

Health Worker Retention in Faith-Based Hospitals: A Mediated–Moderated Framework of Employee Engagement and Islamic Work Ethic

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Abstract

Research Originality: This study addresses the gap by developing an integrated framework that incorporates employee engagement and Islamic work ethic into health worker retention strategies.

Research Objectives: This study investigates the effects of talent management and employer branding on health worker retention through employee engagement and Islamic work ethic in private faith-based hospitals.

Research Methods: Primary data were collected from 210 health workers employed at private hospitals across Aceh Province using a multi-stage random sampling design. This study uses PLS-SEM to estimate direct, indirect, and moderating effects.

Empirical Results: The findings indicate that talent management and employer branding significantly strengthen employee retention both directly and indirectly through employee engagement, confirming partial mediation. Islamic work ethic further reinforces these relationships, highlighting that retention is shaped by the interaction between psychological engagement and religiously grounded work values.

Implications: The study highlights the importance of integrating human resource practices, employee engagement, and ethical values to sustain workforce retention in faith-based healthcare institutions.

Keywords:

employer branding; employee engagement; employee retention; talent management; Islamic work ethic

How to Cite:

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INTRODUCTION

Building a healthy society remains a fundamental objective of national development, and hospitals serve as key institutions in delivering sustainable, high-quality healthcare services. The effectiveness of healthcare systems depends heavily on the availability and stability of competent health workers, as human resources underpin hospital performance (Cavicchi, 2017). Nevertheless, healthcare employment is characterized by demanding workloads, emotional intensity, and continuous service pressure, which frequently contribute to burnout, declining engagement, and stronger turnover intentions among healthcare professionals (Pandita & Ray, 2018; Chopra et al., 2024).

Healthcare workforce instability has emerged as a major challenge to the sustainability of healthcare systems worldwide. Effective healthcare delivery depends on the availability and stability of competent health workers. Nevertheless, many countries continue to face persistent retention and workforce management problems, particularly in resource-constrained developing economies. The World Health Organization projects a global shortage of nearly 11 million health workers by 2030, with the largest deficits concentrated in low- and lower-middle-income countries (WHO, 2026). Increasing workloads, emotional exhaustion, fiscal constraints, and the migration of skilled personnel further intensify organizational vulnerability by weakening service continuity, institutional capacity, and healthcare quality. Consequently, retaining committed health workers has become a strategic imperative for sustaining healthcare resilience and long-term organizational performance.

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These challenges are particularly evident in private hospitals, where employment security and organizational resources are often more limited. In Indonesia, including Aceh Province, the average employee turnover rate in private hospitals ranged between 15 and 20 percent during 2018–2025, exceeding the commonly accepted tolerance threshold of 10 percent (Rahmansyah, 2025; Harris & Cameron, 2005). Persistent turnover not only increases recruitment and training costs but also disrupts institutional continuity and compromises patient safety (Jerjes et al., 2026). Such conditions underscore the strategic importance of retention-oriented human resource management within healthcare organizations.

To address retention problems, organizations increasingly rely on strategic human resource practices, particularly talent management and employer branding. Talent management focuses on aligning employee competencies, development, and career progression with organizational objectives (Berger & Berger, 2018; Dixit & Arrawatia, 2018), while employer branding strengthens employees' identification with organizational values and workplace identity (Cascio & Graham, 2016). Empirical studies generally report positive effects of both practices on employee retention (Arasanmi & Krishna, 2019; Dipietro et al., 2019; Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2019; Tumasjan et al., 2020). However, the existing literature continues to produce fragmented explanations regarding how these organizational practices actually influence employees' decisions to remain.

Recent studies increasingly suggest that employee engagement represents an important psychological mechanism linking organizational practices to retention outcomes. Engaged employees tend to exhibit stronger organizational attachment, lower turnover intention, and greater willingness to contribute beyond formal job responsibilities (Chopra et al., 2024; Pandita & Ray, 2018; Sharma et al., 2021). Talent management and employer branding have also been shown to strengthen engagement by enhancing employees' professional development, organizational identification, and psychological connection with workplace values (Ancarani et al., 2018; Hughes & Rog, 2008; Tanwar & Kumar, 2019). Nevertheless, prior studies continue to model these relationships largely through isolated or direct-effect approaches, providing limited explanation of the mediating processes through which organizational practices shape retention behavior.

In faith-based healthcare organizations, employee behavior is further influenced by ethical and religious value systems. Islamic work ethic conceptualizes work not merely as an economic activity but also as a moral and spiritual responsibility grounded in Islamic teachings (Ali, 2008; Ragab Rizk, 2008). Employees with a strong Islamic work ethic are generally more committed, engaged, and willing to maintain long-term organizational relationships (Khan & Hussain, 2018; Shahzad et al., 2024). Existing evidence also suggests that Islamic work ethic strengthens workplace attitudes and affective commitment (Kuncoro & Wibowo, 2019; Nizam et al., 2016). However, the literature still provides a limited understanding of how Islamic work ethic conditions the effectiveness of organizational practices in promoting employee retention, particularly within healthcare institutions.

Several academic debates further reinforce these unresolved issues. First, scholars continue to debate whether talent management functions as an integrated strategic system or merely a fragmented collection of human resource practices with inconsistent retention outcomes (Akbar et al., 2025; Narayanan et al., 2019; Sandeepanie et al., 2024). Second, the retention role of employer branding remains theoretically contested, as recent studies increasingly argue that its influence operates indirectly through employee engagement rather than through direct organizational attachment alone (Chopra et al., 2024; Yousf & Khurshid, 2024). Third, disagreement persists regarding the theoretical positioning of employee engagement, particularly whether it should be treated as an outcome, a mediating mechanism, or a higher-order psychological construct (Boccoli

et al., 2023; Saks, 2022). Finally, scholars increasingly argue that the effectiveness of management practices depends heavily on institutional, cultural, and ethical contexts rather than universally applicable organizational models (Festing & Schäfer, 2014). Within this discussion, the Islamic work ethic has emerged as a potentially important boundary condition shaping employee responses to organizational practices (Khan et al., 2015; Murtaza et al., 2016), although empirical evidence from healthcare retention remains limited.

Collectively, these debates indicate that existing retention studies remain fragmented in their explanations of how organizational practices, psychological engagement, and ethical value systems jointly shape employee retention. Existing evidence is also heavily concentrated in secular and general organizational settings, with limited attention to faith-based healthcare institutions where religious values strongly shape organizational behavior and employment relationships.

This study addresses these gaps by developing an integrated mediated–moderated framework that explains how employee engagement mediates the effects of talent management and employer branding on health worker retention. At the same time, the Islamic work ethic strengthens these relationships within faith-based hospitals. By situating the analysis in private hospitals in Aceh Province, the study further provides context-sensitive evidence from an underexplored institutional setting characterized by strong Islamic cultural and ethical values. Through this framework, the study contributes to the employee retention literature by offering a more comprehensive explanation not only of whether organizational practices influence retention, but also of how and under what ethical conditions these relationships become effective.

METHODS

The population comprised 7,375 nurses employed in private faith-based hospitals across 23 regencies and municipalities in Aceh Province, based on data from the Aceh Provincial Health Office (2025). Nurses were selected because they constitute the largest professional group in hospitals and maintain the most continuous interaction with patients, making them highly exposed to organizational pressure, emotional demands, and workplace dynamics related to engagement, commitment, and retention. Respondents were required to have at least 2 years of work experience, be actively employed, and have direct involvement in patient care or operational healthcare services. Only voluntarily completed questionnaires were included in the final dataset. A multi-stage sampling approach was employed to ensure geographical representation across Aceh Province. Cluster sampling first divided Aceh into six regional zones representing urban, rural, coastal, and remote healthcare settings, followed by purposive random sampling within each zone based on the predefined criteria. To maintain balanced regional representation, 35 respondents were selected from each zone, resulting in a final sample of 210 respondents, which was considered adequate for PLS-SEM estimation involving mediation and moderation analysis. The respondent distribution is presented in Table 1.

The study employed five latent constructs within an integrated mediation–moderation framework. Talent management (TM) and employer branding (EB) were modeled as exogenous constructs; employee retention (ER) as the endogenous construct; employee engagement (EE) as the mediating mechanism; and Islamic work ethic (IWE) as the moderating construct influencing retention outcomes. Clear operational definitions and dimensional specifications were incorporated to enhance construct clarity and measurement transparency. Talent management was measured using five indicators related to talent identification, employee development, and career planning (Berger & Berger, 2018; Dixit & Arrawatia, 2018).

Table 1. Total Sample Based on Regional Zone, Regency/City

No.	Regional Zone	Regency/City	Total Respondent
1.	Central Zone	Sabang City, Banda Aceh City, Aceh Besar Regency, and Pidie Regency	35
2.	North Zone	Pidie Jaya Regency, Bireuen Regency, Lhokseumawe City, North Aceh Regency, Central Aceh Regency and Bener Meriah Regency	35
3.	East Zone	East Aceh Regency, Langsa City, and Aceh Tamiang Regency	35
4.	Southeast Zone	Gayo Lues Regency, Southeast Aceh Regency, Subulussalam City, Singkil Regency, and Banyak Island	35
5.	South Zone	South Aceh Regency, Southwest Aceh Regency, and Simeulue Regency	35
6.	West Zone	West Aceh Regency, Nagan Raya Regency, and Aceh Jaya Regency	35
Total Respondents			210

Employer branding was assessed through 15 indicators reflecting organizational image, work environment, career opportunities, rewards, and value congruence (Backhaus, 2016; Dabirian et al., 2019). Employee engagement comprised nine indicators representing vigor, dedication, and absorption (Anitha, 2014; Schaufeli et al., 2002). The Islamic work ethic was operationalized using 10 indicators capturing responsibility, accountability, sincerity, and ethically grounded work behavior grounded in Islamic values (Ahmad & Owoyemi, 2012; Ali, 2008). Employee retention was measured using six indicators of organizational loyalty and intention to remain within the organization (Tadesse, 2018; Yousf & Khurshid, 2024).

The measurement items were adapted from established empirical studies and evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Construct reliability and validity were assessed through established statistical procedures to ensure accurate representation of the underlying variables. Table 2 shows the conceptual definitions, dimensions, indicators, and measurement sources of each construct.

The empirical analysis employed Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to evaluate the direct, mediating, and moderating relationships within the

proposed framework. The analytical procedure involved measurement model evaluation, structural model assessment, and hypothesis testing to examine the relationships among talent management, employer branding, employee engagement, and employee retention, as illustrated in Figure 1.

In line with this proposed research model (Figure 1), the direct, mediating, and moderating effects are formally specified through the regression equations presented below.

a) Direct Effect

$$EE = \beta_{11}TM + \beta_{12}EB + \zeta_1 \tag{1}$$

$$ER = \beta_{21}TM + \beta_{22}EB + \zeta_2 \tag{2}$$

$$ER = \beta_{31}EE + \zeta_3 \tag{3}$$

b) Mediating Effect

$$ER = \beta_{41}TM + \beta_{42}EB + \beta_{43}EE + \zeta_4 \tag{4}$$

c) Moderating Effect

$$ER = \beta_{51}TM + \beta_{52}EB + \beta_{53}IWE + \beta_{54}TM*IWE + \beta_{55}EB*IWE + \zeta_5 \tag{5}$$

$$ER = \beta_{61}EE + \beta_{62}IWE + \beta_{63}EE*IWE + \zeta_6 \tag{6}$$

Table 2. Operational Definition and Measurement of the Research Variables

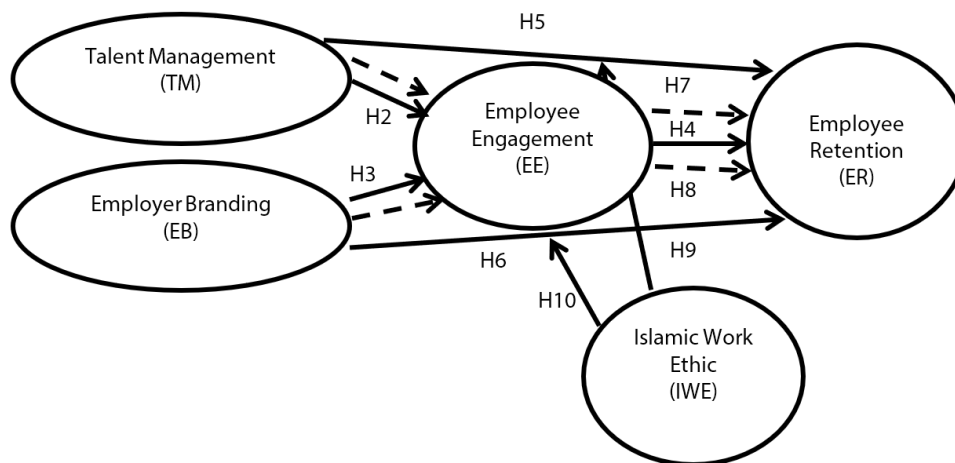
Variable	Conceptual Definition	Dimensions	Indicators	Source
Talent Management (TM)	Organizational practices focused on identifying, developing, and retaining employees through structured talent and career planning systems.	Talent identification, talent development, career planning	5 items (TM1 to TM5)	Dixit and Arrawatia (2018); Berger and Berger (2018)
Employer Branding (EB)	Employees' perceptions of the organization as an attractive and supportive workplace offering meaningful and value-consistent employment experiences.	Organizational image, work environment, career opportunities, rewards and benefits, value congruence	15 items (EB1.1 to EB5.3)	Backhaus (2016); Dabirian et al. (2019)
Employee Engagement (EE)	Employees' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral attachment to their work, reflected in vigor, dedication, and absorption.	Vigor, dedication, absorption	9 items (EE1.1 to EE3.3)	Schaufeli et al. (2002); Anitha (2014)
Islamic Work Ethic (IWE)	Work-related ethical values grounded in Islamic principles that emphasize responsibility, accountability, sincerity, and meaningful work as worship.	Effort, competition, transparency, and morally responsible conduct	10 items (IWE1 to IWE10)	Ali (2008); Ahmad and Owoyemi (2012)
Employee Retention (ER)	Employees' intention and willingness to remain with the current organization, reflecting loyalty and continued commitment.	Intention to stay, organizational loyalty	6 items (ER1 to ER6)	Tadesse (2018); Youf and Khurshid (2024)

In these equations, EE represents employee engagement, ER represents employee retention, TM represents talent management, EB represents employer branding, and IWE represents Islamic work ethic. The coefficient β indicates the direction and magnitude of

the relationships among latent constructs, while ζ represents the structural error term.

Following the specification of the structural equations, direct effects were evaluated through the significance of structural path coefficients among the exogenous, mediating, and endogenous constructs. Mediating effects were examined using bootstrapping procedures to estimate indirect effects and bias-corrected confidence intervals, while moderating effects were assessed through interaction terms incorporated into the structural model.

Figure 1. Proposed Research Model



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrate that talent management and employer branding significantly enhance health worker retention in private faith-based hospitals, both directly and indirectly through employee engagement. Employee engagement partially mediates these relationships, indicating that strategic human resource practices become more effective when they strengthen employees' psychological attachment to their work. Islamic work ethic further amplifies these relationships, suggesting that managerial practices become more effective when aligned with religious and ethical values. Overall, the findings highlight that retention in faith-based healthcare organizations is shaped by the interplay between organizational practices, psychological engagement, and value-based orientations.

Building on these findings, the respondent profile provides important contextual insight into the workforce characteristics underlying the observed relationships. The distribution of respondent characteristics is presented in Table 3. As presented in Table 3, the sample is predominantly female (75.2%), reflecting the gender composition commonly found in healthcare and nursing services. Most respondents are aged 31–40 years (31.9%), followed by those aged 41–50 years (27.6%), indicating a workforce positioned within productive and career-consolidation stages where long-term employment expectations are generally stronger. The majority are married (60.5%) and possess relatively strong educational qualifications: 48.5% hold bachelor's degrees and 40.5% hold professional, specialist, or master's qualifications. Nearly half of the respondents (46.6%) report

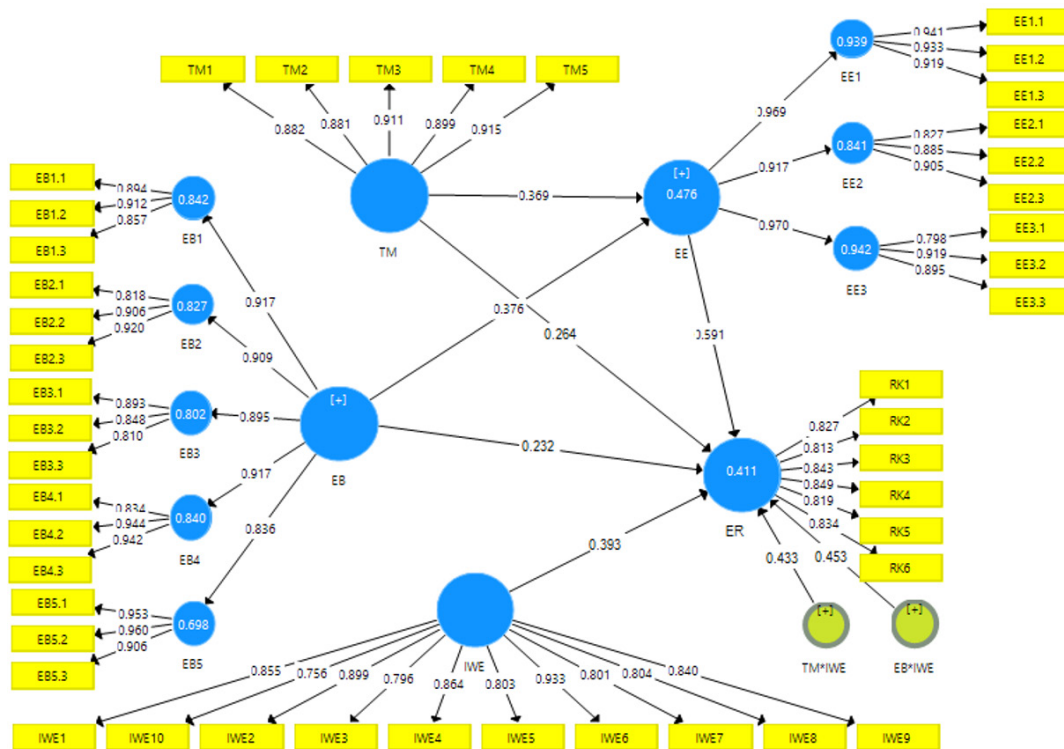
more than 5 years of work experience, suggesting substantial organizational familiarity and professional commitment. However, more than half remain employed under non-permanent contracts (53.3%), highlighting structural employment conditions that may intensify job insecurity and retention challenges in private hospitals.

Table 3. Respondent Characteristics

No.	Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Gender:			
1.	Male	52	24.8
	Female	158	75.2
Total		210	100.0
Age:			
2.	<20 years	0	0.0
	21-30 years	54	25.7
	31-40 years	67	31.9
	41-50 years	58	27.6
	> 50 years	31	14.8
Total		210	100.0
Marital Status:			
3.	Married	127	60.5
	Single	83	39.5
Total		210	100.0
Education:			
4.	Senior high school	2	1.0
	Diploma	23	11.0
	Bachelor degree	102	48.5
	Profession/Specialist/Master	83	40.5
Total		210	100.0
Working experience:			
5.	2-3 years	31	14.8
	4-5 years	81	38.6
	> 5 years	98	46.6
Total		210	100.0
Employment Status:			
6.	Employees → Permanent employees	98	46.7
	Non-Employees → Non-permanent/contract employees	112	53.3
Total		210	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2025 (Processed).

Figure 2. Loading Factor Value of Research Variables



Source: Primary Data, 2025 (Processed).

To ensure measurement robustness prior to structural model evaluation, the outer model was assessed within the PLS-SEM framework using tests of convergent validity, discriminant validity, and internal consistency reliability (Hair et al., 2020). These procedures were conducted to confirm the adequacy of the indicators in representing their respective latent constructs and to establish the methodological basis for subsequent hypothesis testing. Convergent validity was evaluated using indicator loadings, with a minimum acceptable threshold of 0.70. The SmartPLS 3.0 results presented in Figure 2 indicate that all indicators exceeded the recommended threshold, confirming that the measurement items adequately represent their corresponding constructs and satisfy convergent validity requirements.

Discriminant validity was further evaluated using the cross-loading criterion by comparing the loading of each indicator on its assigned construct with its loadings on other constructs. As reported in Table 4, all indicators loaded more strongly on their respective constructs than on alternative latent variables, confirming adequate discriminant validity. Employer branding indicators showed loadings ranging from 0.747 to 0.872, employee engagement from 0.722 to 0.907, Islamic work ethic from 0.756 to 0.933, and talent management from 0.881 to 0.915 on their designated constructs. Employee retention indicators likewise demonstrated stronger associations with their intended construct than with other variables in the model. The interaction constructs used in the moderation analysis also exhibited acceptable loading patterns, supporting the distinctiveness of the moderating effects and the primary constructs. Overall, these results confirm that each construct represents a distinct conceptual domain with minimal measurement overlap.

Table 4. Cross-Loading Results

	EB	EB*IWE	EE	IWE	ER	TM	TM*IWE
EB1.1	0.799	-0.024	0.455	0.047	0.307	0.596	-0.060
EB1.2	0.839	-0.068	0.491	0.034	0.306	0.547	-0.060
EB1.3	0.806	-0.065	0.540	0.036	0.345	0.563	-0.010
EB2.1	0.817	-0.044	0.520	0.059	0.339	0.509	-0.067
EB2.2	0.779	-0.069	0.566	0.055	0.383	0.521	-0.015
EB2.3	0.806	-0.124	0.579	0.078	0.425	0.587	-0.050
EB3.1	0.767	0.042	0.426	0.163	0.335	0.576	0.119
EB3.2	0.747	-0.074	0.431	0.120	0.307	0.617	-0.037
EB3.3	0.770	-0.068	0.519	0.099	0.333	0.511	-0.013
EB4.1	0.751	-0.001	0.481	0.058	0.266	0.502	-0.036
EB4.2	0.872	-0.040	0.626	0.032	0.424	0.637	-0.027
EB4.3	0.867	-0.021	0.599	0.029	0.408	0.637	-0.018
EB5.1	0.796	-0.021	0.442	0.081	0.332	0.625	-0.008
EB5.2	0.780	-0.040	0.487	0.061	0.301	0.586	-0.029
EB5.3	0.779	-0.038	0.484	0.082	0.296	0.553	0.021
EE1.1	0.571	-0.050	0.900	-0.001	0.545	0.563	-0.000
EE1.2	0.563	-0.055	0.907	-0.005	0.584	0.546	-0.036
EE1.3	0.504	-0.042	0.899	-0.041	0.549	0.463	-0.030
EE2.1	0.514	-0.028	0.722	0.037	0.470	0.529	-0.038
EE2.2	0.470	-0.001	0.812	0.044	0.482	0.493	0.004
EE2.3	0.563	0.029	0.860	0.019	0.608	0.589	0.058
EE3.1	0.660	-0.103	0.736	0.049	0.498	0.706	-0.057
EE3.2	0.558	-0.052	0.905	-0.010	0.556	0.559	-0.025
EE3.3	0.501	-0.031	0.886	-0.075	0.531	0.450	-0.014
IWE1	0.050	0.107	-0.007	0.855	0.055	0.102	0.185
IWE10	-0.009	0.003	-0.065	0.756	-0.011	-0.021	0.099
IWE2	0.081	0.149	-0.007	0.899	0.056	0.055	0.206
IWE3	0.040	0.072	-0.056	0.796	0.008	0.026	0.136
IWE4	0.027	0.072	-0.066	0.864	0.033	0.008	0.128
IWE5	0.008	0.004	-0.048	0.803	0.004	0.019	0.091
IWE6	0.118	0.049	0.035	0.933	0.093	0.120	0.105
IWE7	0.038	0.068	-0.036	0.801	-0.008	0.031	0.139
IWE8	-0.007	-0.020	-0.032	0.804	0.021	0.017	0.077
IWE9	0.057	0.004	0.002	0.840	0.013	0.036	0.118
ER1	0.382	-0.061	0.537	-0.020	0.827	0.366	-0.067
ER2	0.301	-0.007	0.428	0.118	0.813	0.290	0.019
ER3	0.330	-0.085	0.534	-0.012	0.843	0.350	-0.074
ER4	0.354	-0.088	0.556	0.088	0.849	0.347	-0.083
ER5	0.348	0.001	0.500	0.064	0.819	0.371	-0.001
ER6	0.403	-0.121	0.574	0.120	0.834	0.464	-0.073
TM1	0.572	-0.034	0.481	0.080	0.342	0.882	0.115
TM2	0.650	-0.034	0.567	0.145	0.418	0.881	0.039
TM3	0.641	-0.033	0.522	0.084	0.395	0.911	0.133
TM4	0.651	0.014	0.594	0.044	0.385	0.899	0.151
TM5	0.681	-0.029	0.669	0.056	0.436	0.915	0.080
TM*IWE	-0.025	0.707	-0.017	0.162	-0.060	0.114	1.000
EB*IWE	-0.055	1.000	-0.043	0.089	-0.077	-0.025	0.707

Source: Primary Data, 2025 (Processed).

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion by comparing the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) with inter-construct correlations (Henseler et al., 2015). As presented in Table 5, all constructs exceeded the recommended AVE threshold of 0.50, with values of 0.690 for employee retention, 0.723 for employee engagement, 0.806 for talent management, 0.639 for employer branding, and 0.700 for Islamic work ethic, confirming satisfactory construct validity.

Table 5. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and AVE Square Root

	AVE	AVE Square Root
Employee Retention (ER)	0.690	0.831
Employee engagement (EE)	0.723	0.850
Talent management (TM)	0.806	0.898
Employer branding (EB)	0.639	0.799
Islamic work ethic (IWE)	0.700	0.837
TM*IWE	1.000	1.000
EB*IWE	1.000	1.000

Source: Primary Data, 2025 (Processed).

Table 6 further indicates that employer branding correlated with employee engagement (0.640) and talent management (0.715), while employee engagement and talent management correlated with employee retention (0.632 and 0.443, respectively). Islamic work ethic demonstrated relatively weak correlations with the primary constructs, ranging from 0.000 to 0.162, suggesting that it captured a distinct conceptual domain within the model. The interaction constructs (EB*IWE and TM*IWE) also showed acceptable correlations, with little overlap with the primary variables. Since all inter-construct correlations remained below the corresponding square roots of AVE, the constructs were considered empirically distinct.

Table 6. Correlation Value between Constructs with the AVE Square Root

	EB	EB*IWE	EE	IWE	ER	TM	TM*IWE
EB	1.000						
EB*IWE	-0.055	1.000					
EE	0.640	-0.043	1.000				
IWE	0.085	0.089	0.000	1.000			
ER	0.428	-0.077	0.632	0.071	1.000		
TM	0.715	-0.025	0.638	0.090	0.443	1.000	
TM*IWE	-0.025	0.707	-0.017	0.162	-0.060	0.114	1.000

Source: Primary Data, 2025 (Processed).

Following the construct validity assessment, reliability was evaluated using CA to examine the internal consistency of the measurement instruments. Constructs are generally considered reliable when Cronbach's Alpha (CA) values exceed 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019). As reported in Table 7, all constructs surpassed the recommended threshold, indicating

satisfactory internal consistency and confirming that the indicators reliably represented their respective latent constructs with minimal measurement error.

Table 7. Cronbach’s Alpha Reliability Value

Indicator	Cronbach’s Alpha	Cut-Off Value	Remark
Employee Retention	0.910	0.700	Reliable
Employee engagement	0.951	0.700	Reliable
Talent management	0.940	0.700	Reliable
Employer branding	0.959	0.700	Reliable
Islamic work ethic	0.962	0.700	Reliable

Source: Primary Data, 2025 (Processed).

Following measurement model evaluation, the structural model was assessed to examine the explanatory and predictive capability of the proposed framework. The coefficient of determination for employee retention reached 0.610 (adjusted $R^2 = 0.607$), indicating that talent management, employer branding, employee engagement, and Islamic work ethic collectively accounted for 61.0% of the variance in employee retention, with the remaining variation attributable to factors outside the proposed model. Table 8 reports the Q-square (Q^2) values used to assess the predictive relevance of the structural model. Predictive relevance indicates the model’s capability to generate accurate predictions and evaluate the explanatory quality of the estimated relationships. A model demonstrates predictive relevance when Q^2 exceeds zero; values of 0.35, 0.15, and 0.02 indicate strong, moderate, and weak predictive relevance, respectively (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 8. Q-Square Value

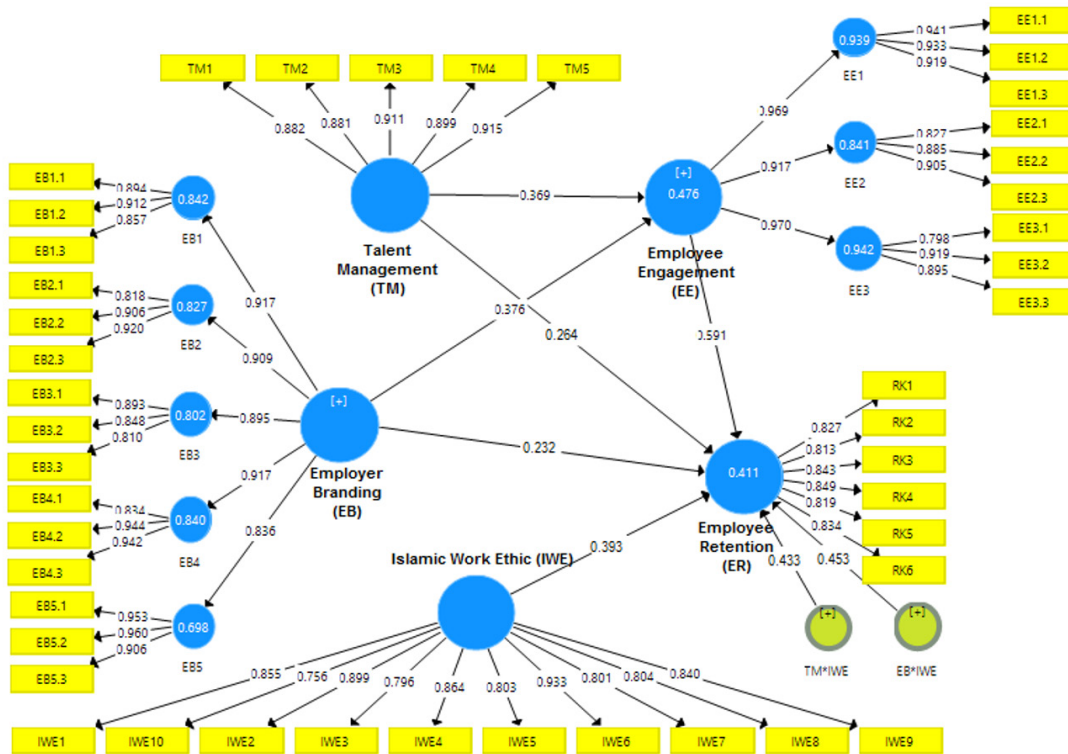
	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
Employee Retention	1.164.000	852.521	0.268
Employee engagement	1.746.000	1.157.776	0.337
Talent management	970.000	970.000	-
Employer branding	2.910.000	2.910.000	-
Islamic work ethic	1.940.000	1.940.000	-
TM*IWE	194.000	194.000	-
EB*IWE	194.000	194.000	-

Source: Primary Data, 2025 (Processed).

Subsequently, the Goodness of Fit (GoF) index was used to evaluate the adequacy of the proposed framework. The estimated GoF value of 0.696 indicates strong model performance and supports the framework’s capability to explain the relationships among the studied constructs. Figure 3 illustrates the structural relationships among talent management, employer branding, employee engagement, Islamic work ethic, and employee retention within the proposed framework. The figure presents the standardized path coefficients, indicator loadings, and interaction effects underlying the direct and

indirect relationships examined in the model, while the estimated structural coefficients are reported in Table 9.

Figure 3. Path Diagram of Research Variables



Source: Primary Data, 2025 (Processed).

Table 9. Path Coefficients Values

	Original Sample	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	t-stat.	P-Value
TM -> EE	0.369	0.366	0.120	3.072	0.001
EB -> EE	0.376	0.382	0.120	3.146	0.001
EE -> ER	0.591	0.574	0.082	7.193	0.000
TM -> ER	0.264	0.254	0.144	2.038	0.033
EB -> ER	0.232	0.234	0.100	2.318	0.010
TM -> EE -> ER	0.218	0.204	0.077	2.814	0.003
EB -> EE -> ER	0.222	0.221	0.073	3.042	0.001
IWE -> ER	0.393	0.387	0.085	4.637	0.000
TM*IWE -> ER	0.433	0.443	0.121	3.572	0.000
EB*IWE -> ER	0.453	0.464	0.123	3.696	0.000

Source: Primary Data, 2025 (Processed).

The results reported in Table 9 indicate that talent management (TM) positively affects employee engagement (EE). This finding suggests that talent development, career alignment, and organizational support strengthen employees' psychological attachment to their work. In faith-based hospitals, employees who perceive stronger organizational

investment in their professional development are more likely to demonstrate greater enthusiasm, commitment, and involvement in organizational activities. The finding supports previous studies emphasizing that talent management practices oriented toward employee development and career progression positively influence employee engagement (Bhatnagar, 2007; Hughes & Rog, 2008; Pandita & Ray, 2018; Birou & Hoek, 2022). It also reinforces Saks (2022), who conceptualizes engagement as a psychological mechanism shaped by organizational support and managerial practices. These results indicate that talent management functions not merely as an administrative practice but as a strategic mechanism for strengthening workforce stability through enhanced employee engagement.

Employer branding (EB) also positively affects employee engagement. This result indicates that employees become more psychologically engaged when hospitals are perceived as supportive, reputable, and value-consistent workplaces. Within faith-based healthcare organizations, employer branding appears to operate not only through organizational reputation and employment benefits, but also through alignment between institutional and employee values. Employees who positively perceive their organizations tend to develop stronger emotional attachment and organizational involvement. This finding is consistent with prior evidence reported by Ancarani et al. (2018), Shuck et al. (2017), Tanwar and Kumar (2019), and Špoljarić and Verčič (2022), which demonstrate that employer branding strengthens employees' emotional connection and engagement with organizational goals. The result further supports Chopra et al. (2024), who argue that employer branding primarily influences retention through engagement-related mechanisms rather than organizational image alone.

The findings further reveal that employee engagement (EE) exerts the strongest direct effect on employee retention (ER), highlighting engagement as a central determinant of workforce stability in private hospitals across Aceh Province. Employees who demonstrate stronger emotional attachment, enthusiasm, and involvement in their work are more likely to sustain long-term organizational relationships and less likely to develop turnover intentions. This result reinforces the growing view that employee engagement extends beyond an attitudinal outcome and functions as a strategic organizational resource shaping workforce sustainability in healthcare institutions. The finding is consistent with prior studies showing that engaged employees exhibit stronger commitment, lower turnover intentions, and greater willingness to contribute beyond formal job responsibilities (Pandita & Ray, 2018; Sharma et al., 2021; Chopra et al., 2024). The result also supports Boccoli et al. (2023), who position engagement as a strategic mechanism influencing organizational sustainability and employee retention rather than merely a psychological outcome.

Talent management also exerts a positive direct effect on employee retention. This finding indicates that structured talent development, competency alignment, and career management practices directly strengthen employees' intention to remain within the organization. In healthcare environments characterized by high workloads and emotional pressure, employees tend to value organizations that provide professional growth opportunities and long-term career support. Such practices strengthen perceptions of organizational commitment toward employees and encourage reciprocal commitment

in return. This finding is consistent with studies by Dipietro et al. (2019), Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou (2019), and Ott et al. (2018), which show that effective talent management contributes positively to employee retention across organizational contexts. The result also supports Narayanan et al. (2019), who argue that the effectiveness of talent management depends on how organizations institutionalize employee development and support systems.

Similarly, employer branding positively affects employee retention. This finding suggests that employees are more likely to remain within organizations perceived as reputable, supportive, and aligned with their expectations and values. In faith-based hospitals, employer branding may strengthen organizational identification not only through material benefits but also through shared ethical and institutional values that reinforce employees' sense of belonging and organizational legitimacy. Employees who perceive their workplace positively are therefore more likely to develop long-term commitment and lower intentions to leave. This finding supports previous studies by Arasanmi and Krishna (2019), Kashyap and Verma (2018), Tumasjan et al. (2020), and Chopra et al. (2024), which consistently report positive relationships between employer branding, employee commitment, and retention outcomes across organizational settings.

The results presented in Table 9 indicate that employee engagement (EE) significantly mediates the relationship between talent management (TM) and employee retention (ER). This finding suggests that talent management practices strengthen employee retention not only directly, but also indirectly by enhancing employees' psychological attachment and involvement in their work. Employees who perceive stronger organizational support through career development, competency enhancement, and long-term professional growth opportunities are more likely to develop stronger engagement, which subsequently reinforces their intention to remain within the organization.

In faith-based hospitals, such practices may further strengthen perceptions of organizational appreciation and professional recognition, thereby contributing to workforce stability. The finding is consistent with previous studies showing that talent management positively influences employee engagement and retention (Pandita & Ray, 2018; Birou & Hoek, 2022). The result also supports Saks (2022), who conceptualizes engagement as a psychological mechanism linking organizational practices to strategic organizational outcomes. In addition, the finding reinforces Chopra et al. (2024), who argue that organizational strategies become more effective in sustaining employees when they strengthen employees' cognitive and emotional attachment to their work and organization. Collectively, these results position employee engagement as an important transmission mechanism through which talent management influences retention outcomes among health workers in private hospitals across Aceh Province.

Employee engagement also significantly mediates the relationship between employer branding (EB) and employee retention (ER), confirming the robustness of the mediation effect. This finding indicates that employer branding contributes to retention by strengthening employees' emotional attachment to and organizational involvement with the organization. Employees who perceive their organizations as supportive, reputable,

and aligned with their personal values are more likely to develop stronger engagement, which, in turn, increases their willingness to remain in the organization.

In faith-based healthcare institutions, employer branding appears to operate not only through organizational reputation and employment benefits, but also through ethical congruence and value alignment between employees and the organization. This condition is particularly relevant in Aceh's healthcare context, where religious and ethical values strongly shape organizational culture and employee behavior. The finding is consistent with prior studies demonstrating that employer branding positively influences employee engagement and retention (Ancarani et al., 2018; Kashyap & Verma, 2018; Tanwar & Kumar, 2019; Tumasjan et al., 2020). The result further supports Chopra et al. (2024), who argue that employer branding affects retention primarily through engagement-related psychological mechanisms rather than organizational image alone. Similarly, Yousf and Khurshid (2024) demonstrate that employee engagement mediates the relationship between employer branding and organizational commitment. These findings indicate that employer branding functions not only as an external recruitment strategy but also as an internal organizational mechanism that strengthens employees' psychological attachment and long-term retention.

The results reported in Table 10 demonstrate that Islamic work ethic (IWE) significantly moderates the relationship between talent management (TM) and employee retention (ER). This finding indicates that talent management practices become more effective in retaining employees when supported by stronger Islamic ethical values. Employees who internalize values emphasizing responsibility, sincerity, trustworthiness, discipline, and collective welfare are more likely to respond positively to career development opportunities, managerial support, and long-term professional growth initiatives.

In faith-based healthcare institutions, employees who perceive work as part of their moral and religious responsibilities tend to show greater appreciation for organizational efforts to develop employees and sustain the workforce. The finding supports Festing and Schäfer (2014), who argue that management effectiveness is shaped by institutional, cultural, and ethical contexts rather than universally applicable organizational models. The result is also consistent with studies by Murtaza et al. (2016), Khan et al. (2015), and Shahzad et al. (2024), which show that Islamic work ethic strengthens employees' commitment, responsibility, and positive responses toward organizational practices.

Islamic work ethic (IWE) also significantly moderates the relationship between employer branding (EB) and employee retention (ER). This result suggests that employer branding becomes more effective in strengthening retention when employees strongly internalize Islamic values. In private faith-based hospitals in Aceh Province, employees appear to evaluate organizational attractiveness not only through reputation, career opportunities, and employment benefits, but also through ethical congruence and value alignment with Islamic principles. Employees who perceive stronger alignment between organizational identity and personal religious values are therefore more likely to develop emotional attachment, organizational trust, and long-term commitment. This finding is

consistent with previous studies demonstrating that Islamic work ethic positively influences organizational commitment, engagement, and employee attachment (Khan & Hussain, 2018; Kuncoro & Wibowo, 2019; Nizam et al., 2016). Collectively, these findings indicate that organizational practices operate within ethical and cultural contexts, where the Islamic work ethic functions as an important contextual mechanism reinforcing employee retention in faith-based healthcare organizations.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the roles of talent management and employer branding in strengthening health worker retention within private faith-based hospitals, with employee engagement serving as a mediating mechanism and Islamic work ethic as a moderating factor. Using an integrated PLS-SEM framework, the study analyzes data collected from 210 health workers employed in private hospitals across Aceh Province. The findings demonstrate that talent management and employer branding significantly enhance employee retention both directly and indirectly through employee engagement, confirming engagement as a central psychological mechanism linking organizational practices to workforce sustainability. Islamic work ethic further strengthens these relationships, indicating that retention in faith-based healthcare institutions is shaped by the interaction between strategic human resource practices, psychological engagement, and ethical value orientations.

From a managerial and policy perspective, the findings highlight the importance of integrated retention strategies that combine competency-based talent development, supportive leadership, employee engagement, and value-based organizational culture. In faith-based healthcare institutions, organizational practices aligned with ethical and religious values appear more effective in strengthening employees' organizational attachment and long-term commitment. Accordingly, healthcare institutions and policymakers should promote value-based human resource governance and continuous professional development to strengthen workforce stability, institutional resilience, and long-term sustainability of healthcare services. This study is limited to private faith-based hospitals in Aceh Province; therefore, future research may extend the analysis to broader healthcare settings and incorporate additional organizational or institutional factors.

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