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## Effects of the Islamic Marketing Mix on Consumer Behavior

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### **Abstract**

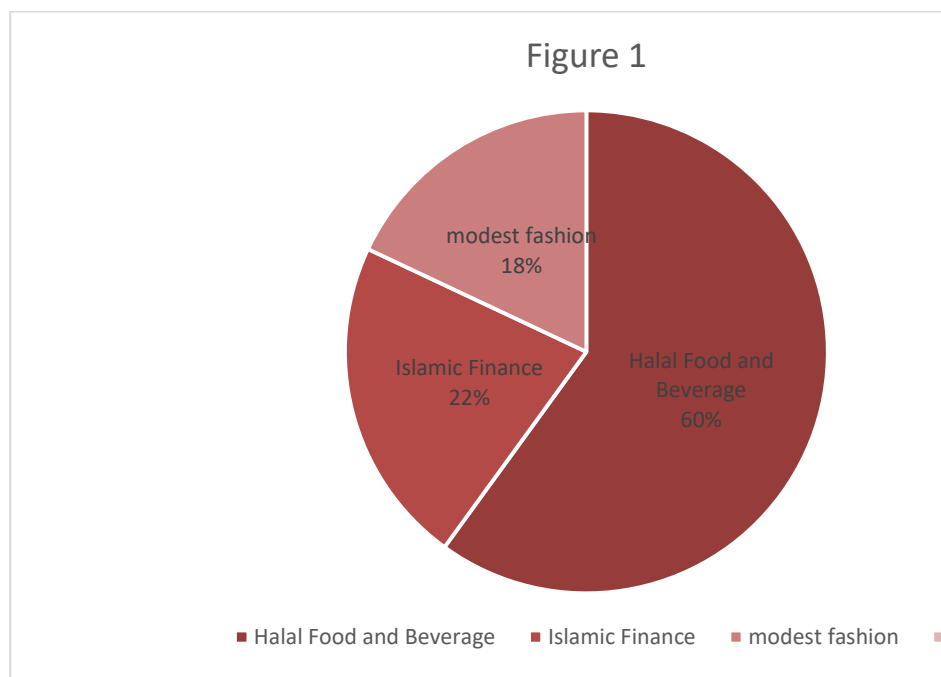
*This article investigates the profound influence of the Islamic Marketing Mix (IMM) on Muslim consumer behavior, arguing that this ethical framework transcends conventional market dynamics rooted purely in profit and utility. Driven by the multi-trillion-dollar global Halal economy, the IMM necessitates adapting the traditional 7 P's (Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, Physical Evidence) to adhere strictly to Shariah principles, particularly Tawhid (divine unity) and Adl (justice/equity). The study finds that the IMM functions primarily as a risk-minimization and trust-building mechanism. Behavioral analysis reveals that adherence to IMM standards, such as Halal and Tayyib (wholesome) products, transparent pricing free from Ribā (interest), and verified Process (Shariah certification) fundamentally shifts consumer decision-making. Consumers exhibit strong identity-based loyalty, viewing compliant consumption as the fulfillment of a religious obligation, rather than just economic satisfaction. This loyalty is further amplified through positive community endorsement. The article concludes that the IMM provides a powerful, sustainable competitive advantage, positioning compliant firms not merely as niche providers, but as leading actors in the global ethical commerce movement.*

**Keywords:** *Islamic Marketing Mix (IMM), Halal Consumer Behavior, Shariah Compliance, Identity-Based Loyalty, Perceived Risk*

### **Introduction**

The global economic landscape is undergoing a fundamental transformation, driven not only by technology and by globalization but also increasingly by ethical and religious consumer demands<sup>1</sup>. Central to this shift is the Muslim consumer market, representing nearly one-quarter of the world's population<sup>2</sup>. With the global Halal industry projected to exceed \$7 trillion in value by the end of the decade, the purchasing power of the Ummah (global Muslim community) commands substantial commercial attention. [Figure 1] While the Halal Food and Beverage sector dominates the market share (60%), the rapid growth in diversified

sectors like Islamic Finance (22%) and modest fashion demonstrates the comprehensive penetration of ethical demands across all consumption categories.



While the traditional Marketing Mix (the 4Ps of Product, Price, Place, and Promotion, later expanded to 7Ps) has long been the foundational strategy for firms, its inherent focus on profit maximization often conflicts with Islamic tenets. For the Muslim consumer, consumption is not merely an economic act but one governed by moral and religious compliance<sup>3</sup>. This necessitates the adoption of the Islamic Marketing Mix (IMM), a comprehensive framework that integrates the core marketing components with the principles of Shariah law.

The scholarly focus on Islamic marketing has historically been narrow, often centering almost exclusively on the technical compliance of the Halal (permissible) product component. This limited scope fails to capture the holistic influence of the IMM on consumer decision-making. The reality is that factors like fair pricing, ethical promotion, and transparent processes, all mandated by Islamic ethics, profoundly shape the consumer's attitude toward a brand.

This article argues that the Islamic Marketing Mix (IMM) serves as a powerful, trust-building mechanism that fundamentally shifts consumer behavior from transactional decisions to identity-driven, ethical compliance. The IMM fosters a deep, community-based loyalty among Muslim consumers by strategically minimizing perceived spiritual and financial risk, thereby establishing a unique competitive advantage for compliant firms. The following analysis explores the conceptual framework of the IMM and breaks down the specific behavioral effects generated by each component, demonstrating how faith translates directly into purchase preference.

### ***Conceptual and Theoretical Framework***

#### ***Theoretical Foundation: From 4Ps to IMM***

The shift from the conventional Marketing Mix to the IMM is not merely a branding exercise but a necessity rooted in the comprehensive legal and ethical framework of Islam. For a

product or service to be successful in the Muslim consumer market, it must conform to the principles of Mu'āmalāt (Islamic jurisprudence governing transactions)<sup>4</sup>. These foundational principles serve as a mandatory filter for all marketing strategies.

### ***The Core Islamic Principles Governing Commerce***

The IMM is structured around three non-negotiable ethical pillars that fundamentally redefine the relationship between the firm and the consumer<sup>5</sup>:

***Tawhid (Oneness of God):*** This principle establishes that all human activity, including commerce, must serve a higher purpose of societal well-being and justice, not just self-interest or profit maximization. Marketing decisions are thus viewed through the lens of divine accountability, forcing firms to act as khulafa' (stewards) of resources<sup>6</sup>.

***Adl (Justice and Equity):*** This is the core principle that governs all financial and transactional components of the IMM. It prohibits two major exploitative practices:

***Ribā (Usury/Interest):*** The prohibition of interest mandates unique pricing and financing models, particularly evident in Islamic banking and insurance (Takaful)<sup>7</sup>.

***Ghabn (Exploitation):*** This requires pricing to be fair and free from undue monopolistic practices or fraudulent markups, ensuring market equilibrium.

***Istislah (Public Interest / Maslaha):*** This concept dictates that products and marketing practices must result in overall benefit (maslaha) for the community (Ummah) and society at large, prohibiting practices that cause harm (e.g., environmental damage, social division, health risks).

### ***Defining the Islamic Marketing Mix (IMM)***

The traditional 4Ps model (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) is insufficient because it lacks the mechanisms required to assure the Muslim consumer of ethical compliance<sup>8</sup>. Therefore, the IMM expands into a 7Ps model, incorporating People, Process, and Physical Evidence as essential factors for establishing trust and transparency.

The Muslim consumer seeks not just utility, but Barakah (blessing) in their transactions. This need for moral assurance elevates the importance of the three additional P's:

***People:*** The conduct and ethical stance of employees are integral to the transaction's validity (Mu'āmalāt).

***Process:*** The procedures for manufacturing, certification, and service delivery must be transparent and auditable to confirm Shariah compliance.

***Physical Evidence:*** The visible signals, such as the Halal logo, prayer facilities, and appropriate marketing imagery, are non-verbal cues that instantly reduce the consumer's perceived risk<sup>9</sup>.

The subsequent sections will analyze how each component of this expanded ethical framework directly modifies and determines consumer behavior, moving the decision-making process from a purely rational choice to a morally and socially aligned choice.

### ***Behavioral Effects of the IMM***

#### ***Behavioral Effects of the IMM: The Core Components***

The practical application of the Shariah principles defined in Section 2.0 occurs within the structure of the expanded marketing mix. The IMM components serve as mechanisms for assurance, transparency, and identity alignment, fundamentally altering how Muslim consumers evaluate and choose products. The primary behavioral effect is the minimization of Perceived Risk, both spiritual (will this act displease God?) and functional (will this product fail?).

### ***Product (Halal, Tayyib, and Ethical Sourcing)***

The Muslim consumer's relationship with the product is dual-layered, extending beyond mere utility. Compliance requires the product to be both Halal (lawful or permissible in terms of source and content) and Tayyib (pure, wholesome, and ethically produced).

**Behavioral Effect: Trust and Safety.** The adherence to Halal standards is a prerequisite for entry into the market, acting as a filter that eliminates perceived spiritual risk. A consumer will readily reject a product, regardless of quality or price, if there is uncertainty regarding its permissibility<sup>10</sup>.

**Behavioral Effect: Willingness to Pay a Premium.** The requirement for Tayyib encourages ethical sourcing, environmental responsibility, and hygienic production processes, positioning the product as ethically superior. Consumers often exhibit a higher willingness to pay for Tayyib products, viewing the premium as a justifiable investment in health, quality, and moral compliance, thereby linking consumption directly to virtuous living<sup>11</sup>. The product is thus viewed as a positive extension of the consumer's religious identity.

### ***Place (Ethical Environment and Accessibility)***

The placement and distribution of the product must be convenient and accessible, but critically, the environment of the transaction must also conform to ethical standards. This is reflected in the resulting Psychological Safety and Comfort experienced by the consumer (Wilson & Liu, 2011)<sup>12</sup>. The ethical standards extend to the physical store or digital platform, mandating requirements like appropriate modesty in staff attire, provision of prayer space, and high standards of cleanliness. This compliance provides a psychological safety net, ensuring consumers' religious identity is respected and accommodated, thereby enhancing their comfort and encouraging longer engagement with the brand. This sense of Affinity and Increased Patronage means that when the transactional environment aligns with the consumer's values, it reduces the emotional cost of shopping, making the Shariah-compliant location the default choice and contributing to loyalty based on a positive emotional and spiritual experience.

### ***Promotion (Truthfulness, Modesty, and Sidq)***

Promotion is the communication channel for the firm's ethics, and Islamic principles strictly mandate Sidq (truthfulness) while prohibiting Gharar (deception or ambiguity) in all messaging (Alserhan, 2010). Furthermore, promotional content must be modest and avoid inappropriate imagery or themes. This adherence to honesty is the primary driver of Brand Credibility and Loyalty. Exaggeration, misleading statistics, or false advertising (Gharar) can lead to immediate and severe brand rejection within the close-knit Ummah, where community endorsement is critical. Conversely, brands that consistently practice Sidq establish high credibility, making their claims more persuasive and effective. In terms of content, the requirement for Acceptance and Compliance ensures that advertisements respect Islamic codes of modesty. When promotional imagery aligns with community standards, it not only avoids social censure but actively reinforces the brand's ethical positioning, thereby enhancing the perceived reliability of the product itself.

### ***Analysis of Assurance Factors***

#### ***4.1 Analysis of Assurance Factors: People, Process, and Physical Evidence***

While the core 4Ps define what is offered, the assurance factors (People, Process, and Physical Evidence) determine how the ethical commitment is delivered and verified. For the Muslim consumer, these factors are critical for resolving the inherent information asymmetry between the producer and the buyer regarding Shariah compliance<sup>13</sup>.

#### ***4.2 People (Ethical Conduct and Adab)***

The employees and management represent the tangible human face of the company's ethical commitment. In the Islamic framework, business interactions are governed by Adab (good

manners, courtesy, and integrity). This means staff must adhere to high standards of honesty and fairness in all customer dealings, avoiding manipulation or dishonesty.

The behavioral effect is a heightened correlation between Staff Conduct and Brand Trust. Consumer satisfaction is heavily tied not just to the efficiency of the service, but to the ethical quality of the interaction. Service failures rooted in perceived dishonesty or poor conduct are significantly more damaging to brand reputation than technical failures, leading to a profound sense of betrayal<sup>14</sup>. Conversely, ethical conduct fosters positive word-of-mouth (WOM) within the community, as consumers feel morally encouraged to recommend a business that upholds virtuous principles.

#### ***4.3 Process (Shariah Certification and Transparency)***

The internal processes, from sourcing raw materials to manufacturing, financing, and service delivery, must be auditable and transparent to ensure compliance at every stage. This systematic verification is formalized through Shariah auditing and certification.

The primary behavioral outcome is Risk Minimization and Expedited Decision-Making. The complexity of modern supply chains makes it impossible for consumers to personally verify compliance. Therefore, the Shariah compliance certificate acts as the single most powerful external cue and a non-negotiable trust signal. This outsourced validation minimizes the consumer's perceived spiritual risk and significantly reduces their search costs and mental effort<sup>15</sup>. The certified product effectively becomes the default choice, bypassing competitors whose processes remain opaque or unverified.

#### ***4.4 Physical Evidence (Certification Mark and Environmental Cues)***

Physical evidence consists of the tangible cues that communicate the brand's ethical status. This includes the presence of a recognized Halal logo, ethical design elements, and supportive environmental features.

The effect is Instant Recognition and Assurance. The Halal logo functions as an immediate signal of permissibility, instantly validating the product for the committed Muslim consumer<sup>16</sup>. Beyond certification, the use of modest marketing materials, the absence of offensive imagery, and the provision of appropriate retail environmental elements (like prayer facilities) reinforce the brand's alignment with the consumer's values. These tangible cues provide continuous, non-verbal reassurance, strengthening the consumer's confidence in their identity-aligned purchase.

#### ***Synthesis, Outcomes, and Future Scope***

The preceding analysis demonstrates that the Islamic Marketing Mix (IMM) acts as an integrated system, converting religious and ethical compliance into tangible commercial advantages<sup>17</sup>. The behavioral outcomes are far-reaching, fundamentally redefining traditional notions of customer relationship management and market segmentation.

#### ***Identity-Driven Loyalty vs. Satisfaction***

The most profound effect of the IMM is the shift in the basis of consumer loyalty. In conventional marketing, loyalty is primarily driven by satisfaction, utility, and cost-benefit analysis. In the IMM framework, loyalty is rooted in identity alignment and the fulfillment of a religious duty (Fard Kifayah). A compliant product allows the Muslim consumer to integrate their consumption choices seamlessly with their moral identity. This results in identity-based loyalty, which is significantly stronger and more resistant to competitors' lower prices or attractive promotions, provided the compliant brand maintains its ethical integrity<sup>18</sup>. Consumers view the purchase not as a mere transaction, but as a morally sanctioned act.

#### ***Community Amplification and Word-of-Mouth***

The sense of shared religious identity creates a unique mechanism for information diffusion. Trust in a compliant brand is often validated through community endorsement, making positive word-of-mouth (WOM) a far more potent promotional tool than mass media



advertising. Conversely, a failure in Shariah compliance, or a perceived breach of ethical principles (Adl), is met with swift and severe negative WOM throughout the Ummah<sup>19</sup>. This collective accountability ensures that ethical breaches are costly, reinforcing the firm's commitment to transparency and compliance.

### ***Ethical Crossover and Market Opportunities***

The principles underpinning the IMM, fair pricing, environmental responsibility, transparency, and ethical sourcing, are not exclusive to the Muslim market. There is a growing opportunity for IMM-compliant brands to appeal to the broader global ethical consumer segment (eco-conscious, fair trade, and socially responsible buyers). The rigorous standards of Tayyib often overlap with demands for organic, non-GMO, and sustainable production, providing a dual-market advantage<sup>20</sup>. By emphasizing the universal ethical components of the IMM, firms can transition from operating in a religious niche to leading the global movement toward value-driven commerce.

### ***Challenges to Global Standardization***

Despite its benefits, the global application of the IMM faces significant hurdles, primarily concerning standardization and regulation. Different geographical regions rely on different Shariah councils and schools of thought, leading to variations in Fatwas (religious rulings) regarding product ingredients and financial mechanisms. This lack of unified global standards creates uncertainty for multinational corporations and increases costs, particularly related to obtaining and maintaining multiple certifications.<sup>21</sup> Resolving these regulatory differences is paramount for maximizing the IMM's potential to streamline global trade and consumer confidence.

### ***Conclusion***

This article has demonstrated that the Islamic Marketing Mix (IMM) is not merely a specialized application of conventional marketing theory but a distinct, ethically mandated framework that profoundly influences Muslim consumer behavior. The IMM operates as an integrated system that converts religious and ethical compliance into tangible commercial advantages. The core finding is that the IMM's effectiveness lies in its ability to manage and minimize perceived risk ,spiritual, functional, and financial ,through structural mechanisms of trust. This is achieved by systematically guaranteeing Product Integrity (Halal and Tayyib status) to eliminate spiritual uncertainty; ensuring Transactional Equity (fair pricing and zero-interest financing) to establish trust (Adl); and utilizing rigorous Process controls (Shariah certification) and clear Physical Evidence (Halal logos) to provide instant assurance. This outsourced validation, particularly the certification process, drastically reduces the consumer's search costs and skepticism. Ultimately, the IMM fosters a powerful shift in consumer psychology: purchase decisions are transformed from an economic choice into an act of identity affirmation and religious obligation. This results in a potent form of identity-based brand loyalty, amplified by the strong social network of the Ummah through positive word-of-mouth. While the challenges related to global standardization remain critical for future industry development, the IMM offers a resilient and sustainable business model. By grounding their strategies in transparency, justice, and social responsibility, businesses utilizing the IMM gain not only access to a massive global market but also a proactive competitive advantage founded on enduring moral capital, offering a blueprint for responsible commerce in the 21st century.

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