

The Effect of Religiosity on Muslim Consumer's Switching Behavior in the Greater Jakarta Area

Nadhira Buhari^a

^a. Sampoerna University, Jakarta, Indonesia
nadhirabuhari@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Objective – This study aims to gain a broad perspective and examine the impact of religiosity on customers' brand switching behavior.

Methodology – Self Administered questionnaires are distributed amongst 60 citizens of Muslim religion based in the Greater Jakarta Area. Brand switching behavior and religiosity will be tested by correlation and Alpha-test.

Findings – Religiosity affects the brand switching behavior of consumers. The results of this study reveal that the independent variable (religion/religiosity) and the dependent variable (religion/religiosity) have a significant positive association (brand switching behavior).

Novelty – This is a unique study exploring religion's impact on brand switching behavior.

Keywords: *switching behavior; buying decision; religiosity; Muslim consumers; Indonesia*

JEL Classification: M39, M31

Article Info: Received 14 January 2022, Accepted 10 July 2022

Article Correspondence: nadhirabuhari@gmail.com

Recommended Citation: Buhari, N. (2022). The Effect of Religiosity on Muslim Customer's Switching Behavior in the Greater Jakarta Area. Journal of Multidisciplinary Issues 2(1) 10 – 17.

I. INTRODUCTION

Brand switching can be defined as transitioning from routine utilization of one item or brand to consistent use of a similar alternative item. Brand switching is generally standard with items that have no extraordinary seen quality change across brands like mineral water, tissue, or instant noodles in Indonesia.

Part of the switching factor consideration could be one's belief or religion. For centuries, religion has been acknowledged as a powerful societal factor in shaping human behavior for a long time (Mokhlis, 2006). Religion has always significantly influenced different aspects of life, including a consumer's decision-making on choosing a product or brand. Islam establishes a distinct culture by providing a way of life, both organizationally and personally. As a result, it is said that the absence of religion in the marketing of a product could cause switching behavior (Saeed, 2014). Customers could be holding to similar products of similar value and make a final decision by looking at which product contains a message that aligns more with their value.

The knowledge of religion's effect on consumer brand switching behavior can be improved. The claim of halal brands or products has grown over the years. Studying the brand switching behavior due to religious factors will give a better understanding of how to get consumers' interest and efficiently market a product with certain branding. For companies with a desire and capacity to learn, identifying the core causes of the departures of customers can create business methods that can re-establish the connection on a more solid foundation with the customers to win their trust back. (Reichheld, 1996). The result from this study will provide broader knowledge on how companies can win customers back through the medium of religiosity.

This study focuses on one factor: the religiousness of customers with the following as the study's objective: to examine the influence of religion on brand switching. The study contributes to the sales and marketing studies, explicitly discussing the effect of religiosity on consumers' buying decisions and the effect of religious messages on the switching behavior of Indonesian consumers.

The scope of this research will be limited to the Indonesian market segment considering that the study is conducted in the country. As the third most populated country, Indonesia has a majority of Muslim citizens. Inhabited by a vast number of Muslims, the country serves as a great place to explore the topic

with an adequate population for study purposes. It appears that determining if religion impacts brand switching would be critical for businesses in the country to increase customer satisfaction, retain existing consumers, and attract new customers. The findings of this study will be relevant to business players who take an interest in Islamic product development, as well as marketers who specialize in Islamic branding and marketing.

The research design for the study will use data gathered from a self-administered questionnaire spread out to the Indonesian Muslim consumer segment. The collected data will then be processed through a simple regression model to find correlations between variables. In elaboration, the research will take place in a time frame of fewer than six months, starting in September of 2021.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Religion/Religiosity

According to Hamouri (1999), Muslims would consume products that are most appealing to them, with the condition that it must be permitted in Islam. They would not choose items that are illegal or *haram* (prohibited by religion). The study done by Hamouri takes into account how Islamic teaching affects Muslim consumer behavior. The findings of Esso and Dibb (2004) examine the association between religiosity and consumer decision to prove that religion substantially impacts consumer shopping behaviors. The authors compare and contrast the shopping habits of people of various religious beliefs and conclude that religious affiliation influences consumer behavior after examining Hindus, Muslims, and Catholics. Furthermore, Esso and Dibb also proposed that future cross-cultural studies could incorporate their findings' significance and religious affiliations.

The book *Islamic Branding and Marketing* by Temporal (2011) argues that giving customers what they genuinely want is always a good idea. On the other hand, it is a mistake to believe that Islam as a religion does not influence the needs, interests, and desires of its adherents. The branding and marketing executives of the Western have a comprehensive understanding of the usual vital markets they deal with. However, Muslim markets have never been extensively addressed, whether in Muslim minority or majority countries. Commonly, companies are not marketing a religion; instead, they are addressing appropriate and relevant consumer needs and wants by establishing brands that appeal to a worldwide religious population, evincing how delicate it is to segment markets based on religion. A prior study of a similar purpose has also been conducted by Kwifi et al. (2019) on the cognitive brain response towards halal products by using the fMRI technology to read the brain activity of Muslim consumers when presented with halal and non-halal products. The finding of this study shows that there is a specific part of the brain related to consumers' decision to choose halal products.

Brand Switching Behavior

Brand switching is defined by Sharma et al. (2017), Kumar and Chaarlas (2011), and Koech et al. (2018) as a transition in the purchase process marked by changes from one brand to another or from one product to another within the same category. Sivakumaran and Peter (2020) scrutinize the factors affecting consumer brand switching behavior. The findings from this research show that consumers switching between similar products and services are majorly driven by personality traits and other psychological factors. The findings by Saeed (2014) demonstrate that brand switching behavior is influenced significantly by religion. The study examined religiosity, Islamic branding, and Islamic marketing mix as the influencing factors of brand switching behavior resulting in a positive correlation of the three variables with switching behavior. Muslims are aware of items permissible by the religion and have a particularly positive attitude toward them, which would further influence their intention to purchase them. In contrast, Muslim consumers do not hesitate to remove *haram* products (forbidden according to Islamic law) from their daily consumption.

Live examples from the market growth might help understand the value of religion in marketing and branding. The global halal business is one of the fastest expanding markets, with an annual value of almost USD 2.3 trillion (Azam & Abdullah, 2020). Personal care and cosmetics companies like Unilever and L'Oreal, as well as local brands, have launched products and campaigns to win the loyalty of this rapidly rising market sector in the developing globe. On the other hand, Muslims are naturally compelled to boycott

brands that appear to contradict some Islamic precepts actively. The phrase actively implies that not only doing it themselves, but these individuals are also actively encouraging others to boycott.

For example, most Muslim customers who are familiar with particular brands claim that the quality and price are comparable, if not superior. Nonetheless, many Muslims may cease buying them because the Muslim community pointed them out as lacking halal certifications and hence as lousy conduct, a sin; no one wants to be perceived as sinning. Being associated with a horrible deed by Muslim customers is a marketer's worst fear.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study is conducted to evaluate the influencing factors in consumer brand switching behavior. Therefore, this research will be a descriptive study to determine the relationship between the selected variable in the brand switching behavior of the Indonesian Muslim consumer segment. The study utilizes primary data sourcing to get the investigated variable. The data will be collected through a self-administered questionnaire that is spread to a total of 60 participants in two weeks that will be curated to the relevant participants for the study purpose. The questionnaire uses a Likert five-scale measurement referring to a prior study by Saeed (2014). Fifty-seven out of 60 questionnaires came back filled with one outlier data of a non-Muslim respondent. Relevant respondents will then be the population observed to find the correlation between the variables.

Table 1. Variables Identification

Variables	Description
Independent Variable	
Religiosity	
Ideological (<i>Id</i>)	How individuals use religious values in making a decision in life
Ritualistic (<i>R</i>)	How committed individuals toward practicing religious ritual
Intellectual (<i>In</i>)	How cultured individuals in religious knowledge
Consequential (<i>C</i>)	How individuals see religious consequences in life
Experience (<i>E</i>)	How individuals experience feelings about doing wrong or against religious belief
Dependent Variable	
Brand Switching Behavior	
Attitude towards switching (<i>ATS</i>)	How consumers perceive the idea of switching
Subjective Norms (<i>SN</i>)	The preference to follow the majority choice
Perceived Behavioral Control (<i>PBC</i>)	How consumers would act toward switching
Personality trait (<i>PT</i>)	The openness to switching and the preference to stay with a brand

The hypothesis model reflects that religiosity has an impact on brand switching behavior. Therefore, the hypothesis model is as follows: $b0 + b1 \text{ religiosity} + e$

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis

The detailed demographics of respondents for observing our dependent and independent variables are shown in Table 2. The total number of observations in the study was 57, comprising Muslim respondents aged 15 to 35 years old in the Greater Jakarta Area.

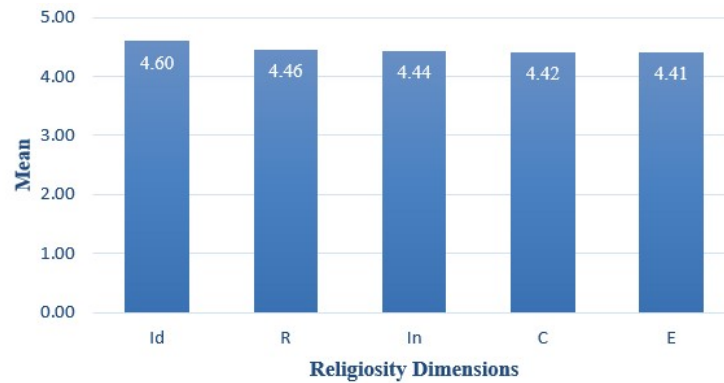
The respondents' religiosity is measured using five dimensions taken from Rehman (2010). Overall, the respondents show a high level of religiosity, with an overall mean of 4.46 out of 5. This is anticipated with

Indonesia as a Muslim majority country, applying the Islamic values in many aspects of daily activities. The respondents show the highest religiosity level ideologically. This means that religion is looked at strongly as the foundation for the respondents to carry out their life. More specifically, the mean of ideological religiosity of the respondents was 4.60, with ritualistic religiosity level of 4.46, intellectual religiosity of 4.44, consequential religiosity of 4.42, and experiential religiosity of 4.41. Respondents have a generally equal level of religiosity across the five dimensions measured, as seen in Figure 1.

Table 2. Demographics of Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	41	71.93
Male	16	28.07
Total	57	100.00
Age group		
15-25	56	98.25
25-35	1	1.75
Total	57	100.00
Latest Education		
High school	46	80.70
University	11	19.30
Total	57	100.00
Working status		
Student	51	89.47
Employed	5	8.77
Unemployed	1	1.75
Total	57	100.00

The brand switching behavior score of the respondents can be seen in Figure 2 below. Based on a scale of 1 to 5, the respondents show a moderate willingness to brand switching behavior. Among four dimensions used to measure the switching behavior, respondents show a moderate high attitude toward switching, which means they do not mind switching from their common brand. Subjective norms refer to how respondents feel more at ease using brands they perceive as the norm within the community. Respondents show an average score on this dimension of 3.65 out of 5. The perceived behavioral control of the respondents scores the lowest amongst the others. This dimension is supposed to measure if respondents find switching brands to be a bother and irritable. Gaining the lowest score, we can argue that the respondents do not find switching brands to have any significant impact on their daily life. Personality traits measure the three remaining scores. The highest scoring item in the brand switching behavior measurement comes from the personality trait of staying in the comfort zone. The relatively high score of 4.14 out of 5 on this item shows that although seeming not to have a problem in switching brands, the average respondent still feels that continuing with their common brand is more comfortable. This could be due to reasons such as being familiar with the brand or having an emotional connection with the brand through memories.



Note: Id = ideological religiosity, R = ritualistic religiosity, In = intellectual religiosity, C = consequential religiosity, E = experience

Figure 1. Mean Religiosity Based on Dimension

The descriptive analysis of the dependent and independent variables studied in this research is shown in Table 3. Before moving forward to empirical data analysis, the correlation between the variables also needs to be tested. The result of the correlation table of the variables is shown in Table 4. After calculating the correlation of variables, it is seen that all variables correlate with one another with a value that does not surpass 0.9 and -0.9. Therefore, further analysis can be conducted.



Note: ATS = attitude toward switching, SN = subjective norms, PBC = perceived behavioral control, PT = personality trait (1, 2, and 3).

Figure 2. Mean Switching Behavior Willingness

Validity and Reliability Test

Due to the limitation of statistical software, the researcher can only conduct statistical testing using Microsoft Office Excel. The data is collected through a questionnaire with linear scale (Likert 5 scale) answers. Therefore, the respondents can only answer with a metric on a scale of 1 to 5. To conduct the reliability test, Cronbach's alpha test is used with the formula in Figure 4.

$$\rho_T = \frac{k^2 \sigma_{ij}^2}{\sigma_X^2}$$

Figure 3. Cronbach's alpha formula

The calculation resulted in Cronbach's alpha of 0.93. This number shows a very high consistency of answers from the respondents on the questions in the survey, translated into a reliable data source for further processing.

Data Analysis

The hypothesis will be tested through a simple linear regression to get a picture of whether religion affects consumers' brand switching behavior.

Model 1. Switching behavior = $b_0 + b_1 \text{ religiosity (level in scale)} + e$

$H_0: b_1 = 0$. Religiosity does not affect brand switching behavior.

$H_1: b_1 \neq 0$. Religiosity positively affects brand switching behavior.

Regression will be done in Table 5 for model 1. The regression will have switching behavior as the dependent variable with religiosity as the independent variable. The regression result will have a confidence level of 95% and will be used for T-testing to check significance by comparing the p-value with an alpha of 5%.

Table 3. Descriptive Analysis

Religiosity Measurement					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Id1	57	1	5	4.70	1.03
Id2	57	1	5	4.49	0.89
R1	57	1	5	4.33	0.93
R2	57	1	5	4.58	1.00
In1	57	1	5	4.58	1.10
In2	57	1	5	4.30	0.89
C1	57	1	5	4.39	1.18
C2	57	1	5	4.40	1.08
C3	57	1	5	4.46	1.00
E1	57	1	5	4.37	1.08
Switching Behavior Measurement					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ATS	57	1	5	3.72	1.21
SN	57	1	5	3.65	1.04
PBC	57	1	5	3.49	1.23
PT1	57	1	5	4.14	1.01
PT2	57	1	5	3.67	1.02
PT3	57	2	5	3.70	0.93

T-Test

From the regression of model 1, it is found that the P-value of the religiosity variable is 0.00010179. If compared to an alpha of 5%, we will get the result that P-value is smaller than the alpha; $0.0001 < 0.05$. With this result, we can conclude to reject H_0 . This result indicates that the religiosity variable significantly affects consumer brand switching behavior. The final model of the regression is:

Model 1. Switching behavior = $0.694126858 + 0.67905527 \text{ religiosity (level in scale)}$

Table 4. Correlation Table

	Id	R	In	C	E	ATS	SN	PBC	PT
Id	1								
R	0.870814	1							
In	0.870825	0.875083	1						
C	0.888753	0.762984	0.822799	1					
E	0.764243	0.794573	0.788536	0.732784	1				
ATS	0.456903	0.456926	0.422407	0.492011	0.437303	1			
SN	0.243545	0.223426	0.298112	0.295277	0.243609	0.416807	1		
PBC	0.140997	0.123529	0.202937	0.086045	0.171063	0.070712	0.457955	1	
PT	0.534019	0.515436	0.568699	0.527945	0.544575	0.479029	0.480948	0.447770	1

Discussion

The interpretation of this finding is clear: religiosity significantly affects consumers' brand switching behavior. This study proves that switching behavior is affected by the religiosity of the consumers. This result aligns with a previous finding by Saeed (2014) that states religion impacts brand switching behavior. The finding of this study can be related to the widespread marketing narratives that include Islamic teaching in it; for example, a simple line of *bismillahirrahmanirrahim* on the back of a food packaging or using a *hijabi* model to attract more audience in a product advertisement. As a country with an Islam majority, the marketing message tends to be received better when including these Islamic values. Additionally, more products are specifically marketed for the Muslim consumer segment as Islamic branding can also contribute to increased product sales.

Table 5. Regression Summary

Model 1 Regression Summary			
R Square	0.241985912		
	Coefficients	T Stat	P-value
Religiosity	0.67905527	4.19022889	0.00010179

V. CONCLUSION

This study is conducted to determine whether religion affects the product choice of a consumer segment based in a religious country. The study run over 57 samples came out with the result that there is a significant relationship between religiosity and brand switching behavior. This finding might come due to the religious background of each sample as individuals and is supported by the fact of living in the largest Muslim country on the globe.

The finding of this study implies that the marketing team of companies, especially in Indonesia, needs to pay good attention to the religiosity of their market. Though this study is only done on Muslim consumers, it is not erasing the possibility that the same impact on switching behavior may also apply to individuals of other religions. The implication for entrepreneurs or product development managers is the opportunity for new brands to start developing products regarding specific religions. This can be a new marketing strategy that would be good to be explored in the future.

This study holds the limitation of only using a small sample size of consumers in only Greater Jakarta Area. Therefore, this study might not reflect the overall Muslim market in Indonesia, which comprises

approximately 231 million adherents across the country. This research also lacks a sample of an older age group who might be a bigger spender than the young generation. A recommendation for future research is to gather a larger sample size comprising of a wider age group so the research finding would be more reliable than this current study. As this research only studies one specific factor regarding switching behavior, future research can add in other factors or study a more varying religion within the five acknowledged religions in Indonesia or the religions with most adherents across the globe. This way, the result would show applicable findings globally.

REFERENCES

- Al-Kwafi, O. S., Abu Farha, A., & Ahmed, Z. U. (2019). Dynamics of Muslim consumers' behavior toward halal products. *International Journal of Emerging Markets*, 14(4), 689-708.
- Azam, M. S., & Abdullah, M. (2020). Global Halal Industry: Realities and opportunities. *International Journal of Islamic Business Ethics*, 5(1), 47.
- Esso, N. & Dibb, S. (2004). Religious influence on shopping behaviour: an exploratory study. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 20, 683-712.
- Hamouri, Q. (1991). *Rationality, time and accounting*, in Faridi, F. R. (Ed.), *Essays in Islamic Economic Analysis: Selected Readings*, Genuine, New Delhi, pp: 67-81.
- Koech, J. K., Cheruiyot, P., & Cheruiyot, J. (2018). Effect of Product Features on Brand Switching of Tea by Consumers in Kericho Town, Kenya. *Int. J. Econ. Commer. Manag.*, VI, 280-289.
- Kumar, R. R. & Chaarlas, D. L. 2011. Brand Switching in Cellular Phone Service Industry Because of Bill-Related Issues Faced by Clients. *International Journal of Event Management Research*, 1(5), 30-42.
- Mokhlis, S. (2006). The Effect of Religiosity on Shopping Orientation: An Exploratory Study in Malaysia. *The Journal of American Academy of Business*, 9, 64-74.
- Reichheld, F. F. (1996). *The Loyalty Effect*. Harvard Business School Press.
- Saeed, M., & Azmi, I. B. (2016). Brand switching behaviour of Muslim consumers: Development of a conceptual model. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science*, 5(4), 31-39.
- Saeed, M. (2014). Religion and Brand Switching Behaviour of Muslim Consumers. *Middle East Journal of Scientific Research*, 21, 1611-1617.
- Sharma, M. S. B., Sharma, G. & Diwan, R. (2017). Factors Affecting Brand Switching Behavior & Brand Preferences Towards Mobile Phones in Punjab. *People*, 3(1).
- Siti, A. A. B. (1999). *Islamic attributed in consumer decision making: an empirical study in Singapore*. Non-publication Master's thesis, IIUM, Kuala Lumpur.
- Sivakumaran, V. & Peter, S. (2020). Model to Assess Consumer Switching Behaviour. *Proceedings of the International Conference on Industrial Engineering and Operations Management Dubai, UAE*, 153, 2169-8767.
- Temporal, P. (2011). *Islamic branding and marketing: Creating a global Islamic business*. John Wiley & Sons.