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Religious Affiliation and Intrinsic Motivation: Evidence from Malaysian Bank Employees

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ABSTRACT

Religion represents an important dimension of Malaysia's socio-cultural environment, yet the relationship between religious affiliation and employees' intrinsic motivation remains comparatively underexplored. This study examines whether intrinsic motivation differs between Muslim and non-Muslim employees in the Malaysian banking sector. Survey data were collected from employees of two Malaysian banks, with 159 responses included in the final analysis. Religious affiliation was analytically classified into Muslim (n = 106) and non-Muslim (n = 53) groups, while intrinsic motivation was assessed using the Work Preference Inventory (WPI). An independent-samples t-test indicated that intrinsic motivation did not differ significantly between Muslim (M = 3.26, SD = 0.39) and non-Muslim employees (M = 3.32, SD = 0.32), t(157) = −1.08, p = .283. The magnitude of the difference was small (Cohen's d = −0.18). These findings indicate that religious affiliation, when considered as an analytical classification, did not meaningfully differentiate intrinsic motivation among employees in the sampled banks. The study provides context-specific evidence from Malaysia's religiously diverse banking sector and highlights the importance of distinguishing religious affiliation from more proximal religion-related constructs when examining the relationship between religion and motivation at work.

1. Introduction

Work motivation is central to understanding employees' behaviours and experiences in organisations as it relates to the forces that initiate, direct and sustain work-related behaviour. Employees may be motivated by the external outcome of doing a job such as pay, recognition, promotion or other rewards but may also be motivated to do the work because the activity is interesting, enjoyable, challenging or personally satisfying. The latter is a measure of intrinsic motivation, which is defined as "doing an activity for the inherent satisfaction of the activity itself rather than for some separable consequence" [8,16]. In organisations, intrinsic motivation is especially important because employees who find their work inherently interesting or satisfying may be motivated to put in effort even when external incentives are not the primary reason for their engagement.

The significance of intrinsic motivation in the workplace is well established. Research has associated intrinsic motivation with a range of desirable work-related outcomes, including engagement, performance, creativity, prosocial behaviour, and knowledge sharing [14,17]. Intrinsic

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motivation is nevertheless not simply a uniform psychological state detached from the environment in which work occurs. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) emphasises the importance of the psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness in supporting autonomous forms of motivation [16]. Hagger and McAnally Star [11] highlight the importance of need-supportive work environments and indicate that motivational processes may vary across employee, work, and cultural contexts. Vo *et al*., [19] also found that work motivation is associated with individual needs as well as wider social and country-level conditions. Intrinsic motivation should therefore be understood within the broader organisational and socio-cultural environment in which employees experience their work.

One socio-cultural characteristic that may be relevant to this motivational environment is religion. Although closely related to spirituality, religion is generally distinguished by its more organised and socially embedded nature. Religion encompasses culturally recognised and institutionalised beliefs, practices, and traditions centred on what is regarded as sacred [6]. It can consequently provide individuals with systems of meaning, values, identity, and behavioural guidance that extend into their working lives. Gyekye and Haybatollahi [10], for example, observe that religious traditions provide formal and informal norms that may guide behaviour and incorporate work-related values concerning ethical conduct, responsibility, dedication, and the value attached to work. Religion may therefore constitute one component of the wider socio-cultural environment through which employees interpret and experience their work.

An important conceptual point, however, is that religiosity, religious identity, and religious affiliation are related but not interchangeable concepts. Religiosity is not merely about the individual being a member of a particular religious group but the extent to which religious beliefs and values are held, internalised or practised by the individual [20]. Religious identity, in contrast, relates to religion as a component of the self and the social identity of the person and is thus pertinent to how employees experience, express, hide or negotiate religion in organisational settings [4,12]. Religious affiliation, more specifically, identifies an individual's association with a particular religious tradition or group, such as Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, or Hinduism [9,10]. Affiliation therefore locates an individual within a religious category, but does not measure the level of religious commitment, religious practice, the centrality of religion in the individual's identity, or the extent to which religious teachings are internalised and applied at work.

The distinction is particularly important when considering the existing evidence concerning religion and work motivation. Studies examining religiosity have found associations with motivationally relevant workplace outcomes. Zumrah [20] found religiosity to be positively associated with employees' motivation to learn and motivation to transfer training. Research on religious identity further demonstrates that employees' religious identity can intersect with their occupational identities and workplace experiences, shaping how they express and negotiate their religion within organisational settings [4,12]. Such evidence establishes the potential relevance of religion-related constructs to organisational behaviour, but it cannot be directly generalised to religious affiliation. Evidence that the degree to which religion is internalised, practised, or incorporated into an employee's identity is associated with work motivation does not necessarily imply that employees belonging to different religious affiliations will differ in their intrinsic motivation.

There is a comparatively small body of research that has directly examined religious affiliation in relation to work motivation and related work attitudes, and it has produced inconsistent findings. Chusmir and Koberg [9], for example, found no significant relationships between specific religious affiliations and work-related attitudes among managerial and non-managerial employees. Similarly, Olofinkua [9] reported no significant differences in motivation and job satisfaction between Catholic

and non-Catholic academic staff in Nigerian Catholic universities. In contrast, research conducted in Catholic educational settings in the United States has reported differences in teachers' motivation and job satisfaction according to religious affiliation [9]. More recently, Goncharuk *et al*., [9] reported significant differences across religious affiliations in several aspects of motivation and job satisfaction among academics in Norway and France. Gyekye and Haybatollahi [10] also initially observed differences across Christian, Muslim, and Traditional African Religion groups in several organisational outcomes among Ghanaian workers, although these differences were not sustained after relevant demographic and socioeconomic factors were taken into account. Taken together, the present evidence does not provide a consistent conclusion as to whether employees belonging to different religious affiliations differ in their work-related attitudes and motivation. More importantly, the existing affiliation-based research has largely examined general work motivation, job satisfaction, or other organisational outcomes rather than intrinsic motivation specifically. Consequently, despite evidence that religion-related constructs may be relevant to employees' experiences of work, it remains unclear whether religious affiliation, as a distinct categorical characteristic, differentiates employees' intrinsic motivation. This constitutes a specific empirical gap addressed by the present study.

Examining whether intrinsic motivation varies with religious affiliation is particularly relevant in Malaysia where religious affiliation is a salient feature of the country's plural socio-cultural environment. Malaysia is a country with religious diversity consisting of Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism and other religious traditions [1,18]. Islam is the predominant religion in the country and those who follow Islam are called Muslims [13]. According to the Population and Housing Census of Malaysia 2020, Islam was the most widely professed religion, accounting for 63.5 per cent of the population, followed by Buddhism (18.7 per cent), Christianity (9.1 per cent) and Hinduism (6.1 per cent) [5]. The contextual basis to explore Muslim and non-Muslim employees in Malaysian workplaces is that Islam is the dominant religion and there are large non-Muslim religious communities. However, the division between Muslim and non-Muslim employees in the present study is an analytical categorisation rather than an assumption that non-Muslims are a religiously homogeneous group. The non-Muslim category included employees who reported religious affiliations other than Islam, including Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, and other religions. Therefore, the comparison is intended to explore whether there are differences in intrinsic motivation between employees belonging to the majority religion of Malaysia and employees of other religious traditions, not to imply similar religious beliefs, practices or motivational orientations among the latter.

The Malaysian banking industry provides an appropriate setting for the study. Employees of different religious affiliations work within common organisational and professional environments, where they may be subject to similar organisational systems, performance requirements, and professional expectations. These shared workplace conditions may contribute to similarities in employees' intrinsic motivational experiences despite differences in religious affiliation. In contrast, as religion can provide meaning systems, values, and interpretations of work, employees with different religious affiliations may differ in their experience of the inherent challenge, enjoyment, or satisfaction of their work. Whether such differences are manifest warrants empirical examination. Therefore, the present study specifically investigates whether intrinsic motivation differs between Muslim and non-Muslim employees in the Malaysian banking sector. It does not suggest that affiliation itself is an independent causal factor of intrinsic motivation, but examines whether there is a statistically significant difference in intrinsic motivation between the two analytical groups within the sampled banking context. Thus, the study aims to answer the following research question: Is there a difference in intrinsic motivation between Muslim and non-Muslim employees in the

Malaysian banking sector? Given the inconsistent results in previous affiliation research and the lack of empirical evidence predicting higher intrinsic motivation in either group, this study proposes a non-directional hypothesis: There is a significant difference in intrinsic motivation between Muslim and non-Muslim employees in the Malaysian banking sector.

2. Methodology

The study used a cross-sectional survey design with a structured questionnaire. Two reasons were behind the choice of the questionnaire method. First, it met the participating banks' need to collect data with minimal direct contact with employees and with minimal disruption to their daily work routines. Secondly, the use of a questionnaire allowed the researcher to obtain responses from a wider range of employees within the limited time of organisational access available for the study. The questionnaire was administered in English and was accompanied by an information sheet and consent form. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were required to provide informed consent before completing the questionnaire.

Questionnaires were distributed to employees at the head offices of two Malaysian banks through their respective Human Resource departments. Given the organisational access arrangements and the restrictions placed on direct researcher contact with employees, a non-probability sampling approach was employed. The Human Resource departments facilitated questionnaire distribution and subsequently returned the completed questionnaires to the researcher. A total of 160 questionnaires were returned from the two participating banks.

Intrinsic motivation was measured using the Work Preference Inventory (WPI) developed by Amabile *et al*., [2]. The intrinsic motivation component of the WPI comprises 15 items representing two dimensions, namely challenge and enjoyment. The challenge dimension reflects an individual's preference for engaging in demanding tasks and opportunities that extend personal capabilities, whereas the enjoyment dimension captures the interest, satisfaction and enjoyment derived from undertaking the work itself. Responses were recorded on a four-point scale ranging from 1, "never true of me," to 4, "always true of me." Higher scores reflected a stronger intrinsic motivational orientation.

Religious affiliation was self-reported by respondents and subsequently classified into Muslim and non-Muslim groups for the purpose of analysis. This analytical classification was adopted to correspond with the study's comparative research question and hypothesis and because several of the original religious-affiliation categories contained sample sizes too small to support meaningful separate group comparisons. The non-Muslim category therefore comprised respondents who identified with Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, and other religions. This grouping was used solely as an analytical classification and should not be interpreted as implying that these religious traditions are homogeneous in their beliefs, practices, or orientations.

An independent-samples t-test was used to examine the study hypothesis by comparing the mean intrinsic motivation scores of the Muslim and non-Muslim groups. The test was appropriate because intrinsic motivation was represented by a continuous composite score and the analysis involved two independent groups. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), although capable of comparing mean scores across religious-affiliation categories, was not employed because the study did not seek to estimate separate differences among each of the original religious categories, some of which contained relatively small numbers of respondents. Following the analytical classification of religious affiliation into two groups, the independent-samples t-test provided the more direct test of the hypothesised group difference; for a comparison involving only two independent groups, it is

statistically equivalent to the corresponding one-way ANOVA in testing equality of group means [3, 7,15]. Statistical significance was assessed at the .05 level.

3. Results

3.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The final sample consisted of 159 employees from the two participating Malaysian banks. As presented in Table 1, female respondents constituted a larger proportion of the sample (59.7%) than male respondents (40.3%). The respondents represented a broad age range, with those aged 26–35 years collectively accounting for almost half of the sample. The sample was predominantly Malay (66.0%), followed by Chinese (24.5%) and Indian (8.8%) respondents. With respect to religious affiliation, Muslims constituted 66.7% (n = 106) of the respondents, while the remaining respondents identified as Buddhists (18.2%, n = 29), Christians (7.5%, n = 12), Hindus (5.7%, n = 9), or other religious affiliations (1.9%, n = 3). These original categories are reported to reflect the religious composition of the sample. For the inferential analysis addressing the study hypothesis, religious affiliation was classified into Muslim and non-Muslim groups, as described in the Methodology section. In terms of other characteristics, almost half of respondents with valid educational data held a bachelor's degree (48.7%). Respondents were represented across different organisational positions, with lower management (40.8%) and middle management (32.5%) forming the two largest groups. The sample also encompassed employees with varying levels of work experience, ranging from less than one year to more than 30 years, with the largest proportions reporting two to five years (26.4%) and six to ten years (23.3%) of total working experience.

Table 1
Demographic profile of respondents

Demographic characteristic	Category	*n*	%
Gender	Male	64	40.3
	Female	95	59.7
Age (years)	Below 25	15	9.4
	26–30	37	23.3
	31–35	39	24.5
	36–40	19	11.9
	41–45	20	12.6
	46–50	21	13.2
	51–55	8	5.0
Ethnicity	Malay	105	66.0
	Chinese	39	24.5
	Indian	14	8.8
	Other	1	0.6
Religious affiliation	Islam	106	66.7
	Christianity	12	7.5
	Hinduism	9	5.7
	Buddhism	29	18.2
	Others	3	1.9

Table 1 (***Continued***)

Highest educational qualification[1]	SPM or equivalent	26	16.5
	STPM	13	8.2
	Diploma	28	17.7
	Bachelor's degree	77	48.7
	Master's degree	12	7.6
	Others	2	1.3
Job position[2]	Middle management	51	32.5
	Lower management	64	40.8
	Clerical	29	18.5
	Non-clerical	2	1.3
	Others	11	7.0
Total working experience	Less than 1 year	3	1.9
	2–5 years	42	26.4
	6–10 years	37	23.3
	11–15 years	22	13.8
	16–20 years	18	11.3
	21–25 years	19	11.9
	26–30 years	14	8.8
	Over 30 years	4	2.5

3.2 Preliminary Analysis and Reliability of the Intrinsic Motivation Measure

Preliminary analyses were conducted prior to hypothesis testing to examine the quality and distribution of the data. Following the data-screening procedure described in the Methodology section, one case with substantial missing responses was excluded, resulting in a final sample of 159 respondents. The remaining responses were within the expected range of the measurement scale, and the relevant negatively worded items were reverse-coded before the overall intrinsic motivation score was computed.

As shown in Table 2, the 15-item intrinsic motivation measure demonstrated good internal consistency (Cronbach's α = .841). The overall mean intrinsic motivation score was M = 3.28 (SD = 0.37) on the four-point scale.

Table 2
Reliability and descriptive statistics for intrinsic motivation

Measure	Items	Cronbach's α	*M*	*SD*
Intrinsic motivation	15	.841	3.28	0.37

Note. Intrinsic motivation was measured using the 15-item intrinsic motivation component of the Work Preference Inventory (WPI). Responses were recorded on a four-point scale, with higher scores representing greater intrinsic motivational orientation.

The distribution of intrinsic motivation scores was subsequently examined for the two religious-affiliation groups. The Shapiro–Wilk test indicated a statistically significant departure from normality for the Muslim group, W = .957, p = .002, whereas the distribution for the non-Muslim group did not significantly depart from normality, W = .966, p = .141. Examination of the distributional characteristics provided further context for these results. The Muslim group exhibited a skewness value of −.808 and kurtosis of .747, compared with .008 and .724, respectively, for the non-Muslim

group. Although the Muslim group therefore exhibited some negative skewness, the extent of the departure was not considered severe.

Potential outlying observations identified during the preliminary screening were also examined. These observations represented plausible scores within the permissible range of the measure rather than data-entry errors and were therefore retained in the analysis. Given the moderate nature of the departure from normality, together with the group sample sizes and the robustness of the independent-samples t-test to moderate violations of normality, the planned parametric analysis was retained. A non-parametric sensitivity analysis was then performed to verify whether the substantive conclusion still holds when the normality assumption is relaxed.

3.3 Intrinsic Motivation and Religious Affiliation

An independent-samples t-test was performed to compare intrinsic motivation between Muslim and non-Muslim employees. As reflected in Table 3, the mean score of the intrinsic motivation of Muslim respondents (n = 106) was M = 3.26 (SD = 0.39), while the mean score of non-Muslim respondents (n = 53) was slightly higher, M = 3.32 (SD = 0.32). The difference between the two group means observed was therefore modest. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was examined by Levene's test before interpreting the t-test. The result was non-significant (F = 3.37, p = .068), suggesting that the assumption of equal variances was not violated. The results assuming equal variances were thus used.

An independent-samples t-test revealed no significant difference in intrinsic motivation between Muslim and non-Muslim respondents, t(157) = −1.08, p = .283 (hypothesis not supported). The mean difference between the groups (Muslim minus non-Muslim) was −0.07, with a 95% confidence interval of −0.19 to 0.06. The average intrinsic motivation score was slightly higher in the non-Muslim group but this difference was not statistically significant.

The magnitude of the difference was also examined using Cohen's d. The effect size was small, d = −0.18, with a 95% confidence interval of [−0.51, 0.15]. The negative sign reflects the direction of the group comparison, with the Muslim group having the slightly lower mean score. In substantive terms, however, the magnitude of the difference was limited. The confidence interval also included zero, reinforcing the absence of a clearly distinguishable group difference.

Table 3
Intrinsic motivation by religious affiliation

Religious affiliation	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*df*	*p*	Cohen's *d*
Muslim	106	3.26	0.39	−1.08	157	.283	−0.18
Non-Muslim	53	3.32	0.32				

Note. Levene's test: F = 3.37, p = .068. Mean difference (Muslim − non-Muslim) = −0.07, 95% CI [−0.19, 0.06]. Cohen's d = −0.18, 95% CI [−0.51, 0.15].

Given the departure from normality identified for the Muslim group in the preliminary analysis, a Mann–Whitney U test was subsequently conducted as a sensitivity analysis. The Muslim group had a mean rank of 79.01, while the non-Muslim group had a mean rank of 81.98. The analysis similarly indicated no statistically significant difference in intrinsic motivation between the two groups, U = 2704.00, Z = −0.38, p = .701. The non-parametric result therefore supported the same substantive conclusion as the primary independent-samples t-test.

4. Discussion

The present study examined whether intrinsic motivation differs between Muslim and non-Muslim employees in the Malaysian banking sector. The findings showed no statistically significant difference between the two groups. Although non-Muslim employees recorded a slightly higher mean intrinsic motivation score than Muslim employees, the difference was small and statistically non-significant, $t(157) = -1.08$, $p = .283$, with a small effect size ($d = -0.18$). The confidence interval for the mean difference included zero, while the Mann–Whitney sensitivity analysis produced the same substantive conclusion. The hypothesis was therefore not supported. Within the sampled banks, religious affiliation, as operationalised through the Muslim and non-Muslim analytical classification, did not meaningfully differentiate employees' intrinsic motivation.

The finding is consistent with some of the previous research on religious affiliation and work-related outcomes reviewed in this study. Chusmir and Koberg [9] found no significant relationships between specific religious affiliations and work-related attitudes among managerial and non-managerial employees, while Olofinkua [9] reported no significant differences in motivation and job satisfaction between Catholic and non-Catholic academic employees. The present result also has some correspondence with the findings of Gyekye and Haybatollahi [10]. Their initial analyses indicated differences among Ghanaian workers affiliated with Christianity, Islam, and Traditional African Religion across several organisational outcomes. However, these differences were no longer evident after education and socioeconomic factors were taken into account. The present findings add to this strand of evidence by showing that religious-group membership was not associated with a statistically distinguishable difference in intrinsic motivation among the Malaysian bank employees examined in this study.

The result does not, however, suggest that differences according to religious affiliation are absent across all organisational or national settings. The existing empirical evidence remains mixed. Goncharuk *et al*., [9], for example, found significant differences across religious affiliations in several aspects of motivation and job satisfaction among academic employees in Norway and France. Research conducted in Catholic educational settings in the United States has similarly reported affiliation-related differences in teachers' motivation and job satisfaction [9]. The difference between these findings and those of the present study may partly reflect variations in national, occupational, and organisational contexts as well as differences in the particular forms of motivation and work attitudes examined. The present findings therefore contribute to the mixed affiliation-based literature by providing evidence specifically concerning intrinsic motivation among employees within the Malaysian banking context.

An important consideration in interpreting the non-significant result is the conceptual distinction between religious affiliation and other religion-related constructs. As established earlier, religious affiliation identifies an individual's association with a particular religious tradition but does not indicate the strength of religious commitment, the extent of religious practice, the centrality of religion to the individual's identity, or the degree to which religious beliefs and values are internalised and applied to work. The absence of a significant difference between Muslim and non-Muslim employees therefore should not be interpreted as evidence that religion more broadly is unrelated to employees' motivation. Rather, the finding indicates that affiliation alone did not differentiate intrinsic motivation in the present sample.

This interpretation is important when the present finding is considered alongside research examining religiosity and religious identity. Zumrah [20], for example, found religiosity to be positively associated with motivation to learn and motivation to transfer among Malaysian public-sector employees. Research on religious identity similarly demonstrates that employees' religious

identity can intersect with occupational identity and workplace experiences, shaping how religion is expressed and negotiated within organisational settings [4,12]. These findings do not conflict with the present result, as religiosity and religious identity tap dimensions of religion that are conceptually distinct from affiliation. In conclusion, the evidence suggests that the importance of religion for employees' experiences of work may be less about membership of a religious category per se, and more about the degree to which religion is internalised, incorporated into identity or made meaningful in the employee's experience of work.

The present finding can also be placed within the framework of a more general theoretical understanding of intrinsic motivation. Self-Determination Theory emphasises the significance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in promoting autonomous forms of motivation [16]. Hagger and McAnally Star [11] reported that need-supportive workplace conditions and psychological need satisfaction are associated with autonomous motivation and these motivational associations may differ across work, employee and cultural contexts. Likewise, Vo *et al*., [19] found that work motivation corresponds to individual needs and wider social and country-level conditions. These perspectives point to the fact that intrinsic motivation is not reducible to one socio-cultural characteristic such as religious affiliation, but rather develops in a wider organisational and social environment.

A plausible explanation for the similarity observed between Muslim and non-Muslim employees in the present study is that employees in both groups worked in the same banking sector and shared organisational systems, professional expectations, performance requirements and institutional arrangements. Such common workplace conditions may be more proximal to employees' experiences of challenge, enjoyment and satisfaction in carrying out their work than religious affiliation per se. The Work Preference Inventory used in the present study measures these intrinsic motivational orientations exactly, by asking employees about their attraction to challenging activities and their enjoyment of the work itself [2]. Thus, it could be that employees from different religious backgrounds can report similar levels of intrinsic motivation when they experience similar work demands, opportunities for competence, professional expectations and other organisational conditions. This explanation, nevertheless, is still interpretive, as these characteristics of the workplace were not studied directly in the current analysis.

5. Conclusion

The present study offers empirical evidence on religious affiliation and intrinsic motivation in the Malaysian banking sector, a field where direct evidence is still scarce. Results showed that there was no significant difference in the intrinsic motivation of Muslim and non-Muslim employees in the sampled banks. The study thus contributes to the literature by extending affiliation-based research from general work motivation, job satisfaction and other organisational attitudes to the more specific construct of intrinsic motivation. More importantly, findings underscore the importance of differentiating religious affiliation from other religion-related constructs.

The findings have implications for organisational practice, particularly in religiously diverse workplaces. Organisations should acknowledge and accommodate religious diversity, but should not assume that employees' motivational orientations can be inferred from their religious affiliation. The absence of a significant difference in the present study suggests that Muslim and non-Muslim employees should not be presumed to differ in the extent to which they experience their work as inherently interesting, enjoyable, challenging, or satisfying merely because they belong to different religious categories. Instead, attention to workplace conditions that support employees' motivational experiences across religious backgrounds may be more useful. In this respect, the emphasis within

Self-Determination Theory on autonomy, competence, relatedness, and need-supportive work environments provides a relevant basis for considering how organisations can support employees' motivation [11,16]. This is also consistent with the broader view that the integration of religion and spirituality at work occurs within organisational cultures, policies, leadership practices, and social contexts [6].

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the sample was drawn from the head offices of only two Malaysian banks using a non-probability sampling approach necessitated by organisational access arrangements. The findings therefore cannot be generalised to all employees in the Malaysian banking sector or to employees in other industries. Second, the study employed a cross-sectional design and examined group differences rather than causal relationships. The findings consequently should not be interpreted as causal inferences concerning religious affiliation and intrinsic motivation. Third, the analytical classification of respondents into Muslim and non-Muslim groups combines Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, and other religious traditions within the non-Muslim category. Although this classification was appropriate to the research question and avoided separate statistical comparisons involving religious categories with small numbers of respondents, the traditions represented within the non-Muslim group are not religiously or conceptually homogeneous. The findings are therefore specific to the comparison between Muslim and non-Muslim employees in this study and should not be interpreted as demonstrating an absence of differences among individual religious affiliations.

Future research could overcome these limitations by using larger and more diverse samples that would allow for adequately powered comparisons between individual religious affiliations, rather than the overarching classification into Muslim and non-Muslim groups. Studies in different organisations, industries and occupational groups would also help determine whether the pattern seen in the banking sector is evident in other workplace contexts. Longitudinal studies might also provide a stronger basis for examining how employees' motivational experiences unfold over time. Further work should also better distinguish between religious affiliation and the more proximal ways in which religion may become relevant to work. Looking at religiosity, religious commitment, religious identity, spirituality, and religiously informed work values, beyond affiliation, may lead to a deeper understanding of the relationship between religion and intrinsic motivation. Future research may consider religion-related characteristics within the larger motivational environment by including workplace conditions like autonomy, competence, relatedness, meaningful work, managerial support, leadership, and job design. Such research could advance the literature toward a more theoretically informative understanding of religion-related processes relevant to employees' intrinsic motivation at work.

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