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Strategies for Presenting and Marketing Islamic Branded Products to Non-Muslim Consumers

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Abstract

Buying behavior of consumers and decision-making process and criteria of Muslim and non-Muslim consumers are fundamental in spreading the brand of Islamic ethical marketing. Many factors including environment, globalization, purchasing power, consumer population, religious and ethical considerations are essential in increasing the worldwide acceptance of Islamic marketing to all races regardless of religious belief. Hence, the paper attempts to identify the appropriate strategies for presenting these Islamic brands and logos to non-Muslim consumers across the global- space. The paper shall provide insight into how Islamic distribution strategies are displayed to every consumer regardless of their faith or cultural practices. The paper likewise builds upon previous scholarly efforts and research outcomes focusing on management approaches and business strategies suitable for increasing the chances of accepting Islamic brands and logos in Muslim and non-Muslim countries. Previous studies helped in understanding the concepts, current business practices, managerial and theoretical perspectives of Islamic branding. The findings indicate that the usage of Islamic brands played a mediating role in strengthening Islamic branded products across non-Muslim countries. Islamic brand was found to create positive impressions about Islam for non-Muslim consumers. It was also discovered that Islamic brands uniquely secured consumers and customers for Islamic products more than non-Islamic products. The study recommends that Islamic marketing designers should build a monitoring logistic to track the level of Islamic product acceptance across the Muslim and non-Muslim world.

Keywords: Ethical consideration; Islamic brand; management approaches; monitoring logistics

1. Introduction

According to Islamic Financial Service (IFS), a service brand is based on values including religious conviction, ethical observance, pricing-interest rates, economic rationality, service quality, product attributes, image and reputation. Religion may be a barrier to Islamic branding, marketing and business, however, consumers need to look beyond religion and focus on the opportunities. In the service context, Islamic branding managers need to build and engage customers with long-term service brands. Engaging customers and consumers with sustainable, long-term and reliable service brands will enable Islamic branding to stand out from another religious branding¹. The Packaging of Islamic products should be protected from any damage that can reduce the quality of the goods. It is less important and unnecessary for Islamic branding to be issued, monitored and produced specifically by a Muslim individual in as much as Islamic regulations and guidance are respected and protected throughout the process². To avoid doubts about the branding of Islamic products, developing government official websites and mobile apps are essential for identifying the used ingredients³.

¹ Abd Rahman, A., Asrarhaghighi, E. & Ab Rahman, S. 2015. Consumers and Halal Cosmetic Products: Knowledge, Religiosity, Attitude and Intention. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*. Vol. 6. No. 1. Pp. 148-163.

² Jafari, A. 2012. *Islamic Marketing: Insights from a Critical Perspective*. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*. Vol. 3. No. 1. Pp. 22-34.

³ De Chernatony, L. 2010. *From Brand Vision to Brand Evaluation, the Strategic Process of Growing and strengthening Brands*. 3rd ed. Heinemann: Elsevier Butterworth.

It is fundamental for Islamic branding to consider the targeted audience and the country of origin⁴. Islamic branding would serve as a convincing factor to gain momentum and retain potential and existing customers. In a Muslim-majority country, Muslims use Islamic branding and logo as underlying criteria for selection⁵. Absolute compliance with Islamic rules may be one of the reasons for consumers' interest in Islamic branding. Aside from that, the certainty of the country of manufacturing being an Islamic nation may likewise be an additional motivating factor for choosing Islamic branding products. Therefore, this paper seeks to fill the research gaps by ensuring that Islamic branding products are not perceived religiously but beneficially. To broaden the chances of business success, non-Muslim consumers must be considered in presenting and marketing Islamic branding products.

2. Islamic Brands and Marketing Strategies

Islamic branding and marketing could simply be understood as practices and offerings that are in line with Islamic teachings and guidelines. The emergence of certifying, evaluating, atomizing, and labelling activities legally and formally give rise to modern cultural phenomena across Muslim and non-Muslim communities. Control factors such as technologies, globalization and consumers have extensively expanded businesses and brands beyond being monitored and regulated by mere religious clergy.

Islamic branding and marketing require dynamic strategic approaches for successful delivery. Following the market opportunities in India and China on one hand, and the massive interest that was shown by their citizens on the other hand it is safe to presume that a bright and productive future is assured for Islamic branding and marketing⁶. Islam-centric business considers economic, consumer and geopolitical imperative for operationalization. Under the economic consideration, geographies, financial value and future sustainability are subjected to scrutiny. As for the consumer base perspective, market size, market value and consumers' religions are vital. Concerning the geopolitical imperative, political stability, collaborative and co-dependent national brand equities must be weighed and considered⁷.

A brand requires blending rituals, meanings, symbolism, mythology and religious language to deepen its significance and raise its competitive advantage. A brand needs polishing the marketing communications messages because there are some worshippers that extremely believe in a particular faith to the extent that they broadly and extensively interpret the word "God" as a non-religion concept⁸.

Islamic brand is wider in scope than halal because the former focuses on the branding, name, logo and design, while the latter concentrates on mere the product processes and ingredients⁹. An overall evaluation shows that in some cases, products may be Islamic in ingredients while non-Islamic in brand, logo and designs. In recent times, Islamic branding appears to be the most profitable brand among all brands¹⁰. Several industries including banking, garments, hospitality, pharmaceutical and food industries use Islamic brands for their products in industrial markets¹¹. Convincingly, some consumers assume that all products possessing an Islamic logo or branding fulfil Shariah requirements and are Shariah compliant. As a matter of reality, illiteracy and low level of awareness are largely responsible for how many Muslims became a victim of haram consumption¹².

2.1 Factors That Determine Brand Acceptance

Different perceptions of the brand include culture, identity, relation, personality, community, economic and consumer-based perceptible. These perceptions determine the various level of brand acceptance. Hence, the following factors are crucial for brand acceptance:

Social media presentation: social media is an interactive platform that promotes the contents, information and effectiveness of a particular product. Behaviour is a vital element that advertises, limits and justifies the role,

⁴ Wilson, J. A. J. and Liu, J. 2011. The Challenges of Islamic Branding: Navigating Emotions and Halal. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*. Vol. 2, No. 1. Pp. 28-42.

⁵ Al-Serhan, B. 2011. *Principles of Islamic Marketing*, London, UK: Gower Publishing Limited.

⁶ Ogilvy, N. 2011. Branding Halal- The Rise of the Young Muslim Consumer. Shelina Jan-mohamed and Nazia Du Bois, Sparksheet, (Online), 4 October. <http://sparksheet.com/branding-halal-the-rise-of-the-young-muslim-consumer/>

⁷ Wilsom, J. A. J. 2014a. Brand Islam is Fast Becoming the New Black in Marketing Terms. 18 February. The Guardian Media Network, www.theguardian.com/media-network/media-network-blog/2014/feb/18/Islamic-economy-marketing-branding

⁸ Maltby, J. et al. 2002. Thou Shalt Worship No Other Gods-Unless They Are Celebrities: The Relationship Between Celebrity Worship and Religious Orientation. *Personality and Individual Differences*. Vol. 32. Pp. 1157-1172.

⁹ Aji, H. M., Muslichah, I., & Seftyono, C. 2020. The determinants of Muslim travellers' intention to visit non-Islamic countries: A halal tourism implication. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, ahead of print

¹⁰ Olawepo, G. T., & Ibojo. 2015. The relationship between packaging and consumers purchase intention: A case study of Nestle Nigeria product. *International Business and Management*, 10(1), 72-81.

¹¹ Jonathan, A. J. 2014. The halal phenomenon: An extension or a new paradigm? *Social Business*, 4, 3, 255-271. DOI:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1362/204440814x14103454934294>

¹² Nadia, U. A & Hanif, M. 2015. Factors affecting the intent to purchase personal care products: empirical evidence from Pakistan. *International Journal of Islamic Marketing and Branding*, 1, 2, 199.

essentiality and importance of the proposed product¹³. Across social media platforms, several motives are used to capture and interact with both visible and accessible users¹⁴. The relationship, manners and active cooperation established by the user through contents are stepwise attempts to measure acceptance.

Social media communication: communication activities on social media platforms influence purchaser's choices and motivate consumers' choices. It is the contents of the communication and information composed for consumers that determine their decision for the products. This tells about the increasing importance of social communication on consumers' attitudes, behaviour, usage satisfaction, purchases and buying intentions and decisions.

Halal certification: may motivate Muslim consumers to purchase a particular product, most especially, if the product ingredients are in line with Shariah principles. A deeper understanding of the process, materials, operations, distribution, manufacturing and all the supply chain procedure of the product is necessary for Muslim consumers¹⁵. Halal certification retains the products and brand on one edge and protects the company that produces such products on the other edge for Muslim consumers because customers would indeed have belief and trust in that company and their products at all times¹⁶.

Packaging: Packaging is an additional instrument to the relevancy of Islamic branding as it attracts consumers to purchase the products. Packaging conveys values and product- characteristics to consumers¹⁷. Pospisil et al. (2020) confirmed that packaging broadly promotes products¹⁸. Packaging can appear in different forms, it may be visual or non-visual. Waheed et al. (2018) see colours and fonts as attractive packaging strategy for winning the heart of consumers¹⁹. Yulianingsih, Syah and Anindita (2019) argued that product packaging goes beyond display design²⁰. Product packaging influences consumers' mindset towards the value of a product. According to Sweeney & Soutar (2001), products are valued by consumers through emotion, quality and social price²¹. Consumers assess a product's usefulness based on customers' perception of that product²². Bigoin-Gagnan & Lacoste-Badie (2018) upheld that some customers prefer appealing and attractive packaging. Some consumers may also value emotional and visually attractive packaging. Consumers' feelings and satisfaction with packaging generate interest and intention for purchasing²³.

Attitude is indeed a significant factor that could be affected through packaging. Lee et al. (2019) contended that attitude plays an important role in the context of purchasing products²⁴. Clark et al.'s (2021) inferred that attitude and emotions convey informational messages for purchasing products²⁵. As argued by Saptasari and Aji (2020), value, social and quality affect the attitude to purchase a product. It has been established that emotional value has a connection with purchasing attitude and intention²⁶. A positive attitude toward purchasing a product will definitely be developed by a Muslim consumer in the presence of Islamic-branded visual packaging.

Through visual packaging, the consumer's intention is developed and sealed. While Benachenhou et al. (2018) contended that visual packaging influences purchase intention²⁷, Waheed et al.'s (2018) found that packaging colour, and packaging attributes including font style attract customers²⁸. Toward convincing the

¹³ James, P. W. 2020. Social Media and Moral Panics: Assessing the Effects of Technological Change on Societal Reaction. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 23, no 6.

¹⁴ Tine, U. F., & Nanna, A. F. 2020. Interest groups on Social Media: Four Forms of Networked Advocacy. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 20, no 2.

¹⁵ Sulaiman Bin Nawawi, et al., 2017. Customers' Intention to Repurchase Halal Personal Care Products: The Moderating Role of Religiosity. *Proceedings of the 2nd Advances in Business Research International Conference*, 39-54.

¹⁶ Nor Sara Nadia Muhamad Yunus, Wan Edura Wan Rashid, Norafifa Mohd Ariffin and Norhidayah Mohd Rashid. 2014. Muslims Purchase Intentions toward Non-Muslims Halal Packaged Food Manufacturer. *Procedia- Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 130, 145-154

¹⁷ Underwood, R. L. 2003. The communicative power of product packaging: Creating brand identity via lived and mediated experience. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practices*, 11(1), 62-76.

¹⁸ Pospisil, J. Z., Zavodna, L. S., & Jiranek, M. 2020. Does the packaging change the perceived taste of beer? Results from a beer experiment. *Market-Trziste*, 32(1), 65-78.

¹⁹ Waheed, S., Khan, M. M., & Ahmad, N. 2018. Product packaging and consumer purchase intentions. *Market Forces*, 13(2), 97-114.

²² Zeithaml, V. A. 1988. Consumer perceptions of price, quality and value: A means-end model and synthesis of evidence. *Journal of Marketing*, 52(3), 2.

²⁰ Yulianingsih, R., Syah, T. Y. R., & Anindita, R. 2019. How packaging, product quality and promotion affect the purchase intention. *Russian Journal of Agricultural and Socio-Economic Sciences*, 92(8), 46-55.

²¹ Sweeney, J. C., & Soutar, G. N. 2001. Consumer perceived value: The development of a multiple item scale. *Journal of Retailing*, 77(2), 203-220.

²² Zeithaml, V. A. 1988. Consumer perceptions of price, quality and value: A means-end model and synthesis of evidence. *Journal of Marketing*, 52(3), 2.

²⁴ Lee, S., Sung, B., Phau, I., & Lim, A. 2019. Communicating authenticity in packaging of Korean cosmetics. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 48, 202-214.

²⁵ Clark, E. A., Duncan, S. E., Hamilton, L. M., Bell, M. A., Lahne, J., Gallagher, D. L., & o'Keefe, S. F. 2021. Characterizing consumer emotional response to milk packaging guides packaging material selection. *Food Quality and Preference*, 87, 103984.

²⁶ Saptasari, K., & Aji, H. M. 2020. Factors affecting Muslim non-customers to use Islamic bank: Religiosity, knowledge and perceived quality. *Jurnal Ekonomi & Keuangan Islam*, 6(2), 165-180.

²⁷ Benachenhou, S. M., Guerrich, B., & Moussaoui, Z. 2018. The effect of packaging elements on purchase intention: Case study of Algerian customers. *Management Science Letters*, 8(4), 217-224.

²⁸ Waheed, S., Khan, M. M., & Ahmad, N. 2018. Product packaging and consumer purchase intention. *Market Forces*, 13(2), 97-114.

purchaser's intention, the researchers concluded that complete product information, packaging attributes and packaging visuals are essential. Akbari et al. (2018) discovered that Islamic symbols on product packaging enhance the chances of winning the purchaser's intention to purchase a product²⁹. Although, Bakar et al. (2013) submitted that symbols and packaging like swords, rosaries and mosques convince consumers' intention toward purchasing a product³⁰.

2.2 Ways to Convince Non-Muslims with Islamic Branded Products

There is a need to increase the design, packaging and presentation of Islamic branding in such a way that suits Muslim and non-Muslim consumers. The managers of Islamic branding must consider developing visually attractive products; emotionally valuable products and graphically designed logos. Islamic branding shall continuously remain relevant if its designs and packaging are accompanied by modern ideas and creativities. The frequency and consistency of a particular Islamic brand guarantee competitive advantage and consumer acceptance of the product. This is possible when consumers are satisfied with the quality, features and characteristics of the product.

Islamic branding is a promising strategy for customer retention rather than customer acquisition. Gaining a consumer's minds with brand design is an additional advantage and influential factor for promoting Islamic branding to non-Muslims. One of the effects of perfecting the logo and design of Islamic branding is that it enhances the market share of the organization and brings higher revenue to the manufacturer. A brand could be a unique assurance for the long-term existence of the company that owns the Islamic branding design.

Islamic branding can also be enhanced by observing religious restrictions, improving product packaging and developing products with uncommon characteristics. Customers' knowledge and awareness about products produced by the company provide a huge opportunities for their brands in the marketplace. Positive details and a good reputation of a company producing a particular product or brand retain customers for the company for a long-term period. In essence, the brand facilitates countless benefits for the organization and strengthens the good relationship between the organization and the customers.

Product pricing and the pricing strategy used for a product brand are a systematic ways of either managing or losing customers. Islamic brands may be less-attractive to the targeted customers alongside the wrong selection of suitable prices to market the product. Additionally, product promotional offers have far-reaching benefits toward engaging and attracting a large number of customers. This is another strategy for motivating customers to any products produced by the company.

Any company producing halal products and services is indeed expected to keep Muslim consumers for quite a long, thus significantly increasing people's attention to Islamic branding and religion. Acquiring customers' trust might likewise be an important attribute to developing Islamic branding as customers' commitment to that brand become stronger when they believe that the company will never manufacture any product other than fully Islamic-compliance products.

3. Methodology of the Study

The researcher obtained and gathered the data through observational and literature review approaches. The observations were viewed from the attitude, intention and behaviour of non-Muslim consumers toward Halal and Islamic branding products, most especially, across non-Muslim societies. The population of the observational study comprises both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers of Islamic branding products.

4. Findings and Conclusion

Following to the high market pressure, business environment challenges and the increasing number of antagonisms against the emergence of halal and Islamic branding products, there is a need for ensuring that Islamic branding is introduced and presented in such a way that merits and increase the attention of non-Muslim consumers because ignorant to that direction may lead to losing profits and consumers. The ultimate objective of the managers of the Islamic brands is to focus on achieving dynamic customers, not mere Islamic-faith consumers. Since loyalty to Islamic brands has a significant impact on retaining Muslim consumers, it is however necessary to enhance the marketing strategies of Islamic branding so that it can also be attractive to non-Muslim consumers.

The relationship between Islamic brand products, customer retention and consumer increment was found positive. By improving the quality, characteristics and uniqueness of Islamic brands; perfecting the price; and colouring the promotional tactics, companies retain long-term customers. More emphasis on Islamic brand characteristics will attain sustainable and competitive advantage for the company.

²⁹ Akbari, M., Gholizadeh, M. H., & bZomorodi, M. 2018. Islamic symbols in food packaging and purchase intention of Muslim consumers. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, 9(1), 117-131.

³⁰ Bakar, A., Lee, R., & Rungie, C. 2013. The effects of religious symbols in product packaging on Muslim consumer responses. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 21(3), 198-204.

An important focus of any company or organization is to identify the factors that increase profits and sustain customers. The outcome of this study points to the fact that the managers of Islamic brands should concentrate more on the packaging, design, logo and characteristics of Islamic branding products. The concept of Islamic branding is increasingly gaining momentum worldwide, thus may be a meaningful strategy for winning the minds of non-Muslim consumers.

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