

# Halal Product Uniqueness on Marketing Performance: The Role of Islamic Market Orientation and Islamic Innovativeness

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## Abstract

### Keywords:

Islamic market orientation;  
Islamic Innovativeness;  
Halal product uniqueness;  
Marketing performance

This study is an empirical investigation aimed at exploring the impact of Islamic market orientation, Islamic innovativeness, and halal product uniqueness on marketing performance. The sample for this study consisted of 180 executives from the food processing sector in Central Java, Indonesia. Utilizing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the data was analyzed. The research results show that Islamic market orientation has a positive influence on Islamic innovativeness. Islamic market orientation and Islamic innovation have a positive influence on the uniqueness of halal products. Islamic market orientation, Islamic innovation and the uniqueness of halal products have a positive influence on marketing performance. Islamic innovation and the uniqueness of halal products can mediate Islamic market orientation on marketing performance. The implication of this research is that leaders can take advantage of Islamic market orientation and Islamic innovativeness which can improve marketing performance if they pay attention to halal product uniqueness as a positional advantage in the culinary industry.

## Abstrak

### Kata kunci:

Orientasi pasar Islam;  
Inovasi Islam;  
Keunikan produk halal;  
Kinerja pemasaran

Penelitian ini merupakan studi empiris yang bertujuan untuk menyelidiki pengaruh Islamic market orientation, Islamic innovativeness, halal product uniqueness terhadap marketing performance. Responden penelitian ini berjumlah 180 pimpinan industri pengolahan makanan di Jawa Tengah, Indonesia. Data dianalisis menggunakan Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Islamic market orientation memiliki pengaruh positif terhadap Islamic innovativeness. Islamic market orientation dan Islamic innovativeness berpengaruh positif terhadap halal product uniqueness. Islamic market orientation, Islamic innovativeness dan halal product uniqueness dapat memediasi Islamic market orientation terhadap marketing performance. Implikasi penelitian ini, pimpinan dapat memanfaatkan Islamic market orientation dan Islamic innovativeness yang dapat meningkatkan kinerja pemasaran jika memperhatikan halal product uniqueness sebagai keunggulan posisional industri kuliner.

## 1. Introduction

The development of MSMEs in Indonesia is very rapid, this can be seen from the increasing number of new MSMEs emerging to attract the attention of customers. MSMEs that are unable to compete will go out of business or go bankrupt due to very dynamic product marketing conditions, where producers and market players compete to win very tight competition. Therefore creating unique products will improve performance outcomes, earnings, return on investment, and customer retention in addition to sales growth (Crosby et al., 1990; R. M. Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Sin et al., 2005; Tse et al., 2004). The growth in the number of MSMEs in Central Java over the last five years shows fluctuating growth, in

2018 the number of MSMEs was 7.52%, in 2019 there was an increase of 12.33%, in 2020 there was a decrease of 3.67% and in 2021 it was 3.61%, then in 2022 the number of MSMEs will increase by 4.12%. Apart from that, MSME turnover growth, in 2018 was 13.08%, in 2019 there was an increase of 21.29%, in 2020 there was a decrease of -0.68% and in 2021 there was an increase of 1.72%, then in 2022 turnover growth MSMEs experienced a decline of 0.49%.

Market orientation has long been considered a key factor in predicting a company's marketing performance. Market orientation concept Refers to a business philosophy that focuses on customer orientation, profit orientation, and communication of market needs conveyed to all departments in the organization to provide satisfaction more effectively and efficiently than competitors (Barksdale & Darden, 1971; Mcnamara, 1972). This concept is the basis for companies to be able to adapt to market changes and better meet customer expectations. According to (Zebal & Saber, 2014), in the context of Islamic markets, Islamic market orientation identifies five main factors which include Islamic customer orientation, information orientation, integration orientation, competition orientation, and response orientation, which aim to direct companies in understanding and meeting market needs. more specifically, especially among consumers who prioritize Islamic principles.

Various studies have shown that market orientation plays an important role in improving business performance. Previous studies (Alrubaiee, 2013; Ayimey et al., 2021; Frösén et al., 2016; Harjadi et al., 2020; Joensuu-Salo et al., 2018; N. A. Morgan et al., 2009; Riswanto et al., 2020; Syam et al., 2022; Udriyah et al., 2019; Wayan et al., 2020) provide evidence that the right market orientation can improve competitiveness and company marketing performance. However, there are also conflicting findings, as stated by Kurniawan et al. (2020), which states that market orientation is not always effective in encouraging increased marketing performance. This raises questions regarding the factors that influence the effectiveness of implementing market orientation in improving business performance. Apart from Islamic market orientation, innovation is also known as an important strategy for improving marketing performance. The concept of innovation in Islam emphasizes a balance between creativity and permitted limits in carrying out innovation. The innovation carried out must be in line with the principles of the Islamic religion, which means that creativity and new developments must remain within the framework of the values permitted by the Shari'a. Prohibited innovations are those that conflict with Islamic law or moral principles, while permitted innovations are those that provide benefits and do not violate religious provisions (Zakaria & Abdul-Talib, 2010).

To improve marketing performance, companies need to have unique products and differentiate themselves from competitors. Product uniqueness can be defined as a product that has significant differences compared to other products in the same category, both in terms of sensory, image, functional, emotional, and other characteristics that can be felt and appreciated positively by consumers (Cardello et al., 2016). The uniqueness of this product not only provides its own attraction, but also has the potential to increase the company's competitiveness and business performance. Research by Ebrahimi et al. (2018) show that to increase the business potential of SMEs in developing countries, it is very important for

companies to introduce new technologies and produce unique products. Product innovation is the key to making the products offered more attractive and different compared to competitors' products, which in the end can improve marketing performance and competitiveness in the market. Innovation carried out correctly can turn a simple product into a superior choice for consumers, thus providing more profits for the company (Murniningsih et al., 2023).

Seeing the characteristics of Indonesian society, which is predominantly Muslim, it is important for entrepreneurs to pay attention to the products they offer so that they are in accordance with the values contained in Islamic law. Therefore, it is necessary to apply principles originating from the Al-Qur'an and Hadith in product development, to ensure that the product can be well received by consumers and excel in the market. Aligning products with religious values can increase customer trust and loyalty, especially in markets that are sensitive to religious issues. However, although there is research that emphasizes the importance of product uniqueness in improving business performance, there are inconsistencies in views regarding the understanding of Resource Advantage Theory and the relationship between competitive advantage and product uniqueness. Research by Tan et al. (2015) revealed that products that are considered unique, new, or unusual do not always translate into successful market value. Only a small proportion of consumers are interested in new, very different products, such as insect-based products, which may not be accepted by most consumers. In companies that use religion as the basis for determining market segments and customer targets, success lies in the ability to meet customer needs that prioritize products in accordance with Islamic law or also called halal products. By focusing on meeting these needs, companies can build closer relationships with target customers, provide the best service, and build a brand image based on religious values. This has the potential to create greater opportunities to improve marketing performance and gain a more sustainable competitive advantage.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Islamic Market Orientation and Islamic Innovativeness

Capabilities are dynamic because they enable businesses to combine and reorganize existing resources in novel and inventive ways, enabling them to adopt new strategies in response to shifting market conditions. While having valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable resources can be beneficial, companies also need additional capabilities to be able to demonstrate the value of the market information process concept to market orientation (Ketchen et al., 2007). According to Kohli and Jaworski (1990) market orientation is defined as the process of gathering market intelligence throughout an organization, disseminating this intelligence across departments, and responding to it organization-wide. This definition emphasizes the importance of creating and sharing market knowledge to enhance customer value. Market orientation, as defined by Kohli and Jaworski (1990) is associated with significant profitability for companies (Kirca et al., 2005; Zhou et al., 2009). According to Zebal and Saber (2014) identified Islamic market orientation with five key factors: Islamic customer orientation, information orientation, integration

orientation, competition orientation, and response orientation. Understanding customer and market needs enables companies to survive and counter strategic moves by competitors (Zakaria & Abdul-Talib, 2010). The main principles that form Islamic market orientation can be referred to in the teachings of the Al-Quran and Hadith which prioritize justice, transparency and customer satisfaction. In Islam, caring for the welfare of others and providing good service to others is something that is highly valued. As in the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW: "Indeed, Allah loves people who work well and provide the best service to others." (HR. Muslim). Apart from that, in QS. Al-Isra (36) Islam places great emphasis on the importance of gaining correct knowledge and sharing honest information. "And do not follow what you do not know." This teaches the importance of accuracy in collecting information used in marketing strategies.

Market orientation tends to be positively related to innovation strategy (Atuahene-Gima, 2005). Customer orientation has a stronger impact on innovation. Businesses that engage with consumers might progressively enhance their offerings of goods and services in reaction to comments or input from consumers. By involving customers to innovate, companies will get ideas for new products and services. In addition to customer orientation, The business closely monitors what its rivals do, which increases the likelihood that it may copy their strategies and enhance its own offerings. Lukas and Ferrel (2000), as well as developing new ways of doing things from its competitors to win market share (Atuahene-Gima, 2005).

H1: Islamic market orientation positively influences Islamic innovativeness.

## 2.2. Islamic Market Orientation and Halal Product Uniqueness

Within the section of the market that is Islamic, Islamic market orientation is closely related to Halal product uniqueness. Businesses that can comprehend the demands of Muslim consumers and are aware of rivals' tactics stand a better chance of gaining a competitive edge in the intended market segment. Al-Khatib et al. (1995) in his study stated Muslim customers place a high value on halal goods and services and have strong preferences for them. In the religious-based product market, companies that are responsive to the needs of Muslim customers, such as trying hard to produce unique products that are halal in accordance with Islamic rules, when the business genuinely makes sure that the substances and raw materials utilized in production are halal and that the manufacturing process complies with Islamic principles, religious Muslim employees who understand halal and haram, secure delivery and storage of products and avoid items that could cause the product to become halal will have a greater opportunity to gain the positional advantage of halal product uniqueness. As mentioned in QS. Al-Baqarah (172) "Believers, eat of the good things We have given you, and give thanks to Allah, if it is truly Him that you worship." This verse emphasizes the importance of choosing good and halal food and products, which are in accordance with Allah's rules. By ensuring that the products offered comply with Islamic principles and meet the expectations of Muslim customers, companies can create unique features that not only appeal to Muslim consumers, but also create a strong bond between the brand and customers.

H2: Islamic market orientation positively affects halal product uniqueness.

### 2.3. Islamic Innovativeness and Halal Product Uniqueness

Innovativeness refers to an organization's openness to fostering creativity and experimentation when introducing new products or services, as well as its commitment to research and development for new processes and technological leadership (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). According to Jiménez-Jiménez and Sanz-Valle (2011) innovativeness involves implementing new ideas, processes, products, or marketing strategies within an organization, fostering creativity, experimentation, and novel outcomes in products, services, methods, or technology. The pursuit of technological advancements, new services, products, or enhanced product lines to gain a competitive edge defines a company's focus on innovation (Sankowska, 2013). In the context of Islam, innovation involves maintaining a balance between permissible and prohibited forms of creativity and innovation (Zarif et al., 2013). The life history of Rasulullah SAW provides an example of how innovation in line with Islamic principles can be applied in various aspects of life, including in the religious, economic, social and political fields (Sulaiman et al., 2015). Rasulullah SAW not only brought changes to the lives of Muslims, but also introduced innovative ways of managing society and the economy that remained based on religious values. This principle can be applied in the business world, by creating halal products that not only meet market needs, but also comply with the rules of Islamic law.

Research conducted by Atuahene-Gima and Ko (2001) argue that achieving sustainable competitive advantage requires innovation that sets a company apart. Innovativeness significantly impacts product differentiation, leading to the development of unique products through organizational innovation (Kam Sing Wong, 2012; Theoharakis & Hooley, 2008). Moreover, marketing innovation positively influences competitive positioning in religion-centric markets (Hendar et al., 2017) and religio-centric product strategy (Hendar et al., 2020).

H3: Islamic innovativeness positively impacts halal product uniqueness.

### 2.4. Islamic Market Orientation and Marketing Performance

Jaworski and Kohli (1993) views market orientation as a marketing practice concept and explains it as the gathering of market data for present and future consumer needs across the business, the sharing of market data with departments, and the organization's response. Hills and Sarin (2003) claims that activities can steer behaviors and preferences in new directions and that the process of uncovering possible unexpressed desires of clients is known as customer onboarding. Target buyers must be well understood during customer onboarding for ongoing value creation to be generated for them. A customer-oriented philosophy forms the cornerstone of business success, involving proactive measures to align with market demands. Customer orientation, defined as the ability and willingness to identify, analyze, understand, and address customer needs (Gatignon & Xuereb, 1997) drives the integration of desired features or benefits into new products. Companies with a market-oriented approach use market intelligence to build sustainable competitive advantages (Kohli et al., 1993). This market-oriented culture motivates SMEs to align their actions to enhance customer value, highlighting the importance of customer satisfaction (Narver & Slater, 1990)

emphasizing the significance of customer satisfaction. Shared market-oriented norms guide company strategies and tactics, fostering innovation and superior offerings (Han et al., 1998) and enhancing customer support, thus increasing benefits for clients. Islamic market orientation highlights the importance of focusing on Muslim consumers to enhance marketing effectiveness Nurudin (2022). This is in line with Islamic sharia principles which emphasize the importance of providing halal products that meet consumer expectations in a manner that is in accordance with Islamic values in the QS. Al-A'raf (157), "Indeed, Allah has only made lawful for you what is good and has forbidden what is bad." This verse underlines the importance of producing halal goods and services, which are not only good for consumers, but are also in line with Islamic moral principles.

H4: Islamic market orientation positively influences marketing performance.

### 2.5. Islamic Innovativeness and Marketing Performance

According to Al-Karasneh and Saleh (2010) the Quran encourages innovation through utilizing the five senses bestowed by God, which include observation, sight, hearing, reflection, and *ijtihad*. In Surah Al-Alaq 1-5 "Read with (mentioning) the name of your Lord who created, who created man from a clot of blood. Read, and your Lord is the most gracious, who teaches man with the pen, teaches man what he does not know." This verse teaches us to utilize the knowledge and creativity given by Allah SWT to continue to innovate and create new things. Innovation in the Islamic context is not only related to the ability to produce something new, but also how it is in line with sharia values and provides benefits to the people. Islamic innovativeness can be characterized as an entrepreneur's attitude, behavior, proclivities, abilities, and inventiveness in seeking and utilizing new ideas to create something novel and distinctive that complies with Islamic law. Formal strategic planning and flexible planning are key components of the company's ability to innovate and enhance its performance. When new features are added to a current product or service, exceptional performance is provided, or the rules of a competitive domain are altered, it is referred to as innovativeness (Avlonitis & Salavou, 2007; Dibrell et al., 2014). Johnson et al. (2009) Innovation is the ability of an individual or an organization to generate or implement new concepts, procedures, products, or services with the goal of improving consumer value and business performance. Research conducted Selvarajan et al. (2007) companies operating in unstable environments tend to innovate and sell new products more than companies operating in stable environments. The entrepreneurial character of MSMEs has a significant impact on their business performance. Some of the characteristics of entrepreneurship that influence performance include the courage to take risks, the ability to collaborate, discipline, honesty, openness, optimism, perseverance, creativity and an independent attitude. Apart from that, the ability to learn and develop in facing challenges is also an important factor that drives success in running a business (Efendi & Waharini, 2023).

H5: Islamic innovativeness positively affects marketing performance.

### 2.6. Halal Product Uniqueness and Marketing Performance

Product excellence encompasses the superior features, quality, and benefits that customers derive from their purchases (T. Li & Calantone, 1998). Extensive research has

established a strong link between new product performance and product superiority (Langerak et al., 2004; Nakata et al., 2006). The features and aesthetics of a product play a crucial role in attracting customers and eliciting positive emotions, contributing to its high perceived quality (Bloch, 1995) and enhancing its marketability. Studies demonstrate that products emphasizing superior features perform well in terms of quality, consumer acceptance, and financial success (Sethi, 2000). According to Cooper and Kleinschmidt (1987) product superiority significantly impacts the success or failure of new products, with unique customer benefits being particularly critical.

Favalli et al. (2013) argue that distinct features differentiate food products within their category and appeal to consumers. Mattiacci and Vignali (2004), highlight the importance of unique food attributes in enhancing quality and justifying higher prices and profit margins. Other researchers discuss specific characteristics that differentiate food products, such as sensory, processing, ingredient, geographic, and conceptual qualities (Favalli et al., 2013; Jaeger et al., 2017; Rason et al., 2007; Stolzenbach et al., 2011) emphasize that products stand out to consumers due to sensory, aesthetic, functional, emotional, or other distinctive qualities within their category. A product needs to be halal certified in order to provide value to Muslim clients. It also needs to stand out from the competition in the market. Halal food certification serves as a means of identifying products to consumers by stating that they were sourced, produced, and distributed in compliance with stringent Islamic criteria (Ab Talib et al., 2017). A certificate of halal food certification is provided by an Islamic organization and certifies that the products on the list adhere to Islamic law (Riaz & Chaudry, 2003). Businesses utilize halal certification as a means of enhancing organizational performance and as a means of gaining company legitimacy (Ab Talib et al., 2016). Certification is an instrument for achieving business performance (Fikru, 2014; Kafetzopoulos & Gotzamani, 2014; Sampaio et al., 2009). Therefore, products that are unique and in accordance with Islamic law, equipped with halal certification, will not only create an advantage in the market but also provide added value for Muslim consumers who are increasingly aware of the importance of products that comply with the principles of their religion. This provides a great opportunity for companies to gain a superior competitive position, both in terms of market and profitability.

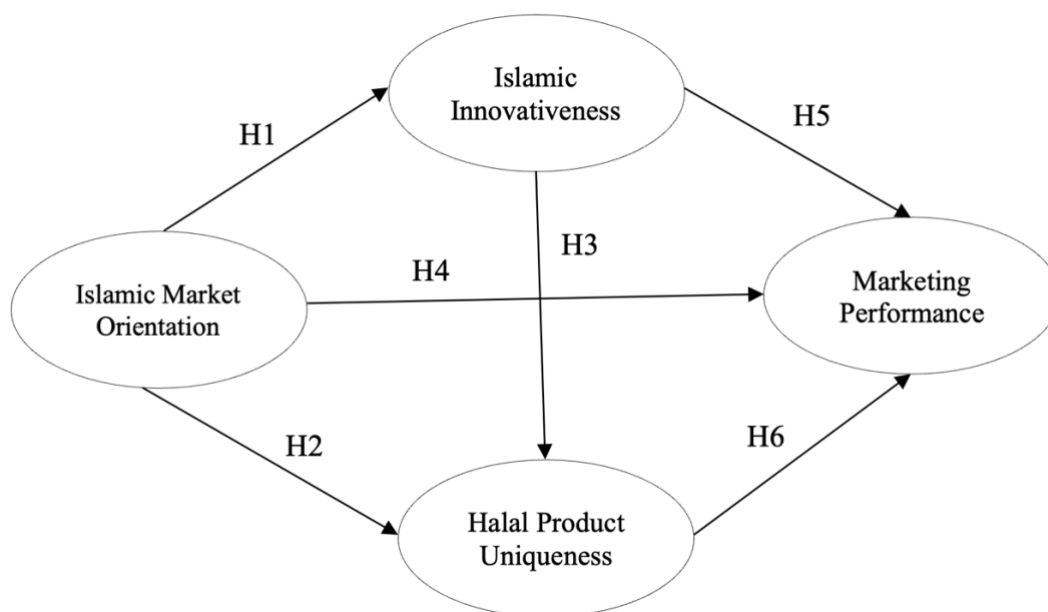
H6: Halal product uniqueness positively impacts marketing performance.

Based on the provided description, the relationship between Islamic market orientation and Islamic innovativeness is expected to foster an increase in the uniqueness of halal products. This increase in uniqueness can lead to enhanced marketing performance. Here's an outline of how this relationship and its consequences can be explained in [Figure 1](#).

### 3. Method

The object of this research is the food processing industry in Central Java, Indonesia. Based on data from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Kemenkraf) in 2023, the creative economy sector in Indonesia is dominated by the culinary sector. However, in Central Java, the culinary sector is in second place with a percentage of 15.11%, while the

music sector is in first position with a percentage of 22.98%. This condition shows that there are differences in dynamics between the creative economy sector at the national and regional levels, especially in Central Java. This difference opens up opportunities for further research, especially in understanding the factors that influence the development of the music sector that dominates in the region, as well as how the culinary sector can further develop and compete in the creative economy at the regional level. The population in this study was 68,754 industries. The sampling method uses a purposive sampling technique, which is based on population characteristics, namely region or location and has been operating for a minimum of 3 years. The sample size then refers to the opinion of [Hair et al. \(1995\)](#), who stated that the sample size is the index multiplied by 5 to 10 or a minimum of 100 respondents. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires to a sample of 180 respondents. For data analysis, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed. SEM is a method typically used to test complex relationships or models, such as those encountered in marketing research ([Ferdinand, 2014](#)). There are four variables developed in this study, the operational definition and measurement of each variable is as follows [Table 1](#).



**Figure 1.** Conceptual framework

## 4. Result and Discussion

### 4.1. Research Analysis and Results

The model has been analyzed using confirmatory factors, so each indicator in the fit model can be used to define latent constructs, so that the full Structural Analysis Modeling (SEM) model can be analyzed. The results of the processing can be seen in [Figure 2](#). Analysis of the influence of determination in SEM analysis is used to determine the contribution of exogenous variables to endogenous variables, which can be seen from the adjusted R square. Coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) In essence, it measures how far the model's ability to explain endogenous variations ([Latan & Ghazali, 2012](#)). Adjusted  $R^2$  has been adjusted to



the degrees of freedom of each square included in the Adjusted  $R^2$  calculation. The coefficient of determination can be seen in [Table 2](#). The goodness of fit model criteria using the AMOS program have shown that the SEM analysis in this research is acceptable. Based on the fit model, testing several hypotheses can be carried out based on a significance level of 0.05. The test was carried out by looking at the level of significance in the estimated value, critical ratio and probability based on the results of data analysis using the AMOS program. The results of the structural equation model regression equation test are summarized in [Table 3](#). Halal product uniqueness in this research is proposed as a concept that mediates the relationship between Islamic market orientation and marketing performance as seen in [Table 4](#).

**Table 1. Measurement variables**

Variable Name	Operational Definition	Measurement/Indicator
Islamic market orientation ( <a href="#">Narver &amp; Slater, 1990</a> ; <a href="#">N. Nurudin et al., 2023</a> ; <a href="#">Zebal &amp; Saber, 2014</a> )	Understanding of Muslim customer needs, information, integration, competition and responsiveness to create superior value and lead to long-term relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Muslim customers' commitment</li> <li>- Understanding of their needs</li> <li>- Creation of value for them</li> <li>- Tendency to research competitor strategies</li> <li>- Speed at which they respond to those strategies</li> </ul>
Islamic innovativeness ( <a href="#">Abdullah et al., 2021</a> ; <a href="#">Hendar et al., 2018</a> ; <a href="#">N. Nurudin et al., 2023</a> )	The attitude, behavior, tendencies, abilities and creativity of an entrepreneur to seek and apply new ideas to produce something new and unique in accordance with Islamic law.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The propensity to seek out novel Islamic ideas</li> <li>- The attempt to implement new approaches that adhere to Shari'a</li> <li>- The novelty of practical products</li> <li>- The propensity to employ new technology</li> </ul>
Halal product uniqueness ( <a href="#">Hendar et al., 2017</a> ; <a href="#">Jaeger et al., 2017</a> ; <a href="#">N. Nurudin et al., 2023</a> )	The advantages of a product compared to other products are designed based on halal principles as a value offered to customers for the purpose of increasing Marketing Performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The uniqueness of halal materials</li> <li>- The uniqueness of halal production processes</li> <li>- The uniqueness of halal storage</li> <li>- The uniqueness of halal staffing</li> <li>- The uniqueness of halal distribution</li> </ul>
Marketing performance ( <a href="#">Ayimey et al., 2021</a> ; <a href="#">Hendar et al., 2018</a> ; <a href="#">Killa, 2017</a> ; <a href="#">N. Nurudin et al., 2023</a> )	Effectiveness and efficiency of marketing activities with market-related objectives such as revenue, growth rate and market share.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Customer growth</li> <li>- Growth in sales results</li> <li>- Achievement of sales targets</li> <li>- Profit growth</li> </ul>

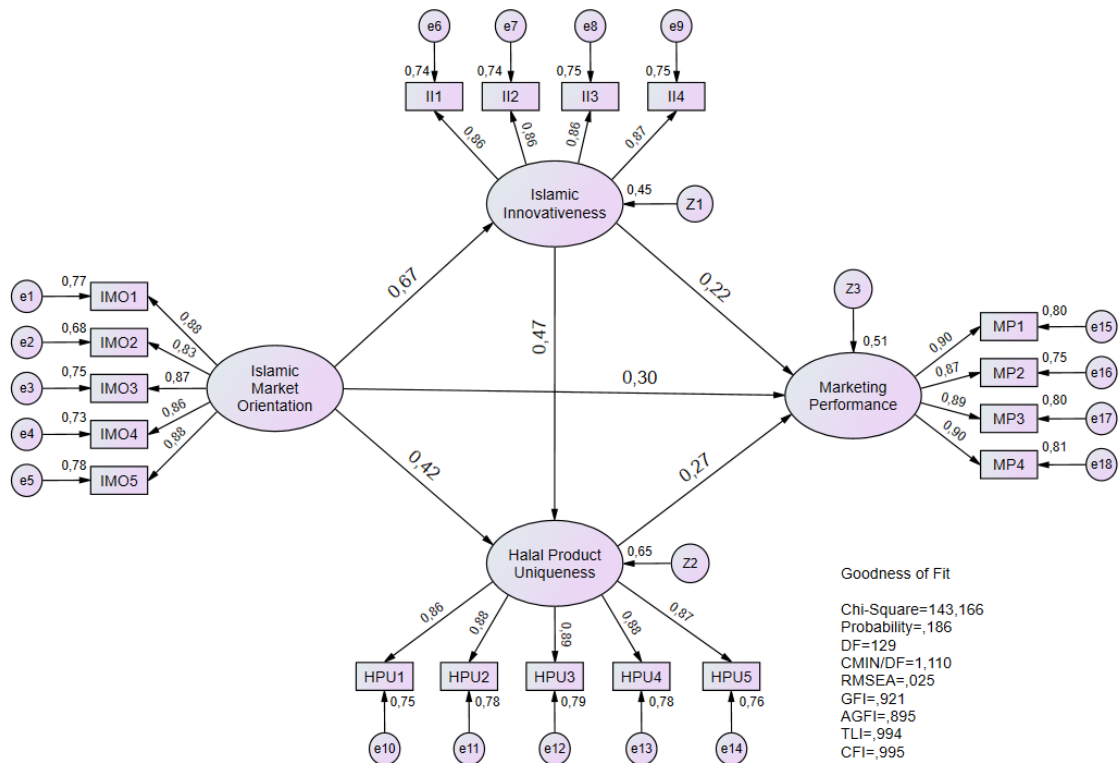


Figure 2. Research path models

Table 2. Hypothesis test

Squared Multiple Correlations: (Group number 1 - Default model)	
	Estimate
Islamic_Innovativeness	.455
Halal	.655
Marketing Performance	.509

Source: Processed research data, 2024

Table 3. Hypothesis test

Hypothesis	Regression	Estimate	S.E	CR	P	Information
H1	Islamicmarket orientation → Islamic innovativeness	.646	.070	9.176	0.000	Significant
H2	Islamicmarket orientation → Halal product uniqueness	.415	.077	5.416	0.000	Significant
H3	Islamicinnovativeness → Halal product uniqueness	.488	.082	5.949	0.000	Significant
H4	Islamicmarket orientation → Marketing performance	.326	.105	3.107	0.002	Significant
H5	Islamicinnovativeness → Marketing performance	.255	.115	2.230	0.026	Significant
H6	Halal product uniqueness → Marketing performance	.291	.119	2.451	0.014	Significant

Source: AMOS output data, 2024

Table 4. Sobel test results

Indirect Influence	Sobel	P-value	Information
Islamic Market Orientation → Islamic innovativeness → Marketing Performance	2,156	0.031	Significant
Islamic Market Orientation → Halal Product Uniqueness → Marketing Performance	2,050	0.040	Significant

Source: Processed research data, 2024

Based on the provided information, here's a summary of the findings regarding the mediating roles of Islamic innovativeness and halal product uniqueness in the relationship between Islamic market orientation and marketing performance.

#### 4.1.1. Islamic Innovativeness as a Mediator

Islamic innovativeness significantly mediates the relationship between Islamic market orientation and marketing performance. Sobel Test Statistics of 2.156 with a p-value of 0.031 (significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) indicates that Islamic innovativeness plays a crucial role in enhancing marketing performance by leveraging the insights and strategies of Islamic market orientation. This finding aligns with existing research (Huhtala et al., 2014; Riswanto et al., 2020) which emphasizes the mediating effect of innovation on the relationship between market orientation and business performance.

#### 4.1.2. Halal Product Uniqueness as a Mediator

Halal product uniqueness also serves as a significant mediator between Islamic market orientation and marketing performance. Sobel Test Statistics of 2.050 with a p-value of 0.040 (significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) confirms that the uniqueness of halal products plays a pivotal role in enhancing marketing performance within the religious market segment. Companies that exhibit strong Islamic market orientation and focus on creating unique halal products tend to achieve better marketing performance, as empirically validated. Islamic innovativeness and halal product uniqueness are crucial mechanisms through which Islamic market orientation influences marketing performance. These findings contribute to bridging the research gap and underscore the importance of aligning organizational strategies with religious market dynamics to achieve competitive advantage and superior performance in Muslim-majority markets.

#### 4.2. Discussion

Islamic market orientation towards Islamic innovativeness. This means that the company that continues to understand the needs and desires of Muslim customers as well as competitors' strategies, the higher the Islamic innovativeness in that market. The culinary industry in Central Java has innovated in accordance with sharia by creating ideas related to halal products that suit the needs of Muslim customers as well as trying new methods used by competitors. The results of this study are in line with (Atuahene-Gima, 1996, 2005; Lukas & Ferrell, 2000) in his study stated the market orientation has a positive effect on innovation strategy. Market orientation has a positive effect on innovation speed (Carbonell & Escudero, 2010).

Islamic market orientation regarding halal product uniqueness. This means that the company that continues to understand the needs and desires of Muslim customers and the company is responsive to competitors' strategies, the higher the halal product uniqueness. In other words, the greater the company's ability to react to customer needs and competitors' strategies, the more capable the company will be of gaining superiority in halal product uniqueness in that market. Food and beverage processing industry in Central Java have a high commitment to making products that are produced in accordance with sharia principles by using raw materials that already have a halal label or halal certificate, production processes that comply with sharia, Muslim employees who are obedient to worship as well as safe storage and distribution with safe packaging, essence of haram goods. The results of this study are in line with [Al-Khatib et al. \(1995\)](#) in his study stated Muslim consumers have high priorities, preferences and needs for halal products and services. Apart from that, in studies [Hendar et al. \(2017\)](#) market orientation has a significant effect on religio-centric positional advantage. [Langerak \(2003\)](#), [Zhou et al. \(2009\)](#), [Li and Zhou \(2010\)](#) in his study stated that market orientation has a positive effect on differentiation advantage.

Islamic innovativeness influence halal product uniqueness. New products always appear in the business rivalry and have the potential to impact existing products. One of the keys for businesses to create products that outperform those of rivals is innovation. Muslims innovate by seeking out new concepts, experimenting with novel approaches that adhere to Islamic law, making use of cutting-edge technology, and modernizing or developing new products ([Abdullah et al., 2021](#)). Innovation plays a pivotal role in product commercialization ([Sandberg & Ohman, 2011](#); [Tohidi & Jabbari, 2012](#)). For a product to succeed, it must offer significant benefits that improve human life ([Othman, 2012](#)) which can be achieved by integrating halal elements into unique products. Research highlights that innovation leads to product differentiation ([Atuahene-Gima & Ko, 2001](#); [Theoharakis & Hooley, 2008](#)) excellence ([Kam Sing Wong, 2012](#)) religio-centric product strategy ([Hendar et al., 2020](#)). These factors collectively contribute to creating products that are not only distinctive but also align with consumer preferences and market demands, including those within the halal market segment.

Islamic market orientation affects marketing performance, meaning it gets better Islamic markets orientation, the better the marketing performance will be [Kelley \(1992\)](#) A company that practices customer orientation engages its staff in enhancing customer satisfaction and cultivating enduring relationships. The company is consistently committed to addressing the needs of Muslim customers and enhancing their value to boost marketing performance. This approach aligns with findings that market orientation significantly impacts business performance ([Dabrowski et al., 2019](#); [Huhtala et al., 2014](#)) and marketing performance ([Hendar et al., 2018](#); [Zhou et al., 2009](#)).

Islamic innovativeness influence marketing performance means it's getting higher Islamic innovativeness will improve its marketing performance. How fast and adaptably a company responds to its current dynamics will determine if it survives. As a result, by adjusting, competitive strategies that work are required. Companies operating in the Muslim market in particular need to constantly innovate while adhering to Islamic law to improve

marketing performance. This result is in line with the finding that Innovativeness can improve marketing performance or business performance (Anning-Dorson, 2017; Chatterjee et al., 2024; Ebrahimi et al., 2018; Farooq et al., 2021; Hendar et al., 2018; Kneipp et al., 2019; Kristinae et al., 2020; Mulyana et al., 2020; N. Nurudin et al., 2022; Selvarajan et al., 2007; Singh et al., 2022).

Halal product uniqueness influence marketing performance. The distinct characteristics of halal products that could boost marketing effectiveness include the unique aspects of halal materials, production processes, staffing, storage, and distribution. These unique features of halal products are developed following stringent Islamic guidelines (Ab Talib et al., 2017) and are certified as part of a strategy to enhance organizational performance (Ab Talib et al., 2016). The results of this research are in line with Mattiaci and Vignali (2004) who state that unique foods have distinctive and superior qualities which allow for higher prices and better profit margins. Research conducted by Hendar et al. (2020). This aligns with findings from Fikru (2014), Kafetzopoulos and Gotzamani (2014), Sampaio et al. (2009) stated that certification is an instrument for achieving business performance. The uniqueness of halal products has a significant effect on marketing performance (N. Nurudin et al., 2023).

## 5. Conclusion

Islamic market orientation positively impacts Islamic innovativeness and halal product uniqueness. Additionally, Islamic innovativeness positively affects halal product uniqueness. All three factors Islamic market orientation, Islamic innovativeness, and halal product uniqueness influence marketing performance. Furthermore, the study's indirect influence analysis indicates that both Islamic innovativeness and halal product uniqueness can mediate the relationship between Islamic market orientation and marketing performance. In the research we conducted, the culinary industry has applied sharia principles in making its products unique in gaining positional advantage and has an impact on improving market performance. The successful implementation of the halal product uniqueness strategy depends on two key factors, namely Islamic market orientation and Islamic innovativeness. Culinary industry leaders are expected to be able to take a religiosity approach and provide an understanding of the importance of Islamic values which not only create a company's superiority and uniqueness that can form a sustainable competitive advantage, but also as a form of worship to Allah. The limitation of this research is that it only involved 180 respondents, so the results may not be generalizable to the entire culinary industry population in Central Java. It is recommended that future research increase the sample size by including more respondents from various cities and districts in Central Java. In addition, a broader research approach using more representative sampling techniques and considering variations in culinary businesses of various scales and types of business will also increase the validity and generalization of research results.

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## Authors' Declaration

### Authors' contributions and responsibilities

The authors made substantial contributions to the conception and design of the study. The authors took responsibility for data analysis, interpretation and discussion of results. The authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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### Availability of data and materials

All data are available from the authors.

### Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interest.

### Additional information

No additional information from the authors.

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