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# The impacts of *Maslahah* product uniqueness, Islamic customer orientation, and Islamic innovativeness dimensions in improving marketing performance

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#### ABSTRACT

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Kevwords: Islamic customer orientation Islamic innovativeness Maslahah product uniqueness Marketing performance

The research was an empirical study, aimed to investigate the impacts of Islamic customer orientation, Islamic innovativeness, halal product uniqueness, Thoyyib product uniqueness, and religion-centric product uniqueness on marketing performance. Respondents of this study were 250 food and beverage processing industries in Central Java, Indonesia. Then, data were analyzed using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (SEM PLS). The results of the research demonstrate that Islamic customer orientation and Islamic innovativeness had a positive and significant effect on Maslahah product uniqueness (halal product uniqueness, Thoyyib product uniqueness, and religion-centric product uniqueness). Islamic customer orientation, Islamic innovativeness, and Maslahah product uniqueness (halal product uniqueness, Thoyyib product uniqueness, and religion-centric product uniqueness) had a positive and significant effect on marketing performance. Islamic customer orientation was proven to have a great impact on Maslahah product uniqueness (halal product uniqueness, Thoyyib product uniqueness, and religion-centric product uniqueness) and marketing performance. Moreover, the *Maslahah* product uniqueness dimension, such as Thoyyib product uniqueness, had also a firm impact on improving marketing performance.

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#### 1. Introduction

Competitive strategy makes a company more competitive and superior to its competitors (Bharadwaj et al., 1993). Competition among companies is commonly natural since a product offered by a company is likely to be offered also by other companies, with relatively the same type and characteristics. Due to fierce and tight competition, a company has to make efforts in order to survive. The effort is to create a competitive advantage for the company. When a company can do something that its competitors cannot do or imitate, it can be called a comparative advantage (Hunt & Morgan, 1995). Further, if a company has a comparative advantage in terms of resources, the company will be in a position of competitive advantage in a certain market segment, which can determine marketing performance. Product features-based positional advantage can be obtained through product quality, convenience, and product packaging (Morgan, 2012). Henard and Szymanski (2001) identified that product superiority is a combination of several different product characteristics. A company as a product provider is required to have a better strategy to appeal to consumers. According to Porter (1997), a precise strategy is to use a differentiation strategy. Differentiation is the process of adding a series of important and valuable differences to differentiate the company's offer from competitors' offerings (Kotler, 2005). Hence, it requires serious market research for searching different forms and knowledge of competitors' products. The advantages of product differentiation are one of the unique aspects of an organization. Product uniqueness is defined as "a dissimilar product from other products, in which their categories are based on sensory, image, functional, emotional, or other product characteristics, positively perceived by consumers" (Cardello et al., 2016). Research done by Martins & Pliner (2005) argued that western culture considers

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consuming insects or dog meat by other cultures as disgusting, and Tan et al. (2015) added that a small portion of the population likes the success market is not seen. In Islam, this unique product is prohibited for consumption because it is not in accordance with *Sharia* (Islamic law). Therefore, the conceptualization of product uniqueness still depicts its weaknesses. For example, in the western perspective, product uniqueness is only measured from the transactional material aspect, yet it has not relied on *Allah SWT* by applying Islamic values based on the Qur'an and Hadith.

A religious-committed religious market segment has potential market opportunities and requires an accurate marketing strategy. The capability in establishing customer relationships through religious values creates satisfaction and commitment to purchase products, which, in turn, affects marketing performance (Mulyana et al., 2019). In terms of Islamic customer orientation, a company must design its marketing activities to satisfy the needs of Muslim customers (Zebal & Saber, 2014). Based on several studies related to customer orientation, Dabrowski et al. (2019), Deshpandé et al. (1993), Huhtala et al. (2014), Narver and Slater (1990), and Zhou et al. (2009) concluded that customer orientation has a positive influence on business performance and market performance. Contrastingly, Gao et al. (2007) argued that customer orientation does not affect company performance. Indonesian, predominantly Muslim, must be necessarily considered by businessmen in promoting their products so they are in accordance with Islamic law. It aims to seize superior market performance. In a highly dynamic market change, a company must innovate to sustainably achieve sustainable advantages, having an impact on its market performance. Innovativeness is a dimension of entrepreneurial orientation. It relates to the willingness to support creativity and experimentation in introducing new products or services, novelty, technological leadership, and R & D in developing new processes (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). Regarding some research related to innovativeness, Selvarajan et al. (2007), Rhee et al. (2010), Chatterjee et al. (2020), Singh et al. (2022), and Liu et al. (2022) postulated that innovativeness has a positive impact on business performance. However, in contrast, Shergill and Nargundkar (2005), Atalay et al. (2013), Rosli and Sidek (2013) argued that innovativeness has a negative effect on marketing performance. Also, Mulyana et al. (2019) stated that marketing innovativeness has no significant effect on marketing performance.

#### 2. Literature review and hypotheses

#### 2.1 Conceptual Development of Maslahah Product Uniqueness

Product uniqueness is a concept derived from R-A Theory (Hunt & Morgan, 1995). It is a general theory about the competition process. Typically, this theory explains that the fundamental goal of a resource-based strategy is to achieve a comparative advantage in resources, which can generate a competitive advantage in the target market segment. It aims to gain superior financial performance (Hunt & Duhan, 2002). Meanwhile, from the view of marketing management, three significant elements must be considered by a marketing manager in a market entry strategy, such as segmenting, targeting, and positioning. Positioning is the action of designing a company's offering and image. Thus, it places a meaningful and different competitive position in the minds of its target customers (P Kotler, 2009). Positioning strategy can be conducted through the differentiation of line products, services, channels, people, and images. Cooper & de Brentani (1991) explained that highly innovative products create more opportunities for differentiation and competitive advantage, which have a positive effect on performance. Product differentiation with unique customer benefits and superior value to customers is one of the success factors (Cooper & Kleinschmidt, 1987; Song & Parry, 1996). A unique product is a highly dissimilar product to other products in its category based on sensory, image, functional, emotional, or other product characteristics, confidently assessed by consumers (Cardello et al., 2016). Maslahah is often associated with benefits. It means goodness related to material, physical, and psychological. Further, maslahah is also referred to by other terms, such as hikmah (wisdom), huda, and barakah. Those articulate the good rewards promised by Allah in both this world and the hereafter. In short, maslahah implies the benefit of the world and the hereafter (Rahmawaty, 2011). The synthesis of product uniqueness derived from resource advantage theory and maslahah from the Qur'an and Hadith produces the novelty Maslahah product uniqueness. Maslahah product uniqueness is the advantage of a product compared to other products. It is designed based on the principles of halal, thoyyib, and religioncentric product attributes as the value offered to customers.

Maslahah product uniqueness has three dimensions. Firstly, the uniqueness of halal products. Halal products are products having been stipulated halal according to Sharia (Islamic law). Some halal products circulating in the community have not been guaranteed. Therefore, the Law of Halal Product Guarantee was passed on October 17th, 2014, requiring that entry, circulating, and traded products in the territory of Indonesia must be certified halal (DPR RI, 2014). The conditions of halal are as follows: 1. Halal by its halal substance. It is a product originating from halal basic material for consumption and it has been determined in the Qur'an and Hadith; 2. Halal by its collecting. It means that halal products can become unlawful if a means of collecting is haram because it can harm others and has been stipulated in the Qur'an and Hadith; 3. Halal by its processing method. It is a previously halal product that can become haram if the processing method is not in accordance with Sharia (Islamic law). Additionally, the characteristics of Halal product uniqueness are the uniqueness of Halal Materials, Halal Production Process, Halal Staffing, and Halal Storage, as well as Halal Distribution. Secondly, it thoyyib product uniqueness. Thayyib derives from the Arabic "thaba", which means good, delicious, fun, pleasant, and delightful. It also means clean or holy (Yunus, 1990). Some tafsir scholars explained that the word thayyib means food that is not dirty based on its substance or damage (expired) or mixed with najis (unclean) objects. Other tafsir scholars also had different interpretations. They stated that food that appeals to those who will eat or does not harm the body or mind (Shihab, 2000).

Good food is clean and healthy food and it does not cause harm to the body and mind (QS Al-Nahl: 114, QS. Al-Baqarah: 168). In Tafsir al-Misbah, both verses articulated that the call for halal food is addressed to all humans, whether they believe in Allah SWT or not. However, some halal food and drinks are not automatically thayyib. Also, some thayyib products are not halal according to their respective conditions. Some halal and good foods are for someone suffering from certain health conditions, and some are not good for him/her, though they are good for others. In addition, some foods are good, yet they are not nutritious, and it becomes less good (Shihab, 2000). Therefore, the highly recommended food is halal and thayyib. According to Katsir (1923), thoyyib, based on both verses, is good in itself and it is not harmful to the body or mind. Based on the description above, the characteristics of *Thoyyib* product uniqueness are uniqueness in ensuring health benefits, product safety, product cleanliness, and the proportional element of the product. Lastly, it is the religion-centric attribute of product uniqueness. The complaint values to religious norms are the key to success and a source of company excellence. Bakar et al. (2013) acknowledged the existence of religious influences on marketing, particularly the role of religious symbols in marketing communications. The presence of religious symbols has a significant effect on purchasing intention, but it is only for a low-symbolic valued product. Furthermore, it also highly influences people with stronger religiosity than those with lower religiosity. Religiosity affects people's feelings and attitudes towards consumption (Chitsaz & Hanzaee, 2011), so products are more comfortable if they follow religious norms, capable to solve customer issues related to religious needs, satisfy customer needs in religious activities, have a technical performance to support religious activities, design according to the relevant religious norms, meet the relevant religious norms. Any benefit offered by a product will be less meaningful if it contradicts the relevant religious norms. According to the explanation above, the characteristics of Religion-centric product uniqueness are the uniqueness of religion-based brands, the uniqueness of religion-based packaging, the uniqueness of religion-based designs, and the uniqueness of religious-based information.

## 2.2. Islamic Customer Orientation and Maslahah Product Uniqueness

Customer orientation ranges from activities involved in obtaining information about customers in the target market and disseminating this information throughout the organization (Narver & Slater, 1990). According to Agnihotri et al., (2013), Customer-oriented organizations offer unique and valuable products that can respond to consumer needs. Additionally, Hills & Sarin, (2015) argued that customer orientation is the process of identifying potential desires that customers cannot express, and these activities can direct actions and preferences in new directions. Masa'deh et al., (2018) defined customer orientation as a sufficient understanding of target buyers to create superior value. Zebal & Saber, (2014) stated that Islamic customer orientation is an Islamic institution whose marketing activities are designed to serve Muslim customers. Then, Islamic customer orientation is defined as an understanding of the needs of Muslim customers to make superior value and lead to long-term relationships. Muslim consumers have a high demand for *halal* products, due to the existence of Islamic rules and principles in consuming goods and services (Rice, 1999). Al-Khatib et al. (1995) set out that Muslim customers have high priorities, preferences, and needs for *halal* products and services. Customers, having high religiosity, will have a strong influence on consumer actions and behavior to purchase *halal* food (Awan et al., 2015).

 $\mathbf{H_{1a}}$ : Islamic customer orientation has a positive effect on halal product uniqueness.

**H**<sub>1b</sub>: Islamic customer orientation has a positive effect on Thoyyib product uniqueness.

H<sub>1c</sub>: Islamic customer orientation has a positive effect on the religion-centric attribute product uniqueness.

## 2.3. Islamic Innovativeness and Maslahah product uniqueness

Innovativeness relates to the willingness to support creativity and experimentation in introducing new products or services, novelty, technology leadership, and R & D in developing new processes. (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). According to Jiménez-Jiménez and Sanz-Valle (2011), innovation is a description of the company's capacity to introduce several new processes, products, and ideas in the organization or new marketing strategies. Also, companies tend to engage and support new ideas, experimentation, processes, and creativity that can emerge with new products, services, methods, or technologies. Innovation is a company's readiness oriented on technological developments, new products, services, or better line products to pursue competitive advantage (Sankowska, 2013). Specifically, in Islam, the concept of innovation is about the balance between creativity and innovation, whether those are permitted or prohibited (Zarif et al., 2013). In addition, innovation is also discussed by looking at the life history of the Prophet Muhammad. It is from a religious, teaching, economic, social, and political perspective (Sulaiman et al., 2015). Moreover, some studies also look for methods of increasing the ability to innovate as stated in the Qur'an. It is by utilizing the five senses given by Allah SWT, such as; observing, seeing, hearing, contemplating, and ijtihad (Al-Karasneh & Saleh, 2010). Islamic innovativeness is defined as the attitude, behavior, tendency, ability, and creativity of businessmen to seek and apply new ideas to produce something new and unique in accordance with Islamic law. Concerning product innovation, some studies have deliberately explained. Atuahene-Gima and Ko (2001) stated that innovation leading to differentiation is significantly important to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. Innovativeness has a significant effect on product excellence (Kam Sing Wong, 2012). Organizational innovation consistently leads to more differentiated products (Theoharakis & Hooley, 2008). Marketing innovation has a positive effect on the religion-centric positional advantage (Hendar & Tae Ferdinand, 2017) and the religion-centric product strategy (Hendar et al., 2020).

 $H_{2a}$ : Islamic innovativeness has a positive effect on halal product uniqueness.

 $\mathbf{H}_{2\mathbf{b}}$ : Islamic innovativeness has a positive effect on thoyyib product uniqueness.

H<sub>2</sub>: Islamic innovativeness has a positive effect on the religion-centric attribute product uniqueness.

#### 2.4. Islamic customer orientation and marketing performance

Kohli and Jaworski (1990) explained market orientation from a "market information perspective". It was argued that market orientation is presumed to gather market information about the present and potential customers, disseminate the collected information to departments, and induce appropriate reactions. Meanwhile, from a behavioral perspective, they mentioned that the subject of the action is not only the marketing department but also the entire organization. The target of action is market information, and, subsequently, the action on marketing information is generation, dissemination, and response. Jaworski & Kohli, (1993) considered that market orientation is a concept of marketing practice and translates it into the acquisition of market information throughout the organization for present and future customer desires. It is also the dissemination of market information to departments and organizational responses. Hills and Sarin (2015) stated that customer orientation is the process of identifying potential desires that customers cannot express, and these activities can direct actions and preferences in new directions. Customer orientation must sufficiently understand the target buyers to continuously create effective value for them.

The company's success stems from the customer-oriented principle, or it aligns and is proactively responsive to the market. Customer orientation is "the ability and willingness to identify, analyze, understand, and respond to user needs (Gatignon & Xuereb, 1997). Logically, a constant interest in pleasing the customer leads to defining and building desired features, or advantages, into new products. Market-oriented business relies on market intelligence to create sustainable competitive advantages (Kohli et al., 1993). Thus, a market-oriented culture encourages SMEs to align their organizational activities to create value based on a consumer perspective (Narver & Slater, 1990) and emphasizes the importance of customer satisfaction. Shared market-oriented beliefs and norms across the business set focus and coherence in business strategy and tactics. Such organized efforts often result in innovative and high-quality products or services (Han et al., 1998) and better customer service. Eventually, those will provide greater benefits for the customer. Islamic market orientation, focused on Muslim customers, is an important measure in improving marketing performance (Nurudin, 2022)

H3: Islamic customer orientation has a positive effect on marketing performance.

#### 2.5. Islamic innovativeness and marketing performance

In Islam, the concepts of innovation are as follows: 1. None of the perfect innovation exists, excluding Allah SWT; 2. Inspiration belongs to Allah; 3. It benefits others; 4. It complies with Sharia; 5. It is according to needs; 6. It is a traditional method; and 7. It is produced with sincerity (Abdullah et al., 2021). Further, based on the Qur'an, the method of increasing the ability to innovate is by utilizing the five senses given by God, such as; observing, seeing, hearing, contemplating, and ijtihad (Al-Karasneh & Saleh, 2010). Innovation is a function of the company's formal strategic and flexible planning in improving business performance. Innovation describes changes in existing products or services, processes, and technologies by introducing new product features, offering outstanding performance, or changing the rules of competing domains (Avlonitis & Salavou, 2007; Dibrell et al., 2014). Johnson et al. (2009) pointed out that innovation relates to an individual or organizational characteristics in the creation or adoption of new ideas, processes, products, or services, targeted to increase value to customers and contribute to the performance or effectiveness of the company.

H<sub>4</sub>: Islamic innovativeness has a positive effect on marketing performance.

#### 2.6. Maslahah product uniqueness and marketing performance

Product advantages consist of superior features, quality, and benefits that customers receive from their products (Li & Calantone, 1998). Various studies have confirmed that product superiority is significantly related to new product performance (Langerak et al., 2004; Nakata et al., 2006). Product features and aesthetics can attract consumers' attention, create positive emotional reactions, lead to quality appearance (Bloch, 1995), and be significantly important in enhancing marketing. The study shows the impact of superior feature-oriented products on product performance in customer acceptance, quality, and finance. On the other hand, the quality of new products has greatly affected the market success and profitability of new products (Sethi, 2000). Cooper & Kleinschmidt, (1987) stated that product superiority is a major factor in the success or failure of new products. Of the items comprising product advantages, the most important is the unique customer benefit. Favalli et al. (2013) explained that the uniqueness of food products for consumers involves distinguishing characteristics from other products in their category. The quality and competitive advantage of unique food is also emphasized by Mattiacci and Vignali, (2004), characterizing unique food as having a distinctive and superior quality (value) that allows higher prices and better profit margins. Similarly, several authors have discussed the specific features of food products, making them unique, such as sensory, processing, ingredient, geographical, and conceptual attributes (Favalli et al., 2013; Rason et al., 2007; Stolzenbach et al., 2011). According to (Jaeger et al., 2017), markedly different products from other products in their category based on sensory, image, functional, emotional, or other understandable product characteristics are positively valued by customers. In providing value to Muslim customers, a product must have market advantages and be different from its competitors, so Halal certification is required. Halal food certification, whether in the form of a license, logo, seal, or stamp, is a form of identification to inform users that the food product is sourced, produced, and distributed according to strict Islamic standards (Ab Talib et al., 2017). Further, *Halal* food certification is a document issued by an Islamic organization stating that the product listed therein satisfies Islamic guidelines (Riaz & Chaudry, 2003). *Halal* certification is a tool to gain business legitimacy and a company uses *halal* certification as a mechanism to improve organizational performance (Ab Talib et al., 2016). In addition, (Fikru, 2014; Kafetzopoulos & Gotzamani, 2014; Sampaio et al., 2009) stated that certification is an instrument to achieve business performance.

H<sub>5a</sub>: Halal product uniqueness has a positive effect on marketing performance.

**H**<sub>5b</sub>: *Thoyyib product uniqueness has a positive effect on marketing performance.* 

H<sub>5c</sub>: Religious attribute product uniqueness has a positive effect on marketing performance.

Based on the description above, the relationship between Islamic customer orientation and Islamic innovativeness triggers an increase in product uniqueness issues (*halal* product uniqueness, *thoyyib* product uniqueness, and religion-centric product uniqueness). Consequently, it increases marketing performance. In detail, it can be explained in the following figure 1, as follows.

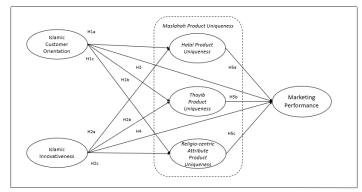


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework

## 3. Research Methodology

The object of this research was the food and beverage processing industries in Central Java, Indonesia. There were 19,734 industries. Respondents were owners or leaders of the Muslim food and beverage processing industries and had 3 years of experience. Data collection was performed by distributing questionnaires, with a sample of 250 respondents. In this study, data analysis employed Structural Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM). PLS-SEM was the best technique, especially when initially minor knowledge of the proposed hypothesis in developing a conceptual model was available (Hair et al., 2017). Measurements on Islamic customer orientation were adapted from (Dabrowski et al., 2019; Masa'deh et al., 2018; Na et al., 2019; Narver & Slater, 1990; Sudarti & Fachrunnisa, 2021; Zebal & Saber, 2014; Zhou et al., 2009). It was measured from four indicators, such as the commitment of Muslim customers, creating Muslim customer value, understanding the needs of Muslim customers, and satisfying Muslim customer satisfaction. Islamic innovativeness was adapted from (Abdullah et al., 2021; Hendar et al., 2018; Jiménez-Jiménez & Sanz-Valle, 2011; Johnson et al., 2009; Kam Sing Wong, 2012; Lee, d2008; Lin et al., 2008). It is measured from three indicators, such as the tendency to seek new Islamic ideas, trying new ways in accordance with Sharia, new useful products, and the tendency to use new technology. Maslahah product uniqueness (halal product uniqueness, thoyyib product uniqueness, and religion-centric product uniqueness) was adapted from (Avlonitis & Salavou, 2007; Chitsaz & Hanzaee, 2011; Cooper & de Brentani, 1991; Hendar & Tae Ferdinand, 2017; Jaeger et al., 2017) and (Qs. Al-Bagarah: 168, Qs. A- Maidah: 88, QS Al- Nahl: 114). Halal product uniqueness was measured from five indicators, such as the uniqueness of halal materials, halal production process, halal staffing, halal storage, and halal distribution. Meanwhile, Thoyyib product uniqueness was measured from four indicators, such as the uniqueness in ensuring health benefits, product safety, product cleanliness, and product proportions. Religion-centric product uniqueness was measured from four indicators, such as the uniqueness of religion-based brands, packaging, designs, and information. Marketing performance was adapted from (Ayimey et al., 2020; Healy et al., 2014; Hendar et al., 2018; Hendar & Tae Ferdinand, 2017; Killa, 2017; Merrilees et al., 2011; Sin et al., 2005; Zhou et al., 2009). It was measured through four indicators, such as sales growth, customer growth, achievement of sales targets, and profit growth.

# 4. Results and Discussion

# 4.1. Research Analysis and Results

Based on the results of the convergent validity test in table 1, if the loading factor value was <0.5, it had to be removed from the model, and the factor loading value had to be re-estimated. By eliminating some of the loading factors, such as <0.5, all

indicators were used to continue the analysis to the next stage. It was said to meet convergent validity if all loading factors were > 0.5 (Hair et al., 2017). Based on the test results, all indicators had a loading factor value of > 0.5, so it could be said that the model was fit.

Table 1

Loading Factor	
Indicators	Loading
IC1 ← Muslim customer commitment	0.751
IC2 ← Creating Muslim customer value	0.802
IC3 ← Understanding the needs of Muslim customers	0.834
IC4 ← Satisfying Muslim customer satisfaction	0.677
II1 ← Tendency to seek new Islamic ideas	0.750
II2 ← Trying new ways in accordance with Sharia	0.748
II3 ← New useful product	0.752
II4 ← Tendency to utilize new technology	0.756
HP1 ← The uniqueness of <i>halal</i> materials	0.802
HP2 ← The uniqueness of the halal production process	0.870
HP3 ← The uniqueness of <i>halal</i> staffing	0.816
HP4 ← The uniqueness of halal storage	0.866
HP5 ← The uniqueness of <i>halal</i> distribution	0.693
TP1 ← The uniqueness in ensuring health benefits	0.771
TP2 ← The uniqueness in ensuring product safety	0.807
TP3 ← The uniqueness in ensuring product cleanliness	0.789
TP4 ← The uniqueness in ensuring product proportions	0.786
RC1 ← The uniqueness of religion-based design	0.635
RC2 ← The uniqueness of religion-based packaging	0.756
RC3 ← The uniqueness of a religion-based brand	0.839
RC4 ← The uniqueness of religion-based information	0.815
MP1 ← Sales growth	0.733
MP2 ← Subscriber growth	0.727
MP3 ← Sales target achievement	0.724
MP4 ← Profit growth	0.852
Course DI C Output Data 2022	

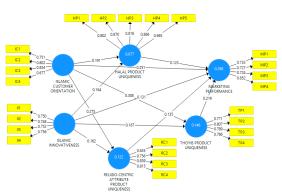


Fig. 2. Flowchart of the research model

Source: PLS Output Data, 2022

Table 2
Reliability Test

Remadility Test			
Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite	Average Variance Extracted
Islamic customer orientation	0.770	0.851	0.590
Islamic innovativeness	0.746	0.838	0.565
Halal product uniqueness	0.870	0.906	0.659
Thoyyib product uniqueness	0.800	0.868	0.621
Religion-centric attribute product uniqueness	0.772	0.848	0.586
Marketing performance	0.756	0.846	0.579

Source: PLS Output Data, 2022

Based on the results of the reliability test in Table 2, the evaluation of constructreliability values was measured by Cronbach alpha, composite reliability, andaverage variance extracted (AVE). the Cronbach alpha and composite reliability values of all constructs had to be >0.70, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) valuewas > 0.5. The test results showed Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values were > 0.70 and average variance extracted (AVE) was> 0.5, so the indicators were consistent in measuring their constructs.

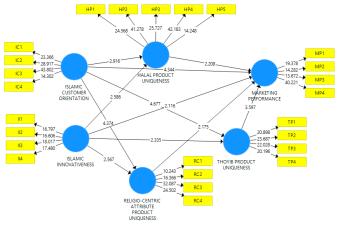


Fig. 3. Hypotheses test

Table 3
Hypothesis test

		Sample		T Statistics	P Values
	Sample	Means			
Islamic customer orientation → <i>Halal</i> product uniqueness	0.191	0.195	0.065	2.916	0.004
Islamic customer orientation → <i>Thoyyib</i> product uniqueness	0.308	0.308	0.066	4.677	0.000
Islamic customer orientation → Religion-centric attribute product uniqueness	0.275	0.281	0.063	4.374	0.000
Islamic innovativeness → <i>Halal</i> product uniqueness	0.164	0.171	0.063	2.586	0.010
Islamic Innovativeness → <i>Thoyyib</i> product uniqueness	0.167	0.168	0.071	2.335	0.020
Islamic innovativeness → Religion-centric attribute product uniqueness	0.162	0.160	0.063	2.567	0.011
Islamic customer orientation → Marketing performance	0.251	0.254	0.058	4.344	0.000
Islamic innovativeness → Marketing performance	0.131	0.129	0.062	2.116	0.035
Halal product uniqueness → Marketing performance	0.123	0.123	0.056	2.208	0.028
Thoyyib product uniqueness → Marketing performance	0.219	0.222	0.061	3.597	0.000
Religion-centric attribute product uniqueness → Marketing performance	0.135	0.137	0.062	2.175	0.030
C					

Source: PLS Output Data, 2022

Based on the results of the hypothesis test in table 3, all hypotheses were accepted with T-Statistics of > 1.96 and a significance of < 0.05. The test results of Islamic customer orientation had a positive and significant effect on *halal* product uniqueness with a T-Statistics value of 2.916 > 1.96 and a P-Value of 0.004 < 0.05, so hypothesis 1a was accepted. Islamic customer orientation had a positive and significant effect on *thoyyib* product uniqueness with a T-Statistics value of 4.677 > 1.96 and a P-Value of 0.000 < 0.05, so hypothesis 1b was accepted. Islamic customer orientation had a positive and significant effect on the religion-centric attribute product uniqueness with a T-Statistics value of 4.374 > 1.96 and a P-Value of 0.000 < 0.05, so hypothesis 1c was accepted.

Moreover, Islamic innovativeness had a positive and significant effect on *halal* product uniqueness with a T-Statistics value of 2.586 > 1.96 and a P-Value of 0.010 < 0.05, so hypothesis 2a was accepted. Islamic innovativeness had a positive and significant effect on *thoyyib* product uniqueness with a T-Statistics value of 2.335 > 1.96 and a P-Value of 0.020 < 0.05, so hypothesis 2b was accepted. Islamic innovativeness had a positive and significant effect on the religion-centric attribute product uniqueness with a T-Statistics value of 2.567 > 1.96 and a P-Value of 0.011 < 0.05, so hypothesis 2c was accepted.

In addition, Islamic customer orientation had a positive and significant effect on marketing performance with a T-Statistics value of 4.344 > 1.96 and a P-Value of 0.000 < 0.05, so hypothesis 3 was accepted. Islamic innovativeness has a positive and significant effect on marketing performance with a T-Statistics value of 2.116 > 1.96 and a P-Value of 0.035 < 0.05, so hypothesis 4 was accepted. *Halal* product uniqueness had a positive and significant effect on marketing performance with a T-Statistics value of 2.208 > 1.96 and a P-Value of 0.028 < 0.05, so hypothesis 5a was accepted. *Thoyyib* product uniqueness had a positive and significant effect on marketing performance with a T-Statistics value of 3.597 > 1.96 and a P-Value of 0.000 < 0.05, so hypothesis 5b was accepted. Lastly, the religion-centric attribute of product uniqueness had a positive and significant effect on marketing performance with a T-Statistics value of 2.175 > 1.96 and a P-Value of

#### 4.2. Discussion

Islamic customer orientation influenced maslahah product uniqueness (halal product uniqueness, thoyyib product uniqueness, and religion-centric product uniqueness). In the Islamic market segment, Islamic customer orientation was closely related to maslahah product uniqueness. Companies, having the ability to know the needs of Muslim customers had a greater opportunity to gain a positional advantage in the target market segment. In the religion-based product market, companies were responsive to the needs of Muslim customers, by providing satisfaction and value to Muslim customers, and committed to producing unique halal products in accordance with Islamic rules. In doing so, companies ensured that the raw materials and substances used for production were halal. Also, the production process was in accordance with Islamic principles such as slaughtering cattle by reciting the name of Allah SWT. Muslim employees, understanding halal and haram, safe product storage and distribution, and avoiding materials that could affect the product to become haram, had greater opportunities in gaining the positional advantage of halal product uniqueness. The needs of Muslim customers were not only the guarantee of halal products on the market but also better product uniqueness in satisfying their needs. The products, also, had to be safe when consumed. It meant that those did not contain harmful ingredients. The proportional and nutritious product uniqueness preferred by customers could increase the positional advantage of thoyyib products' uniqueness. Additionally, product attributes were also attracting aspect to customer attention. Different products from existing products had to be more unique than before. The uniqueness of this product was by looking at the desires of religious Muslim consumers. Particularly, religiosity was an important element in unique product attributes, such as brands, packaging, labels, and designs. These, then, would increase the positional advantage of religiosity and product uniqueness attributes in a religion-based market. This research was in line with the following research. For example, Al-Khatib et al. (1995); Rice (1999) argued that Muslim customers have a high need for halal products and services. Lanrak (2003) stated that customer orientation has a positive effect on differentiation advantage. Nakata et al. (2006) set out that customer orientation has a significant effect on the

superiority of new products. Finally, Zhou et al. (2007) postulated that customer orientation has a positive effect on competitive advantage.

Islamic innovativeness influenced product uniqueness issues (*halal* product uniqueness, *thoyyib* product uniqueness, and religion-centric product uniqueness). In business competition, new products always appear. Those could affect business products. Innovation was one of the company's key features so that the manufactured products were superior to competitors. A Muslim making innovation by looking for new ideas, trying new ways, utilizing new technology, and updating or making new products had to be in accordance with Islamic law (Abdullah et al., 2021; Hendar et al., 2018; Az-Zariyat, 51:56). In detail, innovation was highly dominant in commercializing a product (Sandberg & Ohman, 2011; Tohidi & Jabbari, 2012) and the product had to have enormous benefits and an impact on the ease of human life, holistically (Othman, 2012). Thus, it would lead to an increase of more unique and beneficial products for people by paying attention to the *halalan thoyyiban* elements as well as considering the items attribute, made religiously. Similarly, the research was in the same vein with Atuahene-Gima & Ko (2001); Theoharakis and Hooley (2008), stating that innovation leads to product differentiation. Also, Kam Sing Wong (2012) mentioned product excellence, Hendar & Tae Ferdinand (2017) concluded about religion-centric positional advantage, and Hendar et al. (2020) argued on religion-centric product strategy.

Islamic customer orientation affected marketing performance. It articulated that the better the Islamic customer orientation, the more improving the marketing performance. Kelley (1992) stated that customer orientation is a company involving its employees in increasing customer satisfaction and establishing long-term relationships. The company, always committed to satisfying the needs of Muslim customers and creating value for Muslim customers, would be able to improve marketing performance. This result was in accordance with the previous findings stating that customer orientation has a strong influence on business performance (Dabrowski et al., 2019; Deshpandé et al., 1993; Huhtala et al., 2014; Narver & Slater, 1990) and marketing performance (Hendar et al., 2018; Zhou et al., 2009). Moreover, Islamic innovativeness influenced marketing performance. This interpreted that the higher the Islamic innovativeness the more increasing the marketing performance. The survival of the company depended on how fast and responsive the company was in dealing with the existing dynamics. Therefore, effective competitive strategies were needed by making improvements. Companies in the Muslim market had always innovated in accordance with Islamic law so that their compliance with Islamic law would impact improving marketing performance. This result was similar to the following previous findings. Innovativeness could improve marketing performance (Hendar et al., 2018). Innovation affected company performance (Selvarajan et al., 2007). Product innovation had a significant effect on marketing performance (Chatterjee et al., 2020; N. Nurudin et al., 2022). Green innovation had a positive and significant effect on firm performance (Singh et al., 2022). The adoption of digital innovation directly affected company performance (Liu et al., 2022).

Maslahah product uniqueness (halal product uniqueness, thoyyib product uniqueness, and religion-centric product uniqueness) affected marketing performance. The uniqueness of halal material, halal production process, halal staffing, halal storage, and halal distribution were characteristics of halal product uniqueness. These could improve marketing performance. Halal product uniqueness was produced according to strict Islamic standards (Ab Talib et al., 2017) and certified halal as a mechanism to improve organizational performance (Ab Talib et al., 2016). This result of the research was in line with research conducted by Fikru (2014); Kafetzopoulos & Gotzamani (2014); Untilo et al. (2009), postulating that certification is an instrument to achieve business performance. In (QS Al-Nahl: 114, QS. Al-Baqarah: 168) regarding Allah SWTs commandments about halal and thoyvib food, products complying with Sharia were not only satisfying halal elements but also containing thoyyib elements. In this study, thoyyib product uniqueness showed a firmly significant value in improving marketing performance because it related to the health, safety, hygiene, and proportional benefits of products, consumed by customers. Research, supporting the quality of new products, had been found to greatly affect the market success and profitability of new products (Sethi, 2000). Unique foods had a distinctive and superior value, enabling higher prices and better profit margins (Mattiacci & Vignali, 2004). The religion-centric product uniqueness dimension with the unique characteristics of religion-based brands, packaging, designs, and information could improve marketing performance. It was in accordance with Bloch's (1995) research that product features and aesthetics can attract consumers' attention, create positive emotional reactions, lead to quality appearances, and be significantly important in increasing marketing. The study demonstrated the impact of superior feature-oriented products on product performance in customer acceptance, quality, and finance. Also, Hendar et al. (2020) stated that a religion-centric product strategy has a positive effect on marketing performance.

#### 5. Conclusion

Islamic customer orientation and Islamic innovativeness have a positive and significant impact on product uniqueness issues (halal product uniqueness, thoyyib product uniqueness, and religion-centric product uniqueness). Islamic customer orientation, Islamic innovativeness, and maslahah product uniqueness (halal product uniqueness, thoyyib product uniqueness, and religion-centric product uniqueness) have a positive and significant effect on marketing performance. Meanwhile, Islamic customer orientation has a great influence on product uniqueness issues (halal product uniqueness, thoyyib product uniqueness, and religion-centric product uniqueness) and marketing performance. Besides that, the maslahah product uniqueness dimension, such as thoyyib product uniqueness, also has a strong influence on increasing marketing performance. The results of this study and the limitations found in the research can be used as a source of ideas for research development,

so the extension of the research suggested in this study is to enrich dimensions of Islamic market orientation and entrepreneurial orientation.

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