

Religious Marketing Communication Approach in Brand Activation Strategy in Islamic Products

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of the halal industry and rising religious awareness among Muslim consumers have pushed companies to move beyond purely commercial marketing toward strategies that also address consumers' spiritual values, known as Religious Marketing Communication. Although prior studies confirm that religiosity shapes halal purchase intention and consumer trust, none have specifically examined how religious values are operationalized within brand activation strategies for Islamic and halal products, particularly in Indonesia. This study analyzes the concept of Religious Marketing Communication, examines its relevance to brand activation in Islamic and halal products, and describes its implementation strategies. A qualitative library research method was used, analyzing secondary data from books and journal articles through content analysis. Findings show that effective brand activation depends on authentic, ethical communication aligned with sharia principles, supported by storytelling, community empowerment, responsible digital engagement, and consistency between brand messages and business practices; religiosity also influences purchasing decisions, trust, message effectiveness, and loyalty, while inauthentic use of religious symbols risks consumer backlash. These findings contribute theoretically to marketing communication literature and offer practical guidance for marketers and halal industry regulators. In conclusion, Religious Marketing Communication is a strategic approach for building authentic, long-term brand-consumer relationships through the integration of spiritual and ethical values.

Keywords: religious marketing communication; brand activation; islamic marketing; halal products; religiosity; consumer behavior.

INTRODUCTION

In general, fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) are marketed through communication strategies that emphasize functional benefits (Holloway, 2024), product quality, price, and emotional value related to consumers' lifestyle and self-image. These marketing messages are generally designed to influence consumer attitudes and behaviors by highlighting the product's advantages, appearance, comfort, and various psychological and social needs that consumers have (Braca et al., 2023). According to Kotler, (2021), "Marketing communication is the means by which a company seeks to inform, persuade, and remind consumers about its products and brands, both directly and indirectly." Thus, marketing communication not only functions as a medium of information delivery, but also as a strategic instrument to build relationships with consumers, shape brand perception, and drive purchasing decisions.

This view is strengthened by Belch and Belch (2021) who explain that Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) is a strategic process that integrates various forms of corporate communication to produce consistent messages and be able to build long-term relationships with consumers. Therefore, the effectiveness of marketing communication is not only determined by the quality of the products offered, but also by the company's ability to

craft messages that are relevant to the characteristics, needs, values, and culture of its target consumers.

In its development, marketing communication strategies no longer only prioritize the functional benefits of the product, but also utilize symbolic and emotional approaches that are able to build psychological closeness with consumers (Saratian et al., 2024). Keller, (2013) explains that strong brands are built through positive associations embedded in the consumer's memory. Therefore, companies are increasingly utilizing cultural values, traditions, and social identities as part of their brand communication strategies to create stronger emotional bonding. This phenomenon is evident in the use of religious values as part of marketing communication strategies.

In contrast to conventional approaches that emphasize product benefits, marketing communication with religious nuances seeks to bring spiritual meaning, moral values, togetherness, social concern, gratitude, and religious identity into marketing messages. This approach shows that companies not only sell products, but also build emotional relationships through values that people believe in. According to Wilson, (2012), marketing that integrates Islamic values is not only oriented towards economic profit, but also pays attention to ethical aspects, social responsibility, and conformity with the religious values of consumers. This shows that religious elements can be one of the sources of differentiation of brand communication, especially in societies that have a high level of religiosity.

The phenomenon of religious-based marketing communication is becoming increasingly interesting in Indonesia, which is the country with the largest Muslim population in the world. Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS, 2024), around 87% of Indonesia's population is Muslim. These demographic conditions create opportunities as well as challenges for companies in designing communication strategies that are in line with the cultural and religious values of the community. It is not surprising that religious momentum such as the month of Ramadan, Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, and Christmas is often used by various companies as part of seasonal marketing strategies.

Among these various momentums, the month of Ramadan is the most prominent period in marketing communication practices in Indonesia. In addition to being marked by an increase in household consumption activities, Ramadan is also a momentum loaded with spiritual values, family togetherness, social care, and sharing traditions (Abo-Zena & Hassan, 2024). Google, Temasek, and Bain & Company reports in 2024 show that during Ramadan there is an increase in shopping activities, digital media consumption, and people's interaction with various digital platforms, making this period one of the most important marketing seasons for various brands.

Therefore, various companies, especially those engaged in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector, have consistently adapted their communication strategies by presenting religious themes in various marketing activities. These religious nuances are not only manifested through television advertisements or digital campaigns, but are also implemented in various brand activation activities. In this context, brand activation is no longer just aimed at increasing brand awareness or encouraging sales, but also creates a brand experience that is in line with the religious values that live in society. Through various interactive activities, such as sharing programs during Ramadan, social activities, shared iftar experiences, and collaborations with religious communities, the company seeks to build a deeper emotional

connection with consumers and strengthen the brand image as part of the social and spiritual life of the community.

Thus, the phenomenon of using symbols, narratives, and religious values in brand activation activities is a form of transformation of marketing communication strategies from an approach that is solely oriented towards product benefits to an approach that is more oriented towards meaning creation and emotional engagement). This phenomenon is interesting to study because it shows that religious values not only function as a cultural identity of the community, but have also become one of the strategic elements in building effective brand communication in the midst of a religious Indonesian society.

Although the theoretical foundations of Religious Marketing Communication have been discussed by Mottner, (2007); Wilson, (2012), empirical evidence on how religiosity translates into concrete marketing outcomes continues to accumulate. Riyadi et al., (2025) empirically demonstrated that religiosity, trust, and product judgment significantly shape Muslim consumers' halal brand purchase intention. In the Indonesian context, Zeqiri et al., (2026) found that halal awareness, halal certification, and religiosity jointly influence purchase intention toward imported food products, underscoring the relevance of religious values in local consumption decisions. More recently, Koc et al., (2025) confirmed, through structural equation modeling among 847 Muslim consumers, that the belief and practice dimensions of religiosity exert distinct effects on attitude and purchase intention toward halal products.

These empirical studies confirm the behavioral relevance of religiosity but have not specifically examined how religious values are operationalized within brand activation strategies, which is the specific gap this study addresses. The novelty of this research lies in its attempt to conceptually bridge the theoretical framework of Religious Marketing Communication with the practical dimension of brand activation for Islamic and halal products in the Indonesian market, an intersection that has not been explicitly mapped in prior studies. This research is considered urgent given the accelerating growth of Indonesia's halal industry, the increasing scrutiny Muslim consumers place on the authenticity of religious branding, and the risk of consumer backlash when religious symbols are used inconsistently with actual business practices.

Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich the marketing communication literature by offering a conceptual framework that connects Religious Marketing Communication with brand activation practice, an area that remains underdeveloped compared to studies on conventional brand communication. Practically, the findings are expected to provide marketing practitioners, particularly in the halal and Islamic product sectors, with reference points for designing brand activation strategies that are authentic, ethical, and aligned with sharia principles, while avoiding the risk of superficial or exploitative use of religious symbols. The implications of this study extend to brand managers, regulators of the halal industry, and academics seeking to develop measurement models for religiosity-based brand engagement in future quantitative research.

This study aims to analyze the concept of Religious Marketing Communication as a marketing communication approach that integrates religious values in modern marketing activities, examine the relevance of the application of Religious Marketing Communication in brand activation strategies, especially in Islamic and halal products in Indonesia, describe various brand activation strategies that are in accordance with Islamic marketing principles,

including communication that is authenticity, storytelling, community empowerment, digital media utilization, and consistency between brand messages and business practices, analyze the results of empirical research on the influence of religiosity, trust, religious messages, consumer loyalty, and the risk of exploitation of religious symbols on the effectiveness of marketing communication, Formulate the implications of the application of Religious Marketing Communication as a communication strategy that is able to build trust, ethical and sustainable consumer engagement, and loyalty.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach with a library research method. This approach was chosen because the study aimed to conceptually examine the development of Religious Marketing Communication as a marketing communication strategy for Islamic and halal products based on marketing theories, previous research findings, and various relevant scientific references. The data used were secondary data obtained from various sources, including academic books, national and international journal articles, scientific proceedings, research reports, and official publications that discussed marketing communication, brand activation, Islamic marketing, Muslim consumer behavior, and the halal industry.

The data collection technique was carried out through documentation studies by identifying, selecting, and reviewing various literature relevant to the research focus. Furthermore, the data were analyzed using content analysis through several stages, namely: literature collection, data reduction based on thematic relevance, grouping information into key themes, such as the concept of Religious Marketing Communication, brand activation strategies, Islamic marketing, Muslim consumer behavior, and empirical research findings, data interpretation by connecting various theories and research results and the preparation of a descriptive-analytical synthesis to produce a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of Religious Marketing Communication in building relationships between brands and Muslim consumers.

To increase the credibility of the study, source triangulation was applied by comparing various theories, empirical research findings, and expert opinions so that more objective and comprehensive conclusions were obtained. As this study employs a library research design, the research instrument used was a literature recording and coding sheet developed by the researchers, containing fields for source identity, publication year, key concepts, and relevant findings, which guided the extraction and classification of information from each source. The literature search was conducted through academic databases, namely Google Scholar, Scopus, and the Indonesian Science and Technology Index (Sinta), using keyword combinations such as "religious marketing," "Islamic marketing communication," "brand activation," and "halal consumer behavior."

The inclusion criteria applied were: publications in English or Indonesian, peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, or official institutional reports, and sources published between 1983 and 2025, with priority given to publications from the last ten years (2015-2025); sources that were not peer-reviewed, non-academic (e.g., blog posts or opinion pieces), or unrelated to the core themes of the study were excluded. Of the literature initially identified, a total of twenty-two sources met the inclusion criteria and were used as the primary basis of analysis, as presented in the reference list. It is acknowledged that, as with library research in

general, this method is inherently limited by its reliance on secondary data and the subjectivity involved in thematic interpretation; consequently, the conceptual synthesis produced in this study should be complemented by future empirical validation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Conceptual Foundations of Brand Activation and Religious Marketing Communication

Brand activation is a marketing strategy that aims to "bring to life" a brand through direct experiences, interactions, and consumer engagement to create strong emotional connections and drive action (such as purchases, loyalty, or advocacy). This concept evolved from a shift from traditional marketing to an experiential marketing approach. Keller, (2013) in *Marketing Management*, they emphasize the importance of creating customer experience and engagement. Brand activation is understood as part of an effort to build relationships through interactions that make consumers "feel" the brand, not just know it. Schmitt, (1999) through the book *Experiential Marketing*, Schmitt explained that brands must create sensory, emotional, cognitive, and social experiences. Brand activation is a real implementation of experiential marketing, where consumers engage directly with the brand.

Brand activation strategies in Islamic and *halal* products require a more sensitive communication approach compared to consumer products in general. This is because the communication that is built not only touches the functional and emotional dimensions of consumers, but also relates to the spiritual dimension that is part of their religious beliefs and identity. In this context, the success of brand activation is not solely measured by the ability to create a brand experience or increase sales, but also by the ability of brands to build trust, credibility, and conformity with the religious values embraced by their target consumers. Thus, marketing activities on Islamic and halal products must be able to integrate commercial values with ethical and spiritual values in a balanced manner.

The development of religious-based marketing communication is a relatively new phenomenon in the study of marketing science. Compared to various studies on consumer behavior, brand communication, and digital marketing, research on religious marketing is still relatively limited. In fact, the increasing public awareness of religious identity, especially in the global halal industry, has made the religious dimension one of the factors that increasingly affect consumer preferences and purchasing decisions.

Mottner, (2007) explained that religious marketing is a marketing process that is not only oriented to the offering of products or services, but also emphasizes ethical values, morality, and beliefs that are in accordance with the beliefs of a religious community. According to him, religious marketing requires a deep understanding of the spiritual needs of consumers so that the marketing messages conveyed do not contradict the religious values they adhere. In other words, the religious dimension in marketing should not be seen simply as a communication attribute or commercial strategy, but should reflect the values that are actually embodied in the company's activities. Mottner also emphasized that religious marketing is still a relatively under-appreciated field in academic studies, so more empirical research, scientific forums, and academic discussions are needed to enrich the development of theories and practices in this field.

This view is in line with Wilson, (2012), who states that Islamic marketing is not just the marketing of halal products, but a marketing approach based on sharia principles, honesty,

justice, social responsibility, and benefit to society. In this perspective, a brand's success is measured not only by the achievement of economic benefits, but also by its ability to build long-term relationships based on the values of trust, transparency, and integrity. Therefore, the brand activation strategy applied to Islamic products must be able to present a brand experience that is not only commercially appealing but also reinforces the spiritual and moral values that Muslim consumers value.

Furthermore, Kartajaya, (2021) through the concept of Marketing 5.0 explain that modern consumers increasingly consider the value aspect in choosing a brand. They not only evaluate the quality of the product but also pay attention to whether the company has a commitment to social, cultural, ethical, and sustainability values. In the context of halal and Islamic products, this trend shows that consumers expect brands to be able to demonstrate consistency between communication messages, corporate behavior, and business practices that are in accordance with sharia principles. The mismatch between religious messages and company practices has the potential to reduce the level of consumer trust in brands.

Therefore, the concept of Religious Marketing Communication is an important framework in designing brand activation strategies for Islamic and halal products. This approach ensures that every brand communication activity not only aims to attract attention or increase consumer engagement, but also builds meaning, credibility, and trust through the delivery of messages that are in line with sharia principles and religious values of the community. Its implementation can be realized through the selection of narratives that are in accordance with Islamic teachings, the proportionate and ethical use of religious symbols, the implementation of social responsibility programs during religious momentum, and the creation of brand experiences that reflect the values of care, togetherness, honesty, and usefulness. Thus, brand activation in Islamic products not only serves as a means of promotion, but also as a medium to build a stronger emotional and spiritual relationship between the brand and its consumers. There are several aspects.

First, brands need to understand that consumers of halal products are not only looking for "halal" labels but also trust and blessings (barakah). Therefore, a brand activation strategy must be able to present an experience that strengthens that belief. For example, activation through halal education events, Islamic lifestyle workshops, or digital campaigns that display the halal certification process in a transparent manner. This kind of activation not only informs but also builds a sense of security and emotional closeness. Religious marketing in the concept of Islam is related to Islamic marketing or Ali Hasan (2010) calls it spiritual marketing where the basic concept of spiritual marketing is the cultivation of creation, taste, heart, and karsa (implementation) which is guided by the integrity of faith, piety, and obedience to the sharia of Allah SWT. It also includes efforts to educate consumers about products that are in accordance with Islamic law. He found that an individual's level of religiosity affects attitudes towards products, brand preferences, and sensitivity to marketing messages. Religious consumers tend to be more selective and consider moral aspects

Second, the Religious Marketing Communication approach emphasizes the importance of the values of honesty, simplicity, and responsibility. In the practice of brand activation, this means avoiding excessive claims, unconventional visuals, or manipulative strategies. Instead, brands must present communication that is polite, authentic, and relevant to the daily lives of Muslim consumers. For example, the Ramadan campaign that not only focuses on discounts,

but also invites sharing and social concern. According to Quraish Shihab in Ali Hasan (2010), in spiritualization marketing must be designed in such a way based on 3 pillars, namely:

- a. Marketing at the level of intellectual intelligence that focuses on strategy, program (product, place, price, promotion-marketing mix), differentiation and selling
- b. Marketing at the level of emotional intelligence/feeling/taste is characterized by the concept of customer relationship, emotional branding and experiential marketing whose essence is to include emotional values to pamper customers with affection and attention so that they can give birth to experiences with positive value in using products.
- c. Marketing at the level of spiritual intelligence is marketing based on the values of the Islamic faith as exemplified by the Prophet PBUH, namely honesty, amanah (credibility, responsibility), fathanah (intelligent and wise), tabligh (communicative)

Taken together, these three pillars describe an integrated hierarchy of spiritualized marketing rather than three separate tactics. The intellectual dimension establishes the strategic and programmatic foundation of marketing (product, place, price, and promotion, together with differentiation and selling) (Nugraha et al., 2026), the emotional dimension builds on that foundation through customer relationship management and experiential marketing that engage consumers affectively, and the spiritual dimension, exemplified by the Prophetic values of honesty (*sidq*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), wisdom (*fathanah*), and communicativeness (*tabligh*), gives the first two dimensions their ethical and religious grounding. In practice, brand activation for Islamic and halal products is most effective when these three levels are pursued simultaneously rather than sequentially, since a strategically sound and emotionally engaging campaign that lacks spiritual grounding risks being perceived as inauthentic, whereas one grounded only in spiritual symbolism without strategic and emotional design risks being commercially ineffective.

Third, storytelling is an important element in the activation of Islamic brands. The story raised should not only sell the product but also convey spiritual values and inspiration. For example, raising the story of halal MSME actors, the migration journey, or the importance of choosing halal products as part of worship. Thus, brand activation is not only a means of promotion, but also a medium of da'wah that is light and relevant.

Fourth, community utilization has a strategic role. Brands can activate the Muslim community through collaborations with religiously credible influencers, ustaz/ustazah, or hijrah communities. Activations such as joint studies, charity programs, or mosque-based social movements can strengthen engagement while expanding brand reach organically. However, it is important to ensure that this collaboration does not seem exploitative but is based on intentions and values that are in line.

Fifth, in the digital era, brand activation can be strengthened through interactive and educational online platforms. Content such as short videos on the halal lifestyle, live sessions with sharia experts, or user-generated content campaigns with Islamic themes can increase audience participation. Here, language and visuals must be maintained to be polite, inclusive, and not to offend differences in sects or religious practices. For example, certain religious communities have a more active habit of being more active on social media platforms or forums that discuss religious themes. Religious events, such as seminars or conferences, can also be a good place to promote relevant products. An example of a religion-based marketing approach

is for example advertising products labeled Halal, where in the context of marketing to Muslim consumers, many companies prioritize halal products.

Sixth, the success of this strategy relies heavily on consistency between brand messaging and practices. Muslim consumers tend to be critical of inconsistencies, so brands must ensure that the entire value chain, from production to distribution, is strictly in accordance with halal principles and Islamic ethics. Stated that in the context of Islamic marketing, marketing must be based on sharia principles such as honesty (*sidq*), trust, and justice. Religious marketing is not just a communication strategy, but it also encompasses the entire business practice (Arham, 2010).

Einstein, (2008) explained that religious marketing is also closely related to branding activities. As explained earlier, marketing is closely related to branding activities. They not only sell products but also convey their commitment to religious values in their business practices. In relation to marketing activities of religion, marketing activities are closely related to social values such as social concern and religious values. Religion teaches humans good behavior, therefore many religions teach the importance of social contribution, such as zakat in Islam or charity in Christianity. Companies that engage in corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities related to charity, humanitarian aid, or community building can attract religious consumers. This shows that the brand is in line with the religious teachings they follow.

Religious marketing is a strategic approach that is rooted in a deep understanding of consumer values and beliefs. Experts agree that religiosity significantly influences consumption behavior, while research shows that this approach is effective in building trust, engagement, and loyalty, as long as it's done authentically and ethically. Thus, religious marketing is not simply the use of religious symbols or messages, but the comprehensive integration of spiritual values and modern marketing practices.

Various empirical studies show that the Religious Marketing approach has a significant influence on consumer behavior, especially in societies with high levels of religiosity. In recent decades, the growing attention to the halal industry and value-based marketing has led to the development of studies examining the relationship between religiosity, marketing communication, consumer trust, and brand loyalty. These findings show that religious values not only influence consumers' preferences for a product, but also shape their perceptions of brand credibility, the quality of marketing communications, and long-term purchasing decisions. Here are the findings:

The Influence of Religiosity on Purchase Decisions

One of the most consistent findings in various studies is that the level of religiosity has a positive influence on consumers' purchasing decisions. The higher the level of religiosity a person, the greater the tendency to choose products and services that are considered in accordance with their religious teachings, such as halal food and beverages, halal cosmetics, modest fashion, halal medicines, and Islamic financial services. From the perspective of consumer behavior, religiosity serves as a value system that influences the way individuals evaluate a product, shape attitudes, and make purchasing decisions.

An example of a case is the marketing activities of Wardah Cosmetics where Wardah is one of the examples of the success of halal cosmetic products in Indonesia. When it first

introduced the concept of "Halal Cosmetics", Wardah not only offered quality cosmetics, but also provided a guarantee that all of its products had obtained halal certification from the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI). For Muslim consumers who have a high level of religiosity, halal labels are an important consideration in choosing cosmetics because they are related to religious beliefs.

Wardah's success shows that religiosity is able to influence consumer preferences so that they prefer products that are considered in accordance with religious values over other products that have a similar function. Wilson and Liu (2011) explained that Muslim consumers not only consider the aspects of product quality, price, and benefits, but also pay attention to the conformity of the product with sharia principles. Similarly, Alserhan, (2011) emphasized that for Muslim consumers, consumption is part of the implementation of religious values so that purchasing decisions are often influenced by moral and spiritual considerations, not solely economic factors. Therefore, the level of religiosity is one of the important determinants in purchasing behavior in the halal market.

Trust as a Key Factor

Trust is one of the main factors that determine the success of marketing Islamic and halal products. Various studies show that the existence of halal certification or labels is not enough to build consumer confidence. Consumers also evaluate the company's reputation, brand credibility, transparency of the production process, consistency of communication, and the company's commitment to implementing the communicated values. Consumers also assess whether the company is actually executing business practices that are in line with the values communicated. An example is the trust-building strategy carried out by Shaamil Quran where, they communicate as printing the Al Quran with materials that are guaranteed to be halal, from using paper materials that have halal labels, using glue and glue brushes that do not use prohibited materials. All of this is communicated through the Brand Activation activity "Quran Tourism".

Morgan and Hunt (1994) through the Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing explain that trust is the main foundation in building a long-term relationship between a company and a consumer (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). In the context of religious marketing, Wilson, (2012) added that Muslim consumers will trust brands that consistently demonstrate ethical business behavior, honesty, responsibility, and in accordance with sharia principles¹. Therefore authentic Religious Marketing Communication can increase the level of consumer trust while strengthening the relationship between the brand and its customers.

The Effectiveness of Religious Messages in Marketing Communication

Studies have also shown that marketing messages that contain religious values tend to be more effective in attracting consumer attention and building emotional attachment, especially in groups of people with high levels of religiosity. These messages generally raise themes such as social care, honesty, gratitude, family togetherness, sharing with others, and worship values that are close to people's lives. An example of this is the Marjan Syrup Advertising strategy

¹ Wilson, J. A. J. (2012). *The New Wave of Transformational Islamic Marketing*. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*.

during Ramadan where for many years Marjan has consistently launched Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr-themed advertisements. Interestingly, the ads rarely focus on product specifications, but rather feature stories of family togetherness, friendship, breaking the fast together, forgiving each other, and the value of sharing.

This approach manages to build a strong association between Marjan and the month of Ramadan so that when entering Ramadan, consumers automatically remember the brand. This shows that religious messages packaged through storytelling are more effective than communication that only highlights the benefits of the product. Another example is the Ramadan campaign from Indomie, Bimoli, and SariWangi which consistently elevates the values of family, gratitude, and social care.

According to Keller, (2013), effective brand communication is one that is able to build positive associations in the consumer's memory. In the context of religious marketing, the use of narratives that are aligned with religious values can strengthen brand meaning and create stronger emotional engagement than messages that only highlight the functional benefits of the product. This phenomenon is evident in various marketing campaigns during the month of Ramadan, when many companies present messages that emphasize the meaning of togetherness, caring, and spiritual reflection as part of the brand's communication strategy.

Influence on Consumer Loyalty

In addition to influencing purchasing decisions, religious marketing approaches also contribute to the formation of consumer loyalty. Loyalty is not only manifested in the form of repurchases, but it is also reflected in consumers' commitment to continue using, recommending, and maintaining a relationship with a brand in the long term. An example of this is banking products from Bank Syariah Indonesia (BSI), where most customers choose BSI not only because of its banking products, but also because of the belief that its operational system is in accordance with sharia principles. Customer loyalty is not only based on the quality of service, but also on the value congruence between personal beliefs and the values carried by the company. The same can be found in users of halal products such as Wardah, Kahf, or Zoya. Many consumers continue to use the brand even though there are alternative products because they feel that the brand represents their identity and life values.

Oliver, (1999) defines loyalty as a strong commitment to make consistent repurchases despite the existence of various product alternatives in the market. In the context of Islamic products, consumer loyalty is formed when the brand is able to demonstrate consistency between the values communicated and the business practices being carried out. Consumers will feel that the brand not only meets their functional needs, but also supports the life values they believe in. Therefore, loyalty to halal products often has a stronger emotional and spiritual dimension than loyalty to conventional products.

Risk of Exploitation of Religious Values

While the use of religious values in marketing communications offers a variety of benefits, a number of studies also warn of the risks of overdoing or inauthenticity. The use of religious symbols solely for commercial purposes can cause negative perceptions among consumers. Instead of improving brand image, the practice has the potential to generate distrust, public criticism, and even rejection of the brand (consumer backlash).

Mottner, (2007) emphasized that religious marketing must be built on ethical grounds, respect for religious values, and a deep understanding of the characteristics of religious communities. In line with that, Wilson & Liu, (2011) remind that Muslim consumers are increasingly critical in evaluating the authenticity of a brand. They are able to distinguish between companies that truly implement Islamic values in their business practices and companies that simply use religious symbols as promotional tools. Therefore, the success of Religious Marketing Communication relies heavily on consistency between communication messages, company behavior, product quality, and commitment to the values claimed by the brand.

Overall, these empirical findings show that religiosity is an important factor that influences consumer behavior in the halal market. The success of a religious marketing strategy is not only determined by the use of religious symbols or messages, but also by the company's ability to build trust, demonstrate authenticity, and present a brand experience that is aligned with the spiritual values of consumers. Thus, the implementation of Religious Marketing Communication needs to be ethical, consistent, and oriented towards creating long-term relationships between brands and their consumers.

By integrating Brand Activation and Religious Marketing Communication, brands are not only able to increase awareness and engagement, but also build deeper relationships, based on beliefs and spiritual values. This makes the brand not just a business entity, but part of the consumer's life journey in carrying out their beliefs.

CONCLUSION

Religious Marketing Communication terbukti mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai religius ke dalam komunikasi merek untuk membangun hubungan yang tidak hanya berorientasi komersial, tetapi juga etis dan bermakna spiritual. Pendekatan ini sangat relevan bagi strategi brand activation produk Islami dan halal, seiring meningkatnya kesadaran konsumen Muslim Indonesia dan berkembangnya industri halal. Implementasinya yang efektif memerlukan storytelling yang autentik, pemberdayaan komunitas, keterlibatan digital yang bertanggung jawab, serta konsistensi antara pesan merek dan praktik bisnis, bukan sekadar penggunaan simbol religius secara simbolis.

Temuan empiris juga menunjukkan bahwa religiositas secara signifikan memengaruhi keputusan pembelian, kepercayaan, efektivitas pesan, dan loyalitas konsumen, sementara penggunaan simbol religius yang tidak autentik berisiko memicu penolakan konsumen. Dengan demikian, Religious Marketing Communication yang dijalankan secara etis dan konsisten dapat menjadi strategi pembangunan merek jangka panjang. Sebagai studi konseptual berbasis kajian pustaka, penelitian ini memiliki keterbatasan karena hanya mengandalkan data sekunder tanpa pengujian empiris primer. Penelitian selanjutnya disarankan untuk menguji kerangka ini secara kuantitatif.

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