

# CULTURAL INFLUENCE IN BUSINESS PRACTICES: A COMPARISON BETWEEN CHINA AND INDONESIA IN EVERYDAY TRADING ACTIVITIES

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## ABSTRACT

This study compares daily business practices in China and Indonesia, with a focus on the cultural factors that affect it. This study seeks to explore differences and similarities in trade activities between Indonesia and China, focusing on how cultural backgrounds affect business behavior in both countries. International trade is influenced not only by economic factors, but also by the cultural values that underlie the behavior of consumers and entrepreneurs. Globalization and economic integration have encouraged increasingly intensive cultural exchanges between countries in the world.

**Keywords:** Culture, Indonesia, Business Practices, China, Marketing Strategy

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

This study compares daily business practices in China and Indonesia, focusing on the cultural factors that influence them. This study seeks to explore differences and similarities in trade activities between Indonesia and China, focusing on how cultural backgrounds affect business behavior in both countries. International trade is influenced not only by economic factors, but also by the cultural values that underlie the behavior of consumers and entrepreneurs (Rolando, 2025d, 2025a; Wigayha & Rolando, 2024, 2025).

First, culture plays an important role in international marketing strategies. Aji Aji (2023) shows that culture influences the way companies design and implement marketing strategies, which in turn can affect their success in international markets. In Indonesia, for example, strong religious values and consumer ethics can shape purchasing preferences and behaviors (Arli & Tjiptono, 2013). This is also supported by research that shows that business ethics in Indonesia are greatly influenced by religious factors and materialism (Arli & Tjiptono, 2013; Lu & Lu, 2009). In the Chinese context, values such as "guanxi" (personal relationships) and "mianzi" (self-esteem) are also very important in building business relationships and negotiations (Sheer & Chen, 2003; Kiong & Kee, 2014).

Furthermore, differences in approaches to corporate social responsibility (CSR) also reflect cultural influences. Ramasamy and Yeung Ramasamy & Yeung (2008) noted that Chinese consumers' perception of CSR is different from that of consumers in other countries, including Indonesia. In Indonesia, CSR is often seen as a moral obligation that must be fulfilled by companies,

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while in China, CSR is more often associated with the company's image and long-term profits (Ramasamy & Yeung, 2008). This shows that cultural background not only influences consumer behavior but also the company's strategy in operating in the global market (Rolando, 2025c, 2025f, 2025b; Setiawan & Rolando, 2025; Winata & Rolando, 2025).

Further comparisons can be seen in the dynamics of family businesses in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia and China. Sukamdani Sukamdani (2023) revealed that family businesses in Indonesia are often influenced by traditional values and relationships between family members, which are different from the more individualistic approach in China. This research suggests that understanding the dynamics of family businesses can be helpful in understanding how culture shapes business behavior in both countries.

In addition, in the context of e-commerce adoption, Shia et al. (2015) show that factors such as trust, cost, and social influence play an important role in consumer decisions in Indonesia and China. The study highlights how cultural differences can affect the way consumers in both countries interact with new technologies and commerce platforms.

Overall, the differences and similarities in trade activities between Indonesia and China can be understood through a cultural lens. The cultural values that underlie business behavior in both countries not only influence marketing and CSR strategies, but also shape the way consumers interact with products and services. By understanding the influence of this culture, companies can design more effective strategies to enter and compete in international markets (Rolando, 2024b, 2024a, 2025e; Rolando & Chondro, 2025).

## **1.2 Research Questions**

The study focuses on two questions:

1. How do cultural factors in China and Indonesia affect day-to-day business practices in both countries?
2. What are the similarities and differences in day-to-day trading activities in China and Indonesia?

## **1.3 Research Objectives**

1. To Analyze the Influence of Cultural Factors on Business Practices in China and Indonesia.
2. To Identify Similarities and Differences in Everyday Trade Activities in China and Indonesia

## **1.4 Significance of Research**

This research has profound significance in understanding how cultural background influences business behavior in Indonesia and China. By examining the differences and similarities in trade activities in the two countries, the research can provide valuable insights for academics, business practitioners, and policymakers.

First, this research contributes to the understanding of the influence of culture on international marketing strategies. Aji Aji (2023) emphasized that culture has a significant impact on the implementation of marketing strategies, which is very important for companies looking to enter foreign markets. This research shows that a deep understanding of local cultural values can assist companies in designing more effective and relevant marketing campaigns. This is also in line with a study by Suryadimulya et al. (Suryadimulya et al., 2023), which highlights the importance of cultural intelligence in cross-cultural business interactions. Cultural intelligence allows individuals to understand and appreciate different cultural values, thereby increasing the effectiveness of business interactions (Mulyono & Rolando, 2025; Zahran & Rolando, 2025).

Furthermore, this research is also relevant in the context of corporate social responsibility (CSR). Arli and Tjiptono (2013) show that consumer perception of CSR in Indonesia is influenced by religious and ethical values. This shows

that companies operating in Indonesia need to consider these aspects in their CSR strategies. On the other hand, research by Sukamdani Sukamdani (2023) provides insight into the dynamics of family businesses in Southeast Asia, which are often influenced by traditional values and relationships between family members. Understanding these dynamics can help companies build better relationships with business partners and consumers.

In today's digital era, this research also has significance in understanding the adoption of e-commerce in both countries. Shia et al. Shia et al. (2015) identified factors influencing consumers' decisions to adopt e-commerce, including trust and social influence. This research shows that understanding the cultural context can help companies in designing more effective marketing strategies for e-commerce platforms. In addition, Setyowati et al. Setyowati et al. (2021) highlight the challenges and prospects in the implementation of e-business information systems in Indonesia, which are increasingly relevant in the context of international trade.

This research contributes to a broader understanding of the relationship between culture, institutions, and economic development. Spranz et al. Spranz et al. (2012) show that the interaction between culture and institutions is very important in determining the success of economic development. By understanding how culture influences business behavior, this research can help in formulating more effective policies to support sustainable economic growth in both countries.

## **2. RESEARCH METHOD**

### **2.1 Protocol Review**

This research protocol has been updated based on input from the ethics committee to ensure compliance with applicable ethics and laws. Adjustments have been made to protect the rights and privacy of participants. Data collection and storage measures have also been reviewed to improve the security and confidentiality of the information obtained. The research team is committed to maintaining research integrity and adhering to the highest standards of academic ethics.

### **2.2 Search Strategy**

This research uses a qualitative approach to explore business practices and daily trading activities in China and Indonesia. The data search strategy includes direct observation at the trading site, in-depth interviews with business actors, as well as analysis of documents and other written sources. Researchers conducted a 3-month field study in each country to gain a comprehensive understanding of the local cultural context that influences business behavior.

### **2.3 Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria**

The inclusion criteria in this study include:

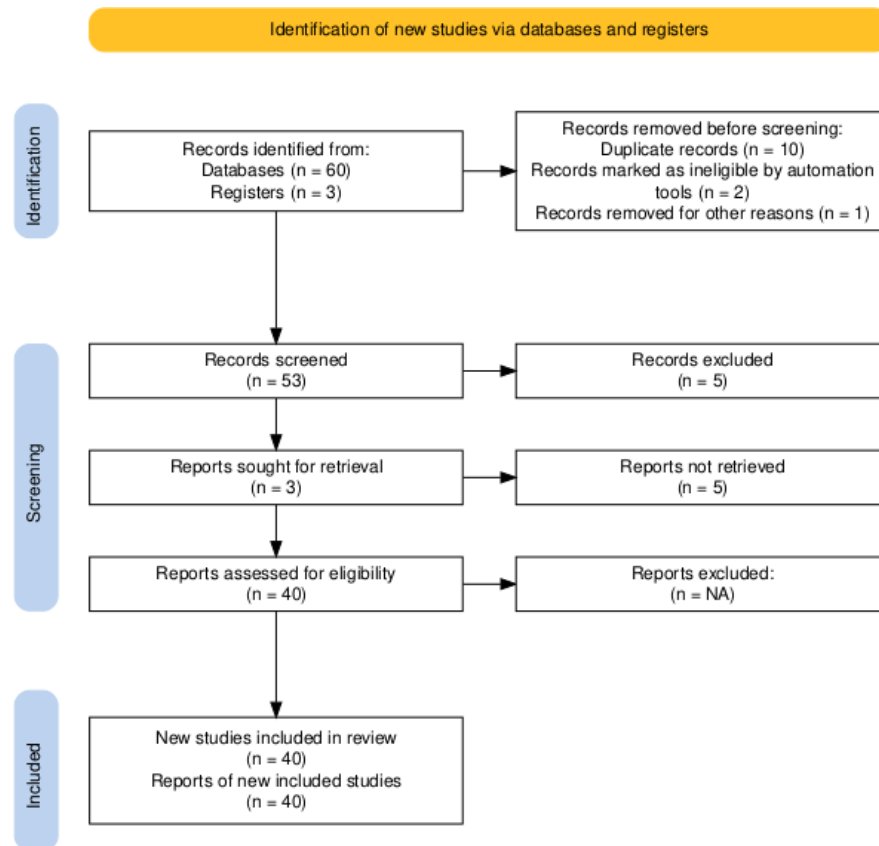
- Active business people domiciled in China or Indonesia
- Engage in trade in goods or services in the domestic market

Willing to participate in interviews and field observations While the exclusion criteria include:

- Business people who do not reside in China or Indonesia
- Engage only in international trade activities
- Refuse to participate in this study

The research team established these criteria to ensure the sample groups involved in the study accurately represent the day-to-day trading activities in each country.

### **2.4 Prisma Flow Diagram**

**Figure 1. Prisma Flow Diagram**

## 2.5 Quality Assessment Criteria

To assess the quality of this study, the research team used the following criteria:

1. **Credibility:** Do the research findings match the reality observed in the field?
2. **Transferability:** To what extent can research results be applied or adapted to different cultural and economic contexts?
3. **Dependability:** Is the research process well-documented and replicable?
4. **Confirmability:** Whether the research findings are supported by the collected and free data from Bias Researcher? The research team systematically applied these criteria to evaluate the quality and validity of their research results. This aims to ensure that the study's findings are credible and provide valuable insights for future research.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Descriptive Statistics Study

The descriptive statistics in this study serve to provide a clear picture of the differences and similarities in trade activities between Indonesia and China, as well as how cultural backgrounds affect business behavior in both countries. Descriptive statistics include the collection and analysis of relevant data to understand patterns, trends, and characteristics that exist in trade and cultural contexts.

First, in the context of data collection, this study adopts a quantitative approach that involves surveys of consumers and business people in both countries. Shia et al. (2015) reported that data were collected from 192 consumers in Jakarta and 184 consumers in Taipei, using ANCOVA to test the research model.

This method provides a solid foundation for comparative analysis, allowing researchers to identify factors that influence consumers' decisions in adopting e-commerce, such as trust, cost, and social influence. This data is important to understand how culture influences consumer behavior in both countries.

Furthermore, this study also uses descriptive statistics to describe the demographic characteristics of respondents. For example, research by Wang Wang (2024) shows that the competitive attitudes and behaviors of employees in China play an important role in the digital performance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). By understanding the demographic characteristics of respondents, researchers can analyze how factors such as age, education, and work experience affect attitudes and behaviors in the context of trade.

In addition, descriptive statistical analysis also includes the measurement of key variables that affect business performance, such as corporate social responsibility (CSR) and business ethics. Arli and Tjiptono Arli & Tjiptono (2013) highlight that religious values and materialism in Indonesia affect the ethical dimension of consumers. With using descriptive statistics, researchers can describe how perceptions of CSR differ between consumers in Indonesia and China, as well as how this impacts purchasing decisions.

In the context of family business, Sukamdani Sukamdani (2023) provides insight into the dynamics of family businesses in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia. Descriptive statistics can be used to describe the structure and characteristics of a family business, as well as how cultural values influence their business strategies and decisions. This research helps in understanding how cultural backgrounds shape business behavior in both countries.

The study also considers institutional and cultural factors that influence economic development. Spranz et al. Spranz et al. (2012) show that the interaction between culture and institutions is very important in determining the success of economic development. Descriptive statistics can be used to illustrate the relationship between these factors and how they contribute to trade dynamics between Indonesia and China.

### **3.2 Thematic Synthesis**

In this thematic synthesis, we will discuss how cultural backgrounds, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and family business dynamics affect trade activities in Indonesia and China. This study aims to provide a deeper insight into how these factors are interrelated and contribute to business behavior in both countries.

First, the influence of culture on international marketing strategies is significant. Aji Aji (2023) shows that culture influences the implementation of marketing strategies, which is important for companies that want to compete in the global market. In the Indonesian context, strong religious values and consumer ethics can shape purchasing preferences and behaviors (Arli & Tjiptono, 2013). This is in line with research by Puspita et al. (Puspita et al., 2022), which highlights the importance of understanding cultural context in trade relations between Indonesia and China. By understanding these cultural differences, companies can design more effective strategies to attract consumers in both countries.

Furthermore, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is an important aspect of business relationships. Bhinekawati Bhinekawati (2016) emphasized that companies that adopt good CSR practices not only gain economic benefits, but also build a positive reputation in the eyes of consumers. In Indonesia, CSR is often seen as a moral obligation, while in China, CSR is more related to the company's image and long-term profits. This research shows that understanding the differences in perceptions of CSR can help companies in formulating better strategies to operate in both markets.

The dynamics of family businesses also play an important role in the context of trade in Southeast Asia. Sukamdani Sukamdani (2023) provides insight into how family businesses in Indonesia and neighboring countries operate and maintain their entrepreneurial spirit. In this context,

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cultural values and relationships between family members greatly influence business decisions and strategies taken. This research shows that family businesses are often more flexible and able to adapt to market changes, which is an advantage in a competitive business environment.

The study also considers institutional and cultural factors that influence economic development. Spranz et al. (2012) show that the interaction between culture and institutions is very important in determining the success of economic development. By understanding how culture influences business behavior, this research can help in formulating more effective policies to support sustainable economic growth in both countries.

This thematic synthesis shows that cultural backgrounds, CSR, and family business dynamics are intertwined and have a significant impact on trade activities in Indonesia and China. By understanding these relationships, companies and policymakers can design more effective strategies for operating in international markets.

### **3.3 Bibliometric Analysis**

Bibliometric analysis aims to evaluate and organize relevant literature in the context of research on differences and similarities in trade activities in Indonesia and China, as well as how cultural background influences business behavior. In this analysis, we will group relevant references based on their themes, methodologies, and contributions to a broader understanding of the topic.

1. Themes of Culture and Business Behavior

References that discuss the influence of culture on business behavior in Indonesia and China are very important in the context of this study. Aji Aji (2023) examines how culture influences the implementation of international marketing strategies, providing insights into how companies can tailor their strategies for different markets. Suryadimulya et al. (2023) also highlight the importance of cultural intelligence in multicultural interactions, which is relevant for understanding the dynamics of trade between the two countries.

2. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

CSR is a central theme in this analysis. Arli and Tjiptono (2013) explore the impact of religiosity and materialism on consumer ethics in Indonesia, which can influence how companies carry out their CSR practices. Bhinekawati (2016) emphasizes the importance of CSR in the context of sustainable development, which is relevant for companies operating in both countries.

3. Family Business Dynamics

Sukamdani (2023) provides an in-depth analysis of the dynamics of family businesses in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia and China. This study shows how cultural values and relationships between family members influence business decisions, which is an important aspect of understanding business behavior in both countries.

4. E-Commerce and Technology

Shia et al. (2015) conducted a comparison of consumer decisions in adopting e-commerce between Jakarta and Taipei, which provides insight into how cultural factors influence the adoption of new technologies. Setyowati et al. (2021) also discuss the challenges and prospects in the implementation of e-business information systems in Indonesia, which are increasingly relevant in the context of international trade.

5. Economic and Policy Analysis

Spranz et al. (2012) analyzed the relationship between institutional and cultural factors in economic development in Indonesia. Puspita et al. (2022) examined digital sovereignty in Indonesia-China trade relations, which provides additional perspectives on how policy and economics are intertwined in the context of trade.

### **3.4 Network Analysis**



Network analysis in the context of this study focuses on the relationship between various factors influencing trade activities between Indonesia and China, as well as how cultural background and organizational structure affect business behavior. Using relevant references, we can describe the networks of interaction that exist among the various elements involved in international trade.

1. Cultural Networks and Adaptation

Chi CHI (2024) stated that cross-cultural adaptation in joint ventures between China and Indonesia is very important for business performance. This research shows that employee backgrounds, cross-cultural activities, support, and networking have a dynamic impact on business performance. These networks create effective communication channels and facilitate the exchange of knowledge between employees from different cultural backgrounds, which in turn can improve the performance of joint ventures.

2. Networking in E-Commerce

Shia et al. Shia et al. (2015) conducted a comparison of consumer decisions in adopting e-commerce between Jakarta and Taipei. This study shows that factors such as trust, cost, and social influence play an important role in consumer decisions. The social networks formed among consumers and business people can influence the adoption of new technologies, which shows the importance of building strong networks in the context of digital commerce.

3. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Network

Ramasamy and Yeung Ramasamy & Yeung (2008) examined Chinese consumers' perceptions of CSR, which suggests that CSR can build consumer trust and loyalty. The network between the company and stakeholders, including consumers and the public, is critical in building a company's reputation. This research shows that companies that are active in CSR can build stronger networks with consumers, which in turn can improve business performance.

4. Family Business Dynamics

Sukamdani Sukamdani (2023) provides insight into the dynamics of family businesses in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia and China. The networks formed in family businesses are often influenced by cultural values and relationships between family members. This research shows that family businesses that have a strong network can be more flexible and able to adapt to market changes, which is an advantage in a competitive business environment.

5. Networking in Policy and Economics

Puspita et al. Puspita et al. (2022) discuss digital sovereignty in Indonesia-China trade relations, showing that policy and economic networks are crucial in the context of international trade. This research shows that countries need to build strong networks to support economic growth and protect national interests in the digital era.

### 3.5 Discussion

#### 3.5.1 Synthesis of key findings

This research reveals that cultural background, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and family business dynamics play an important role in shaping business behavior in Indonesia and China. Key findings suggest that local culture influences marketing strategies and consumer decision-making, where religious values and consumer ethics in Indonesia contribute to preferences towards products and services (Arli & Tjiptono, 2013; . In addition, CSR is seen as a moral obligation in Indonesia, while in China it is more related to the company's image (Shia et al., 2015). The dynamics of family businesses also show that traditional values and relationships between family members influence business decisions, providing flexibility in dealing with market changes (Sukamdani, 2023).

#### 3.5.2 Theoretical Implications

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These findings have significant theoretical implications in the field of cross-cultural studies and consumer behavior. This research reinforces the theory that culture influences not only individual behavior but also overall business strategy. By integrating the concept of cultural intelligence in the context of international trade, this research can enrich the existing literature and provide a more comprehensive framework for understanding the interaction between culture and business (Arli & Tjiptono, 2013; Spranz et al., 2012). In addition, this study shows that CSR should be understood in the context of local culture, which can enrich CSR theory by considering differences in perceptions in different countries (Shia et al., 2015).

**3.5.3 Practical Implications**

From a practical perspective, these findings provide guidance for companies looking to enter the Indonesian and Chinese markets. Companies need to adjust their marketing strategies taking into account local cultural values and consumer ethics. For example, companies operating in Indonesia should focus more on CSR practices that match the expectations of the local community to build a good reputation (Shia et al., 2015). In addition, understanding the dynamics of family businesses can help companies build better relationships with business partners and consumers (Sukamdani, 2023).

**3.5.4 Research Gaps**

While this research provides valuable insights, there are some research gaps that need to be addressed. First, more research is needed to explore how other factors, such as technology and innovation, affect business behavior in both countries. Second, longitudinal studies can provide a deeper understanding of how business behavior changes over time, especially in the context of technological developments and globalization (Setyowati et al., 2021; Puspita et al., 2022). Finally, research on gender differences in entrepreneurship in Indonesia and China can also be an interesting area to explore further (Babbitt et al., 2015).

**3.5.5 Future Research Directions**

Future research directions could include more in-depth comparative studies of the influence of culture on innovation and technology adoption in Indonesia and China. This research can use both qualitative and quantitative approaches to gain a more holistic understanding of the factors that influence business decisions. In addition, research on the impact of social and political changes on business behavior in both countries can also provide valuable insights (Spranz et al., 2012). Finally, further exploration of the role of CSR in the context of digitalization and e-commerce could be a relevant area of research, given the rapid growth in these sectors in both countries (Shia et al., 2015; Setyowati et al., 2021).

**4. CONCLUSION****4.1 Summary of key findings**

This study found that cultural factors have a very important role in shaping daily business practices in China and Indonesia. Culture not only influences the way individuals and organizations interact in the business environment, but it also determines the key values that underlie decision-making and the way it works. In the context of this study, several similarities and significant differences in trade activities in the two countries were found that can be attributed to their respective cultural backgrounds.

In China, values rooted in Confucianism, such as the importance of maintaining personal relationships (guanxi), respect for social hierarchy, and harmony in interactions, greatly influence daily business practices. Guanxi, As a key element, it involves not only professional relationships but also personal relationships, which are considered the foundation of trust in business. A strong social hierarchy is also reflected in the way negotiations are conducted, where respect for one's status and position in the social structure takes precedence.

Meanwhile, in Indonesia, business culture is influenced by religious and family values which play a major role in shaping the pattern of interaction between individuals and organizations.



Community life in Indonesia, which is full of the values of mutual cooperation, respect, and a family-friendly approach, is seen in the way businesses are run. Good and supportive relationships between business partners are often considered more important than financial gains, especially in local communities that prioritize social harmony.

However, there are striking similarities between the two countries, especially when it comes to emphasizing the importance of reputation, trust, and flexibility in carrying out daily trading activities. In both China and Indonesia, maintaining a good name and building trust are fundamental elements that are considered the main capital in business. In addition, flexibility in adapting to changing situations or the needs of business partners is a commonly applied strategy to maintain good relations and the sustainability of cooperation.

Overall, the study shows that culture plays a complex but essential role in determining how business is done in both countries. An in-depth understanding of these aspects of culture can provide better insights for businesses looking to expand their networks or collaborate in the region.

#### **4.2 Limitations of the study**

This research has several limitations that need to be considered. First, the focus of the research is only on a comparison of day-to-day business practices in China and Indonesia, so it does not include other aspects of the business, such as marketing strategies, human resource management, or strategic decision-making that may also be significantly influenced by cultural factors. Second, data collection methods dominated by limited literature studies and interviews can limit the depth of analysis, especially in exploring the real experiences of business people or broader variations in business practices in both countries. Third, the differences in complex and diverse cultural contexts in China and Indonesia require a more in-depth investigation to understand the nuances that emerge from regional, social, and historical variations in each country. Therefore, more thorough follow-up research and using more diverse methods are needed to enrich the findings produced.

#### **4.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, there are several recommendations that can be submitted. First, further research is needed to explore the influence of cultural factors on other aspects of business practices that have not been reached by this study, such as management styles, organizational structures, corporate governance, and strategic decision-making processes. The research can provide a more comprehensive insight into how culture influences various dimensions of the business. Second, more in-depth investigations using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods are highly recommended, as this approach can lead to a richer and more detailed understanding of cultural differences and their impact on business operations in China and Indonesia. This combination of methods can also help identify certain patterns that may not be revealed through a single approach. Third, cross-cultural training and awareness-raising programs for business professionals in both countries are essential to help bridge cultural differences. These programs can encourage more effective collaboration, strengthen business relationships, and create more harmonious exchanges between the two parties. These steps are expected to increase intercultural understanding while supporting the success of business cooperation in the future.

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