

Operationalising Shariah Marketing in E-Commerce Marketplaces: A Qualitative Case Study of a Food-Packaging SME in Tangerang, Indonesia

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Abstract *This study examines how Shariah marketing is operationalised in e-commerce marketplace activities by a food-packaging small and medium enterprise (SME) in Tangerang, Indonesia, and how these practices are perceived to support customer trust, repeat purchasing, and sales performance. The study employs a qualitative case-study approach with field research. Data were collected through interviews, direct observation, and documentation involving the firm's marketing and operational practices as well as customer-related evidence. Data were analysed through data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification, while data credibility was strengthened through triangulation. The findings show that Shariah marketing is operationalised through segmentation and targeting based on purchase records, geographic concentration, and market potential; positioning centred on product quality; and marketing-mix practices involving product quality assurance, transparent and proportionate pricing, responsible promotion, accessible distribution, and responsive customer service. These practices reflect Shariah marketing principles including fairness, transparency, mutual consent, avoidance of deceptive practices, commitment to quality, and the protection of buyers' right of khiyar. The findings further indicate that the consistent application of these principles is*

perceived to strengthen customer trust, encourage repeat purchases, and support sales stability. This study contributes by demonstrating how Shariah marketing principles can be translated from normative ethical values into observable marketplace practices within an SME context, thereby providing a practice-based perspective on Shariah-compliant digital marketing.

Keywords: *Shariah marketing, e-commerce marketplace, Islamic marketing ethics, digital marketing*

Abstrak: *Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana pemasaran syariah dioperasionalisasikan dalam aktivitas marketplace e-commerce pada sebuah usaha kecil dan menengah (UMKM) kemasan pangan di Tangerang, Indonesia, serta bagaimana praktik tersebut dipersepsikan mendukung kepercayaan pelanggan, pembelian ulang, dan kinerja penjualan. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian lapangan (field research). Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi langsung, dan dokumentasi terhadap praktik pemasaran dan operasional perusahaan serta bukti yang berkaitan dengan pelanggan. Data dianalisis melalui tahapan pengumpulan data, reduksi data, penyajian data, serta penarikan dan verifikasi kesimpulan, sedangkan kredibilitas data diperkuat melalui triangulasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pemasaran syariah dioperasionalisasikan melalui segmentasi dan penentuan target berdasarkan rekap pembelian, konsentrasi wilayah, dan potensi pasar; positioning yang menekankan kualitas produk; serta praktik bauran pemasaran yang mencakup jaminan kualitas produk, penetapan harga yang transparan dan proporsional, promosi yang bertanggung jawab, distribusi yang mudah diakses, serta pelayanan pelanggan yang responsif. Praktik tersebut mencerminkan prinsip pemasaran syariah berupa keadilan, transparansi, kerelaan para pihak, penghindaran praktik penipuan, komitmen terhadap kualitas, serta perlindungan hak khayar bagi pembeli. Temuan juga menunjukkan bahwa konsistensi penerapan prinsip-prinsip tersebut dipersepsikan dapat memperkuat kepercayaan pelanggan, mendorong pembelian ulang, dan mendukung stabilitas penjualan. Penelitian ini berkontribusi dengan menunjukkan bagaimana prinsip pemasaran syariah dapat diterjemahkan dari nilai etis yang bersifat normatif menjadi praktik marketplace yang dapat diamati dalam konteks UMKM, sehingga menawarkan perspektif berbasis praktik mengenai pemasaran digital yang sesuai dengan prinsip syariah*

Kata Kunci: *Pemasaran Syariah, Marketplace E-Commerce, Etika Pemasaran Islam, Pemasaran Digital*

A. Introduction

The rapid expansion of e-commerce has transformed the way small and medium enterprises (SMEs) access markets, communicate with customers, and organise their marketing activities. Digital marketplaces allow SMEs to extend their geographical reach, display products continuously, interact directly with customers, and integrate promotional and transactional activities within a single platform. For SMEs with limited conventional marketing resources, such platforms provide opportunities to improve market access and respond more quickly to changing customer demand. Previous studies on SME digitalisation have similarly shown that digital platforms can support market expansion, organisational adaptability, and the strategic use of information in business development.¹ Nevertheless, greater dependence on digital marketplaces also changes the nature of seller–buyer interaction because purchasing decisions are increasingly based on product descriptions, displayed prices, promotional claims, reviews, and digitally mediated communication rather than direct physical inspection.

This condition creates particular challenges for the implementation of Shariah marketing. In Islamic business ethics, marketing is not merely an instrument for increasing transactions but an activity that must remain consistent with principles of honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, transparency, mutual consent, and the avoidance of deception. These principles become especially important in e-commerce, where information asymmetry may occur when customers cannot directly inspect a product before purchasing it. Product descriptions that do not correspond to actual quality, unclear prices, exaggerated promotions, inappropriate treatment of complaints, or restrictions on buyers' legitimate options may create ethical problems from the perspective of *muamalah*. In the

¹ Mira Kartiwi, "Case Studies of E-Commerce Adoption in Indonesian SMEs: The Evaluation of Strategic Use," *Australasian Journal of Information Systems* 14, no. 1 (2006): 69–80, <https://doi.org/10.3127/ajis.v14i1.8>; T. Li et al., "Learning from ESG Disclosures: Institutional Behavior and Performance Implications," *Management Science* 67, no. 2 (2021): 1114–38; Ana Isabel Canhoto et al., "Digital Strategy Aligning in SMEs: A Dynamic Capabilities Perspective," *The Journal of Strategic Information Systems* 30, no. 3 (2021): 101682, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsis.2021.101682>.

Indonesian context, Fatwa No. 146/DSN-MUI/XII/2021 concerning online shops reinforces the importance of clarity, fairness, and responsible conduct in digitally mediated transactions.² Contemporary studies have consequently emphasised the relevance of Shariah principles to product information, contractual clarity, seller behaviour, and consumer protection in online commerce.³

A growing body of research has examined the relationship between Islamic economic principles and e-commerce. Syahrudin et al. for example, discuss Islamic guidelines for digital commerce by examining the implications of MUI Fatwa No. 146 for Indonesia's e-commerce ecosystem.⁴ Alfarisi and Suhedi examine the relevance of DSN-MUI guidance on online shops to the business ethics of e-commerce sellers, particularly within TikTok-based selling activities.⁵ Afrelian et al. approach e-commerce from the perspective of Shariah contracts by analysing the application of *murabahah* and *salam* in digital transactions.⁶ Other studies have approached the issue from related perspectives.

² Fatwa DSN-MUI Nomor 146/DSN-MUI/XII/2021 Tentang Online Shop Berdasarkan Prinsip Syariah (2021), <https://www.shariaknowledgecentre.id/id/.galleries/pdf/fatwa/others/fatwa-dsn-mui-no-146-online-shop-berdasarkan-prinsip-syariah.pdf>.

³ Muhammad Adib Alfarisi and Suhedi Suhedi, "Living Economy: Relevansi Fatwa DSN-MUI Tentang Online Shop Dalam Etika Bisnis Seller E-Commerce Pada Aplikasi TikTok," *TAWAZUN: Journal of Sharia Economic Law* 6, no. 2 (2023): 293–312, <https://doi.org/10.21043/tawazun.v6i2.23324>; Muhamad Ibnu Afrelian, Chamdini Putri, and Khufyah Robe'nur, "Analisis Kontrak Syariah Dalam E-Commerce: Studi Terhadap Akad Murabahah Dan Salam Di Era Digital," *Al-Urban: Jurnal Ekonomi Syariah Dan Filantropi Islam* 8, no. 2 (2024): 204–11, https://doi.org/10.22236/alurban_vol8.i2/18107; Aqmar Syahrudin, Husni Mubarak, and Kamaluddin Ahmad, "Islamic Guidelines for Digital Commerce: Fatwa MUI No. 146 and Its Impact on Indonesia's E-Commerce Ecosystem," *Parewa Saraq: Journal of Islamic Law and Fatwa Review* 3, no. 1 (2024): 35–45, <https://doi.org/10.64016/parewasaraq.v3i1.35>.

⁴ Aqmar Syahrudin, Husni Mubarak, and Kamaluddin Ahmad, "Islamic Guidelines for Digital Commerce: Fatwa MUI No. 146 and Its Impact on Indonesia's E-Commerce Ecosystem," *Parewa Saraq: Journal of Islamic Law and Fatwa Review* 3, no. 1 (2024): 35–45, <https://doi.org/10.64016/parewasaraq.v3i1.35>.

⁵ Muhammad Adib Alfarisi and Suhedi Suhedi, "Living Economy: Relevansi Fatwa DSN-MUI Tentang Online Shop Dalam Etika Bisnis Seller E-Commerce Pada Aplikasi TikTok," *TAWAZUN: Journal of Sharia Economic Law* 6, no. 2 (2023): 293–312, <https://doi.org/10.21043/tawazun.v6i2.23324>.

⁶ Muhamad Ibnu Afrelian, Chamdini Putri, and Khufyah Robe'nur, "Analisis Kontrak Syariah Dalam E-

Tuhumury (2025) focuses on consumer protection in Indonesian marketplace transactions, while Rochmad et al. demonstrate the relevance of Shariah compliance to customer relationship management and loyalty, although in the context of Islamic banking rather than SME marketplace selling.⁷ Earlier research reviewed in the original field study also demonstrates that Islamic perspectives have been applied to reseller systems, SME e-commerce marketing, Shariah marketing mixes, flash-sale practices, and Islamic business ethics in marketplace transactions.

Taken together, these studies indicate an evolving state of the art in which research on Islamic marketing and digital commerce has moved beyond general discussions of permissibility toward more specific issues of transactional ethics, Shariah contracts, seller conduct, consumer protection, and Shariah compliance in digitally mediated business. This development is important because it establishes that Shariah values have practical implications for online transactions rather than functioning merely as abstract religious principles. However, much of the existing literature examines these issues at the normative, legal, contractual, consumer-protection, or general ethical level. Empirical explanations of how an SME translates Shariah marketing principles into recurring day-to-day marketing decisions within an actual marketplace setting remain comparatively limited.

More specifically, at least three gaps can be identified from the existing literature. First, studies discussing Shariah-compliant e-commerce commonly emphasise the normative requirements of digital transactions, but provide less empirical detail on how these requirements are translated into routine marketing activities such as customer segmentation, market targeting, product positioning, product presentation, pricing, promotion, distribution, and customer service. Second, studies of Shariah marketing

Commerce: Studi Terhadap Akad Murabahah Dan Salam Di Era Digital,” *Al-Urban: Jurnal Ekonomi Syariah Dan Filantropi Islam* 8, no. 2 (2024): 204–11, https://doi.org/10.22236/alurban_vol8.i2/18107.

⁷ Rochmad Rochmad, Ahmad Mukhlis Yusuf, and Rahmat Mulyana, “The Impact of Electronic Customer Relationship Management and Quality Moderated by Sharia Compliance on Loyalty (Study on Islamic Banks in Jakarta),” *Tazkia Islamic Finance and Business Review* 17, no. 2 (2024): 81–101, <https://doi.org/10.30993/tifbr.v17i2.337>.

frequently explain ethical principles such as honesty, fairness, transparency, and non-deception, yet there remains a need to demonstrate these principles through observable field practices and the experiences of organisational actors. Third, the relationship between conventional marketing strategy frameworks particularly segmentation, targeting, positioning (STP), and the marketing mix and Shariah ethical principles has not been sufficiently documented through a practice-based qualitative case of an Indonesian SME operating through e-commerce marketplaces. These gaps are particularly relevant to food-packaging SMEs, where customers rely heavily on information concerning product materials, quality, price, suitability, delivery, and seller accountability.

Accordingly, the novelty of this study does not lie in proposing new principles of Shariah marketing. Rather, it lies in providing an empirical, practice-based explanation of how established Shariah marketing principles are operationalised through observable SME marketing routines in an e-commerce marketplace context. The study integrates the strategic dimensions of segmentation, targeting, positioning, and the marketing mix with Shariah-oriented principles reflected in fairness, transparent communication, mutual consent, avoidance of fraudulent practices, commitment to product quality, and protection of the buyer's right of *khiyar*. In this way, the study moves from explaining what Shariah marketing *should be* at the normative level toward examining how Shariah marketing is actually manifested in everyday marketing practice.

This study therefore investigates a food-packaging SME in Tangerang, Indonesia, using a qualitative case-study and field-research approach. The case is relevant because the enterprise conducts marketing through both offline and e-commerce channels and applies marketing decisions concerning customer segmentation, targeting, product quality, pricing, promotion, distribution, and customer service. The empirical investigation is guided by two questions: 1) How are Shariah marketing strategies operationalised through e-commerce marketplace activities in a food-packaging SME in Tangerang? and 2) How are Shariah marketing principles reflected in the firm's marketing practices and customer-related transactions? Based on these questions, the study aims to explain the practical

implementation of Shariah marketing through e-commerce and to identify how Shariah principles are manifested in the firm's everyday marketing activities. By doing so, the study seeks to contribute a contextually grounded account of Shariah-compliant digital marketing practices for SMEs and to extend the discussion of Islamic marketing from normative prescriptions toward observable organisational practice.

B. Literature Review

This literature review synthesises six interlinked streams to frame how Shariah marketing can be operationalised in e-commerce marketplaces. It first positions Shariah marketing and Islamic marketing ethics as an actionable code of conduct that governs disclosure, pricing, promotion, and service behaviour. It then treats marketplaces as platform institutions that shape exchange through rules, interfaces, and enforcement. Next, it draws on trust–risk theory to explain how information asymmetry drives reliance on credible signals in online purchasing. The review also examines reputation systems and review manipulation as ethical vulnerabilities. It further discusses multi-platform selling as an SME reality that elevates consistency challenges. Finally, it links Indonesian Shariah guidance to practical marketplace routines.

Shariah Marketing as an Ethical and Strategic Framework

Shariah marketing views marketing activities as part of *muamalah* that must be conducted in accordance with Islamic ethical principles. Marketing therefore does not merely concern the achievement of sales objectives but also the manner in which value is offered, communicated, exchanged, and delivered to customers. Within this perspective, integrity, transparency, fairness, and accountability constitute important ethical foundations for marketing practices. The Islamic marketing tradition also associates business conduct with the Prophetic attributes of *shiddiq* (truthfulness), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *fathanah* (competence and wisdom), and *tabligh* (responsible communication). These attributes provide a broad ethical orientation through which marketers are expected to avoid misleading conduct and maintain responsible relationships with customers.

In the context of this study, however, Shariah marketing is treated not merely as a set of normative personal attributes but as an ethical orientation that can be identified through concrete marketing decisions and transactional practices. Previous Islamic marketing studies have similarly emphasised that ethical conduct influences how firms build credibility, maintain customer relationships, and deliver value⁸. Accordingly, the analytical focus of this study is placed on observable marketing practices rather than on assessing the personal religiosity of individual marketers.

Operationalising Shariah Marketing through STP and the Marketing Mix

The strategic dimension of Shariah marketing in this study is examined through segmentation, targeting, positioning (STP), and the marketing mix. The original theoretical framework identifies segmentation and targeting, positioning, and the marketing mix as key elements of marketing practice associated with the business practices of the Prophet Muhammad. In this framework, segmentation and targeting require marketers to understand differences in customer characteristics and market needs before determining the segments that can be appropriately served. Positioning concerns the value and perception established in customers' minds through the firm's ability to provide products that correspond to their needs and expectations.

Positioning in Shariah-oriented marketing is closely related to the consistency between market promises and actual product performance. The underlying principle is that

⁸ Md. Abdullah Al Mamun, Carolyn A. Strong, and Md. Abul Kalam Azad, "Islamic Marketing: A Literature Review and Research Agenda," *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 45, no. 5 (October 2020): 964–84, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12625>.

Murad Mohammed Al-Nashmi and Abdulkarim Abdullah Almamary, "The Relationship Between Islamic Marketing Ethics and Brand Credibility: A Case of Pharmaceutical Industry in Yemen," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 8, no. 2 (2017): 261–88, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-03-2015-0024>; Aamir Abbas et al., "The Role of Islamic Marketing Ethics Towards Customer Satisfaction," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 11, no. 4 (2019): 1001–18, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-11-2017-0123>; Md. Abdullah Al Mamun, Carolyn A. Strong, and Md. Abul Kalam Azad, "Islamic Marketing: A Literature Review and Research Agenda," *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 45, no. 5 (2021): 964–84, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12625>.

the product offered should correspond to the needs and expectations of customers rather than create misleading perceptions. The original framework emphasises that products should be presented as they actually are and that customer dissatisfaction arising from incompatibility between the promised and delivered product should be properly addressed.

These strategic choices are implemented through the four elements of the marketing mix: product, price, place, and promotion. Product requires the provision of goods whose quality corresponds to what has been communicated to customers. Price should reflect fairness and proportionality between the value of the product and the customer's purchasing capacity, rather than being used to exploit buyers or unfairly undermine competitors. Place or distribution concerns the accessibility and fairness of the process through which products reach buyers. Promotion must avoid false statements, exaggerated claims, fabricated demand, and other practices that may mislead customers.

Within an e-commerce marketplace, these dimensions become particularly relevant because product information, price displays, promotional messages, ordering processes, and distribution arrangements constitute the primary interface between sellers and customers. The STP and 4P frameworks are therefore used in this study not simply as conventional marketing instruments, but as operational domains in which Shariah principles can be observed in practice.

Shariah Marketing Principles in E-Commerce Transactions

To evaluate whether strategic marketing activities are consistent with Shariah, this study adopts six principles contained in the original research framework: fairness, responsiveness to change, providing the best possible value in product and price, mutual consent and the buyer's right of *khiyar*, avoidance of fraud, and orientation toward quality. These principles provide the normative criteria against which the firm's marketplace practices can be interpreted. The original research explicitly uses these six principles in both its theoretical framework and empirical analysis.

Fairness requires business actors to avoid unjust treatment and to maintain reasonable treatment of customers and competitors. Responsiveness to change recognises that

marketing decisions must adapt to changes in competition, technology, customer preferences, and market conditions without abandoning ethical standards. Providing the best possible value in product and price requires correspondence between product quality and the price charged; Shariah marketing therefore rejects the sale of inferior goods at unjustifiably high prices.

Mutual consent (*tarāḍin*) emphasises that transactions should occur voluntarily and on the basis of adequate information. Closely related to this is the buyer's right of *khiyar*, which preserves the option to cancel or reconsider a transaction when the product does not correspond to what was agreed upon. Avoidance of fraud prohibits *tadlis*, including deception concerning product quantity, quality, delivery, and price. Finally, a quality orientation requires marketers to maintain product quality, cost efficiency, and reliable delivery as part of sustaining customer relationships.

These principles acquire greater significance in e-commerce transactions because buyers frequently make decisions without physically inspecting the product. The original research framework therefore stresses that online sellers should clearly identify and explain the products offered, including relevant product specifications and deficiencies, so that customers are not misled. Clarity of the object and price is particularly important because ambiguity concerning the product or its price may introduce elements of deception into the transaction.

Recent studies on Islamic digital commerce provide a complementary contemporary context. Research concerning DSN-MUI guidance on online shopping, seller ethics, and Shariah contracts emphasises transparency, contractual clarity, responsible seller behaviour, and consumer protection in digital transactions (Alfarisi & Suhedi, 2023; Afrelian et al., 2024; Syahrudin et al., 2024). In this study, these contemporary discussions complement rather than replace the original analytical framework. The central empirical question remains how Shariah marketing principles are translated into actual SME practices

involving market selection, product presentation, pricing, promotion, distribution, and customer handling.

Analytical Framework

Based on the foregoing literature, this study conceptualises the operationalisation of Shariah marketing through two interconnected analytical layers. The first is the strategic-operational layer, comprising segmentation, targeting, positioning, and the 4P marketing mix. The second is the Shariah-ethical layer, comprising fairness, responsiveness to change, appropriate correspondence between product and price, mutual consent and *khiyar*, avoidance of fraudulent practices, and quality orientation.

Thus, Shariah marketing is considered operationalised when strategic marketing activities are not only commercially functional but are also performed consistently with these ethical principles. For example, product strategy is evaluated through product quality and truthful disclosure; price through fairness and clarity; promotion through the avoidance of misleading claims; distribution through accessibility and reliable fulfilment; and customer service through accountability, mutual consent, and protection of the buyer's legitimate options. This integrated framework provides the basis for interpreting the empirical findings of the case study.

C. Research Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive case-study approach with field research to examine the operationalisation of Shariah marketing through e-commerce activities at a food-packaging SME in Tangerang, Indonesia. The study was conducted at Dpack Tangerang, located in Kelapa Dua District, Tangerang Regency, Banten. The object of investigation was the firm's Shariah marketing strategy through e-commerce, with particular attention to segmentation, targeting, positioning, the marketing mix, and the implementation of Shariah marketing principles in its business practices. The original study identifies the core informants as a manager and an employee involved in the firm's marketing activities.

Data were collected through observation, structured interviews, and documentation. Observation was used to examine marketing and operational practices in their field context, while structured interviews were conducted using predetermined questions concerning marketing strategy, market competition, customer service, product quality, pricing, promotion, sales outcomes, and complaint handling. Documentary materials, including field photographs, interview records, and other relevant records, were used as supporting evidence. The primary empirical evidence was obtained from organisational actors directly involved in marketing activities, while customer testimony contained in the field materials was used as supplementary evidence to corroborate selected findings concerning product quality, pricing, service, and transaction experience.

Data analysis followed four interrelated stages: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation were first organised and then reduced by selecting information relevant to the research questions. The reduced data were presented narratively and interpreted in relation to the analytical framework of Shariah marketing, particularly STP, the marketing mix, and Shariah marketing principles. The credibility of the findings was strengthened through triangulation, by comparing evidence from different sources and forms of data, and through *member checking* against interview records where applicable. The original study also retained interview transcripts and documentary evidence to support the verification of field findings.

D. Result and Discussion

The findings show that Shariah marketing at the case SME was manifested through two interconnected dimensions. The first concerned the firm's strategic marketing practices, comprising segmentation and targeting, positioning, and the marketing mix. The second concerned the ethical principles governing those practices, particularly fairness, responsiveness to market change, correspondence between product quality and price, mutual consent and *khayar*, avoidance of deceptive practices, and commitment to quality.

The empirical evidence indicates that these principles were embedded in routine marketing decisions rather than being treated as a separate religious label.

Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning

The firm's segmentation activities were primarily based on geographical proximity and information derived from previous purchases. The manager explained that Dpack initially concentrated on market areas surrounding Tangerang while using brochures, e-commerce, and social media to introduce its products to a wider customer base:

“We initially focus on market segments around Dpack Tangerang and then conduct promotional activities to introduce our products to people in Tangerang and the surrounding areas. Promotion is carried out through brochures, but most importantly through e-commerce and social media”.⁹

This statement is consistent with the original interview, in which the manager explicitly identified surrounding areas, brochures, e-commerce, and social media as the principal basis of the firm's segmentation and promotional activities. The online administrator further explained that purchase records were used to identify the most frequently purchased products and the geographical origin of customers. Food boxes were among the most frequently purchased products, while buyers were predominantly located in Tangerang Regency.¹⁰ Purchase information therefore provided a practical basis for identifying commercially relevant customer groups rather than relying solely on general assumptions about the market. The original interview specifically identifies *Box Nasi* as a frequently purchased product and Tangerang Regency as the dominant customer location. Targeting was subsequently conducted by considering purchase information, customer characteristics, purchasing power, and geographical market potential. The manager stated:

⁹ Fellicia Handly, *Interview with Fellicia Handly, Manager of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

¹⁰ Rina Adriana, *Interview with Rina Adriana, Online Administrator of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

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“Dpack Tangerang determines its target market based on purchase data, such as customer age and income, which influence purchasing power, as well as geographical areas considered potentially profitable for subsequent marketing activities”.¹¹

The online administrator similarly indicated that demand remained relatively high in Tangerang, particularly in Kelapa Dua and surrounding areas.¹² The firm also considered cafés, restaurants, and other culinary businesses located near its operations as potential target customers. The original field findings explicitly identify cafés and culinary businesses as part of Dpack's target market. Positioning was primarily developed around the relationship between product quality, customer needs, and appropriate pricing. Rather than relying heavily on store design or interior appearance, the firm emphasised product suitability and quality as its principal value proposition.¹³ The original findings likewise describe Dpack's positioning as relatively simple in physical presentation while prioritising customer needs, product quality, and correspondence between quality and price.

Product, Price, Place, and Promotion

In product strategy, quality emerged as one of the most consistently emphasised considerations. The manager stated:

“I always choose food-grade materials with good quality and appropriate prices. We sell according to the quality of the material and continue to innovate by adding products and services according to market segmentation”.¹⁴

This statement is supported by the original findings, which describe the manager's emphasis on food-grade materials, quality standards, and gradual product innovation

¹¹ Fellicia Handly, *Interview with Fellicia Handly, Manager of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

¹² Rina Adriana, *Interview with Rina Adriana, Online Administrator of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

¹³ Fellicia Handly, *Interview with Fellicia Handly, Manager of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024; Rina Adriana, *Interview with Rina Adriana, Online Administrator of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

¹⁴ Fellicia Handly, *Interview with Fellicia Handly, Manager of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

according to market segmentation. The online administrator corroborated this account by explaining that good-quality materials and production results were considered important for customer satisfaction and loyalty.¹⁵ Pricing practices combined market-based pricing with promotional discounts. The manager reported that discounts could reach approximately 20% on selected occasions, including national celebrations and periods preceding religious holidays. These discounts were intended to introduce products to new customers while encouraging existing customers to place repeat orders:

“Although the discounts we provide can reach 20% on special days, such as Mother's Day, Independence Day, and periods before religious holidays, they are also used as a promotional opportunity for people who do not yet know Dpack products. The discounts can attract new customers and encourage existing customers to order again”.¹⁶

The original interview further records the manager's perception that promotional discounts contributed to repeat orders and higher revenue during the period preceding Eid. These statements should be interpreted as the manager's perception rather than as quantitative evidence of a causal effect on sales. The distribution strategy combined physical accessibility with digital marketplace channels. The manager described the store as strategically located near the main road and accessible to both customers and local couriers. The firm also provided local delivery services:

“Dpack Tangerang is located in a strategic area directly beside the main road, making it easier for customers and couriers to find our business. We also provide delivery services using local couriers”.¹⁷

In addition to its physical outlet, Dpack used Shopee, Tokopedia, Blibli, and Lazada, while offline customers could access product catalogues and price lists. These

¹⁵ Rina Adriana, *Interview with Rina Adriana, Online Administrator of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

¹⁶ Fellicia Handly, *Interview with Fellicia Handly, Manager of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

¹⁷ Fellicia Handly, *Interview with Fellicia Handly, Manager of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

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practices are explicitly described in the original interview material. Promotion was conducted through both offline and online channels. The online administrator explained:

“We use two approaches to introduce our products: directly, through word of mouth and direct offers to restaurants and cafés in Tangerang, and indirectly through e-commerce platforms such as Shopee, Tokopedia, Blibli, and Lazada, as well as social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp”.¹⁸

The source interview confirms these promotional channels. In addition, the online administrator reported using marketplace advertising facilities, including Shopee's *flash sale* feature. Promotion was also expected to remain consistent with the actual characteristics of the products. The manager stated:

“When promoting our products, we have to explain them as they actually are so that customers do not form expectations that are too high when the product may differ from what they need”.¹⁹

This suggests that promotion functioned not only as a means of attracting customers but also as a mechanism for communicating product characteristics accurately.

Shariah Principles in Marketing Practices

The findings indicate that the firm's marketing activities reflected six Shariah-oriented principles. Fairness was particularly evident in customer service and pricing practices. The manager stated:

“If customers order products in large quantities, there will be a price reduction. In providing service, we do not differentiate between customers; everyone is served properly and politely”.²⁰

The original interview additionally states that the firm attempted to adopt good competitive practices while avoiding inappropriate ones. Customer testimony supported

¹⁸ Rina Adriana, *Interview with Rina Adriana, Online Administrator of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

¹⁹ Fellicia Handly, *Interview with Fellicia Handly, Manager of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

²⁰ Fellicia Handly, *Interview with Fellicia Handly, Manager of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

the existence of quantity-based and loyalty-related discounts. One customer reported receiving discounts when purchasing more than 500 units and also receiving small loyalty-related reductions after becoming a regular customer (Maryana, 2024). Fairness in this case is therefore better interpreted as reasonable and transparent treatment according to transaction conditions rather than identical pricing in every transaction.

Responsiveness to change was reflected in the firm's adjustment to supplier prices and changing market conditions. The manager explained:

“We always keep updated on price changes. If material prices from suppliers increase, we have to carefully adjust the product and its price because we do not set prices outside the market level. We take only a small profit as long as customers remain loyal and satisfied with our products”.²¹

This statement provides direct empirical evidence that pricing adjustments were undertaken in response to supplier-price changes while considering prevailing market prices. A third principle concerned the correspondence between product quality and price. The manager emphasised truthful disclosure of material quality:

“I have never deceived customers about material quality. If the material I sell is of lower quality, I explain it as it is rather than describing poor-quality material as good. I always sell products according to their actual quality”.²²

This wording closely follows the original interview evidence. Customer testimony corroborated this practice. Dina Maryana explained that Dpack recommended higher-quality materials when requested but was also willing to recommend alternatives that matched the customer's budget.²³ Mutual consent and the buyer's right of *khiyar* were reflected primarily in product disclosure and complaint handling. The manager stated:

²¹ Fellicia Handly, *Interview with Fellicia Handly, Manager of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

²² Fellicia Handly, *Interview with Fellicia Handly, Manager of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

²³ Dina Maryana, *Interview with Dina Maryana, Customer of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), 2024.

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“Dpack Tangerang always provides product descriptions in its online store and explains the product to customers before they purchase so that the seller and buyer can mutually agree in the transaction”.²⁴

This statement is directly recorded in the original findings. The interview materials further show that complaints included delayed delivery, damaged products, and products that did not correspond to customers' orders (Handly, 2024). The online administrator also explained that complaints received by the firm were responded to and customers were provided with solutions to the problems they experienced.²⁵ These practices provide empirical support for customer protection and mutual consent, although the available evidence does not establish a formalised return or refund policy.

The principle of avoiding fraudulent practices was closely associated with truthful disclosure. Customer testimony described Dpack as attempting to remain *amanah* and to explain the products being sold as they actually were.²⁶ The original customer statement explicitly characterises the firm as avoiding dishonest practices and explaining products truthfully. In this sense, *shiddiq* and *amanah* were manifested through accurate product information and the avoidance of misleading claims.

Finally, quality orientation was evident in material selection, production, and customer service. The manager stated that the firm sought to provide good-quality products with neat production results, while the online administrator associated good materials and production quality with customer satisfaction and repeat purchasing.²⁷ The

²⁴ Fellicia Handly, *Interview with Fellicia Handly, Manager of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

²⁵ Rina Adriana, *Interview with Rina Adriana, Online Administrator of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

²⁶ Dina Maryana, *Interview with Dina Maryana, Customer of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), 2024.

²⁷ Fellicia Handly, *Interview with Fellicia Handly, Manager of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024; Rina Adriana, *Interview with Rina Adriana, Online Administrator of Dpack Tangerang*, (Tangerang, Indonesia), July 10, 2024.

source data explicitly connect good-quality materials and production with satisfaction and loyalty.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that Shariah marketing in this case was operationalised through routine marketing practices, including the use of customer information for market selection, quality-oriented positioning, correspondence between product quality and price, responsible promotion, multi-channel distribution, truthful product disclosure, and responsive complaint handling. Shariah-oriented values were therefore manifested through observable marketing and transactional practices rather than remaining solely at the normative level.

Discussion

The findings show that Shariah marketing in the studied SME is operationalised through conventional marketing activities that are guided by ethical principles such as fairness, truthful communication, transparency, mutual consent, avoidance of deception, and commitment to quality. These principles are reflected in segmentation, targeting, positioning, and the marketing mix, indicating that Shariah marketing functions not only as a normative concept but also as an observable business practice. In the e-commerce context, such practices are particularly relevant because transactions rely heavily on accurate product information, clear pricing, and responsible communication between sellers and buyers.

Shariah Marketing as an Observable Marketing Practice

The findings demonstrate that Shariah marketing in the case SME is not practised as a separate set of religious activities detached from conventional marketing decisions. Instead, Shariah principles are embedded within everyday decisions concerning market selection, product positioning, product quality, pricing, promotion, distribution, and customer handling. This finding supports the view that Islamic marketing ethics should operate as a managerial orientation governing how value is created and communicated

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rather than merely as a religious label attached to products or businesses. Previous studies have similarly associated Islamic marketing ethics with credibility, customer satisfaction, and responsible exchange.²⁸ The present case extends this discussion by showing the specific routines through which such ethical commitments become observable in the marketing activities of an SME operating through e-commerce marketplaces.

This interpretation is particularly relevant in online transactions because customers frequently depend on seller-provided information before physically examining a product. In this case, product descriptions, explanations concerning material quality, price information, promotional communication, and responses to complaints formed important points at which Shariah principles became operational. The firm's emphasis on explaining products as they actually were, matching quality with price, and responding to transaction problems illustrates how *shiddiq* and *amanah* can be expressed through concrete commercial behaviour. The customer testimony in the original field data further supports this interpretation, particularly the statement that the firm sought to remain *amanah* and describe its products as they actually were. Thus, the contribution of Shariah marketing is located not merely in stating ethical principles but in embedding those principles in observable seller behaviour.

Integrating STP with Shariah Marketing Principles

The findings regarding segmentation and targeting indicate that the firm used purchase records, geographical concentration, product demand, and market potential to direct its marketing activities. Rather than attempting to serve every potential market

²⁸ Md. Abdullah Al Mamun, Carolyn A. Strong, and Md. Abul Kalam Azad, "Islamic Marketing: A Literature Review and Research Agenda," *International Journal of Consumer Studies* 45, no. 5 (October 2020): 964–84, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12625>.

Murad Mohammed Al-Nashmi and Abdulkarim Abdullah Almamary, "The Relationship Between Islamic Marketing Ethics and Brand Credibility: A Case of Pharmaceutical Industry in Yemen," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 8, no. 2 (2017): 261–88, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-03-2015-0024>; Amir Abbas et al., "The Role of Islamic Marketing Ethics Towards Customer Satisfaction," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 11, no. 4 (2019): 1001–18, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-11-2017-0123>.

equally, the firm concentrated on Tangerang and surrounding areas and on customer groups such as cafés and restaurants where demand for food packaging was relatively visible. This reflects the conventional strategic purpose of segmentation and targeting: identifying customer groups that the firm is capable of serving effectively.

From a Shariah marketing perspective, however, these practices can be interpreted beyond their function as tools of market efficiency. Using actual purchase patterns and observable demand enables the seller to align its market promises with its productive and service capacity. In this sense, strategic market selection can support responsible exchange because the business is better positioned to fulfil what it promises to customers. This interpretation complements previous Islamic marketing literature that connects ethical marketing with credibility and customer satisfaction.²⁹ and with studies emphasising the importance of an ethically informed marketing mix.³⁰ The present findings therefore suggest that Shariah principles need not replace conventional STP tools; rather, ethical considerations can govern the way those tools are used.

The positioning findings reinforce this argument. Dpack's position was primarily built around the correspondence between product quality, customer requirements, and price rather than around aggressive price competition. The original data show that the business emphasised quality materials while maintaining prices that customers could reasonably relate to the quality offered. Such positioning is consistent with the Shariah principle that sellers should not misrepresent inferior products as superior products or

²⁹ Murad Mohammed Al-Nashmi and Abdulkarim Abdullah Almamary, "The Relationship Between Islamic Marketing Ethics and Brand Credibility: A Case of Pharmaceutical Industry in Yemen," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 8, no. 2 (2017): 261–88, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-03-2015-0024>; Aamir Abbas et al., "The Role of Islamic Marketing Ethics Towards Customer Satisfaction," *Journal of Islamic Marketing* 11, no. 4 (2019): 1001–18, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIMA-11-2017-0123>.

³⁰ Johari B. Abdullah, Jamil H. Hamali, and Firdaus Abdullah, "Success Strategies in Islamic Marketing Mix," *International Journal of Business and Society* 16, no. 3 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.33736/ijbs.581.2015>.

charge prices that are disconnected from the value offered. In this case, therefore, positioning becomes simultaneously a competitive strategy and an ethical commitment.

The Marketing Mix as the Operational Domain of Shariah Ethics

The four elements of the marketing mix provide the clearest evidence of how Shariah marketing was operationalised. In the product dimension, the emphasis on food-grade materials, production quality, and correspondence between customer requirements and delivered products demonstrates an orientation toward quality and truthful representation. This is consistent with the original Shariah marketing framework in which quality orientation and avoidance of *tadlis* are central principles. The firm's product practices therefore indicate that product quality is not only a source of competitive differentiation but also an ethical obligation to deliver what has been promised.

In the price dimension, the findings show a combination of market-sensitive pricing, quantity discounts, customer-related discounts, and promotional discounts during selected occasions. These practices do not automatically constitute Shariah compliance merely because prices are low. Their ethical significance lies instead in the correspondence between the price charged, the quality offered, and the information communicated to customers. The evidence that discounted products retained the same product quality reinforces this interpretation. Fair pricing in this case is therefore better understood as proportional and transparent pricing rather than uniform pricing for every customer.

The promotion findings further illustrate the relevance of truthful communication. Dpack used brochures, social media, and marketplace channels, but the field evidence emphasised that product information should be communicated without exaggerating product characteristics. This finding is consistent with Islamic marketing ethics that reject deceptive claims and manipulation. It also complements prior research on Shariah-compliant e-commerce, which places considerable emphasis on information clarity, responsible seller conduct, and avoidance of misleading digital transactions. In this respect, the marketplace does not change the underlying ethical obligation; rather, it increases the

importance of accurate disclosure because product information becomes a primary basis for customer decision-making.

The place/distribution dimension demonstrates how physical and digital access can operate together. The firm combined a strategically accessible physical location, local delivery arrangements, catalogues, and several marketplace channels. The empirical importance of distribution, however, lies not simply in the number of channels used but in whether those channels enable the seller to fulfil customer orders and maintain service accountability. Problems reported in the interview data including delayed delivery, damaged goods, and products that did not correspond to orders show that distribution is also an ethical issue because fulfilment failures can affect the fairness of the exchange. The firm's reported practice of responding to complaints therefore becomes part of the Shariah marketing process rather than merely a post-sale customer-service function.

Fairness, Mutual Consent, Khiyar, and the Avoidance of Deception

The six Shariah marketing principles identified in the original framework provide an ethical layer across these strategic and tactical activities. Fairness was manifested through service practices and differentiated but explainable pricing arrangements, including quantity-based discounts. Responsiveness to change appeared in adjustments to supplier prices, changing packaging trends, competition, and customer preferences. The correspondence between product and price was reflected in the firm's repeated emphasis on accurately communicating material quality. These findings correspond closely to the six principles that formed the basis of the original study: fairness, responsiveness to change, giving the best possible value in product and price, mutual consent and *khayar*, avoidance of fraud, and quality orientation.

Particularly significant is the relationship between product information and mutual consent. Mutual consent in an e-commerce transaction cannot be understood merely as the customer's act of clicking a purchase button. Meaningful consent requires sufficiently clear information about what is being purchased. The manager's statement that product descriptions were provided through the online store and explained to customers

therefore has ethical significance because adequate information provides a stronger basis for voluntary agreement between buyer and seller. The firm's willingness to receive complaints and attempt to resolve discrepancies also provides a practical context for the principle of *khiyar*. However, the evidence does not establish a formal institutionalised *khiyar* or refund mechanism; rather, it shows practices that are consistent with protecting the buyer's option when transaction problems arise. This distinction is important in preventing the interpretation from exceeding the available evidence.

The findings also clarify the role of the Prophetic ethical attributes discussed in the literature. *Shiddiq* is observable through truthful explanations of product quality, while *amanah* is reflected in the effort to deliver products consistently with what has been promised and to remain accountable when customers experience problems. Although *tabligh* and *fathanah* remain relevant as broader ethical orientations, the available field evidence is not sufficiently systematic to treat all four attributes as independently verified empirical categories. They are therefore better understood as overarching ethical values whose most clearly documented manifestations in this case concern truthful communication, trustworthiness, competence in responding to market changes, and responsible customer communication.

Contribution to Shariah Marketing and E-Commerce Literature

These findings contribute to the literature in three ways. First, they demonstrate that conventional marketing frameworks such as STP and the 4P marketing mix are not necessarily separate from Shariah marketing. Their conformity with Shariah depends on how marketing decisions are made and implemented. Segmentation, targeting, pricing, promotion, and distribution remain commercially oriented activities, but Shariah principles place ethical boundaries around the information provided, treatment of customers, product–price correspondence, and fulfilment of transactional responsibilities.

Second, the study provides a practice-based bridge between normative Shariah principles and everyday marketplace activity. Much of the literature discussed in the

Introduction focuses on the normative, contractual, or legal requirements of Islamic digital transactions. The present case adds an organisational-level perspective by identifying where such principles become visible in SME practice: purchase-data-based market selection, quality-based positioning, material disclosure, pricing and discount decisions, promotional communication, distribution, complaint handling, and customer options when transactions do not proceed as expected.

Third, the findings suggest that Shariah marketing may contribute to customer relationships through the cumulative consistency of multiple small practices rather than through a single explicitly religious marketing mechanism. Customer testimony in the case associates truthful product information, appropriate product recommendations, quality, price, and service with satisfaction and loyalty. However, because the evidence is qualitative, the study should not claim a causal relationship between Shariah marketing and sales growth or customer loyalty. Instead, the findings indicate that organisational actors and customer testimony perceive these practices as supporting trust, repeat purchasing, and continuity of customer relationships. Future quantitative research would be required to test the magnitude and direction of these relationships.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, the study advances a practice-based understanding of Shariah marketing in which ethical principles are operationalised within the strategic and tactical architecture of marketing rather than positioned alongside it as a separate normative layer. The analytical contribution can therefore be expressed as an integration between STP and the marketing mix as the operational domains and Shariah principles as the ethical criteria governing those domains. This offers a more concrete explanation of how Islamic marketing ethics can be examined empirically within an SME setting.

Practically, the findings suggest that SMEs seeking to implement Shariah-aligned marketplace marketing should prioritise accuracy of product information, correspondence between price and quality, responsible promotional communication, accessible distribution, responsive complaint handling, and preservation of buyer choice when products or services

do not correspond to what was agreed. Importantly, these practices do not require SMEs to create an entirely separate marketing system. Rather, Shariah principles can be incorporated into the marketing routines that firms already perform, provided that those routines are governed by fairness, transparency, truthful communication, mutual consent, avoidance of deception, and commitment to quality.

E. Conclusion

This study examined how Shariah marketing is operationalised through e-commerce marketplace activities in a food-packaging SME in Tangerang, Indonesia. The findings answer the first research question by showing that the firm's marketing strategy is implemented through segmentation and targeting based on purchase information and geographical market potential, positioning centred on the correspondence between product quality and price, and a marketing mix encompassing product quality, pricing and discounts, offline and online distribution, and promotional communication. In relation to the second research question, the findings show that these marketing activities are accompanied by Shariah-oriented principles of fairness, responsiveness to change, appropriate correspondence between product and price, mutual consent and *khiyar*, avoidance of deceptive practices, and commitment to quality. These principles are manifested in observable practices such as explaining product characteristics accurately, matching prices with product quality, providing reasonable discounts, communicating promotions without exaggeration, responding to customer complaints, and maintaining product and service quality. The evidence concerning truthful disclosure and responsible conduct also illustrates practical manifestations of *shiddiq* and *amanah* within marketplace transactions. The central contribution of the study is therefore not the introduction of new Shariah marketing principles, but the demonstration of how established Shariah values can be translated into routine marketing practices through STP and the marketing mix in an SME e-commerce setting. This practice-based perspective bridges the gap between

normative Islamic marketing principles and their observable implementation in digital commercial activities. The qualitative evidence further indicates that managers and customers perceive truthful communication, appropriate price–quality relationships, service responsiveness, and product quality as supporting customer satisfaction, trust, and repeat purchasing. These relationships, however, should be interpreted as participants' perceptions rather than as evidence of causal effects on sales performance. Overall, the case demonstrates that Shariah marketing in e-commerce can be understood as the integration of commercial marketing decisions with ethical responsibilities governing how products are offered, communicated, delivered, and accounted for to customers.

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