



Spiritual-Based Human Resource Management in Recruitment and Orientation: A Study in Tulungagung's Faith-Based Organizations

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Article Info	Abstract
Article history: Received July 11, 2025 Revised August 12, 2025 Accepted October 22, 2025 *Corresponding author email: rafikameilia@uinsatu.ac.id Keywords: spiritual-based HRM, recruitment, orientation, faith-based organizations, Islamic values	Introduction/Objectives: This study explores the implementation of Spiritual-Based Human Resource Management (SBHRM) during recruitment and orientation processes in Islamic-based institutions in Tulungagung, East Java, Indonesia. It investigates how values such as <i>amanah</i> (trust), <i>niyyah</i> (intention), and <i>ikhlas</i> (sincerity) are applied and how they influence new employee motivation, adaptation, and commitment. Research Methods: A convergent parallel mixed-methods design was used. Qualitative data were obtained through interviews and observations with six institutional leaders, while quantitative data were collected using structured questionnaires from 30 newly recruited employees. Thematic analysis and Pearson correlation were used for data interpretation. Findings/Results: The findings show that recruitment is based on moral-religious considerations. Orientation includes spiritual rituals, mentoring, and value internalization. Quantitative results indicate high perception scores for spiritual orientation ($M = 4.36$) and significant positive correlations with motivation ($r = 0.60$) and retention intention ($r = 0.54$). Conclusion: SBHRM acts as both a spiritual and managerial mechanism to support early-stage employee integration. The study contributes to Islamic HRM theory and suggests the

	institutionalization of spiritual-based practices in HR processes.
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INTRODUCTION

Faith-based organizations often integrate spiritual values into their human resource management (HRM) practices, especially in recruitment and orientation. Unlike conventional HRM models that focus on efficiency and technical skills, Islamic-based institutions prioritize spiritual alignment through values such as *amanah* (trust), *ikhlas* (sincerity), and *niyyah* (intention), which serve as moral foundations for organizational culture (Rego & Pina e Cunha, 2008; Krishnakumar & Neck, 2022). Although theories such as Spiritual Leadership (Fry, 2003) and Workplace Spirituality (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000) emphasize meaning and purpose in the workplace, empirical research on how these principles are implemented especially during employee entry phases is limited. Most Islamic HRM studies to date focus on leadership ethics, macro strategies, or institutional vision (Beekun, 2006; Abdullah, 2012), rather than on the specific practices of recruitment and orientation.

This gap is particularly relevant in semi-rural regions like Tulungagung, East Java, where many micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) operate under Islamic-based management. These include pesantren-run cooperatives, Islamic boarding schools, and community-owned faith-oriented businesses. According to BPS Tulungagung (2023), over 76% of registered MSMEs in the region are affiliated with religious institutions.

Table 1. Registered MSMEs and Faith-Based Affiliations in Tulungagung (2020–2023)

Year	Total MSMEs	Estimated Faith-Based (%)	Approximate Number
2020	114,620	71%	81,389
2021	117,950	72%	84,924
2022	120,430	74%	89,118
2023	122,860	76.2%	93,654

Source: BPS Tulungagung, 2023.

Despite this prevalence, scholarly understanding of how Islamic values are operationalized during employee entry stages is limited. Most existing research in this area remains conceptual or anecdotal (Rohman et al., 2023; Sulaiman & Nor, 2021). Rahman and

Shahimi (2023) also call for more contextual Islamic HRM studies that support employee loyalty, value congruence, and institutional integrity.

This study aims to investigate the implementation of Spiritual-Based Human Resource Management (SBHRM) during recruitment and orientation processes within Islamic-based organizations in Tulungagung. It addresses the following research questions:

- (1) How are spiritual values applied during recruitment and orientation?
- (2) How do new employees perceive and respond to these practices?
- (3) What impacts do these practices have on motivation, adaptation, and retention?

By applying a mixed-methods approach, this research contributes to Islamic HRM literature by offering both theoretical insights and practical recommendations for institutionalizing spiritual values in foundational HR processes.

METHOD

This study employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods design to explore how spiritual values are embedded in recruitment and orientation practices. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected concurrently, analyzed separately, and integrated during the interpretation phase to enhance validity (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Fetters, 2020).

Sampling and Respondents

The research was conducted in Tulungagung, East Java, Indonesia, focusing on Islamic-based institutions such as pesantren-run cooperatives and schools.

- (1) Qualitative sample: Six institutional actors were selected using purposive sampling, including principals, HR managers, and religious leaders directly involved in recruitment and orientation.
- (2) Quantitative sample: Thirty newly recruited employees (within the last 12 months) were selected through quota and convenience sampling. This sample size is adequate for exploratory analysis in mixed-method studies (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2009).

Data Collection

- (1) Qualitative: Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and non-participant observations. Interview questions focused on how values such as *amanah*, *ikhlas*, and *adl* were integrated into HR processes. Observations were conducted during orientation activities including *tahlil*, daily prayers, and mentoring sessions.
- (2) Quantitative: A structured questionnaire was distributed to measure perceptions of SBHRM practices. Items were adapted from validated instruments on workplace spirituality (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000), spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003), and Islamic HRM (Beekun, 2006; Malik & Malik, 2021).

Measurements

The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) and measured four key constructs:

- (1) Spiritual-based recruitment practices
- (2) Spiritual-based orientation practices
- (3) Early-stage motivation and adaptation
- (4) Intention to stay

Data Analysis

- (1) Qualitative: Thematic analysis was conducted using inductive coding, following Nowell et al. (2017), which included data familiarization, code development, and theme review.
- (2) Quantitative: Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation were processed using SPSS v.25 to examine relationships between SBHRM variables and employee outcomes.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was granted by the institutional review board. All participants provided written informed consent prior to data collection. The research ensured voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity. Respondents were allowed to withdraw at any point without any consequences.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Qualitative Findings

Thematic analysis of six interview transcripts and observational notes revealed three core themes:

- (1) Spiritually Anchored Recruitment: Recruitment decisions were based on moral integrity (*amanah*), religious observance (prayer routines), and community reputation. Endorsement by kyai or religious leaders was frequently a requirement.
- (2) Orientation as Value Internalization: New employees participated in structured orientation involving *tahlil*, daily prayers, mentoring, and value reflection sessions. These practices were designed to internalize *niyyah* and *ikhlas* in the workplace.
- (3) Religious Identity in Organizational Climate: Participants described HR practices as part of *ibadah* (worship), emphasizing moral responsibility, spiritual growth (*tarbiyah*), and communal harmony.

These findings highlight that recruitment and orientation are not only technical processes but also moral-spiritual engagements, aligned with the institution's religious identity.

Quantitative Findings

Descriptive analysis of responses from 30 newly hired employees revealed strong perceptions of spiritually driven HR practices.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics on SBHRM Practices and Employee Outcomes

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Spiritual-Based Recruitment	4.23	0.47
Spiritual-Based Orientation	4.36	0.42
Early Motivation and Adaptation	4.28	0.45
Intention to Stay	4.10	0.49

Source: Author's data processing, 2025 (n = 30)

Pearson correlation analysis showed significant positive relationships among the key variables:

Table 3. Pearson Correlation Between SBHRM and Outcomes

Variable Pair	Pearson r	p-value
SBHRM ↔ Motivation & Adaptation	0.60	< 0.01
Orientation ↔ Intention to Stay	0.54	< 0.01

Source: Author's data processing, 2025 (n = 30)

These results suggest that employees perceive spiritual-based HR practices as beneficial for their integration and commitment

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that SBHRM, as practiced in Tulungagung's Islamic institutions, serves both functional and spiritual roles. The qualitative data reinforce theories of Spiritual Leadership (Fry, 2003) and Workplace Spirituality (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000), showing how intrinsic motivation is shaped by faith-based rituals and value internalization. The strong correlation between spiritual orientation and motivation supports prior studies (Garg, 2021; Khan & Jermisittiparsert, 2021) suggesting that value congruence enhances psychological safety and employee engagement. Employees perceive their work as meaningful and aligned with their spiritual identity (*niyyah*), which in turn reinforces commitment.

These practices also respond to calls for contextual Islamic HRM models (Rahman & Shahimi, 2023; Sulaiman & Nor, 2021), especially in non-urban environments where organizational identity is inseparable from religious values. However, the current informal nature of SBHRM—largely dependent on leadership personality—poses sustainability risks. Institutionalizing SBHRM into formal HR systems could provide consistency, ethical alignment, and long-term retention, especially in Islamic education, microfinance, and halal-based industries. This aligns with Al Halbusi et al. (2022) and Zhang et al. (2022), who emphasize spiritual leadership as a strategic approach to reduce turnover.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that Spiritual-Based Human Resource Management (SBHRM), when implemented during recruitment and orientation, positively influences employee motivation, adaptation, and commitment in faith-based organizations. Values such as *amanah*, *niyyah*, and *ikhlas* are not only emphasized during selection but also reinforced through mentoring and spiritual activities during orientation. These practices show that SBHRM serves both spiritual and strategic purposes. The study contributes to Islamic HRM literature by illustrating how spiritual values can be operationalized in foundational HR functions, particularly in semi-rural religious contexts.

Practically, this study offers a model for formalizing SBHRM to improve employee alignment and organizational sustainability. Institutions can benefit from integrating spiritual identity into their HR systems to enhance retention and engagement. Future research should explore long-term impacts of SBHRM using longitudinal methods and test its application across sectors such as Islamic schools, halal industries, or government units with spiritual mandates. Further inquiry into gender or generational perspectives may enrich understanding of diverse responses to spiritually infused HR practices.

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