

Realizing Professional Human Resources Through Implementing Orientation at Al Azhaar Islamic Elementary School Tulungagung

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ABSTRACT:

The implementation of Human Resources (HR) orientation in Islamic education institutions has a considerable role in realizing professional human resources, which in turn has a major impact on the progress and development of institutions. This study aims to provide an overview of the implementation of new HR orientation activities in superior Islamic educational institutions. This study uses a descriptive qualitative research method. This research was conducted at Al Azhaar Tulungagung Islamic Elementary School. The results of this study indicate: (1) orientation activities for new HR to create professional HR in the form of internships for 3 (three) months, (2) orientation activities at Al Azhaar can provide mental-psychological and technical readiness for new HR, both educators and education staff, (3) orientation activities at Al Azhaar can be said to be effective because they are based on the right understanding, goals, principles, steps, and materials to create professional human resources. Islamic educational institutions should institutionalize structured, internship-based orientation programs for new personnel as a mandatory component of talent management, complemented by clear performance indicators and post-orientation follow-up mechanisms to ensure sustained staff professionalism and overall institutional performance.

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ABSTRAK:

Implementasi orientasi SDM di lembaga pendidikan Islam memiliki peran yang cukup besar dalam mewujudkan sumber daya manusia yang profesional, yang pada gilirannya berdampak besar bagi kemajuan dan perkembangan lembaga. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk memberikan gambaran pelaksanaan kegiatan orientasi SDM baru di lembaga pendidikan Islam unggulan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian deskriptif kualitatif. Penelitian ini dilakukan di SD Islam Al Azhaar Tulungagung. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan: (1) kegiatan orientasi bagi SDM baru untuk mewujudkan SDM profesional berupa magang selama 3 (tiga) bulan, (2) kegiatan orientasi di SDI Al Azhaar dapat memberikan kesiapan mental-psikologis dan teknis bagi SDM baru. SDM, baik pendidik maupun tenaga kependidikan, (3) Kegiatan orientasi di SDI Al Azhaar dapat dikatakan efektif karena dilandasi oleh pemahaman, tujuan, prinsip, langkah, dan materi yang tepat untuk menciptakan SDM yang profesional. Lembaga pendidikan Islam perlu menginstitusionalisasikan program orientasi SDM baru, idealnya berbasis magang terstruktur sebagai komponen wajib dalam sistem manajemen talenta, lengkap dengan indikator kinerja serta mekanisme tindak lanjut pasca-orientasi untuk menjamin keberlanjutan profesionalisme dan kinerja lembaga.

Kata kunci: lembaga pendidikan islam, orientasi, profesional, sumber daya manusia.

INTRODUCTION

Human resources in Islamic basic education are a decisive factor for institutional effectiveness and national competitiveness, where educators and educational staff (PTK) shape the quality of learning and student outcomes (Abadi et al., 2019; Trisnantari et al., 2019). Professionalism in HR, which includes competence, character, and organizational culture, strengthens leadership capacity and stakeholder collaboration, contributing to educational quality and institutional sustainability (Chotimah & Nisa, 2019; Khuroidah & Maunah, 2022). Recent studies emphasize that HR development in Islamic education must integrate professional, pedagogical, and personal competencies to ensure both academic and moral outcomes, particularly in traditional and modern Islamic schooling contexts (Hantoro et al., 2024). The effectiveness of Islamic educational institutions largely depends on their ability to manage HR systems that integrate recruitment, selection, orientation, training, performance



appraisal, and career development (Dewi et al., 2021; Farida, 2021). National policies, such as the Government Regulation Nomor 4 of 2022 on National Education Standards, further emphasize the need for competent and professional educators and education staff. In Islamic elementary schools, professionalism is not only a technical demand but also a moral obligation to integrate spiritual values with academic achievement (Mahadhir, 2018; Tanzeh, 2019).

Scholars have long emphasized that effective HR management is central to institutional development in Islamic education, as it links competent PTK to organizational excellence and competitive advantage (Budianto et al., 2022; Khuroidah & Maunah, 2022). HR management requires strategic planning and implementation to ensure that every employee's role contributes meaningfully to institutional goals (Dewi et al., 2021; Farida, 2021). Effective management of educational resources, including human and financial resources, directly contributes to institutional sustainability and accountability (Ismail & Sumaila, 2020). Previous research has shown that structured HR processes are crucial for ensuring stability, accountability, and consistent quality in education (Moekijat, 1991; Susan, 2019). In educational contexts, strong HR practices correlate with improved satisfaction among both internal and external stakeholders (Abadi et al., 2019; Chotimah & Nisa, 2019). This alignment ensures that teachers meet the four professional competencies—pedagogic, professional, personal, and social—outlined in national standards (Tanzeh, 2019).

Orientation plays a pivotal role as the initial stage in integrating new staff into institutional systems and culture (Astuti, 2024; Susan, 2019). It serves as a bridge between individual entry and organizational effectiveness, ensuring that educators understand the institution's mission, values, and working environment (Mahadhir, 2018; Trisnantari et al., 2019). In this regard, building a coherent orientation program also involves strengthening institutional image and stakeholder trust through effective communication and service quality, as highlighted in research on marketing strategies in Islamic schools (Labaso', 2018). Well-designed orientation programs foster collaboration, communication, and shared commitment among staff members. These activities can also reduce role ambiguity, improve motivation, and accelerate adaptation to professional duties (Dewi et al., 2021; Maabuat, 2016). For Islamic schools, orientation holds unique significance as it reinforces both professional competence and moral character formation.

In the framework of HR management, orientation aligns individual and organizational goals through structured mechanisms that build loyalty, satisfaction, and performance (Azan et al., 2021). Individual goals emphasize well-being and fulfillment at work, while functional goals ensure efficiency and accountability across organizational units (Dewi et al., 2021; Susan, 2019). Organizational goals focus on achieving institutional excellence through the professional performance of PTK (Chotimah & Nisa, 2019). User goals highlight the need to earn public trust by producing graduates who are independent, adaptable, and ethical (Khuroidah & Maunah, 2022; Tanzeh, 2019). This multi-dimensional alignment underscores orientation as a critical HR strategy rather than a mere administrative requirement.

Continuous HR development through pre-service, in-service, and post-service training complements orientation to ensure lifelong professional learning (Moekijat, 1991; Susan, 2019). Educational institutions that systematically plan and evaluate training programs are better positioned to sustain quality improvement (Fitri & Nik Haryanti, 2020; Sugiyono, 2021). Engagement in reflective practices, reading habits, and professional learning communities further enhances educators' competence and collaboration (Dewi et al., 2021; Tanzeh, 2019). Integrating these strategies helps Islamic elementary schools maintain consistency in educational standards and promote institutional resilience. Ultimately, continuous professional development reinforces the school's mission of producing graduates with strong intellectual and moral capacities.

Effective HR planning and role organization are fundamental for translating orientation into daily practice (Dewi et al., 2021; Kurniawati, 2021). Clear task divisions and transparent performance evaluations enhance efficiency and accountability within the institution (Chotimah & Nisa, 2019; Farida, 2021). Reward systems that recognize achievement can further motivate educators and foster a culture of excellence. In Islamic elementary schools, leadership plays a strategic role in ensuring that HR initiatives remain aligned with both educational and spiritual objectives (Budianto et al., 2022; Khuroidah & Maunah, 2022). These mechanisms collectively create a supportive environment where professionalism can thrive.

However, gaps remain in how orientation is designed, implemented, and evaluated within Islamic educational institutions (Astuti, 2018; Susan, 2019). Many programs focus solely on administrative induction without emphasizing



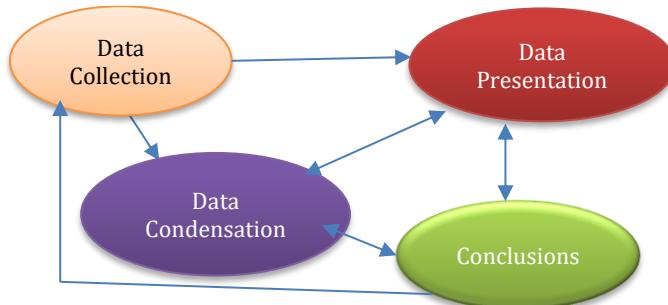
developmental aspects or character integration (Mahadhir, 2018; Trisnantari et al., 2019). There is limited empirical research that details the processes and outcomes of orientation practices in Islamic basic education (Chotimah & Nisa, 2019; Murtafiah, 2022b). Moreover, studies seldom trace how orientation contributes to long-term teacher professionalism and institutional quality (Kurniawati, 2021). This gap highlights the need for in-depth analysis of orientation as a strategic HR component in Islamic educational contexts.

This study examines the implementation of human resource orientation at Al Azhaar Islamic Elementary School (SDI Al Azhaar) Tulungagung as a strategic mechanism to realize professional educators and education staff. It aims to analyze how orientation enhances competence, character, and institutional alignment. The research seeks to reveal the processes and supporting systems that make orientation effective in strengthening school professionalism. Findings are expected to contribute to both theory and practice by refining the concept of orientation as part of HR management. In doing so, this study offers practical insights for educational leaders seeking to build professional, ethical, and competitive human resources in Islamic schooling.

METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design using a field research approach to investigate the implementation of human resource orientation at Al Azhaar Islamic Elementary School Tulungagung. The qualitative approach was chosen to enable a deep understanding of how orientation practices foster professional growth and institutional adaptation within the Islamic educational context. Data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation, involving the school principal, teachers, and newly recruited staff. The analysis was conducted inductively using the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman (see figure 1), which consists of four stages: data collection, condensation, presentation, and conclusion drawing (Fitri & Nik Haryanti, 2020; Sugiyono, 2021). This approach ensured that interpretations were grounded in empirical evidence and reflected the real-life context of the institution. The focus was on describing how orientation activities contribute to strengthening teacher professionalism, competence, and alignment with institutional values (Hantoro et al., 2024).

Figure 1. Qualitative Data Analysis Techniques



To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, several validation strategies were implemented. Triangulation was performed by cross-checking data from interviews, observations, and documentation. Member checking was carried out by sharing preliminary findings with participants to verify the accuracy of interpretations, and an audit trail was maintained to document the research process in detail. Ethical principles were upheld throughout the study: informed consent was obtained from all participants, anonymity was preserved using pseudonyms, and all data were securely stored for academic use only. The research site, Al Azhaar Islamic Elementary School Tulungagung, was purposefully selected due to its integration of Islamic values with modern management practices, providing an ideal context to explore how structured orientation shapes professional human resources in Islamic education (Fitri & Nik Haryanti, 2020; Sugiyono, 2021).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

Al Azhaar Islamic Elementary School (SDI Al Azhaar) Tulungagung is a formal Islamic educational institution established in 1994 under the Al Azhaar Tulungagung Foundation. Located at Jl. Hero I No. 31, Rejoagung, Kedungwaru District, Tulungagung Regency, East Java, the institution has demonstrated remarkable growth. In the 2022/2023 academic year, the school served 760 students, including 28 students with special needs, and employed 80 educators and education staff, along with 30 Tahfidz Al-Qur'an teachers. Al Azhaar achieved an "A" (Excellent) accreditation with a score of 98 out of 100 in 2020,

reflecting its strong commitment to institutional quality. This success is supported by a comprehensive human resource development system, one of which is the structured orientation process for new personnel aimed at realizing professional educators and education staff.

The findings of the field research indicate that the HR orientation at SDI Al Azhaar is designed in the form of a three-month apprenticeship program. This program functions as a preparatory phase that allows new personnel to adapt mentally, socially, and technically to the institutional environment. Orientation activities are intended to build psychological readiness, strengthen interpersonal relationships among new and existing staff, and cultivate an early sense of belonging within the school community. The program is perceived as effective because it creates a positive first impression, promotes comfort and acceptance among new employees, and accelerates their understanding of institutional policies, work culture, and job descriptions. Moreover, the orientation fosters early productivity and performance, thus contributing directly to the realization of professional human resources within the institution.

The implementation of orientation at SDI Al Azhaar adheres to systematic stages that combine introduction, institutional familiarization, and professional practice. At the initial stage, new human resources are formally introduced during a general assembly attended by all staff and students, symbolizing acceptance and collective prayer for their success. The next stage involves the presentation of the school's vision, mission, objectives, and values, which are communicated both during the recruitment process and reiterated by the principal upon acceptance. This approach ensures that every new educator and staff member internalizes the institution's philosophical and operational foundations from the beginning. Institutional policies and detailed job descriptions are also explained thoroughly to ensure clarity of responsibilities and expectations.

During the apprenticeship, communication lines between new staff and the principal are maintained openly, allowing for consultation and feedback when necessary. The school principal conducts both direct and indirect supervision to monitor progress and provide constructive evaluation. Direct supervision is carried out through classroom visits and mentoring sessions, while indirect monitoring involves designated senior teachers or HR officers who accompany new recruits. The evaluation results at the end of the

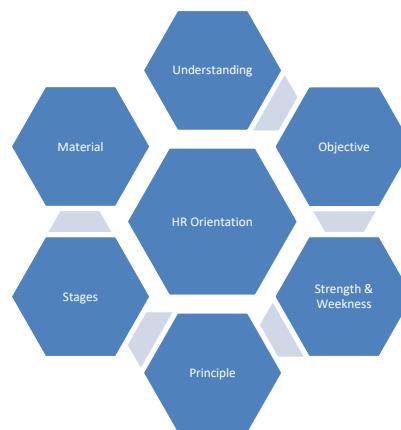
apprenticeship period serve as the basis for determining whether the new personnel are formally appointed as permanent members of the institution. Despite minor challenges related to monitoring intensity, these are mitigated by the principal's active involvement in the control and mentoring process, which reinforces a culture of shared responsibility and continuous improvement.

Orientation materials are prepared according to institutional needs and the professional context of each recruit. The content includes the institutional profile and history, the vision and mission of SDI Al Azhaar, the organizational structure, HR policies and regulations, rights and obligations of staff, available facilities and services, and an introduction to the institutional environment and culture through immersive practice. At the time of research, SDI Al Azhaar was finalizing a comprehensive orientation handbook designed to standardize and guide future programs for new human resources. This initiative reflects the institution's ongoing commitment to ensuring that professional formation and adaptation processes are implemented consistently, systematically, and aligned with its vision of developing competent, ethical, and spiritually grounded educators.

DISCUSSION

HR orientation activities in Islamic educational institutions in the framework of creating professional educators and educational staff refer to a series of important matters as illustrated in the diagram below:

Figure 3. Human Resources Orientation



Definition of Human Resources (HR) Orientation

Orientation in educational institutions constitutes a structured and systematic effort to introduce new human resources to institutional environments, organizational culture, and professional expectations. In organizational theory, this process is widely referred to as organizational socialization, where newcomers acquire the knowledge, behaviors, and social frameworks necessary to function effectively within an institution (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Through this process, new educators and educational staff not only learn about formal policies but also internalize the implicit norms that regulate daily academic and administrative interactions. This internalization is essential for fostering alignment between individual competencies and institutional goals.

A growing body of empirical evidence shows that the quality of orientation programs influences work adaptation and job performance. Maabuati (2016), for example, found that orientation significantly improves performance outcomes in public-sector institutions. This finding is relevant to educational organizations, where successful adaptation of educators is foundational for achieving instructional quality and institutional development. Bauer (2010) supports this view by asserting that effective onboarding increases role clarity, enhances early confidence, and minimizes uncertainty during the adjustment period. Such clarity is particularly crucial for educators whose roles blend pedagogical, administrative, and social responsibilities.

The conceptualization of orientation has also been shaped by foundational HR scholars. Cascio describes orientation as a means for newcomers to understand and adapt to organizational conditions (Sedarmayanti, 2017). Decenzo and Robbins, and Wether and Davis similarly define orientation as a structured introduction to work units, institutional systems, and professional tasks (Marwansyah, 2014). These definitions emphasize that orientation is not merely informational but rather developmental, bridging gaps between employee readiness and institutional expectations. Nawawi (2015a) further expands this understanding by arguing that orientation enables employees to identify institutional values, norms, and ethical responsibilities, thereby cultivating alignment with organizational culture.

In the context of educational institutions, the significance of orientation extends beyond administrative familiarization. Orientation functions to help new educators internalize institutional vision and mission, understand their instructional roles, and adapt to academic and professional environments. It shortens the adjustment period for new personnel and reduces the likelihood of early-stage performance challenges. However, orientation does not always achieve optimal outcomes. In instances where the content is insufficiently structured or where misinformation occurs, employees may experience maladaptation and decreased performance. Such conditions underscore the importance of developing orientation programs that are systematic, accurate, and responsive to the professional needs of educators.

Orientation also plays a crucial role in introducing new personnel to social and cultural dimensions within Islamic educational institutions. This includes exposure to values rooted in Islamic ethics such as amanah (trust), ihsan (excellence), and ukhuwah (brotherhood). The work of Al-Attas (1991) and Hashim (2005), affirms that Islamic educational organizations must nurture intellectual clarity, moral responsibility, and disciplined conduct as part of their human resource development processes. Therefore, HR orientation in Islamic educational institutions integrates technical, social, cultural, and spiritual components that collectively build a holistic understanding of professional duties.

Objectives of Human Resource Orientation

The primary objective of HR orientation in educational institutions is to prepare new educators and staff to adapt effectively to their professional environments. This adaptation encompasses mental readiness, professional competence, and emotional stability. Modern onboarding literature emphasizes that orientation increases role clarity, self-efficacy, and social acceptance among new employees, which facilitates smoother transition into the workplace (L. M. Klein, 2023). These outcomes are vital for educators, who must engage with students, colleagues, and academic systems from the outset of their responsibilities.

Orientation is also designed to minimize psychological barriers and prevent maladjustment by ensuring that employees receive accurate



information regarding institutional procedures, policies, and performance expectations. Sedarmayanti explains that a clear understanding of work scope reduces errors and confusion that may arise in the early stages of employment (Kurniawati, 2021). This clarity allows educators to navigate their responsibilities with confidence and accuracy, thus supporting overall institutional stability.

Furthermore, orientation nurtures social belonging and moral responsibility. Moekijat (1991) emphasizes that orientation helps employees feel part of the organization and reduces anxiety during their initial period of employment. Such belonging fosters long-term commitment and professional identity. Nawawi (2015b) argues that in Islamic settings, orientation must also guide educators to uphold ethical conduct, social harmony, and responsibilities grounded in Islamic values. This moral dimension reinforces the expectation that educators serve not only as professionals but also as moral exemplars for students and communities.

Strengths and Weaknesses of HR Orientation

Orientation programs offer several strengths that support organizational performance and professional stability. One major strength is the reduction of uncertainty among new employees. By providing structured information, orientation helps employees understand their roles and institutional expectations. Bauer (2010) notes that organizations with strong onboarding systems achieve improved newcomer adjustment, early productivity, and stronger organizational commitment. These outcomes benefit educational institutions in particular, as educators require clarity and social integration to perform effectively.

Orientation also enhances employee retention. Klein et al. (2015) assert that employees who receive high-quality onboarding exhibit greater loyalty and stronger long-term performance. Effective orientation accelerates social integration, builds trust, and reinforces alignment with institutional values. Swanson and Holton (2001) argue that such HRD interventions expand organizational capacity by increasing employee motivation and competence. These improvements contribute significantly to achieving institutional goals in educational environments.

However, orientation programs may also have weaknesses. One common challenge is the inconsistency between design and implementation. Some institutions develop comprehensive orientation frameworks but do not fully implement follow-up, supervision, or evaluation. Lack of monitoring can lead to gaps in employee understanding and performance. Moekijat (1991) notes that inadequate supervision may hinder professional readiness and adaptation. To address these limitations, mentorship programs such as buddy systems are recommended. These models provide continuous support and enable new educators to obtain guidance that reinforces their integration into institutional culture.

Principles of HR Orientation

Effective HR orientation must be grounded in principles that ensure clarity, inclusivity, and ethical alignment. Bauer (2010) identifies four essential components that support successful onboarding: role clarity, self-efficacy, social acceptance, and comprehension of organizational culture. In educational institutions, these principles are central to ensuring that educators understand instructional expectations, institutional missions, and pedagogical responsibilities.

Human-centered communication is another key principle. Open and empathetic communication reduces uncertainty and encourages new personnel to express concerns or seek clarification. The orientation process must involve dialogue, mentorship, and feedback to support the emotional and cognitive needs of new educators. Klein et al. (2015) observe that the balance between structured information and interactive engagement strengthens adaptability and reduces stress.

In Islamic educational institutions, these principles must be integrated with spiritual and moral values. Al-Attas (1991) argues that Islamic education is rooted in the cultivation of character, discipline, and ethical awareness. Orientation, therefore, must reflect values such as ukhuwah, ta'awun, and amanah. Consistent evaluation and improvement of the orientation system are also crucial. Without ongoing assessment, orientation may become procedural rather than educational. Institutions that regularly refine their orientation

programs maintain alignment between organizational culture and employee adaptation.

Stages of HR Orientation

HR orientation typically involves several stages that contribute to a comprehensive adjustment period. The first stage is introduction, which provides new educators and staff with an initial understanding of the institutional environment. This stage builds psychological comfort and fosters a welcoming atmosphere. Bauer (2010) stresses that early positive experiences during onboarding enhance motivation and trust, which are essential for successful adaptation.

The second stage involves the clarification of institutional identity, which includes the communication of vision, mission, culture, and organizational values. Understanding institutional identity allows new employees to align their personal aspirations and work behaviors with the institution's larger mission. This alignment is particularly significant in educational settings where professional conduct is intertwined with moral and pedagogical responsibilities.

The third stage consists of policy dissemination. During this stage, staff are informed of institutional regulations, rights, obligations, and standards that guide professional conduct. Clear communication of policies reduces ambiguity and prevents misunderstandings regarding roles and procedures. The fourth stage is communication engagement, which facilitates constructive interaction between institutional leaders, supervisors, and new staff. Klein et al. (2015) highlight that strong communication mechanisms are necessary to reinforce trust and support professional growth.

The final stage is monitoring and evaluation. Ongoing supervision and feedback help identify challenges experienced by new employees and provide opportunities for corrective action. Moekijat (1991) argues that continuous monitoring enhances readiness and reduces maladaptation during the early phase of employment. As a result, new educators are better able to develop professional competence and internalize institutional value.

Orientation Material

Orientation materials encompass a wide range of information aimed at preparing new educators and staff for their professional roles. These materials typically include institutional history, vision and mission, organizational structure, job descriptions, HR policies, and expectations regarding performance and conduct. Azan et al. (2021) explain that orientation materials serve to familiarize new employees with institutional goals and values, thereby enabling them to integrate into organizational culture more quickly and effectively.

In Islamic educational institutions, orientation materials must also incorporate moral and spiritual foundations. Hashim (2005) emphasizes that Islamic education promotes ethical behavior, intellectual clarity, and spiritual discipline. Thus, materials that highlight principles such as amanah, ihsan, and uswah hasanah ensure that educators understand the ethical dimensions of their responsibilities.

Professional HR in Islamic Education Institutions

Professional human resources in Islamic educational institutions must exhibit competence, integrity, and spiritual accountability. Murtafiah (2022a) asserts that HR development in Islamic education requires strong leadership, structured professional development, and continuous capacity building. Day (1999) further emphasizes that teacher professionalism is grounded in lifelong learning, reflective practice, and ethical conduct.

Within Islamic educational contexts, professionalism extends beyond technical mastery. Mahadhir (2018) highlights QS Al-Isra' 84, which teaches that individuals must act according to their capacity and remain accountable before God. This principle reinforces the idea that educators serve not only as professionals but also as moral leaders. Thus, professional HR in Islamic educational institutions embody both pedagogical competency and moral excellence, ensuring that their contributions advance the academic and spiritual growth of students.



CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze the implementation of human resource (HR) orientation as a strategic component of HR management in Islamic educational institutions, particularly in developing professionalism, competence, and character among educators and staff. The findings reveal that at SDI Al Azhaar Tulungagung, orientation is implemented systematically through a three-month apprenticeship program that facilitates mental, social, and technical adaptation. The process effectively integrates institutional values, professional expectations, and spiritual awareness, producing educators and staff who are both competent and ethically grounded.

The study highlights that HR orientation functions not only as an administrative induction but also as a developmental mechanism that fosters belonging, accountability, and moral alignment within Islamic educational settings. Its success depends on leadership engagement, structured mentoring, and consistent evaluation. The results contribute to the understanding of HR development models in Islamic schools and reinforce the view that professionalism in Islamic education must harmonize managerial efficiency with spiritual integrity.

However, this study was limited to a single institutional context, which may not fully capture the diversity of HR orientation practices across Islamic educational settings. Future research should adopt a comparative or multi-site approach to examine variations in orientation design, outcomes, and leadership strategies across different Islamic institutions. Moreover, subsequent studies could explore the long-term impact of orientation on teacher performance, retention, and institutional reputation. Strengthening empirical evidence in these areas will enhance both theory and practice in Islamic educational management.

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