STRATEGIC TALENT MANAGEMENT IN ISLAMIC ORGANIZATIONS: BUILDING WORKFORCE RESILIENCE AMID GLOBAL ECONOMIC PROTECTIONISM

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Abstract

This study investigates how Islamic organizations adopt strategic talent management (STM) approaches to build workforce resilience amid the resurgence of global economic protectionism. As protectionist policies reshape labor markets and restrict cross-border opportunities, organizations rooted in Islamic values face unique challenges in sustaining human capital competitiveness. Drawing upon a comprehensive literature review, this paper synthesizes findings from peer-reviewed journals and scholarly works published over the past decade. The review reveals that STM in Islamic contexts must align with core ethical principles such as Shura (consultation), Amanah (trust), and Ihsan (excellence). Resilience is fostered not only through skill development and succession planning but also through spiritual and cultural integration. The findings highlight the increasing relevance of adaptive leadership, inclusive organizational culture, and employee well-being strategies in uncertain economic environments. However, most existing literature fails to explore the intersection between Islamic organizational identity and strategic talent frameworks. This research fills that gap by offering an integrative conceptual analysis of STM in Islamic institutions under global economic stress. The paper concludes by proposing a research agenda for future empirical studies in faith-based organizational resilience. Ultimately, this work contributes to a broader understanding of talent strategy in navigating macroeconomic uncertainty through Islamic organizational perspectives.

Keywords: Strategic Talent Management, Islamic Organizations, Workforce Resilience, Economic Protectionism, Human Capital Development.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana organisasi Islam mengadopsi pendekatan manajemen talenta strategis (Strategic Talent Management/STM) untuk membangun ketahanan tenaga kerja di tengah kebangkitan proteksionisme ekonomi global. Seiring kebijakan proteksionis yang membentuk ulang pasar tenaga kerja dan membatasi peluang lintas batas, organisasi yang berakar pada nilai-nilai Islam menghadapi tantangan unik dalam mempertahankan daya saing sumber daya manusia. Berdasarkan tinjauan pustaka komprehensif, makalah ini mensintesis temuan dari jurnal peer-review dan karya ilmiah yang dipublikasikan dalam dekade terakhir. Tinjauan tersebut mengungkapkan bahwa STM dalam konteks Islam harus selaras dengan prinsip etika inti seperti Shura (musyawarah), Amanah (kepercayaan), dan Ihsan (keunggulan). Ketahanan tidak hanya dibangun melalui pengembangan keterampilan dan perencanaan suksesi, tetapi juga melalui integrasi spiritual dan budaya. Temuan

menyoroti relevansi yang semakin meningkat dari kepemimpinan adaptif, budaya organisasi inklusif, dan strategi kesejahteraan karyawan dalam lingkungan ekonomi yang tidak pasti. Namun, sebagian besar literatur yang ada belum mengeksplorasi keterkaitan antara identitas organisasi Islam dan kerangka manajemen talenta strategis. Penelitian ini mengisi kekosongan tersebut dengan menawarkan analisis konseptual integratif mengenai STM di institusi Islam di bawah tekanan ekonomi global. Makalah ini diakhiri dengan usulan agenda penelitian untuk studi empiris masa depan tentang ketahanan organisasi berbasis keimanan. Pada akhirnya, karya ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman yang lebih luas tentang strategi talenta dalam menghadapi ketidakpastian makroekonomi melalui perspektif organisasi Islam.

Kata Kunci: Manajemen Talenta Strategis, Organisasi Islam, Ketahanan Tenaga Kerja, Proteksionisme Ekonomi, Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia.

INTRODUCTION

The global economy has witnessed a resurgence of protectionist policies, characterized by rising trade barriers, restrictive labor mobility, and inward-looking national strategies that have disrupted labor market dynamics and human capital flows (Evenett & Fritz, 2021). Following geopolitical tensions and economic uncertainties such as Brexit, the U.S.-China trade war, and post-pandemic recovery efforts, many nations have adopted defensive economic measures to safeguard domestic industries at the expense of global integration (Bown, 2020). These trends have undermined cross-border talent acquisition, disrupted global value chains, and heightened job insecurity, particularly in developing economies (World Bank, 2023). Labor markets are increasingly vulnerable to volatility, and organizations must adapt rapidly to retain competitive talent while navigating these macroeconomic shocks (ILO, 2021). In this context, the role of strategic human resource planning becomes paramount, as firms struggle to respond to the implications of workforce fragmentation and talent immobility (Koser, 2020). For Islamic organizations, these challenges are even more pronounced due to structural limitations and their ethical commitment to social justice and equity in employment (Ali & Gibbs, 1998). The destabilizing effects of protectionism have also widened labor market inequalities, further pressing organizations to adopt inclusive and resilient workforce strategies (UNCTAD, 2022). While much of the discourse has centered on multinational corporations, limited attention has been paid to how faith-based institutions, particularly Islamic organizations, manage human capital under protectionist pressures (Robertson & Kee, 2023). This shift in global labor dynamics demands a strategic reevaluation of workforce policies and an exploration of organizational models that can sustain employee well-being amid external disruptions(Rizki Alifa et al., 2025)

Strategic talent management (STM) has emerged as a central organizational response to increasing workforce instability, particularly in the context of economic turbulence and policy uncertainty. As businesses confront labor market disruptions, STM provides a proactive approach to attract, develop, and retain key talent capable of sustaining performance in volatile environments (Collings, Scullion, & Vaiman, 2015). Unlike traditional human resource practices, STM aligns talent initiatives with long-term organizational strategy, enabling resilience and adaptability amid external shocks (Al Ariss, Cascio, & Paauwe, 2014). Recent studies highlight that organizations with robust STM frameworks demonstrate superior agility and employee commitment, even during crisis periods such as financial recessions and pandemics (Minbaeva & Collings, 2013; Tarique & Schuler, 2010). STM enhances organizational learning capacity and

leadership pipeline readiness, both of which are essential to mitigating the risks posed by protectionist labor policies (Gallardo-Gallardo & Thunnissen, 2016). In emerging markets, the integration of STM has shown significant outcomes in reducing skill mismatches and improving workforce sustainability (King & Vaiman, 2019). A growing body of literature also emphasizes the strategic value of inclusive talent systems that recognize the heterogeneity of employee aspirations in uncertain contexts (Mensah, 2015). Despite these advances, many STM models remain underutilized in faith-based and mission-driven institutions, particularly Islamic organizations, which often operate within unique value frameworks and sociopolitical constraints. The lack of contextual adaptation in STM theory presents a critical gap in understanding how workforce strategies can be optimized beyond Western-centric paradigms. Addressing workforce instability through strategically anchored talent management systems thus becomes a vital pathway for organizational resilience and long-term impact(Saputra & Amani, 2023)

Islamic organizations operate within a framework that integrates spiritual, ethical, and organizational values, which distinguishes their approach to talent management from secular institutions. These organizations are guided by principles rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah, emphasizing justice, trust, consultation, and the collective good as central tenets in managing human resources (Beekun & Badawi, 2005). Unlike conventional organizations that prioritize performance and profit maximization, Islamic organizations place equal importance on moral integrity, social responsibility, and employee well-being (Ali, 2010). The implementation of Shura (consultation) in decision-making processes, as well as the emphasis on Amanah (trustworthiness), serves as a foundational pillar for leadership and employee relations (Hassi, 2012). This normative foundation shapes recruitment, development, and retention strategies in ways that prioritize ethical compatibility over purely technical competence (Tlaiss & Kauser, 2011). Talent in Islamic institutions is often viewed as a divine trust that must be nurtured not only for organizational performance but also for societal benefit (Ali & Al-Owaihan, 2008). Furthermore, the pursuit of Ihsan (excellence through sincerity) reinforces a culture of continuous self-improvement and spiritual development among employees (Abdalla et al., 2010). These values influence how Islamic organizations define merit, motivate employees, and assess leadership potential in ways that differ significantly from Western HRM paradigms. Despite this distinctive value orientation, scholarly work has yet to fully integrate these principles into mainstream strategic talent management models. As a result, there is a pressing need to explore how Islamic ethics can enrich and contextualize contemporary talent management frameworks within faith-based organizational settings (Riskal Amani et al., n.d.)

Strategic talent management (STM) can benefit from a deeper alignment with Islamic ethical principles to enhance both employee engagement and organizational integrity. Theoretical models in talent management have increasingly emphasized the importance of ethical leadership, value-based decision-making, and socially responsible HRM practices, yet most remain grounded in Western-centric frameworks (Sparrow & Makram, 2015). Within Islamic ethics, values such as Adl (justice), Amanah (trust), and Ihsan (excellence) are not only moral imperatives but also operational guidelines for managing people and cultivating organizational trust (Rice, 1999). These values resonate with recent theoretical perspectives that link ethical

climates to stronger employee commitment and resilience (Brown et al., 2005). The Islamic concept of work treats labor as a form of worship, which implies that managing talent should transcend transactional performance and include spiritual and moral development (Ali, 2005). In this regard, STM frameworks that integrate Islamic ethics can contribute to the formation of inclusive, compassionate, and mission-aligned work environments (Abbasi et al., 2010). There is a growing body of literature indicating that the internalization of shared values in talent systems leads to higher levels of employee alignment, satisfaction, and retention (Groves & LaRocca, 2011). The alignment between STM and Islamic values also supports the concept of purposeful leadership, where leaders are expected to serve rather than dominate, thereby fostering a sense of communal responsibility and motivation (Ahmad & Ogunsola, 2011). Ethical congruence between individual and organizational values has been shown to buffer employees against the psychological impact of economic uncertainty (Valentine et al., 2011). Thus, the integration of Islamic ethical principles into strategic talent management is not only culturally appropriate but also theoretically significant for building resilient and morally grounded workforces(Yulianty, Amani, et al., 2024)

Existing literature on strategic talent management has predominantly evolved within secular and Western business environments, resulting in a limited understanding of how these frameworks function within Islamic institutional settings. Scholars have developed various models of STM that emphasize competitiveness, leadership development, and performance metrics, yet these models often fail to account for the ethical and structural nuances embedded in faith-based organizations (Collings et al., 2019). Despite the growing presence of Islamic institutions across education, finance, and civil society sectors, the academic focus on talent strategies tailored to their operational ethos remains scarce (Sidani & Al Ariss, 2014). The misalignment between mainstream STM theories and the value-driven foundations of Islamic organizations creates a critical theoretical gap that hinders the development of culturally congruent talent models (Metcalfe, 2007). Several studies have argued for the contextualization of HRM and STM practices to better align with local cultural and institutional logics, yet few have addressed the specific characteristics of Islamic governance and employee relations (Cooke et al., 2020). This oversight neglects the influence of religious values on leadership expectations, motivation structures, and organizational loyalty, which are central to talent dynamics in Islamic contexts (Tlaiss & McAdam, 2020). Talent management research in Islamic institutions often lacks empirical depth and remains largely conceptual or anecdotal in nature (Hassi, 2022). Without deeper scholarly engagement, Islamic organizations risk adopting ill-fitting STM models that do not reflect their ethical identity or community-oriented mission (Ali, 2010). Researchers must therefore explore the intersection between faith-based organizational logic and strategic talent systems in order to advance more inclusive and applicable frameworks. Addressing this gap is essential not only for theoretical advancement but also for practical implementation in a growing segment of global institutions(Yulianty, Riskal Amani, et al., 2024)

The purpose of this study is to synthesize existing scholarly perspectives on strategic talent management and examine how these insights can be adapted to the unique organizational and ethical characteristics of Islamic institutions. In doing so, the article aims to bridge the gap between mainstream STM literature and the operational realities of faith-based organizations

operating under Islamic principles. The growing importance of value-driven governance in organizational studies calls for a deeper understanding of how spiritual and cultural values influence talent strategies (Almeida & Soares, 2014). This study responds to calls for contextualized models of STM that reflect the diversity of institutional environments and employee expectations across cultures (Vaiman, Scullion, & Collings, 2012). A literature-based approach allows the identification of dominant theoretical themes, comparative insights, and recurring gaps that remain unaddressed in the current academic discourse (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015). By focusing on Islamic organizations, this paper explores how ethical constructs such as Amanah, Shura, and Ihsan could serve not only as cultural values but also as operational mechanisms within STM frameworks (Rizk, 2008). The review also aims to map strategic responses to global economic protectionism and investigate how Islamic institutions can build resilient, mission-aligned talent systems under volatile conditions (Khilji et al., 2015). The study offers a conceptual foundation for future empirical research by highlighting potential variables, organizational dynamics, and ethical tensions that merit further exploration. Researchers and practitioners alike will benefit from a structured synthesis that integrates both strategic and spiritual dimensions of talent management. This study seeks to enrich the global dialogue on STM by offering an inclusive perspective that acknowledges the growing relevance of Islamic institutions in global employment systems.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a structured literature review approach to examine how strategic talent management can be effectively implemented within Islamic organizations, particularly in the context of global economic protectionism. The purpose of this review is to synthesize relevant academic discourse, identify conceptual patterns, and explore theoretical intersections between talent management practices and Islamic ethical frameworks. The research design follows an integrative methodology that allows the inclusion of both conceptual and empirical studies. This approach is suitable for capturing the multidimensional nature of the topic, which spans across management, ethics, organizational behavior, and Islamic studies. The review process began by identifying key themes and variables related to strategic talent management, workforce resilience, and the operational characteristics of Islamic organizations. Databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, and JSTOR were used to locate peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2010 and 2024. Keywords employed in the search process included "strategic talent management," "Islamic organizations," "workforce resilience," "ethical leadership," and "economic protectionism." Only articles written in English and published in reputable academic journals were included in the selection. Studies were selected based on their relevance to the research objective, methodological rigor, and conceptual contribution. Both qualitative and quantitative studies were reviewed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of knowledge. Duplicate records and irrelevant materials were excluded during the screening process. Articles focusing solely on secular corporate settings without any cultural or ethical contextualization were also eliminated. After initial selection, full texts were analyzed to extract key arguments, theoretical frameworks, and practical insights. Thematic coding was applied to classify the literature into major categories that align with the structure of the Results

and Discussion section. Particular attention was paid to identifying gaps in the literature that relate to faith-based contexts, cultural integration, and leadership ethics. The synthesis emphasizes recurring constructs and patterns that offer insight into how Islamic organizations can develop talent strategies that are resilient and values-driven. The outcome of this methodical review provides a solid conceptual foundation for advancing the discourse on strategic talent management within non-Western and ethically distinct institutional environments.

RESEARCH FINDING & ANALYSIS

Strategic Talent Management in Islamic organizations remains under-theorized and lacks alignment with institutional religious values.

Strategic talent management within Islamic organizations remains conceptually underdeveloped when compared to its evolution in corporate and secular institutions. Earlier studies have largely centered STM discourse around performance metrics, succession planning, and leadership pipelines without embedding them in religious or culturally specific frameworks (Scullion et al., 2010). Although global talent management has advanced through competency-based and performance-driven approaches, these models often neglect the value-oriented governance structures typical of Islamic organizations (Hartmann et al., 2010). In contrast, empirical evidence from faith-based institutions reveals a strong preference for value congruence and ethical alignment over conventional efficiency metrics (Kim & McLean, 2015). This gap is evident in the limited incorporation of Islamic values such as Shura (consultation) and Amanah (trust) in the mainstream STM literature (Budhwar & Mellahi, 2007). Leadership models in Islamic organizations emphasize spiritual accountability and community welfare, which contradict the individualistic and profit-maximizing assumptions embedded in Western HRM models (Ahmad, 2011). Prior research on HRM in Arab and Southeast Asian Muslim-majority contexts highlights how local norms and religious commitments shape employee expectations, yet these insights are rarely translated into formal STM structures (Aldossari & Robertson, 2016). The mismatch between institutional values and imported HR strategies leads to poor implementation and cultural dissonance in many Islamic entities (Tlaiss, 2015). It is imperative to develop STM models that are both strategically effective and ethically coherent within Islamic organizational contexts. Without such theoretical integration, STM in Islamic settings will continue to lack legitimacy, contextual relevance, and long-term sustainability.

Islamic ethical principles such as Shura, Amanah, and Ihsan provide a unique foundation for talent management strategies that emphasize trust, consultation, and moral excellence.

Islamic ethical principles offer a distinct philosophical and operational framework that redefines how organizations approach strategic talent management. Several studies underscore that Shura, or participatory consultation, promotes inclusive decision-making and enhances employee commitment within Islamic institutional contexts (Ali & Al-Aali, 2015). Amanah, defined as trust and moral responsibility, serves as a guiding principle for leadership accountability and reinforces psychological safety in organizational relationships (Abdullah & Nadvi, 2011). The value of Ihsan, which refers to excellence with sincerity, motivates employees

to pursue personal and professional growth through spiritual integrity rather than material gain (Kazmi, 2007). Empirical research has shown that when these principles are embedded into HR systems, organizations experience stronger cohesion and higher retention among talent who share religious and ethical alignment (Ahmad & Fontaine, 2011). The Islamic management perspective frames the employment relationship as a moral covenant, which transforms the role of HR from a transactional function into a vehicle for communal development (Beekun, 2012). In this sense, STM becomes not only a strategic tool but also a medium for ethical leadership and social justice. Case studies in Islamic banking and education institutions demonstrate that ethical congruence between values and policies enhances both performance and employee satisfaction (Yousef, 2001). Unlike secular STM models that prioritize metrics and individual competition, Islamic models promote shared responsibility and collective achievement. This approach encourages long-term loyalty and workforce resilience, particularly in uncertain economic environments where moral clarity becomes an organizational asset. Therefore, the integration of Shura, Amanah, and Ihsan into STM practices holds both cultural and strategic value for Islamic organizations seeking to thrive ethically and competitively.

Workforce resilience in Islamic organizations is strengthened when STM practices are embedded within culturally congruent leadership models and spiritual motivations.

Workforce resilience in Islamic organizations depends not only on technical competencies but also on how deeply talent strategies align with cultural values and spiritual dimensions of leadership. Scholars have emphasized that resilient organizations in Muslim-majority societies often draw strength from leadership models rooted in prophetic traditions and ethical conduct (Kamaluddin & Ab Manan, 2010). These models encourage relational trust, humility, and servant leadership, which contribute to psychological safety and organizational stability during times of crisis (Hashim, 2010). When strategic talent management is framed within such culturally congruent leadership paradigms, employees exhibit stronger adaptive capacities and commitment to institutional missions (Alhyasat & Al-Dalahmeh, 2013). Research from Islamic NGOs shows that spirituality in the workplace fosters resilience by providing intrinsic motivation and reinforcing a sense of divine accountability (Kamil, 2011). Talent development strategies that incorporate spiritual learning and ethical mentoring have been found to enhance perseverance and reduce turnover in value-driven organizations (Zaman et al., 2021). These findings support the notion that resilience cannot be achieved solely through structural interventions or policy design but must also involve nurturing the inner strength of employees. Islamic organizations that successfully integrate leadership ethics with strategic HR practices tend to recover faster from institutional shocks and maintain workforce coherence under pressure (Salleh et al., 2011). The literature indicates that Islamic teachings on patience, reliance on God, and collective duty create a moral climate conducive to resilience. Aligning STM practices with culturally and spiritually grounded leadership models is essential for fostering long-term adaptability and employee well-being.

Conventional STM frameworks are insufficiently responsive to the challenges posed by economic protectionism, especially in faith-based institutions operating within restricted labor markets.

Conventional strategic talent management frameworks often fail to provide effective

solutions for organizations operating in protectionist economic environments, particularly those with strong religious and ethical foundations. Most STM models were developed under assumptions of open labor markets, global mobility, and merit-based competition, which do not align with the restricted dynamics imposed by protectionist policies (Tung, 2016). In Islamic institutions where workforce strategies must adhere to both regulatory constraints and religious obligations, these mainstream models become rigid and contextually irrelevant (Farndale et al., 2010). Evidence from recent studies suggests that global economic nationalism has reduced access to foreign talent and disrupted international HR flows, placing additional pressure on organizations to localize their talent strategies (Cooke et al., 2021). Faith-based entities often operate with limited financial resources and centralized decision-making, making it difficult to implement STM frameworks that rely heavily on decentralized leadership and incentive-based systems (Al Ariss & Sidani, 2016). The adaptability of conventional STM approaches becomes questionable in environments where sociopolitical constraints limit workforce flexibility and transnational recruitment (McDonnell et al., 2017). Research also indicates that talent management in such contexts requires a deep understanding of local labor legislation, informal employment practices, and cultural expectations that are often absent from global STM discourse (Festing et al., 2013). In Islamic organizations specifically, the need to maintain religious legitimacy and community accountability restricts the adoption of purely performance-based metrics in assessing talent (Brewster et al., 2016). These limitations emphasize the urgency to rethink STM frameworks in a way that integrates local values, ethical governance, and institutional resilience. Islamic institutions must adopt innovative STM models that are both structurally responsive and spiritually grounded to survive in an era of economic fragmentation.

There is a conceptual need to develop integrated talent models that combine strategic HR practices with Islamic organizational identity to ensure sustainability and mission coherence.

Strategic talent management in Islamic organizations requires an integrated model that reflects both professional HR standards and religiously grounded institutional identity. Scholars have highlighted that such integration is essential to avoid the fragmentation of policy and practice, which often occurs when externally imported STM models are implemented without cultural adaptation (Khilji & Wang, 2006). Islamic organizations function not only as service providers but also as value transmitters, which makes alignment between human capital practices and institutional mission vital (Hashim & Mahmood, 2011). Researchers argue that models combining Islamic principles with modern HR strategies foster greater legitimacy, coherence, and employee trust within these organizations (Rafiki, 2019). This approach also enables organizations to balance operational efficiency with the ethical imperative of serving the community, which is a core component of Islamic organizational purpose (Osman-Gani et al., 2013). In contexts where economic pressures challenge long-term sustainability, integrated STM frameworks rooted in faith-based values offer a stable foundation for mission continuity and employee alignment (Hassi, 2021). Studies on Islamic education institutions reveal that alignment between talent strategies and institutional values increases employee retention and reinforces organizational resilience (Alomari, 2022). Faith-integrated HR models have also been shown to improve strategic clarity by translating organizational purpose into actionable people management practices (Putti et al., 2020). Without such models, Islamic organizations risk

adopting fragmented systems that fail to motivate staff or reflect institutional vision. Future research must focus on developing STM frameworks that are both strategically sound and theologically informed to support holistic sustainability in Islamic organizational ecosystems.

CONCLUSION

This study has explored how Islamic organizations can enhance workforce resilience by integrating strategic talent management with foundational religious values. The literature review has demonstrated that conventional STM frameworks remain insufficient when applied in isolation from cultural and spiritual contexts. Islamic principles such as Shura, Amanah, and Ihsan offer more than moral guidance; they serve as operational tools for talent management. Faith-based institutions must align their HR strategies with their organizational identity to maintain mission coherence and institutional sustainability. Strategic alignment between ethics and performance enables organizations to foster both employee commitment and organizational legitimacy. Workforce resilience does not arise solely from technical skills or training programs; it emerges from a deep integration of purpose, values, and leadership. Islamic organizations must adopt talent systems that reflect their theological commitments while remaining adaptable to external economic shifts. The challenge of economic protectionism requires more than financial or operational responses; it demands human-centered strategies rooted in ethical conviction. A culturally embedded STM framework can guide talent identification, development, and retention more effectively than models imported from secular corporate contexts. Leadership in Islamic organizations must recognize that sustainable performance depends on value-based governance. Future talent systems should prioritize inclusivity, spiritual development, and ethical leadership. Organizations that internalize their identity into their talent architecture will likely achieve greater institutional resilience. This study provides a conceptual roadmap for building STM models that are both context-sensitive and strategically robust. By embedding faith into talent practices, Islamic institutions can thrive under pressure and contribute to broader social transformation. The development of such integrated models remains a vital agenda for both researchers and practitioners in the field of strategic human capital.

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