused on studies published between 2015 and 2024 and employed keywords such as organizational ethics, human resource social responsibility, socially responsible human resource management, and employee commitment.

Keywords: Employee Commitment; Ethical Organizational Climate; Human Resources; Organizational Ethics; Social Responsibility.

1. Introduction

Organizational ethics and human resource social responsibility have increasingly emerged as strategic elements in contemporary human resource management, particularly in fostering employee commitment within highly competitive and dynamic organizational environments. Organizational ethics functions as a normative framework that guides employee behavior and attitudes in alignment with organizational values and standards, thereby encouraging responsibility, discipline, professionalism, and mutual trust. Prior studies indicate that the consistent implementation of ethical principles contributes positively to employee performance, trust-based relationships, and long-term organizational loyalty (Nasution, A. H.; Islamiati, 2022).

Alongside organizational ethics, human resource social responsibility (HR-SR) has gained significant scholarly attention as an essential dimension of sustainable human resource management. HR-SR emphasizes not only productivity and efficiency but also employee welfare, fairness, integrity, and long-term social sustainability. Previous empirical studies demonstrate that socially responsible human resource practices foster ethical organizational cultures,

enhance collaboration, and strengthen employee engagement and commitment (Magdalena, S., Putri, R. A., & Pratama, 2021). These findings suggest that ethical and socially responsible human resource management practices play a critical role in shaping positive employee attitudes and organizational outcomes.

Despite the growing body of literature on organizational ethics and HR-SR, existing studies predominantly adopt quantitative approaches that focus on direct causal relationships between ethical practices, social responsibility initiatives, and employee commitment. While these studies provide valuable insights, organizational ethics and HR-SR are often examined as separate constructs, with limited attention given to their integrated role within human resource management systems. Moreover, much of the existing research emphasizes performance-related outcomes, leaving the underlying mechanisms through which ethical and socially responsible practices influence employees' affective commitment and loyalty relatively underexplored.

In the context of intensified global competition, organizations are increasingly required to uphold ethical principles and social responsibility in managing human resources to prevent discriminatory practices, promote inclusivity, and enhance perceptions of organizational justice. Studies such as (Al Hussainy, 2023) confirm that human resource management grounded in ethics and social responsibility positively influences organizational commitment and corporate sustainability. However, comprehensive literature-based analyses that synthesize findings on the combined role of organizational ethics and HR-SR in enhancing employee commitment remain limited, particularly within developing country contexts.

Addressing this gap, the present study adopts a literature review approach to examine the integrated role of organizational ethics and human resource social responsibility in enhancing employee commitment. This study seeks to address the following research questions: (1) how does organizational ethics influence employee commitment? (2) how does human resource social responsibility contribute to employee commitment? and (3) how does the integration of organizational ethics and HR-SR strengthen employees' emotional attachment and loyalty to the organization. By synthesizing theoretical perspectives and empirical findings from previous studies, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of ethical and socially responsible human resource management.

The contributions of this study are threefold. First, it extends the theoretical discourse in human resource management by positioning organizational ethics and HR-SR as complementary constructs in explaining employee commitment. Second, it offers practical insights for organizational leaders and human resource practitioners in designing ethical and socially responsible policies that foster sustainable employee commitment. Third, this study provides a conceptual foundation for future research on ethical human resource management within competitive and dynamic organizational contexts. The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: Section 2 reviews the relevant literature, Section 3 describes the research methodology, Section 4 presents and discusses the findings, and Section 5 concludes the paper.

2. Literature Review

Organizational ethics constitutes a fundamental normative framework that governs the behavior of organizational members in alignment with shared values, moral principles, and collective objectives. Within organizational settings, ethics functions not merely as a moral guideline but also as a mechanism of social control that shapes employees' cognitive orientations, expectations, and behavioral patterns. Ethical organizational environments are closely associated with procedural justice, transparency, and consistency in decision-making processes, which significantly influence employees' perceptions of organizational legitimacy and trust. From the perspective of ethical climate theory, employees who perceive their organizations as ethically grounded are more likely to internalize organizational values and develop positive psychological attachments. Empirical evidence provided by (Wahyuni, E. T., Hadiwijaya, D., & Susilo, 2024) confirms that an ethical organizational climate enhances perceptions of fairness and indirectly strengthens employees' affective commitment to the organization.

In parallel, socially responsible human resource management (SRHRM) reflects a paradigmatic shift in human resource practices from a narrow productivity-oriented approach toward a more holistic framework emphasizing employee well-being, dignity, equity, and labor rights. Rooted in the principles of internal corporate social responsibility, SRHRM highlights the organization's moral obligation to protect and empower its workforce through fair compensation, continuous development, inclusive policies, and safe working conditions. This approach aligns with social exchange theory, which posits that employees reciprocate organizational care and support with positive work attitudes and sustained commitment. (Goputra, G., & Michael, 2024) demonstrate that the integration of social responsibility principles into HR policies is positively associated with pro-organizational attitudes, including loyalty, organizational involvement, and reduced turnover intentions.

Employee commitment represents a multidimensional psychological bond that reflects the extent to which individuals identify with organizational values, feel emotionally attached, and demonstrate a willingness to maintain long-term employment relationships. Meyer and Allen's commitment framework conceptualizes commitment as comprising affective, continuance, and normative dimensions, each shaped by employees' experiences of fairness, support, and ethical treatment. Commitment extends beyond attitudinal loyalty to encompass discretionary effort and proactive contribution within diverse work contexts.(Kamela, H., & Alam, 2021) argue that employee commitment is significantly influenced by perceptions of social exchange quality, whereby moral support, ethical leadership, and organizational concern for employee welfare foster a strong sense of reciprocity and obligation.

The interaction between organizational ethics and socially responsible human resource management establishes a conducive institutional context for strengthening employee commitment. Organizational ethics provides a coherent moral and value-based architecture that shapes norms and expectations, while SRHRM translates these ethical principles into concrete practices that employees experience directly in their daily work lives. This integration ensures consistency between organizational values and managerial actions, thereby enhancing credibility and trust. (Ernawati, D., & Fadli, 2022) emphasize that employees' perceptions of ethical conduct and internal CSR initiatives exert a significant influence on employee engagement, with organizational commitment serving as a key mediating mechanism. These findings

reinforce the argument that employee commitment is not solely driven by economic incentives, but is deeply shaped by employees' subjective evaluations of ethical integrity, fairness, and social support embedded within organizational systems.

Despite the growing body of research on organizational ethics and socially responsible HR practices, prior studies largely examine these constructs in isolation, with limited effort to synthesize their combined influence on employee commitment. Moreover, much of the existing literature prioritizes empirical measurement over conceptual integration, leaving gaps in understanding how ethical values and HR social responsibility jointly function as complementary mechanisms within human resource management. Therefore, a comprehensive literature-based synthesis is needed to integrate organizational ethics and SRHRM into a unified analytical framework for explaining employee commitment in contemporary organizational contexts.

3. Proposed Method

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach using a literature review method to examine the role of organizational ethics and human resource social responsibility in enhancing employee commitment. The literature review approach is used to synthesize relevant theories and empirical findings from previous studies in order to develop a comprehensive conceptual understanding of ethical and socially responsible human resource management.

The data sources consist of academic books and peer-reviewed journal articles obtained from reputable databases, including Google Scholar, SINTA-accredited journals, and internationally indexed journals relevant to the fields of management and human resource studies. The literature search focused on publications issued between 2015 and 2024 to ensure the relevance and timeliness of the reviewed materials. The keywords used in the search process included "organizational ethics," "human resource social responsibility," "socially responsible human resource management," and "employee commitment."

The selection of literature was guided by inclusion criteria, namely: (1) studies that explicitly discuss organizational ethics, human resource social responsibility, or employee commitment; (2) articles published in peer-reviewed academic journals; and (3) publications written in English or Indonesian. Sources that were not directly relevant to the research objectives or did not meet academic quality standards were excluded from the analysis.

Data analysis was conducted using a thematic analysis approach. The selected literature was reviewed, categorized, and compared to identify recurring themes, conceptual relationships, and patterns of findings related to the influence of organizational ethics and socially responsible human resource practices on employee commitment. The results of this analysis were then synthesized to construct an integrated conceptual framework.

As this study relies exclusively on secondary data, no primary data collection methods such as surveys or interviews were employed. The literature-based approach enables a broad yet in-depth exploration of the research topic and provides a strong conceptual foundation for understanding the role of ethical and socially responsible human resource management in fostering employee commitment. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically and practically to the existing literature in management and organizational studies.

4. Results and Discussion

Organizational ethics constitutes a fundamental foundation in shaping employees' work behavior and psychological orientation within organizations. Beyond serving as a set of normative rules, organizational ethics functions as a value-based guideline that influences how employees interpret organizational expectations, make decisions, and interact in the workplace. The consistent implementation of ethical principles provides employees with behavioral clarity and psychological safety, which are essential preconditions for the development of employee commitment (Fatmasari, N., Hidayati, T., & Lestari, 2024). From a theoretical perspective, this finding aligns with ethical climate theory, which suggests that shared ethical perceptions within organizations significantly shape employee attitudes and attachments.

The effectiveness of organizational ethics is closely linked to employees' perceptions of fairness and organizational justice. When employees perceive decision-making processes as transparent, equitable, and respectful, they are more likely to develop trust in management and the organization as a whole. These perceptions of justice strengthen emotional bonds between employees and the organization, thereby reinforcing affective commitment. In this context, organizational ethics operates as a psychological bonding mechanism that sustains long-term employee commitment (Setiadi, A. A. F., Khoerunnisa, E., Nastiyar, F. A., & Faraz, 2023).

In addition to organizational ethics, human resource social responsibility (HR-SR) has emerged as a critical dimension of contemporary human resource management. A socially responsible HRM approach recognizes employees not merely as productive resources but as individuals with inherent rights, needs, and developmental potential. By prioritizing employee welfare, inclusivity, and personal growth, HR-SR contributes to the creation of humane and balanced employment relationships. Consistent with social exchange theory, employees who perceive organizational concern and support tend to reciprocate through positive work attitudes and increased commitment (Kamela, H., & Alam, 2021).

Human resource social responsibility is operationalized through internal organizational policies, including career development opportunities, employee welfare protection, and the establishment of safe and inclusive work environments. When such practices are implemented authentically, employees respond with higher levels of loyalty and a stronger willingness to contribute beyond formal job requirements. This reciprocal process indicates that employee commitment is not formed instantaneously but develops gradually through cumulative work experiences perceived as fair, meaningful, and supportive (Rachmawati, E., Laili, A. R. H. W., & Ismail, 2023).

The integration of organizational ethics and human resource social responsibility enhances the overall effectiveness of employee management systems. Organizational ethics provides a coherent moral framework that shapes organizational values and norms, while HR-SR translates these ethical principles into tangible managerial practices experienced by employees in their daily work lives. Together, these dimensions foster a supportive organizational culture oriented toward the sustainability of employment relationships (Ernawati, D., & Fadli, 2022).

Importantly, the absence of synergy between organizational ethics and HR-SR may weaken employee commitment. Organizations that emphasize ethical values without corresponding HR policies risk creating a discrepancy between espoused values and enacted practices. Conversely, HR-SR initiatives that are not grounded in strong ethical principles may lack normative direction and credibility. Therefore, the alignment of ethical values and socially responsible HR practices is essential for fostering stable and enduring employee commitment (Widyastuti, A., & Budiharto, 2023).

Employee commitment reflects a multidimensional psychological attachment manifested in employees' willingness to remain within the organization and contribute optimally to organizational success. While material factors such as compensation remain relevant, this study reinforces the argument that non-material factors—particularly perceptions of ethical integrity and social responsibility—play a decisive role in shaping commitment. This finding underscores the strategic importance of ethical and socially responsible management in strengthening affective and normative commitment (Rovitia, N., Oktaviola, H., & Sari, 2023).

In the context of increasingly intense business competition, organizations are required to maintain workforce stability and employee loyalty as sources of competitive advantage. High levels of employee commitment are associated with reduced turnover, enhanced engagement, and improved organizational performance. Empirical evidence suggests that organizations characterized by strong ethical climates and socially responsible HR practices tend to exhibit higher levels of employee commitment and engagement (Wahyuni, E. T., Hadiwijaya, D., & Susilo, 2024).

Furthermore, human resource social responsibility contributes to shaping a positive organizational image as a fair and employee-oriented workplace. This positive internal and external image not only supports employee retention but also enhances organizational attractiveness to prospective talent. Accordingly, organizational ethics and HR-SR play a dual strategic role in retaining existing employees and attracting high-quality human resources in competitive labor markets (Goputra, G., & Michael, 2024).

5. Conclusions

This study provides a comprehensive literature-based analysis of the role of organizational ethics and human resource social responsibility in enhancing employee commitment. The findings indicate that organizational ethics functions as a fundamental value framework that shapes employees' perceptions of fairness, trust, and psychological safety, which are essential for the development of sustainable commitment. Ethical organizational environments enable employees to internalize organizational values and foster stronger emotional attachment to the organization.

Furthermore, the review highlights that human resource social responsibility plays a critical role in translating ethical values into concrete managerial practices that directly affect employees' daily work experiences. Socially responsible HR practices, such as employee development, welfare protection, and inclusive work environments, reinforce positive social exchange relationships between employees and organizations, thereby strengthening affective and normative commitment.

Importantly, this study emphasizes that organizational ethics and human resource social responsibility should not be viewed as isolated constructs. Their integration creates a synergistic effect that enhances the effectiveness of human resource management systems and supports long-term employment relationships. Organizations that align ethical principles with socially responsible HR policies are more likely to achieve stable workforce commitment and reduced turnover.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the human resource management literature by synthesizing organizational ethics and HR social responsibility into a unified conceptual framework for explaining employee commitment. Practically, the findings offer valuable insights for organizational leaders and HR practitioners in designing ethical and socially responsible policies to foster sustainable employee commitment in competitive and dynamic organizational contexts.

Despite its contributions, this study is limited by its reliance on secondary data and literature-based analysis. Future research is encouraged to empirically test the proposed conceptual relationships across diverse organizational and cultural contexts. Such efforts would further strengthen the understanding of ethical and socially responsible human resource management as a strategic driver of employee commitment.

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