

The Influence of Work Flexibility, Reskilling, and Upskilling on *Nafs al-Muṭma'innah* among Educators in Muhammadiyah Universities and Boarding Schools (PESMA)

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Received May 4, 2026, Revised: June 07, 2026, Accepted: June 22, 2026

Abstract

Digital transformation and automation have reconfigured academic work environments, generating adaptive HR demands while simultaneously intensifying psychological strain that may disrupt employees' inner equilibrium in Islamic higher education contexts. Purpose: This study aims to analyze the influence of work flexibility, reskilling, and upskilling on *nafs al-muṭma'innah* as an Islamic psychological construct of inner tranquility among educators in Muhammadiyah universities and PESMA institutions in East Java. Methods: A quantitative explanatory design was employed using a survey of 154 employees selected through simple random sampling. Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression in SPSS, preceded by classical assumption tests to ensure model robustness. Findings: The results indicate that work flexibility, reskilling, and upskilling exert significant partial and simultaneous effects on *nafs al-muṭma'innah*. These adaptive HR strategies reduce perceived work pressure while enhancing psychological stability and spiritual well-being, demonstrating a statistically supported integration between organizational adaptability and Islamic constructs of inner peace. Implications: The findings suggest that HR policies in Islamic educational institutions should

integrate competency development with spiritual well-being frameworks, although generalizability is limited to Muhammadiyah contexts in East Java. Originality: This study introduces *nafs al-muṭma'innah* as an empirically tested dependent variable within HRM research, bridging Islamic psychology and contemporary organizational behavior.

Keywords: *Work Flexibility, Reskilling, Upskilling, Nafs al-Mutma'innah, Human Resource Management.*

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology and automation in the era of Industrial Revolution 4.0 has brought significant structural changes to the world of work and human resource management. This transformation drives a shift in human roles from technical executors to adaptive actors who are required to have mental and spiritual readiness in facing rapid changes in work systems.¹ These changes impact not only the industrial and business sectors but also extend to the higher education sector, which possesses high administrative and academic complexity.² Higher education institutions are demanded to manage human resources professionally while maintaining human values and work morals. In the Islamic context, these changes necessitate the purification and strengthening of the soul so that humans do not fall into the dehumanization of work due to technological dominance.³

On a broader scale, work automation and digitalization carry serious implications for job structures and individual psychological resilience. Shifts in job types and new competency demands often trigger inner anxiety and emotional instability if not balanced with adequate spiritual readiness.⁴ This condition indicates that modern work challenges are not only technical but also touch the deepest dimensions of the human psyche. In the perspective of the Qur'an, this dynamic is related to the condition of an-nafs, which can exist at various levels of tranquility or anxiety.⁵ Therefore, the success of work adaptation is highly influenced by an individual's ability to maintain inner balance amidst the pressures of change.⁶

One form of organizational adaptation to these dynamics is the implementation of work flexibility as an HR management strategy. Work flexibility provides space for individuals to adjust their work rhythms with personal conditions, thereby potentially

¹ Hazizah Mutiara and Cahaya Ningrum, "Artificial Intelligence In Al-Ghazali's Perspective Bridging The Concepts Of Nafs And Machine," 2024.

² Ilham Mundzir, "The Progressiveness of Quranic Interpretation in the Fatwa of Muhammadiyah on Female Circumcision" 12, no. 2 (2022): 285–311, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijjims.v12i2>.

³ Idaya Andriani et al., "Good Governance Based on Islamic Values in PTKIN Personnel Management: A Case Study," 1849.

⁴ Ira Bariroh and Ainul Yakin, "Human Emotional Levels Hawkins Scale Theory And Its Correlation With The Concept Of Nafs In The Qur'an" 03, no. 01 (2025): 536–44.

⁵ Parima Sari et al., "Al-Wasathiyah : Journal of Islamic Studies Konsep An-Nafs Menurut Tafsir Ibnu Katshir Dan Tafsir Ilmi Al-Wasathiyah" 2 (2023): 219–38, <https://doi.org/10.56672/alwasathiyah.v2i2.94>.

⁶ Risma Nailul Amaliya and Achmad Khudori Soleh, "Konsep Nafs Dan Terapinya Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an Risma" 1, no. 1 (2025): 79–89.

reducing psychological pressure and improving life balance.⁷ In the higher education environment, work flexibility becomes relevant alongside the increasing use of digital systems and online platform-based work. However, flexibility not accompanied by the strengthening of inner values can instead give birth to a disorientation of the meaning of work and psychological instability.⁸ Consequently, work flexibility needs to be understood not only as a technical policy but also as a space for the psychological development of employees.⁹

In addition to work flexibility, the demands for reskilling and upskilling are logical consequences of rapid technological change. The process of relearning and competency enhancement requires strong mental readiness so that individuals do not experience prolonged psychological burnout. In an Islamic perspective, the process of learning and self-capacity building is part of tazkiyatun nafs, which functions to cleanse the soul from fear and despair.¹⁰ Reskilling and upskilling conducted without spiritual awareness have the potential to be perceived as a burden rather than a process of self-meaning.¹¹ Therefore, strengthening the psychological dimension becomes a vital element in ensuring that the competency adaptation process proceeds healthily and sustainably.¹²

On the other hand, the acceleration of digital transformation also gives rise to increasingly complex psychological pressures. Individuals often experience anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and inner restlessness due to ever-changing technology-based work demands. In the study of Tafsir and Islamic psychology, such conditions reflect the dynamics of an-nafs that has not yet reached the level of tranquility (itmi'nan).¹³ A work environment full of pressure has the potential to strengthen the dominance of a restless nafs if not balanced with the process of self-control and soul purification.¹⁴ Thus, HR management approaches that ignore the spiritual dimension risk exacerbating the psychological imbalance of employees.¹⁵

⁷ Farid, Ahmad, and Nisa Afinah. "Karakteristik Budi pekerti kepribadian individu dalam perspektif Al-Qur'an." *Jurnal Ilmiah Research Student* 1.2 (2023): 120-126.

⁸ Relevansinya Dengan and Pendidikan Karakter, "Konsep Pemikiran Tazkiyatun Nafs Oleh Ibnu Taimiyah Dan Relevansinya Dengan Pendidikan Karakter" 8, no. 2 (2024): 159-69.

⁹ Jurnal Pendidikan Islam, "Implementation of Tazkiyah Al-Nafs-Based Islamic Education for The Elderly to Achieve Nafs Al-Muthmainah," 2022, 189-201.

¹⁰ Sufistik Perspektif and A L Ghazali, "Metode Muhasabah: Analisis Pendekatan Psikologi Sufistik Perspektif Al-Ghazali (Konsep Pendidikan Ruhaniyah Melalui Tazkiyatun Nafs)" 12, no. 1 (2021): 41-51.

¹¹ Jurnal Ilmiah et al., "Pendidikan Jiwa Menurut Perspektif Ibnu Qayyim" 3, no. 1 (2024): 84-93.

¹² Evi Luthfi Nurulhayati, "Integrasi Konsep Nafs Al- Ghazali Dalam Menghadapi Degradasi Moral Peserta Didik Di Era Digital" 02 (2025): 73-88.

¹³ Zaduna Fiddarain et al., "Semantic Analysis of Nafs in the Qur ' an : A Toshihiko Izutsu Perspective and Its Relevance in Modern Thought" 1, no. 3 (2023): 213-24.

¹⁴ Refleksi Nafs and Eva Latipah, "Refleksi Nafs Dalam Kisah Nabi Yusuf As Dan Zulaikha: Analisis Tafsir Al-Mishbah Karya Quraish Shihab," 2022, 198-210.

¹⁵ Sugeng Sejati et al., "Kontekstualitas Ayat Tentang An-Nafs Dalam Al- Qur ' an (Analisis Kajian Psikologi Pendidikan Islam)" 7 (2024): 623-30, <https://doi.org/10.29240/alquds.v7i3.8772>.

In the treasury of Islamic psychology, the concept of *nafs al-mutma'innah* is understood as a state of a soul that is calm, stable, and in harmony with divine values. This tranquil soul does not mean being free from challenges, but rather being able to respond to pressure wisely and meaningfully.¹⁶ *Nafs al-mutma'innah* is formed through a continuous process of self-control, reflection, and spiritual awareness.¹⁷ In the context of modern work, this condition of the soul becomes an important asset for individuals to remain productive without losing inner peace.¹⁸ Accordingly, soul tranquility has direct relevance to the sustainability of performance and the mental health of employees.

A spirituality-based human resource management approach is becoming increasingly important in the context of Islamic educational institutions. Islamic higher education, including Muhammadiyah Higher Education Institutions in East Java, has a moral responsibility to integrate professional values and soul development in HR management. Work spirituality can be a source of intrinsic motivation that maintains emotional stability and the meaning of work amidst the pressures of automation.¹⁹ Islamic values such as sincerity (*ikhlas*), patience (*sabr*), and inner balance play an important role in forming a healthy and adaptive work culture.²⁰ Therefore, strengthening the spiritual dimension in HR management serves as a vital foundation for the creation of a work environment that is not only effective but also peaceful for the soul.²¹

Prior research serves as an important basis for understanding how modern work system changes impact the psychological conditions and well-being of employees.²² Found that work flexibility has a positive effect on job satisfaction and employee performance because it increases work-life balance and an individual's sense of control over their work.²³ Demonstrated that flexible work arrangements supported by good internal communication are able to drive optimal employee performance in modern

¹⁶ Khoirul Iman, "Syams : Jurnal Studi Keislaman Kajian Tafsir Isyari , Ayat Nafs Dalam Tafsir Al-Tustari" 5 (2024): 18–35.

¹⁷ Devi Nurqomariah and Yeti Dahliana, "AL-AFKAR : Journal for Islamic Studies Jiwa Yang Tenang Dalam Surah Al-Fajr 27-30 Perspektif Tafsir Al-Azhar" 7, no. 1 (2024): 146–58, <https://doi.org/10.31943/afkarjournal.v7i1.915.A>.

¹⁸ "Konsep Al-Nafs Dalam Al-Qur'an Menurut Kitab Ibnu Katsir Murni," n.d., 12–16.

¹⁹ Siti Mutmainnah and M Syakur, "Implementasi Konseling Sufistik Dalam Minimalisasi Perilaku Negatif Santri Di Pondok Pesantren Nurul Fata Bondowoso" 3, no. 2 (n.d.): 67–75.

²⁰ Sari et al., "Al-Wasathiyah : Journal of Islamic Studies Konsep An-Nafs Menurut Tafsir Ibnu Katshir Dan Tafsir Ilmi Al-Wasathiyah."

²¹ S Hapsari and L Rachmawati, "Pengaruh Minat Baca Dan Penggunaan Gadget Terhadap Hasil Belajar Ekonomi Peserta Didik Kelas X Ips Ma Al-Hidayah Bangkalan," *Jurnal Pendidikan Ekonomi (JUPE ...*, 2018, <https://ejournal.unesa.ac.id/index.php/jupe/article/view/23873>.

²² Adriana Anamaria Davidescu, Simona-andreea Apostu, and Andreea Paul, "Work Flexibility, Job Satisfaction, and Job Performance among Romanian Employees— Implications for Sustainable Human Resource Management," n.d.

²³ Jihan Fadhilah and Alvin Eryandra, "Flexible Work Arrangements and Internal Communication Satisfaction Predicting Optimal Performance," n.d., 123–44.

organizational environments.²⁴ Emphasized that reskilling and upskilling programs play a significant role in increasing the agility and adaptability of the workforce, making employees better prepared to face technological changes and new work demands.

Furthermore, several studies have also highlighted the psychological and spiritual impacts of technology-based work changes.²⁵ Showed that technostress due to work digitalization negatively affects the performance of educators and staff in higher education if not balanced with organizational support.²⁶ Found that work spirituality has a positive relationship with job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which subsequently impacts performance improvement.²⁷ Explained that the application of tazkiyah al-nafs is able to form a calmer and more stable soul condition, leading to the achievement of nafs al-muṭma'innah as an indicator of an individual's spiritual well-being.

Despite these various studies discussing work flexibility, reskilling and upskilling, technostress, and work spirituality separately, a significant research gap remains. Most studies focus more on performance outcomes, job satisfaction, or organizational commitment, while the dimension of soul tranquility in the perspective of Islamic psychology has not been used as a primary variable. Moreover, there is limited empirical research integrating work flexibility, reskilling, and upskilling as adaptive HR strategies directly linked to nafs al-muṭma'innah. This gap is even more evident in the context of Islamic educational institutions, particularly Muhammadiyah universities, which are currently facing accelerated digitalization and work automation.

Based on this gap, this study is directed toward analyzing the influence of work flexibility, reskilling, and upskilling on the nafs al-muṭma'innah of Muhammadiyah Higher Education employees in East Java in the era of automation. This study aims to expand the understanding of human resource management by integrating modern HR approaches and Islamic psychology. Theoretically, this research is expected to contribute to the development of Islamic spirituality-based HR management literature, specifically in positioning nafs al-muṭma'innah as an indicator of occupational well-being. Practically, the results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for university leaders in designing HR management policies that are not only adaptive to

²⁴ Mahedi Hasan, "Upskilling and Reskilling in a Rapidly Changing Job Market : Strategies for Organizations to Maintain Workforce Agility and Adaptability" 9, no. 6 (2024): 117–26.

²⁵ Dina Syakina, Aulia Rahma, and Mohammad Rizal, "The Role of Technostress on Educators ' Work Performance at Universities in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta" 22, no. 1 (2023): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.24167/psidim.v22i1.4935>.

²⁶ Dwi Wahyu et al., "Job Satisfaction And Organizational Commitment Mediating Workplace Spirituality On Job Performance," no. 158 (2021): 506–20, <https://doi.org/10.24034/j25485024.y2024.v8.i3.6632>.

²⁷ Hapsari and Rachmawati, "Pengaruh Minat Baca Dan Penggunaan Gadget Terhadap Hasil Belajar Ekonomi Peserta Didik Kelas X Ips Ma Al-Hidayah Bangkalan."

technology but also capable of maintaining the inner peace and spiritual balance of employees.

METHOD

This research employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory design, aiming to empirically test the influence between independent and dependent variables through numerical data processing. The study was conducted at Muhammadiyah Higher Education Institutions in East Java, Islamic-based higher education institutions currently adapting to the digitalization and automation of administrative and academic work systems. A quantitative approach was selected as it allows for an objective and structured examination of causal relationships between variables. The independent variables in this study include work flexibility, reskilling, and upskilling, while the dependent variable is *nafs al-muṭma'innah*. All research stages were systematically designed to produce accurate findings.

The population of this study consists of all employees at Muhammadiyah Higher Education Institutions in East Java, totaling 250 individuals based on personnel data. The sampling technique utilized is probability sampling with a simple random sampling method, ensuring that every member of the population has an equal opportunity to be selected as a respondent. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error. Based on this calculation, the total sample used in this study is 154 respondents, which is considered representative of the overall population condition.

Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire as the primary research instrument. The questionnaire was structured in the form of closed-ended statements and utilized a five-point Likert scale to measure respondents' perceptions of each research variable indicator. The data obtained from the questionnaires constitute primary data collected directly from the respondents. Additionally, this study utilizes secondary data as supporting information in the form of documents and information related to employee competency development. The entire data collection process was conducted uniformly to maintain the consistency of the research results.

Data analysis was performed using multiple linear regression analysis to determine the partial and simultaneous effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable. Prior to the regression analysis, the data were tested through classical assumption tests, including heteroscedasticity, multicollinearity, and autocorrelation tests. The heteroscedasticity test was conducted to ensure homoscedasticity (equality of residual variance), the multicollinearity test to ensure the absence of strong correlations between independent variables, and the autocorrelation test to ensure no correlation exists between residuals. All classical assumption tests were performed using SPSS software.

Hypothesis testing was conducted via the t-test to determine the partial influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable, and the F-test to determine

the simultaneous influence of the independent variables. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was used to measure the regression model's ability to explain the variation in the dependent variable. The testing criteria were based on a 5% significance level, where a significance value of less than 0.05 indicates a significant influence. The results of this analysis are expected to provide an empirical overview of the relationship between work flexibility, reskilling, upskilling, and nafs al-muṭma'innah within the context of HR management in the era of automation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Nafs al-Muṭma'innah

The concept of *nafs al-muṭma'innah* is one of the fundamental concepts in Islamic psychology, referring to a state of the soul that is tranquil, stable, and in harmony with divine values. The term derives from the Arabic word *iṭmi'nān*, which denotes serenity, peace, and inner stability. From an Islamic perspective, tranquility of the soul is not merely understood as a psychological condition free from anxiety; rather, it is also a spiritual state that emerges from a person's closeness to Allah SWT. Therefore, *nafs al-muṭma'innah* is often regarded as one of the highest stages of human personality development, reflecting a balance among cognitive, affective, spiritual, and behavioral dimensions.

The normative foundation of *nafs al-muṭma'innah* is found in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Fajr (89:27–30), which states: “O tranquil soul, return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing to Him. Enter among My servants, and enter My Paradise.” These verses indicate that tranquility of the soul represents an ideal condition attained by individuals who possess a strong spiritual relationship with Allah. Such tranquility arises from firm faith, acceptance of divine decree, and the ability to navigate life's challenges with wisdom, balance, and spiritual awareness.

From the perspective of Al-Ghazali, the human soul possesses the potential to attain perfection through the process of self-purification (*tazkiyat al-nafs*). According to him, *nafs al-muṭma'innah* is a state in which an individual successfully controls worldly desires and places reason and the heart at the center of decision-making. A tranquil soul is no longer dominated by excessive worldly ambitions; rather, it is directed toward seeking the pleasure of Allah. In this condition, individuals are able to confront life's challenges with wisdom and resilience, without being easily disturbed by external pressures.²⁸

A similar view was advanced by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, who described *nafs al-muṭma'innah* as a soul that attains tranquility through remembrance of Allah (*dhikr*), faith, and complete reliance upon Him. According to Ibn Qayyim, inner peace emerges when the heart fully trusts in Allah's wisdom and decree. Individuals who reach this

²⁸ Al-Ghazali, A. H. M. (2005). *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*. Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah, Vol. 3, pp. 58–64

level are neither overwhelmed by anxiety in times of hardship nor excessively elated in times of success. Consequently, emotional stability becomes one of the defining characteristics of a tranquil soul.²⁹

Meanwhile, M. Utsman Najati, a prominent contemporary scholar of Islamic psychology, views *nafs al-muṭma'innah* as a form of mental well-being grounded in spirituality. Najati emphasizes that psychological well-being is determined not only by biological and social factors but also by the quality of one's relationship with God. In this context, individuals with a high level of spirituality tend to demonstrate greater optimism, psychological resilience, adaptability, and life satisfaction than those who lack a clear spiritual orientation.³⁰

Based on the synthesis of these perspectives, *nafs al-muṭma'innah* in the present study is defined as a condition of spiritual well-being characterized by inner peace, emotional stability, spiritual satisfaction, trust in Allah, a meaningful orientation toward life and work, and a sense of gratitude in carrying out daily responsibilities. This concept is particularly relevant for examining the psychological and spiritual conditions of educators who face various professional demands in the era of digital educational transformation.

Operationally, *nafs al-muṭma'innah* consists of six primary dimensions. First, *inner peace*, which refers to an individual's ability to maintain a sense of tranquility despite workplace pressures. Second, *emotional stability*, defined as the ability to regulate emotions in a positive and balanced manner. Third, *spiritual satisfaction*, which reflects feelings of fulfillment and happiness derived from closeness to Allah. Fourth, *trust in Allah (tawakkul)*, referring to the belief that all efforts and outcomes remain under Allah's guidance and control. Fifth, *meaningful work orientation*, which views work as an act of worship and a means of contributing positively to others. Finally, *gratitude and contentment*, which represent the ability to appreciate divine blessings and accept life circumstances with sincerity and satisfaction.

Work Flexibility

The transformation of work patterns in the digital era has created a growing demand for flexibility within the workplace. The concept of *work flexibility* refers to the degree of discretion granted by organizations to individuals in managing the time, location, and manner in which their work is performed. Work flexibility has become increasingly important in higher education institutions, where lecturers and educators are expected to perform multiple roles simultaneously, including teaching, conducting research, engaging in community service, carrying out administrative responsibilities, and mentoring students.

Work flexibility encompasses several key dimensions. First, *flexible schedule*, which refers to the freedom to arrange working hours and task completion timelines. Second,

²⁹ Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah. (1996). *Madarij al-Salikin*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Vol. 1, pp. 167–175

³⁰ Najati, M. U. (2005). *Al-Qur'an wa 'Ilm al-Nafs*. Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, pp. 312–318.

flexible workload, which denotes the ability to adjust workload according to an individual's capacity and circumstances. Third, *work-life balance*, which reflects the equilibrium between professional responsibilities and personal life. Fourth, *work autonomy*, which refers to the degree of freedom individuals possess in determining work methods, strategies, and task management. These four dimensions are essential factors in creating a healthy, supportive, and productive work environment.

The relationship between work flexibility and individual well-being can be explained through the *Job Demands-Resources Theory* (JD-R). This theory posits that employee well-being is influenced by the balance between *job demands* and *job resources*. When organizations provide adequate flexibility, individuals gain additional resources that enable them to cope more effectively with work-related pressures. Conversely, limited flexibility may increase stress, emotional exhaustion, and job dissatisfaction.³¹

In addition, *Self-Determination Theory* (SDT) suggests that human beings possess three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Work flexibility allows individuals to satisfy their need for autonomy by providing greater control over how their work is organized and performed. The fulfillment of this need enhances intrinsic motivation, job satisfaction, and overall psychological well-being.

Within the context of Islamic education, work flexibility influences not only productivity but also the spiritual quality of educators' lives. When individuals are given greater freedom to manage their time, they are better able to engage in worship, personal development, and family responsibilities. Such conditions can foster inner tranquility, which is one of the core characteristics of *nafs al-muṭma'innah*.

Work flexibility also enables educators to reduce conflicts between their professional and personal roles. A reduction in role conflict can lower stress levels and improve individuals' ability to regulate their emotions effectively. Consequently, work flexibility is expected to contribute positively to the development of a tranquil, emotionally stable, and meaningful state of being.

Based on the foregoing discussion, it can be argued that the higher the level of work flexibility perceived by educators, the greater the likelihood that they will achieve the psychological and spiritual conditions necessary for the development of *nafs al-muṭma'innah*. This suggests that work flexibility may serve as an important organizational factor in fostering both professional well-being and spiritual flourishing among educators.

Reskilling

³¹ Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The Job Demands-Resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309-328

The rapid advancement of technology, the digitalization of education, and the evolving competency demands of the twenty-first century require educators to continuously update their professional capabilities. One of the strategies widely adopted by organizations to address these challenges is *reskilling*, which refers to the process of acquiring new competencies that differ from an individual's existing skill set. Reskilling aims to help employees adapt to changing work environments and respond effectively to new challenges arising from technological developments and organizational transformation.

In the education sector, reskilling has become increasingly essential as educators are expected to master a wide range of new competencies, including the use of educational technologies, artificial intelligence applications in education, educational data analytics, and innovative teaching methodologies. The ability to acquire new skills is therefore a critical factor in maintaining the professional relevance and effectiveness of educators in the digital era.

Reskilling can be assessed through several key indicators. First, *learning adaptability*, which refers to an individual's ability to adjust to change and their willingness to engage in continuous learning. Second, *new skill acquisition*, which reflects the successful mastery of new competencies. Third, *technological competence*, which denotes the ability to utilize technologies relevant to one's professional responsibilities. Fourth, *career readiness*, which refers to preparedness for evolving career demands and emerging opportunities in a rapidly changing professional landscape.³²

From a psychological perspective, reskilling provides individuals with a sense of security because it enhances their readiness to cope with workplace changes. When individuals possess competencies that align with contemporary professional demands, their anxiety regarding job uncertainty tends to decrease. Conversely, inadequate competencies often become a source of stress, insecurity, and diminished self-confidence.

From an Islamic perspective, lifelong learning is regarded as an essential aspect of human development and the fulfillment of humanity's role as *khalifah* (vicegerent) on earth. The pursuit of new knowledge and skills is not only professionally valuable but also spiritually meaningful, as it enables individuals to contribute more effectively to society. Consequently, reskilling can be viewed as a form of self-actualization that aligns with the Islamic principles of personal growth and human development.

The ability to adapt and acquire new competencies also enhances *self-efficacy*, or an individual's belief in their own capabilities. Individuals who have confidence in their abilities tend to be more optimistic, composed, and capable of responding positively to challenges. Such conditions support the development of emotional stability and inner tranquility, both of which constitute important dimensions of *nafs al-muṭma'innah*.

³² World Economic Forum. (2023). *The Future of Jobs Report 2023*. Geneva: World Economic Forum, pp. 37–45.

Therefore, reskilling serves not only as a mechanism for enhancing professional competence but also as a factor that can strengthen educators' psychological and spiritual well-being. By fostering self-confidence, preparedness for change, and a sense of calm in fulfilling professional responsibilities, reskilling contributes to the cultivation of the conditions necessary for the attainment of *nafs al-muṭma'innah*.

Upskilling

In addition to reskilling, modern organizations increasingly emphasize the importance of *upskilling* as a strategic approach to human resource development. Upskilling refers to the process of enhancing and deepening existing competencies to enable individuals to achieve higher levels of performance. While reskilling focuses on acquiring new and different skills, upskilling concentrates on strengthening and advancing competencies that individuals already possess.

Within the context of higher education institutions and student boarding schools (*Pesantren Mahasiswa* or PESMA), upskilling is particularly important because educators are expected to continuously improve the quality of their teaching, research, student mentoring, and community service activities. Continuous competency development enables educators to provide educational services that are more effective, relevant, and responsive to contemporary societal and technological demands.

Upskilling can be measured through several key indicators. First, *professional development*, which refers to participation in various professional growth and training activities. Second, *digital literacy enhancement*, which denotes the improvement of an individual's ability to utilize digital technologies effectively in professional settings. Third, *pedagogical competence improvement*, which involves the enhancement of teaching skills, instructional strategies, and educational methodologies. Fourth, *continuous learning behavior*, which reflects an ongoing commitment to learning and self-improvement throughout one's professional career.³³

From the perspective of *Human Capital Theory*, upskilling increases the value of individuals by enhancing their knowledge, skills, and professional capacities. Such competency development contributes to higher productivity, improved job performance, and greater opportunities for career advancement. Beyond its organizational benefits, upskilling also generates psychological advantages, including increased self-confidence, professional efficacy, and job satisfaction.

From the perspective of Islamic education, competency enhancement reflects the values of *itqan* (professional excellence) and *ihsan* (performing one's duties with the highest level of quality and sincerity). Educators who continuously strive to improve themselves demonstrate a strong commitment to their professional responsibilities and moral obligation to provide the best possible education for their students. This

³³ Becker, G. S. (1993). *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to Education* (3rd ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 15–29.

awareness fosters a deeper sense of purpose and meaning in their professional endeavors.

Such a sense of meaning is closely associated with the spiritual dimension of human life. When individuals perceive their work as an act of worship (*ibadah*) and a form of service to society, work is no longer viewed merely as an obligation or burden; rather, it becomes an integral part of a meaningful life mission. This perspective contributes to the development of spiritual fulfillment and inner tranquility.

Therefore, upskilling not only enhances the professional quality of educators but also strengthens their psychological and spiritual well-being. The more consistently individuals engage in competency development, the greater their opportunity to experience meaningful work, spiritual satisfaction, and the state of *nafs al-muṭma'innah* while carrying out their educational responsibilities.

Results

This section presents the results of the research data processing obtained from questionnaires distributed to respondents, encompassing respondent descriptions, descriptive statistics of the research data, and the results of inferential statistical analysis to test the formulated hypotheses.

Table 1. Respondent Profile

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	86	55.8
	Female	68	44.2
Age	< 30 years	34	22.1
	30–39 years	57	37.0
	40–49 years	41	26.6
	≥ 50 years	22	14.3
Tenure	< 5 years	29	18.8
	5–10 years	61	39.6
	> 10 years	64	41.6

Based on Table 1, the majority of respondents are male, accounting for 55.8%, while females represent 44.2%. In terms of age, respondents are dominated by the productive age groups of 30–39 and 40–49 years, indicating that most employees are in an active work phase and are adaptive to change. The length of service (tenure) is relatively evenly distributed, with a dominance of employees who have worked for more than five years. Consequently, the data reflects sufficient work experience in understanding policies regarding flexibility, reskilling, and upskilling within the university environment.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Research Data

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
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Work Flexibility (X1)	154	2.80	4.80	3.92	0.46
Reskilling (X2)	154	2.75	4.85	3.88	0.49
Upskilling (X3)	154	2.90	4.90	3.95	0.44
Nafs al-Muṭma'innah (Y)	154	2.85	4.95	04.02	0.42

Based on Table 2, all research variables have a mean value above 3.80, suggesting that respondents tend to provide positive assessments of work flexibility, reskilling, upskilling, and the state of nafs al-muṭma'innah. The relatively small standard deviation indicates that respondent answers are quite homogeneous and do not show extreme variation. This demonstrates that respondent perceptions across the sample are relatively consistent.

Table 3. Classical Assumption Tests

Type of Test	Variable	Score
Heteroscedasticity	X1,X2,X3	Spearman's rho significance (> 0.05)
Multicollinearity	X1,X2,X3	Tolerance (> 0.10) and VIF (< 10)
Autocorrelation	Regression Model	Durbin-Watson value ($du < DW < 4-du$)

According to the classical assumption tests in Table 3, the regression model meets all the required assumptions. The significance value in the heteroscedasticity test is above 0.05, meaning no heteroscedasticity symptoms were found. Tolerance and VIF values indicate the absence of multicollinearity between independent variables. Additionally, the Durbin-Watson value falls within the acceptable range, ensuring the regression model is free from autocorrelation issues and is suitable for further analysis.

Table 4. T-Test (Partial)

Independent Variable	t-value	Sig.	Result
Work Flexibility (X1)	3,214	2	Significant influence
Reskilling (X2)	2,587	11	Significant influence
Upskilling (X3)	4,036	0	Significant influence

Based on Table 4, all independent variables have a significance value of less than 0.05; thus, partially, work flexibility, reskilling, and upskilling significantly influence nafs al-muṭma'innah. The upskilling variable shows the strongest influence with the highest t-value, indicating that continuous competency improvement plays a vital role in shaping employee soul tranquility. These results support the partial hypotheses proposed in this study.

Table 5. F-Test Results (Simultaneous)

Model	F-value	Sig.	Result
Simultaneous Regression	28,746	0	Significant influence

Based on Table 5, the F-value of 28.746 with a significance of 0.000 indicates that work flexibility, reskilling, and upskilling simultaneously have a significant influence on nafs al-muṭma'innah. This result confirms that the three independent variables together form a strong model in explaining the condition of employee soul tranquility. Thus, the simultaneous hypothesis in this study is accepted.

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination Test

Model	R	R Square	Percentage (%)
Partial X1→Y	462	213	21.3
Partial X2→Y	418	175	17.5
Simultaneous X1,X2,X3→Y	631	398	39.8

Based on Table 6, the coefficient of determination shows that partially, work flexibility explains 21.3% of the variation in nafs al-muṭma'innah, while reskilling explains 17.5%. Simultaneously, the three independent variables are able to explain 39.8% of the variation in nafs al-muṭma'innah, while the remaining percentage is influenced by other factors outside this research model. This indicates that while work flexibility, reskilling, and upskilling are important determinants, they are not the sole factors in shaping employee soul tranquility.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that work flexibility has a significant influence on employees' nafs al-muṭma'innah, suggesting that freedom in managing time, place, and work methods can create inner peace when facing the demands of work in the era of automation. This finding aligns with Davidescu, who found that work flexibility enhances employee satisfaction and performance by improving work-life balance. Fadhilah and Eryandra also demonstrated that work flexibility supported by a robust internal communication system is capable of driving optimal employee performance. In the context of this research, work flexibility does not only impact performance aspects but also contributes to emotional stability and soul tranquility - the core characteristics of nafs al-muṭma'innah.

The significant influence of reskilling on nafs al-muṭma'innah indicates that the process of relearning and mastering new skills does not merely function to improve technical competence but also strengthens the sense of security and self-confidence among employees. Hasan emphasized that reskilling plays a crucial role in enhancing the agility and adaptability of the workforce amidst rapid technological changes. When

employees feel capable of keeping pace with change and possess relevant skills, the psychological pressure caused by job uncertainty can be minimized. Thus, reskilling contributes to the formation of inner peace because individuals no longer perceive change as a threat, but rather as an opportunity for self-development.

The research findings also reveal that upskilling has the strongest influence on nafs al-muṭma'innah compared to other variables. This indicates that continuous competency enhancement reinforces professionalism, work meaningfulness, and emotional stability. This finding supports Hasan, who stated that upskilling plays a major role in maintaining the readiness and confidence of the workforce in a dynamic labor market. In the perspective of occupational psychology, individuals who feel competent tend to have lower stress levels and higher inner satisfaction. Therefore, upskilling is not only an instrument for HR development but also a psychological mechanism that strengthens the condition of a tranquil soul.

Simultaneously, work flexibility, reskilling, and upskilling are proven to have a significant influence on nafs al-muṭma'innah, indicating that employee soul tranquility is formed through a combination of structural and individual factors. This finding becomes relevant when linked to the research of Syakina, which showed that technology-based work pressure (technostress) can decrease performance if not balanced with organizational support. In this context, flexibility and competency development function as psychological buffers that help employees manage the pressures of digitalization. In other words, a comprehensive adaptive HR strategy is capable of reducing the negative impacts of technostress and creating more peaceful working conditions.

From the perspective of work spirituality, the results of this study reinforce the findings of Ranto, who stated that work spirituality contributes to job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which subsequently impacts performance. This study extends those findings by demonstrating that spirituality is not only reflected in work attitudes but also in a deeper inner condition, namely nafs al-muṭma'innah. This concept of soul tranquility aligns with the study by Nurqomariah and Dahliana, which emphasizes that nafs al-muṭma'innah is the peak of spiritual well-being, as described in Surah Al-Fajr verses 27 - 30. Consequently, the integration of modern management practices and spiritual values is key to building holistic employee well-being.

Furthermore, these findings enrich Islamic psychology studies that discuss the concept of an-nafs through various interpretations and approaches. Sari and Ismahani, Sejati, and Tamulis and Arsyad explain that the nafs has dynamics influenced by the environment, experience, and self-development processes. Sulhan and Latipah and Wibowo emphasize that nurturing the soul through life experiences and value-based education is capable of forming sustainable inner peace. In the context of modern organizations, the results of this study suggest that work flexibility policies, along with reskilling and upskilling programs, can function as a means of contextual soul

development. Thus, this research affirms that HR management in the era of automation needs to blend managerial and spiritual approaches to cultivate employees who are adaptive, productive, and possess a strong *nafs al-muṭma'innah*.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that work flexibility, reskilling, and upskilling have a significant influence on the *nafs al-muṭma'innah* of employees at Muhammadiyah Higher Education Institutions in East Java. Work flexibility provides a sense of autonomy that helps employees maintain emotional balance when facing digital-based work demands. Reskilling and upskilling play a vital role in enhancing self-confidence and employee readiness for technological changes, which ultimately contributes to inner peace. Simultaneously, these three variables form an adaptive HR strategy that impacts not only performance aspects but also the spiritual well-being of employees. These findings affirm that HR management in the era of automation needs to integrate modern managerial approaches with Islamic spiritual values.

The theoretical implication of this research is the expansion of human resource management studies by incorporating *nafs al-muṭma'innah* as an indicator of occupational well-being based on Islamic psychology. This study demonstrates that Islamic spiritual concepts can be empirically operationalized within modern management studies. Practically, the results of this research provide implications for the leaders of Islamic higher education institutions to design work flexibility policies and reskilling/upskilling programs that are humanistic and oriented toward a professional-spiritual balance. Such an approach has the potential to create a work environment that is adaptive to technology while simultaneously providing peace for the employees' souls.

Based on the research results, it is recommended that Muhammadiyah higher education institutions strengthen clear and structured work flexibility policies and integrate sustainable reskilling and upskilling programs. The development of employee competence should be accompanied by the reinforcement of spiritual values through character building and an Islamic work culture. Future research is suggested to include other variables such as value-based leadership, technostress, or organizational culture as factors influencing *nafs al-muṭma'innah*. Furthermore, qualitative approaches or mixed-method designs could be utilized to explore the subjective experiences of employees in greater depth.

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