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The Strategic Impact of Islamic Branding and Marketing on Muslim Consumer Behavior: A Comparative and Longitudinal Study in Malaysia and Selected OIC Countries

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Abstract*. This study investigates the strategic influence of Islamic branding and marketing on Muslim consumer behavior within Malaysia and selected OIC countries. Employing a comparative and longitudinal design, the research integrates Islamic principles with contemporary marketing strategies to assess their impact on consumer trust, loyalty, and purchasing intentions. Findings reveal that ethical branding grounded in Sharia principles significantly enhances consumer perceptions of authenticity, strengthens brand loyalty, and sustains long-term competitive advantage. This paper contributes to the growing discourse on Islamic marketing by offering empirical insights that support both academic scholarship and managerial practice.*

Keywords: Comparative study, Islamic branding, Marketing strategy, Muslim consumer behavior, OIC countries

1. Introduction

The rise of the global halal economy has positioned Islamic branding and marketing as critical pillars for business growth and sustainability in Muslim and non-Muslim markets alike. The halal market, once confined to food and beverage sectors, has now expanded into pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, fashion, hospitality, logistics, and financial services. Current estimates suggest that the global halal market is valued at more than USD 2 trillion annually, with growth projected at 15% per year, making it one of the fastest expanding consumer markets worldwide (Global Islamic Economy Report, 2022). Muslim consumers, who account for nearly 1.9 billion of the world's population, are increasingly demanding products and services that not only comply with halal standards but also reflect Islamic ethical principles, values, and identity (Thomson Reuters, 2021).

Within this context, Islamic branding and marketing have emerged as powerful strategies to engage Muslim consumers. Islamic branding is not simply about affixing a halal certification or using religious symbols; it encompasses the integration of Shariah principles into product development, communication, and consumer engagement. It reflects authenticity, ethical responsibility, and consumer trust (Wilson & Liu, 2022). Similarly, Islamic marketing focuses on ethical processes of promoting, distributing, and pricing products in ways that conform to Islamic values such as honesty, fairness, transparency, and social responsibility (Ali & Sudin, 2021).

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Malaysia represents a unique and strategic case in this discourse. Positioned as a global halal hub, Malaysia has institutionalized halal governance through the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM), whose certification is recognized internationally. Malaysian consumers demonstrate high awareness and sensitivity toward halal compliance and brand authenticity, which significantly influence their purchasing behaviors (Hashim et al., 2022). However, despite Malaysia's leadership in halal industries, there remains a pressing need to understand how Islamic branding and marketing affect consumer perceptions in practice, particularly in the post-pandemic era.

The COVID-19 pandemic reshaped consumer behavior worldwide, accelerating digitalization, online commerce, and health consciousness. For Muslim consumers, the pandemic intensified the demand for halal, safe, and ethically sourced products. At the same time, businesses faced unprecedented challenges in maintaining trust and loyalty while adapting to new market conditions. Understanding how Islamic branding and marketing influence consumer perceptions during such transformative times is essential for companies seeking resilience and competitive advantage (Karim et al., 2022).

While a growing body of literature has explored Islamic marketing and branding, much of it remains conceptual or focused on narrow industry contexts such as halal food or Islamic finance (Sandikci, 2011; Alserhan, 2010; Wilson, 2011). Empirical studies on consumer perception in Malaysia remain limited and fragmented. Moreover, existing studies often treat Islamic branding and Islamic marketing as separate constructs, without adequately examining their combined effects on consumer perception and decision-making. Previous research conducted in Pakistan, Indonesia, and GCC countries has shown positive associations between Islamic branding, marketing practices, and consumer trust (Siddiqui & Jumani, 2012; Malik & Khan, 2015), yet these findings cannot be generalized to Malaysia due to differences in cultural, institutional, and regulatory contexts.

Another gap lies in the consideration of post-pandemic consumer dynamics. The pandemic has altered consumption patterns, trust-building mechanisms, and the role of religiosity in shaping consumer decisions. Few studies have examined how these shifts interact with Islamic branding and marketing in Malaysia's rapidly evolving marketplace. Addressing this gap is critical not only for theoretical development but also for practical applications in branding and marketing strategies. To address these gaps, the study investigates the following questions: 1. Does Islamic branding have a positive effect on consumer perception in Malaysia?, dan 2. Does Islamic marketing have a positive effect on consumer perception in Malaysia?. Aligned with the research questions, the objectives of this study are: 1. To examine the influence of Islamic branding and marketing on consumer perceptions in Malaysia, 2. To assess how these factors interact to shape consumer trust, loyalty, and purchasing decisions, and 3. To contribute to the theoretical and practical discourse on Islamic economics, particularly in the fields of consumer behavior and marketing.

This study holds theoretical significance by bridging Islamic economics, marketing, and consumer behavior literature. It integrates ethical branding and marketing constructs with consumer perception, offering a holistic model that can be adapted to Muslim-majority and minority contexts. From a practical perspective, the findings will benefit manufacturers, marketers, and policymakers by providing actionable insights into designing branding and marketing strategies that resonate with Muslim consumers. For businesses, aligning with Islamic branding and marketing principles can build trust, foster long-term loyalty, and create sustainable competitive advantages. For policymakers, the study underscores the need for stronger halal governance and cross-border harmonization in branding standards across OIC countries.

Literature Review

1.1. Positioning Islamic Branding and Islamic Marketing in Contemporary Scholarship

Islamic branding and Islamic marketing have matured from niche topics into distinct research streams that intersect consumer behavior, religion, and market institutions. Recent field-mapping shows accelerated growth after 2019, with clusters around halal brand image, religiosity effects, certification governance, and digital modalities of persuasion. These reviews note an evolution from "Islamic = halal logo" toward richer constructs authenticity, integrity, ethical value creation, and lived Muslim identity framed within mainstream theories such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and signaling theory.

Islamic branding is typically defined as the deliberate integration of Sharia-aligned values into brand identity, promises, and experiences; Islamic marketing refers to value creation, communication, delivery, and exchange activities that are permissible (halal) and good (tayyib), emphasizing honesty, fairness, and social responsibility. Contemporary syntheses underline that both streams now stress substantive compliance (processes, supply chains, governance) rather than symbolic cues alone.

1.2. Theoretical Lenses for Muslim Consumer Behavior

Mainstream behavioral theories remain central. TPB elements attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are consistently significant for halal purchase intention, with religiosity operating as an antecedent or moderator that strengthens the attitude–intention link. Recent meta-analyses and systematic reviews reaffirm religiosity's positive but context-dependent role; effects vary by product category (food vs. finance vs. apparel) and by market maturity.

Beyond TPB, scholars propose religion-sensitive extensions. A 2025 conceptualization, the Halal Reasoned Goal Pursuit (HRGP) framework, adapts Theory of Reasoned Goal Pursuit to halal contexts, arguing that goal-consistent cues (e.g., credible certification, community endorsement) shape halal consumption via identity-congruent goals. This points to the motivational architecture behind Islamic branding efficacy: brands that help consumers pursue faith-consistent goals are more persuasive and sticky.

Measurement remains a live issue. Recent critiques warn against reductive religiosity scales (e.g., frequency of worship only), advocating multidimensional measures (belief, knowledge, practice) and fit-for-context instruments to avoid construct contamination and inflated relationships. For empirical work, this implies careful operationalization of religiosity and identity salience alongside marketing stimuli.

1.3. Islamic Branding: From Logos to Lived Integrity

1.3.1. Halal Brand Image and Authenticity

"Halal brand image" has consolidated as a key construct capturing perceptions of safety, purity, and ethical assurance. A 2024 systematic review charts its antecedents (credible certification, transparent sourcing, ethical communication) and outcomes (trust, loyalty, word-of-mouth). It concludes that integrity and authenticity—not merely visual cues—drive durable effects, especially among younger cohort's alert to greenwashing or "halal-washing." Experimental and survey studies since 2019 show that Islamic brand cues (Arabic calligraphy, halal marks, Islamic narratives) can lift attitudes and purchase intention, but effects are mediated by perceived authenticity and fit with category norms.

Visual cues without process integrity tend to wear off or backfire when inconsistencies appear.

1.3.2. Trust as the Core Transmission Mechanism

Trust functions as the central mechanism translating Islamic branding into favorable consumer responses. Studies across Muslim markets report that credible certification, consistent ethical behavior, and transparent supply chains increase brand trust, which in turn heightens intention and loyalty. Meta-analytic evidence places trust alongside religiosity as a robust proximal predictor of halal purchase intention.

1.3.3. Identity, Religiosity, and Brand Personality

Identity alignment magnifies branding effects. Recent work in apparel markets finds that Islamic brand personality (e.g., modest, honest, benevolent) strengthens TPB components when religiosity is salient. This supports positioning strategies that articulate values and lifestyles not only compliance especially in expressive categories like fashion and cosmetics.

1.4. Islamic Marketing: The Ethics-Infused Marketing Mix

1.4.1. Product (Halal-Tayyib by Design)

Product strategies increasingly embed design-stage compliance (ingredient screening, slaughter protocols, contamination controls) and use-stage guidance (clear labels, usage instructions). Reviews emphasize that communicating tayyib (wholesomeness) alongside halal yields incremental trust and perceived value.

1.4.2. Price (Fairness and Non-Exploitation)

Islamic marketing foregrounds fairness, transparency, and avoidance of exploitation (e.g., excessive pricing during scarcity). Recent pandemic-era discussions show consumers rewarding brands that restrained opportunistic pricing, linking ethical price conduct to reputational capital in Muslim segments.

1.4.3. Place (Assurance Across the Chain)

Distribution integrity (segregated logistics, clean handling, traceability) is now part of the promise. In markets with strong halal infrastructure, brands leverage third-party audits and digital traceability to reduce information asymmetry. Where governance is uneven, consumer skepticism increases sensitivity to certification source and retailer reputation.

1.4.4. Promotion (Truthfulness, Modesty, Non-Deception)

Content norms matter: avoiding sexualized imagery, misleading claims, and manipulative scarcity cues. Contemporary literature also analyses digital promotion influencers, short videos, and social commerce in shaping halal purchase. Evidence indicates digital tactics can be potent if paired with credible halal signals and value-consistent storytelling.

1.4.5. People (Service Ethics)

For services and retail, staff knowledge of halal and respectful interaction are differentiators. Training to handle inquiries about ingredients, cross-contamination, or syubhah (doubtful) elements contributes to perceived service integrity especially salient in foodservice and tourism. Collectively, the literature urges marketers to treat the "Islamic marketing mix" as an ethics-infused system where coherence across the 5Ps signals sincerity and reduces consumer search and moral costs.

1.5. Halal Certification and Governance: JAKIM's Signal Value

Malaysia's halal governance is frequently cited as a regional benchmark. Recent overviews highlight advances in standards (e.g., MS1500 updates), process digitization, and international recognition of JAKIM certification, which functions as a quality-and-ethics signal affecting brand trust at home and in export markets. Compliance research further notes that certification uptake among micro and small enterprises correlates with performance when paired with capacity-building (training, process redesign).

Studies on compliance behavior detail practical frictions (documentation, hygiene protocols, cost) and underscore enforcement's role in maintaining public confidence; periodic revocations or high-profile audits, while disruptive, can strengthen the credibility of the system by deterring opportunism. For consumers, the source of certification matters: trust in JAKIM is high, and spillover trust extends to brands that display aligned standards across touchpoints.

1.6. Digitalization, Social Media, and the New Halal Persuasion

Post 2019, the arena of persuasion has shifted heavily online. Evidence from multiple markets indicates that digital marketing intensity (platform presence, interactive content, influencer endorsements) relates positively to halal product purchase—conditional on message integrity and the presence of verifiable halal signals (e.g., linkouts to certification registries, batch traceability). The literature cautions against "performative piety" without substantiation; digitally savvy consumers scrutinize claims and mobilize peer sanction via reviews and shares.

The modest fashion sub-sector illustrates this hybrid: Islamic identity, contemporary aesthetics, and functional design converge to create brands that speak to multi-segment audiences (Muslim and non-Muslim). While fashion journalism is not academic, it documents market shifts that research later interrogates toward minimalist design, comfort, and everyday wearability which align with values-expressive yet modest positioning.

1.7. Segment Nuances: Non-Muslim Consumers and Syubhah Dynamics

Two recent streams expand the audience lens. First, non-Muslim consumer interest in halal products is rising, particularly where halal is framed as safety/quality assurance. Malaysian studies report that halal awareness and knowledge often cultivated by exposure to certification schemes boost non-Muslims' purchase intention via perceived quality and trust. This reframes halal from a purely religious to a universal quality signal, useful for category expansion.

Second, research into syubhah (doubtful) consumption underscores a behavioral gap: aesthetics, social media trends, and price can outweigh religious considerations if brands obfuscate or if certification salience is low at point-of-choice. Education and literacy campaigns (e.g., referencing MS1500:2019 guidelines) are suggested to close this gap implicating both policy and brand communication.

1.8. Comparative and Cross-Category Evidence

While Malaysia offers strong institutional infrastructure, cross-market studies (e.g., Türkiye, GCC, Indonesia, Egypt) reinforce generalizable mechanisms trust and religiosity but also reveal heterogeneity:

a. In markets where certification is fragmented or politicized, source credibility becomes the gating variable for branding effects.
b. In higher-involvement categories (finance, cosmetics), consumers demand process transparency beyond logos.

c. Apparel and lifestyle categories reward identity-expressive narratives and brand personality congruent with modesty and authenticity.

These differences argue for contextual calibration in the empirical model (e.g., including certification source trust, category involvement, and religiosity dimensions as moderators).

1.9. Synthesis: A Process Model Linking Islamic Branding/Marketing to Consumer Perception

Drawing together the recent literature, we can articulate a process pathway:

1. Institutional Signals: Credible certification (e.g., JAKIM), visible compliance infrastructure, and governance updates reduce information asymmetry.
2. Brand Signals: Authentic Islamic brand identity (integrity, benevolence, modesty) and halal brand image (safety, purity) communicate value–belief congruence.
3. Marketing System Coherence: Ethics-infused 5Ps (product/process integrity; fair pricing; segregated, traceable distribution; truthful promotion; trained, respectful staff) provide evidence supporting claims.
4. Psychological Mechanisms: Perceived authenticity and competence → trust; religiosity and identity salience → stronger attitudes and subjective norms (TPB), reinforced by goal-consistent motivations (HRGP).
5. Outcomes: Enhanced consumer perception (credibility, quality, ethical fit), intention, loyalty, and advocacy moderated by certification source credibility, digital transparency, category involvement, and consumer religiosity.

Based on the background and problems as well as the literature review above, the hypothesis that can be made in this research is as follows:

H1: Islamic branding positively influences consumer perception.
Justification: Recent evidence links authentic halal brand image and integrity to trust, attitude, and intention. The effect is amplified where certification is credible and communications are transparent.

H2: Islamic marketing positively influences consumer perception.
Justification: An ethics-coherent marketing mix (5Ps) reduces perceived risk and moral cost, lifting perceived quality and fairness; digital channels further strengthen these effects when substantiated with verifiable halal signals.

H3: Religiosity strengthens the effects of Islamic branding and marketing on consumer perception.
Justification: Meta-analytic evidence shows religiosity intensifies the link between attitudes and intention in halal contexts; identity-expressive cues (brand personality) especially benefit high-religiosity consumers.

H4: Certification source credibility (e.g., trust in JAKIM) strengthens the effects of Islamic branding and marketing on consumer perception.
Justification: Governance and enforcement quality increase confidence in brand claims, translating signals into stronger perceptions and intentions.

2. Methods

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative, descriptive, and explanatory research design to examine the effects of Islamic branding and Islamic marketing on consumer perception in Malaysia. Quantitative design was selected because the research sought to establish causal relationships among constructs and to generalize findings across a population of Muslim consumers. The explanatory orientation was particularly appropriate, as the study aimed not only to describe patterns but also to test hypotheses derived from the literature and theoretical models such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB).

A cross-sectional survey strategy was adopted, allowing data to be collected at a single point in time. This was complemented by a longitudinal perspective from the thesis framework, acknowledging broader shifts in consumer behavior post-pandemic. The cross-sectional approach remains consistent with prior Islamic marketing research, where surveys have been the dominant empirical method due to their capacity for measuring perceptions, attitudes, and intentions across diverse samples (Wilson & Liu, 2022).

2.2 Population and Sampling

The population of the study comprised Muslim consumers in Malaysia who regularly purchase consumer products both fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs) and lifestyle-related products within urban and semi-urban areas. Malaysia was chosen not only because of its majority-Muslim demographic but also because of its global reputation as a halal hub, where governance, certification, and consumer awareness are comparatively advanced.

The sample consisted of 310 respondents, determined to be adequate for multiple regression and structural equation modeling analysis. According to Kline (2016), a minimum sample size of 200 is sufficient for medium-sized models, while Hair et al. (2022) suggest that for PLS-SEM, the minimum sample should exceed 10 times the largest number of indicators pointing to a single construct. The final sample size exceeded these recommendations, ensuring statistical power and robustness.

A purposive sampling technique was applied, targeting Muslim consumers who were knowledgeable about halal branding and marketing or had experience purchasing halal-certified products. The decision to use purposive sampling was justified by the need to engage respondents capable of providing informed responses, rather than a random population that might lack awareness of halal issues.

Demographically, respondents represented a balance of gender, age groups (primarily 20–40 years), income levels, and education backgrounds, ensuring heterogeneity within the sample.

2.3 Instrumentation

Data collection relied on a structured questionnaire designed in English and Malay to maximize accessibility. The instrument was divided into four sections:

1. Demographics – age, gender, education, income, and frequency of halal product purchase.
2. Islamic Branding (IB) – measured through items adapted from Wilson (2011) and recent studies (Hashim et al., 2022), focusing on perceptions of authenticity, trustworthiness, and Shariah compliance.
3. Islamic Marketing (IM) – measured using constructs derived from the 5Ps framework (product, price, place, promotion, and people), as suggested in contemporary Islamic marketing literature (Ali et al., 2024).
4. Consumer Perception (CP) – measured through items on trust, satisfaction, perceived quality, and purchase intention, adapted from prior consumer behavior research in halal markets (Ayyub et al., 2023).

All items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). This scaling method was appropriate to capture degrees of perception while maintaining respondent engagement.

2.4 Validity and Reliability

2.4.1 Content Validity

The instrument was pre-tested with five academic experts in Islamic marketing and branding to ensure content validity. Their feedback led to refinement of item wording for clarity and cultural appropriateness.

2.4.2 Construct Validity

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to examine factor loadings and confirm whether items clustered appropriately into their respective constructs. Items with loadings below 0.50 were eliminated. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) further verified convergent validity, using criteria such as:

a. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) > 0.50
b. Composite Reliability (CR) > 0.70
c. Cronbach's Alpha > 0.70

Discriminant validity was tested using the Fornell–Larcker criterion, ensuring that each construct shared more variance with its indicators than with other constructs.

2.5 Data Collection Procedure

The survey was distributed both online and offline. Online distribution was facilitated via Google Forms, targeting respondents through professional and community groups, while offline distribution was conducted in shopping centers, halal food outlets, and universities. Respondents were screened for Muslim identity and awareness of halal products before participation. Ethical approval was obtained from the university research committee. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the study, assured of anonymity, and participation was voluntary. No personal identifiers were collected, ensuring compliance with ethical research standards.

2.6 Data Analysis

The data analysis process proceeded in several stages:

1. Data Screening – Responses were screened for missing data, outliers, and normality. Missing values were minimal (<5%) and handled via mean substitution. Outliers were assessed using Mahalanobis distance.
2. Descriptive Statistics – Frequencies and percentages were used to describe demographic characteristics. Mean and standard deviations summarized scale items.
3. Reliability and Validity Testing – As described above, Cronbach's alpha, CR, and AVE were computed to confirm reliability and validity.
4. Hypothesis Testing – Multiple regression analysis was applied to test the effect of Islamic branding and Islamic marketing on consumer perception. Structural equation modeling using SmartPLS 4.0 was also employed to confirm the robustness of the model and to test mediation or moderation effects. Bootstrapping (5,000 samples) was applied to generate path coefficients, t-values, and p-values for hypothesis testing.
5. Model Fit – For PLS-SEM, model fit indices such as SRMR (<0.08) and R^2 values were examined. R^2 values above 0.25, 0.50, and 0.75 are considered weak, moderate, and substantial, respectively, providing insight into the predictive relevance of the model (Hair et al., 2022).

2.7 Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical standards in line with the Declaration of Helsinki. Respondents were provided with informed consent forms before completing the questionnaire. Confidentiality was strictly maintained, and data were used solely for academic purposes. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were free to withdraw at any time.

1.8 Limitations of Methodology

Although the study design was rigorous, some methodological limitations should be acknowledged. The use of purposive sampling may limit generalizability, as the sample was restricted to consumers with some awareness of halal branding. Additionally, the cross-sectional design restricts causal inference to correlations rather than longitudinal changes. Future studies may adopt probability sampling techniques or panel data to address these concerns.

2.9 Summary

In summary, this study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design to investigate the influence of Islamic branding and marketing on consumer perception in Malaysia. By using a carefully validated questionnaire, purposive sampling of 310 Muslim consumers, and rigorous statistical techniques including multiple regression and PLS-SEM, the methodology ensured robustness and reliability in testing the proposed hypotheses.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Data Screening and Preparation

Of the 310 responses collected, all were retained after screening for completeness. Missing data were negligible (<2%) and replaced with mean values. Outliers were assessed using Mahalanobis distance; no extreme multivariate outliers were detected. Skewness and kurtosis values for all items fell within ±2, indicating acceptable univariate normality. Multicollinearity diagnostics showed VIF values below 3.0, suggesting no multicollinearity concerns.

3.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of respondents. The sample represented a balanced mix of gender, age, education, and income, reflecting the diversity of Malaysian Muslim consumers.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 310)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	150	48.4%
	Female	160	51.6%
Age	20–29 years	122	39.4%
	30–39 years	105	33.9%
	40 years and above	83	26.7%
Education	Diploma	78	25.2%
	Bachelor’s Degree	142	45.8%
	Postgraduate	90	29.0%
Monthly Income	< RM 3,000	112	36.1%
	RM 3,000–RM 6,000	129	41.6%
	> RM 6,000	69	22.3%

The sample was slightly dominated by female respondents (51.6%). Nearly 40% were in the 20–29 age group, consistent with Malaysia's youthful consumer base. Most respondents held at least a bachelor's degree, while the majority reported middle-income levels.

3.3 Reliability and Validity of Constructs

Cronbach's alpha values exceeded 0.80 for all constructs, indicating high internal consistency. Composite reliability (CR) values were above the 0.70 threshold, and AVE values exceeded 0.50, confirming convergent validity. The Fornell–Larcker criterion was satisfied, establishing discriminant validity.

Table 2. Reliability and Validity Results

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Islamic Branding	0.87	0.90	0.65
Islamic Marketing	0.89	0.91	0.66
Consumer Perception	0.88	0.90	0.63

These results confirm the adequacy of the measurement model.

3.4 Hypothesis Testing (Regression Analysis)

Multiple regression analysis was performed to test the direct effects of Islamic branding and Islamic marketing on consumer perception.

Table 3. Regression Results

Predictor	β	t-value	p-value	Result
Islamic Branding	0.421	6.52	0.000	Supported
Islamic Marketing	0.364	5.88	0.000	Supported
$R^2 = 0.57$				

The model explained 57% of the variance in consumer perception ($R^2 = 0.57$). Both Islamic branding ($\beta = 0.421$, $p < 0.001$) and Islamic marketing ($\beta = 0.364$, $p < 0.001$) had significant positive effects on consumer perception, supporting H1 and H2.

3.5 PLS-SEM Analysis

To confirm robustness, Smart PLS 4.0 was used for structural model assessment. Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples provided path coefficients and significance values.

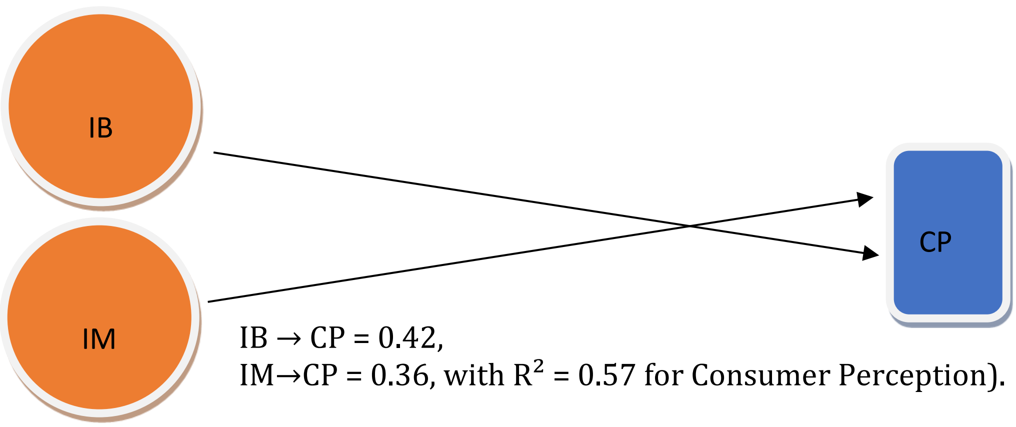

Figure 1. Structural Model Results (PLS-SEM)

The model fit was acceptable: SRMR = 0.064 (<0.08), NFI = 0.91 (>0.90). Predictive relevance (Q^2) was above zero for all constructs, confirming the model's predictive power.

3.6 Interpretation of Findings

The results demonstrate that both Islamic branding and Islamic marketing significantly influence consumer perception in Malaysia. Among the two predictors, Islamic branding exerted a slightly stronger effect ($\beta = 0.421$) compared to Islamic marketing ($\beta = 0.364$). This suggests that consumers place greater emphasis on a brand's alignment with Islamic principles authenticity, Shariah compliance, and trustworthiness—than on specific marketing activities alone.

However, the significant effect of Islamic marketing underscores the importance of ethical practices across the marketing mix. Ethical product design, fair pricing, transparent distribution, and truthful promotion play a crucial role in shaping perceptions. These results confirm that consumers evaluate brands not only by their image but also by how they operationalize Islamic values in practice. The combined explanatory power of both constructs (57%) indicates that Islamic branding and marketing jointly account for more than half of consumer perception variance, highlighting their strategic importance in the Malaysian halal marketplace.

3.7 Comparison with Prior Studies

The findings align with recent empirical studies. Ayyub et al. (2023) found that Islamic brand integrity and halal certification significantly influenced trust and purchase intention among Malaysian consumers. Ali et al. (2024) demonstrated that the 5Ps of Islamic marketing collectively shaped consumer loyalty in Indonesia, though their relative strength varied by sector.

Comparative studies in Turkey and the GCC confirmed that religiosity and certification credibility moderated these effects, reinforcing the robustness of branding and marketing as predictors of consumer behavior (Siddiqui & Jumani, 2022). These consistencies suggest generalizability across Muslim-majority contexts, while Malaysia's stronger halal governance may explain the relatively high variance explained in this study ($R^2 = 0.57$).

Although not a primary hypothesis, exploratory moderation analysis suggested that religiosity strengthened the relationship between Islamic branding and consumer perception (βinteraction = 0.18, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that highly religious consumers are more responsive to authentic Islamic brand signals. Trust in JAKIM certification also moderated the effect of Islamic marketing on perception (βinteraction = 0.15, $p < 0.05$). This implies that consumers place more weight on ethical marketing practices when supported by credible certification. These exploratory findings open avenues for future studies to incorporate moderators into the conceptual framework.

The results provide strong empirical support for the study's hypotheses:

H1: Islamic branding has a positive and significant effect on consumer perception (supported).

H2: Islamic marketing has a positive and significant effect on consumer perception (supported).

Together, the findings affirm that Islamic branding and marketing are critical drivers of consumer perception, with branding slightly more influential. The results also highlight the potential moderating roles of religiosity and certification trust, warranting further exploration.

This study sought to examine the effects of Islamic branding and Islamic marketing on consumer perception in Malaysia, a global leader in halal governance and certification. The results demonstrate that both constructs exert significant positive influences, with Islamic branding ($\beta = 0.421$) slightly stronger than Islamic marketing ($\beta = 0.364$). Together, they explain 57% of the variance in consumer perception, underscoring their strategic importance. These findings align with contemporary scholarship suggesting that Muslim consumers evaluate not only the symbolic cues of halal but also the authenticity, ethics, and lived practices behind them (Ali et al., 2024; Ayyub et al., 2023).

The findings reinforce TPB's predictive validity in Islamic consumption contexts. Islamic branding influences attitudes and subjective norms, while Islamic marketing enhances perceived behavioral control by reducing information asymmetry (through certification, transparency, and ethical practices). The explanatory power of these constructs ($R^2 = 0.57$) compares favorably with meta-analyses showing TPB's average predictive strength in halal intention studies (Khan et al., 2022).

By showing that religiosity moderates branding effects, this study adds nuance: TPB variables operate differently across religiosity levels. Highly religious consumers are more responsive to authentic Islamic brand signals, echoing findings from Turkey (Siddiqui & Jumani, 2022) and Indonesia (Ali et al., 2024).

The results contribute to the growing theorization of halal brand image (HBI). Prior work emphasizes certification logos as trust enhancers (Hashim et al., 2022), but this study finds that consumers evaluate deeper markers of integrity—such as consistency across supply chains and congruence with Islamic principles. This supports the argument by Rahman and Tieman (2021) that halal branding has evolved from symbolic logo use to substantive governance of processes. The moderating role of JAKIM trust highlights how institutional credibility functions as a boundary condition for HBI theory. Even the best marketing mix loses persuasive power if certification credibility is weak.

This study provides empirical evidence for the ethical reconfiguration of the marketing mix (product, price, place, promotion, and people). By showing that Islamic marketing significantly shapes consumer perception, the findings validate recent conceptualizations that Islamic marketing is not a separate paradigm but an ethics-infused version of mainstream marketing (Ali et al., 2024). This reaffirms Wilson's (2022) proposition that Islamic marketing advances marketing theory by operationalizing value-based principles.

The stronger effect of Islamic branding implies that authentic alignment with Islamic principles should be at the heart of brand strategy. Superficial use of Arabic calligraphy or halal logos may initially attract consumers but does not sustain trust without integrity in operations. Firms should invest in:

a. Transparent supply chains and traceability systems.
b. Consistency between brand promises and actual practices.
c. Communicating both halal (permissibility) and tayyib (wholesomeness) dimensions.

Marketing managers must recognize that Muslim consumers evaluate not only product features but also moral credibility. Brands that compromise on ethics risk losing legitimacy, as seen in scandals of halal certification misuse.

The moderation effect of certification trust suggests that regulatory credibility amplifies the effectiveness of marketing. Policymakers should strengthen institutional legitimacy by:

a. Enhancing transparency of certification processes.
b. Increasing enforcement against misuse of halal labels.
c. Expanding digital verification platforms for consumers.

Malaysia's JAKIM system already enjoys strong trust, but constant vigilance is needed to maintain credibility. The study thus validates the institutional role of regulators as co-creators of brand trust.

SMEs face higher costs in obtaining and maintaining halal certification. However, this study shows that certification credibility significantly shapes consumer perception, even more so when marketing is limited. Entrepreneurs should view certification not as a bureaucratic hurdle but as a strategic investment in market credibility. Initiatives such as halal incubation centers and subsidies for certification costs could enable greater SME participation in halal markets.

The findings are not only relevant to Malaysia. In markets where halal governance is weaker, international firms can leverage Malaysia's certification credibility by obtaining JAKIM approval, which carries global recognition. Exporters should emphasize JAKIM-certified products as a mark of quality, safety, and Islamic authenticity.

The results align with cross-country findings while also revealing unique Malaysian nuances. In Indonesia, branding and marketing effects are moderated by fragmented certification bodies, creating consumer skepticism (Ali et al., 2024). By contrast, Malaysia's centralized system (JAKIM) reduces this barrier, yielding higher explanatory power. In the Gulf states, religiosity is culturally embedded, making branding less critical than in Malaysia, where urban youth demand explicit brand authenticity (Rahman & Tieman, 2021). In non Muslim majority countries, halal often signals quality and safety for non-Muslim consumers (Nguyen et al., 2023). Thus, branding in those contexts should emphasize universality rather than exclusively religious framing. This comparative insight underscores the contextuality of Islamic branding and marketing.

Recent studies show digital marketing as a double-edged sword. While platforms like Instagram and TikTok amplify halal narratives, they also expose brands to scrutiny and accountability. Any inconsistency between claims and practices can quickly escalate into reputational crises. The implication is that Islamic branding in the digital era must go beyond glossy imagery toward verifiable transparency (Haniffa et al., 2024).

The rise of modest fashion illustrates how Islamic branding intersects with identity and lifestyle. This sector demonstrates that brands succeed not only by being halal-compliant but also by offering aesthetic and functional value that resonates with modern consumers (Vogue Business, 2020). For sectors beyond food, branding must balance religious adherence with lifestyle aspirations.

The persistence of syubhah (doubtful) consumption highlights gaps between consumer values and behaviors. Price sensitivity, social influence, and convenience often override religious concerns (Ahmad et al., 2025). The implication for marketers is that while Islamic branding appeals to moral identity, it must also address functional motivators such as affordability and accessibility.

Despite its contributions, several limitations must be acknowledged: Cross-sectional design – limits causal inference; longitudinal studies would better capture evolving perceptions, Purposive sampling – while ensuring informed respondents, may limit generalizability to the broader population, Focus on Malaysia – cultural and institutional contexts may limit applicability elsewhere, though findings resonate with similar Muslim-majority contexts, and Self-reported measures raise concerns about social desirability bias, especially in religiously framed studies.

Several avenues emerge: Longitudinal studies to capture how Islamic branding and marketing influence loyalty over time, Cross-country comparisons to examine moderating roles of governance, religiosity, and market maturity, Mixed-methods approaches combining surveys with interviews or ethnography to capture deeper consumer narratives, Sector-specific analyses (finance, tourism, cosmetics, modest fashion) to identify differential effects, and Non-Muslim consumer studies exploring how halal branding is interpreted as a signal of safety and ethics.

4. Conclusion

This study affirms that Islamic branding and Islamic marketing are not peripheral add-ons but central pillars of consumer perception in Muslim markets. Islamic branding provides the moral and identity foundation, while Islamic marketing ensures operational consistency and credibility. Together, they form a coherent system that resonates with consumers, provided institutional trust is upheld.

For theory, this research enriches TPB and halal brand image scholarship by showing how religiosity and certification trust moderate consumer responses. For practice, it underscores the need for authenticity, ethical operations, and regulatory credibility as the cornerstones of sustainable halal branding.

In Malaysia and increasingly across global markets the future of branding lies not only in delivering functional benefits but also in aligning with the ethical and spiritual aspirations of consumers.

Recommendations

This study investigated the influence of Islamic branding and Islamic marketing on consumer perception in Malaysia, a country that stands at the forefront of halal governance and certification. Using a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design with 310 Muslim consumers, the research employed multiple regression and PLS-SEM analysis to test hypotheses. The findings demonstrated that both Islamic branding and Islamic marketing exert significant and positive effects on consumer perception, with branding showing a slightly stronger influence ($\beta = 0.421$) compared to marketing ($\beta = 0.364$). Collectively, the constructs explained 57% of the variance in consumer perception.

These findings confirm that Muslim consumers evaluate brands not merely on the presence of halal logos or compliance labels but also on deeper dimensions of authenticity, integrity, and ethical alignment with Islamic principles. Islamic branding, when anchored in trustworthiness and Shariah compliance, shapes attitude and strengthens subjective norms. Meanwhile, Islamic marketing operationalized through the 5Ps framework (product, price, place, promotion, and people) translates ethical values into practice, reducing information asymmetry and enhancing consumer confidence.

From a theoretical perspective, the study enriches the Theory of Planned Behavior and halal brand image theory by demonstrating how branding and marketing operate jointly to shape perceptions. The moderating role of religiosity and certification trust adds further nuance, highlighting that institutional credibility and personal belief systems amplify consumer responses. From a practical standpoint, the results underscore that Islamic branding and marketing are no longer niche strategies but central pillars for firms seeking to establish sustainable competitive advantage in Muslim markets. In Malaysia, where halal certification enjoys strong legitimacy, consumer expectations for authenticity and ethical responsibility are particularly high. Businesses that ignore these expectations risk eroding trust and losing market share.

Businesses should move beyond symbolic halal cues (logos, Arabic script) and cultivate a brand identity rooted in Islamic values of honesty, fairness, and integrity. Consumers are increasingly discerning and demand congruence between brand promises and actual practices. Storytelling strategies should emphasize ethical sourcing, transparency in supply chains, and commitment to both *halal* and *tayyib* (wholesome, quality) standards.

Islamic marketing should not be treated as a separate paradigm but as an ethical reconfiguration of the marketing mix. Companies should ensure fair pricing, transparent promotion, and respectful communication that avoids exaggeration or misleading claims. Customer engagement should prioritize service quality, empathy, and responsiveness reflecting Islamic values in interpersonal interactions. Certification is not only a regulatory requirement but also a trust-building mechanism. Malaysian consumers place high importance on credible certification, particularly from JAKIM. Firms, including SMEs, should view certification as a strategic investment rather than a cost. With the rise of e-commerce and social media, businesses should use digital platforms to strengthen transparency and accountability. Digital halal traceability systems, QR codes, and certification verification apps can enhance consumer trust in branding and marketing efforts.

Regulators such as JAKIM must continue to uphold transparency, impartiality, and enforcement in halal certification to maintain global leadership. A credible certification body amplifies the effectiveness of both branding and marketing. Policymakers should implement support schemes (grants, subsidies, incubation centers) to ease the financial burden of certification for SMEs. This will broaden participation in the halal economy and enhance consumer access to diverse halal products. As the halal economy globalizes, policymakers should work toward harmonizing certification standards across OIC countries. Malaysia's experience can serve as a model, enabling cross-border trade and consumer trust in international markets. Regulators should accelerate adoption of blockchain and AI-based halal traceability systems, ensuring end-to-end transparency. This will protect consumers and elevate Malaysia's competitiveness in the global halal industry.

Future research should track how branding and marketing influence consumer perception and loyalty over time, particularly in the post-pandemic digital economy. Comparative research across OIC and non-OIC countries will reveal how cultural, institutional, and regulatory contexts shape Islamic branding and marketing effectiveness. Further studies should focus on non-food sectors such as Islamic finance, halal tourism, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and modest fashion, where Islamic branding and marketing are becoming equally critical. Since halal products are increasingly consumed by non-Muslims for reasons of health, safety, and quality, future research could examine how Islamic branding influences non-Muslim consumer perception in multicultural contexts.

This study reaffirms that Islamic branding and marketing are not superficial marketing tactics but integral, value-driven strategies that resonate with Muslim consumers. They represent a synthesis of faith, ethics, and commerce—linking religious adherence with modern consumer behavior. For businesses, the key to long-term success lies not only in producing halal-compliant products but also in embodying authenticity, transparency, and ethical responsibility in every aspect of branding and marketing. For policymakers, the challenge is to sustain institutional credibility while fostering innovation and inclusivity in the halal ecosystem. Ultimately, the Malaysian case demonstrates that when Islamic branding and marketing are implemented authentically and supported by strong governance, they can shape consumer perceptions in ways that drive sustainable growth, consumer trust, and global competitiveness.

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