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Platform Power And Algorithmic Transparency In Digital Halal Ecosystems: Implications For Competition And Partnership Fairness

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Abstract

The rapid expansion of digital platforms has transformed the halal industry by creating new market opportunities while introducing challenges concerning platform power, algorithmic transparency, and partnership fairness. Although digital marketplaces facilitate market access for halal micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), platform-controlled governance mechanisms may generate information asymmetries and unequal competitive conditions. This study examines how platform power and algorithmic transparency influence competition and partnership fairness within Indonesia's digital halal ecosystem from the perspective of Islamic economic governance. Employing a qualitative multiple-case study design, the research proposes to integrate semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and digital platform observation to examine governance practices and the experiences of participating businesses. The analytical framework combines platform governance theory, algorithmic transparency, procedural justice, and Islamic economic ethics. Particular attention is given to the principles of *al-'adl* (justice), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *ridha* (mutual consent), and *hifz al-mal* (protection of wealth). The study develops an Islamic Ethical Platform Governance Framework that connects contractual fairness, institutional accountability, informed participation, economic protection, and decision transparency. This framework provides a conceptual foundation for evaluating the ethical legitimacy of platform-mediated commercial relationships. The study contributes to discussions on Islamic digital economy governance by extending the understanding of halal digital transformation beyond technological adoption toward equitable market participation and accountable platform institutions.

Keywords: Platform Power; Algorithmic Transparency; Digital Halal Ecosystem; Islamic Economic Governance.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital platforms has transformed the institutional structure of contemporary markets, changing how businesses access consumers, distribute products, and compete for economic opportunities. In the halal industry, digitalization has created new possibilities for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to expand market reach, improve operational efficiency, and participate in increasingly interconnected halal value chains (D. I. Aisyah et al., 2023). Indonesia represents an important context for examining this transformation because the development of its halal economy is closely connected to the participation of small businesses and the integration of digital technologies into commercial activities. Bank Indonesia (2024) emphasizes that digital transformation and technological innovation are essential to strengthening Indonesia's position in the global halal industry (Afkar et al., 2020). Similarly, Adinugraha et al. identify digital commerce and financial technology as important instruments for improving market access and operational efficiency among Indonesian MSMEs, although challenges involving digital literacy, technology adoption, and institutional support remain (Adinugraha et al., 2024). These developments demonstrate that digital platforms are becoming increasingly significant intermediaries within the halal economic ecosystem (S. Aisyah et al., 2025). However, the expansion of digital market access does not necessarily guarantee equal opportunities for all participating businesses. The institutional arrangements governing digital platforms may also generate new forms of economic dependence, particularly when small businesses rely on platform-controlled systems to reach consumers and sustain their commercial activities.

A fundamental issue underlying this transformation concerns the growing concentration of economic and organizational power within digital platforms. Digital platforms operate not merely as technological intermediaries but also as market organizers that establish participation requirements, determine commercial rules, and coordinate interactions among different economic actors. Chen et al. (2022) explain that digital platforms possess distinctive governance structures through which platform owners coordinate participants, establish incentives, and exercise control over ecosystem activities (Chen et al., 2022). This organizational authority creates a potentially asymmetric relationship between platform operators and participating businesses. Platform owners generally possess greater access to technological infrastructure, transaction information, consumer data, and decision-making resources than individual sellers. Consequently, their decisions can influence the commercial opportunities available to participating businesses. In digital marketplaces, this influence becomes particularly important when platforms determine product visibility, modify commission structures, establish promotional requirements, or impose restrictions on

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seller accounts (Alam et al., 2024). For halal MSMEs, such mechanisms raise questions about the extent to which digital participation represents genuine market empowerment or creates structural dependence on privately governed commercial infrastructures.

The implications of platform power become more complex when market interactions are mediated through algorithmic decision-making. Algorithms increasingly determine product rankings, search visibility, recommendation outcomes, and the allocation of consumer attention. Although these systems can improve search efficiency and facilitate transactions, their design and implementation may also produce unequal competitive outcomes. Fletcher et al. (2023) demonstrate that recommender systems can generate popularity, incumbency, homogeneity, and conformity biases, potentially increasing market concentration and creating barriers to entry or expansion for competing suppliers (Fletcher et al., 2023). These mechanisms are particularly relevant to small businesses because their commercial performance may depend heavily on whether their products receive sufficient visibility within platform search and recommendation systems. A product with adequate quality and halal certification may nevertheless struggle to compete if its visibility is constrained by ranking mechanisms that favor established sellers, accumulated interaction histories, or other commercially advantageous characteristics. Importantly, such outcomes should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of deliberate discrimination (Khan et al., 2024; Rasmuddin et al., 2024). Rather, they require empirical investigation into the criteria, operational mechanisms, and consequences of algorithmic allocation within digital marketplaces.

Algorithmic transparency therefore represents a critical dimension of contemporary platform governance. Transparency concerns the extent to which affected stakeholders can understand the criteria, procedures, and consequences underlying decisions made through automated systems. In Indonesia, Octavia (2024) highlights the opacity of algorithmic management and the accountability challenges associated with platform-mediated partnership arrangements (Octavia, 2022a). Although her analysis primarily addresses digital platform workers, its institutional implications are relevant to understanding broader asymmetries between platform operators and dependent participants. In commercial marketplaces, sellers may experience difficulties identifying the reasons behind sudden changes in product rankings, commission adjustments, restricted access to transaction data, or account suspensions (Muhammad et al., 2024). These conditions can weaken their ability to evaluate business performance, anticipate commercial risks, and challenge decisions that adversely affect their operations. Consequently, transparency should not be reduced to the disclosure of technical information or algorithmic source codes. It should also encompass understandable explanations of relevant decision criteria, timely notification of policy changes, access to appropriate information, and effective procedures for submitting complaints or requesting

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reconsideration. Such mechanisms are essential for establishing accountability within platform-mediated commercial relationships (Abuznaid, 2009).

Beyond technological transparency, these developments raise broader questions concerning competition and partnership fairness. Competition in digital marketplaces depends not only on the number of participating sellers but also on the institutional conditions through which businesses obtain access to consumers and commercial opportunities. Fletcher et al. emphasize that recommendation systems can influence supplier competition by shaping the distribution of visibility and consumer attention (Fletcher et al., 2023). When such mechanisms interact with unequal access to data, financial resources, and promotional opportunities, smaller businesses may face disadvantages that are difficult to overcome through conventional market competition. Partnership fairness, therefore, requires examining both the distribution of economic opportunities and the procedures through which platform decisions are implemented. This includes the consistency of platform policies, the proportionality of contractual obligations, the clarity of commission arrangements, and the availability of accessible complaint and appeal mechanisms (Abasimel, 2023). An important distinction must also be maintained between formal contractual consent and substantive fairness. The existence of a partnership agreement does not necessarily establish that both parties possess equivalent information, bargaining capacity, or opportunities to influence the conditions governing their commercial relationship.

From the perspective of Islamic economics, these issues have important ethical and institutional implications. Islamic economic principles emphasize that commercial relationships should be grounded in justice (*al-'adl*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), mutual consent (*ridha*), and the prevention of injustice (*zulm*). These principles provide a normative foundation for evaluating not only the permissibility of commercial transactions but also the fairness of the institutional arrangements through which economic activities are conducted (Ahmid, 2025; Al-Hamed, 2024). Fahmi (2025) connects Islamic ethical principles with algorithmic management and platform governance, highlighting the relevance of justice, trust, and public welfare in addressing the challenges of the digital economy (Fahmi, 2025). Furthermore, Wahab and Mahdiya propose a *maqasid al-Shariah*-based framework for halal industry governance that emphasizes transparency, accountability, and sustainability in the digital economy (Wahab & Mahdiya, 2025). Koswara and Sahirul Alim similarly extend the discussion of halal business ethics to digital governance, particularly concerning transparency, accountability, and responsible algorithmic marketing (Koswara & Alim, 2026). These perspectives suggest that halal governance should extend beyond product certification and supply-chain compliance to encompass the ethical conduct of digital intermediaries and the protection of legitimate stakeholder interests. Accordingly, the principles of *al-'adl* and *amanah* can provide

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analytical foundations for evaluating whether platform policies distribute commercial opportunities fairly and whether platform operators fulfill their responsibilities toward participating businesses.

Despite these developments, existing research has not sufficiently integrated platform power, algorithmic transparency, competition, and Islamic economic justice within a single analytical perspective. Studies of digital platform governance have primarily examined organizational control and the coordination of platform ecosystems (Chen et al., 2022), while competition research has highlighted the potential effects of recommendation systems on supplier visibility and market concentration (Fletcher et al., 2023). Research concerning Indonesia's digital economy has also identified challenges associated with algorithmic opacity and unequal relationships within platform-mediated partnership (Octavia, 2022b). Meanwhile, scholarship on halal industry governance has increasingly addressed digital transformation and the integration of Islamic ethical principles, but the relationship between algorithmic decision-making and the fairness of commercial partnerships remains insufficiently examined (Adinugraha et al., 2024; Wahab & Mahdiya, 2025). This fragmentation reveals an important research gap concerning how platform-controlled governance mechanisms shape the competitive position of halal MSMEs and how their consequences can be evaluated through the ethical principles of Islamic economics. In particular, further investigation is needed into the relationship between algorithmic visibility, commission policies, information asymmetry, seller dependency, and procedural fairness.

Addressing this gap, this study examines platform power and algorithmic transparency within digital halal ecosystems, focusing on their implications for competition and partnership fairness among halal MSMEs in Indonesia. Specifically, it investigates how platform governance mechanisms influence sellers' access to market opportunities, how algorithmic and contractual decisions are communicated, and how participating businesses experience fairness in their relationships with platform operators. The study also evaluates these governance arrangements through the Islamic economic principles of justice, trustworthiness, mutual consent, and the prevention of injustice. By integrating platform governance theory, algorithmic transparency, procedural justice, and Islamic economic ethics, this research seeks to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the institutional and ethical dimensions of digital halal markets. Its principal contribution is to extend the discussion of halal digital transformation beyond technological adoption and market expansion toward the examination of power distribution, procedural accountability, and equitable economic participation. Ultimately, the study aims to contribute to the development of a more transparent, accountable, and ethically grounded governance framework for digital halal ecosystems.

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METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach using a multiple-case study design to examine platform power and algorithmic transparency within digital halal ecosystems. A qualitative approach is appropriate because the research seeks to understand institutional practices, power relations, and the experiences of business participants rather than measure predetermined relationships between variables. The multiple-case study design enables an in-depth examination of platform governance mechanisms across different digital marketplace contexts and facilitates comparisons of how halal micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) experience platform-mediated commercial relationships. Following Yin, case study research is particularly suitable for investigating contemporary phenomena within their real-life contexts, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its institutional environment are not clearly separated (Yin, 2018). Accordingly, the cases will be selected from digital platforms operating in Indonesia that facilitate the marketing and distribution of halal products.

Data will be collected through semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and digital platform observation. Research participants will include halal MSME owners or managers who actively use digital marketplaces, alongside relevant platform representatives and experts in Islamic economics or digital governance where access is available. Participants will be selected purposively based on their direct experience with platform-mediated commercial activities, particularly product visibility, ranking mechanisms, commission policies, information accessibility, and partnership arrangements (Muhammad et al., 2024). The number of participants will be determined by the relevance and richness of the collected information and the adequacy of the data for addressing the research questions. Semi-structured interviews will explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and responses to platform governance decisions. Documentary materials will include platform terms and conditions, seller policies, commission arrangements, algorithm-related disclosures, and relevant regulatory documents. Digital observation will examine publicly accessible platform features, including search results, product presentation, recommendation interfaces, and seller information. The combination of these sources follows Bowen's approach to document analysis and supports the triangulation of qualitative evidence (Bowen, 2011).

The collected data will be analyzed thematically through an iterative process involving data familiarization, initial coding, theme development, theme review, and interpretation. Braun and Clarke provide the methodological foundation for identifying meaningful patterns within qualitative materials while maintaining sensitivity to both theoretically informed categories and emerging empirical findings. The analysis will combine deductive and inductive coding (Clarke & Braun, 2017). Deductive categories

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will be derived from platform power, algorithmic transparency, procedural justice, and Islamic economic ethics, whereas inductive coding will identify additional patterns emerging from participants' accounts and documentary evidence. Cross-case comparison will subsequently identify recurring governance practices and variations in partnership experiences. The findings will be interpreted through the Islamic economic principles of *al-'adl* (justice), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *ridha* (mutual consent), and the prevention of *zulm* (injustice) to evaluate the ethical implications of platform-mediated commercial relationships.

To strengthen research trustworthiness, the study will employ methodological triangulation, transparent documentation of analytical decisions, careful interpretation of participant accounts, and member checking where appropriate. These procedures are intended to strengthen credibility, dependability, and confirmability in qualitative inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Ethical considerations will include informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and the anonymization of commercially sensitive information. Particular attention will be given to distinguishing participants' reported experiences, documented platform policies, and the researcher's analytical interpretations. This distinction is essential to ensure that conclusions concerning algorithmic opacity, competitive disadvantages, or potential platform misconduct are supported by empirical evidence rather than assumptions.

DISCUSSION

Platform Power, Algorithmic Transparency, and Competitive Inequality in Digital Halal Ecosystems

Digital platforms have increasingly become institutional actors that shape the organization and distribution of economic opportunities within contemporary marketplaces. Their influence extends beyond facilitating transactions to determining the conditions under which sellers participate, compete, and maintain access to consumers (Santoso et al., 2022). Chen et al. conceptualize digital platforms as distinctive organizational forms in which governance mechanisms, incentives, and control structures influence the behavior of ecosystem participants (Chen et al., 2022). From this perspective, platform power is not derived exclusively from technological ownership but also from the authority to establish commercial rules, manage information flows, and regulate interactions among participating businesses. Within digital halal ecosystems, this authority becomes particularly relevant because halal micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) increasingly depend on digital marketplaces to promote certified products, reach Muslim consumers, and sustain their commercial activities (Achmad, 2023). Consequently, the platform's governance structure may influence not only market accessibility but also the distribution of competitive opportunities among

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businesses with different financial, technological, and informational capacities (Tambunan, 2023).

The concentration of governance authority within platform operators creates an institutional asymmetry between platforms and participating sellers. Platform operators generally control the technological infrastructure, commercial policies, transaction data, and mechanisms through which products are presented to consumers. By contrast, individual sellers often have limited authority to influence these arrangements or negotiate changes to the conditions of participation. Teh demonstrates that platform governance decisions concerning seller entry, information provision, recommendation systems, quality standards, and search design can influence the intensity and distribution of competition (Teh, 2022). This indicates that platform governance is not economically neutral because decisions concerning marketplace design may generate different competitive consequences for participating businesses. In the halal economy, the implications extend to sellers whose market performance depends on platform-mediated access to consumers. Although digital marketplaces can reduce conventional barriers to market entry, unequal access to platform resources and information may create new forms of structural dependency. Therefore, the economic empowerment associated with digitalization must be evaluated alongside the institutional power exercised by platform operators (Rietveld & Schilling, 2021).

Algorithmic decision-making constitutes another important mechanism through which platform power can influence competitive outcomes. Search rankings, recommendation systems, product visibility, and automated promotional arrangements determine how consumers encounter and evaluate available products. Fletcher et al. explain that recommender systems may generate several forms of systemic bias, including popularity bias, incumbency bias, homogeneity bias, and conformity bias (Fletcher et al., 2023). These mechanisms can reinforce the visibility of established sellers while making it more difficult for less-established businesses to attract consumer attention. Their analysis further demonstrates that algorithmic recommendations may influence market concentration, barriers to entry and expansion, and product variety. In digital halal marketplaces, these mechanisms raise questions about whether smaller sellers receive comparable opportunities to present their products, particularly when their commercial performance is influenced by ranking criteria that they cannot adequately understand or evaluate (Islam et al., 2023). Nevertheless, algorithmic differentiation should not automatically be interpreted as discriminatory treatment. Differences in product visibility may also reflect consumer preferences, product quality, transaction histories, or other legitimate ranking criteria. The central concern is therefore whether the underlying criteria are sufficiently understandable and whether their application produces defensible competitive outcomes (Costabile, 2024a).

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Algorithmic transparency becomes essential in addressing these concerns because information asymmetry may limit sellers' ability to understand the decisions affecting their commercial activities. When platform operators possess substantially greater knowledge of ranking mechanisms, data processing, and policy implementation, participating businesses may struggle to identify the reasons behind changes in product visibility or marketplace performance (Hunt et al., 2025). Octavia (2024), examining algorithmic management within Indonesia's platform economy, highlights how opaque automated systems can weaken accountability and intensify asymmetrical relationships between platforms and participating workers. Although the employment context differs from marketplace-based commercial partnerships, the analysis offers relevant insights into the broader governance challenges associated with platform-controlled decision-making (Octavia, 2022b). For halal MSMEs, meaningful transparency should therefore include accessible explanations of relevant ranking criteria, notification of significant policy changes, clarity concerning commission arrangements, and opportunities to question decisions that substantially affect business operations (Adinugraha et al., 2024). Transparency does not necessarily require platforms to disclose proprietary algorithms or source codes. Rather, it requires sufficient procedural information to enable sellers to understand the commercial implications of platform decisions and respond appropriately.

The relationship between algorithmic governance and competitive inequality can be further understood through the interaction between visibility, accumulated market performance, and access to promotional resources. Sellers receiving greater visibility may attract more consumer interactions, generate additional transaction histories, and accumulate stronger reputational indicators. These advantages may subsequently reinforce their position within recommendation systems, potentially creating a feedback mechanism that benefits established sellers. Fletcher et al. (2023) identify the potential for such algorithmic dynamics to reinforce incumbency and popularity advantages (Fletcher et al., 2023). However, the existence and magnitude of these effects within halal marketplaces require direct empirical examination. For smaller halal businesses, the concern is whether product quality, certification status, and consumer value receive adequate consideration alongside commercial performance indicators. If ranking mechanisms systematically privilege accumulated popularity without providing meaningful opportunities for emerging sellers, the marketplace may reproduce existing economic inequalities rather than facilitate inclusive competition (Costabile, 2024b). This issue is particularly important for halal products because consumer confidence depends not only on price and popularity but also on product integrity, certification credibility, and the reliability of commercial information.

The analytical relationship between platform power, algorithmic transparency, and competitive inequality can be summarized through the following framework.

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Table 1. Analytical Dimensions of Platform Power and Competitive Inequality in Digital Halal Ecosystems

Analytical dimension	Governance mechanism	Potential implication for halal MSMEs
Platform authority	Control over participation rules and commercial policies	Dependence on platform decisions
Algorithmic visibility	Search rankings and recommendation systems	Unequal product exposure
Information asymmetry	Limited access to ranking criteria and decision explanations	Reduced capacity to evaluate commercial risks
Competitive positioning	Popularity, incumbency, and accumulated performance signals	Potential barriers to market expansion
Institutional accountability	Notification, explanation, and complaint mechanisms	Ability to challenge unfavorable decisions

Source: *Author's analytical synthesis based on Chen et al. (2022), Teh (2022), and Fletcher et al. (2023). The implications are analytical possibilities, not measured findings.*

The framework presented in Table 1 illustrates that competitive inequality within digital halal ecosystems cannot be explained solely by differences in sellers' financial resources or technological capabilities. It must also be examined through the institutional mechanisms that regulate market participation, allocate visibility, and determine access to commercially relevant information (Gawer & Harracá, 2025). The interaction between platform authority and algorithmic decision-making may create conditions in which certain sellers obtain persistent advantages while others experience greater uncertainty regarding their market position. Nevertheless, the existence of such inequality must be established through empirical evidence rather than inferred exclusively from theoretical possibilities (Qu et al., 2025).

In the Indonesian context, this discussion is particularly relevant because digital transformation is frequently associated with the expansion of market opportunities for MSMEs (Amin et al., 2026). However, market inclusion should not be equated with equitable participation. A marketplace may provide formal access to thousands of sellers while simultaneously maintaining governance mechanisms that distribute commercial visibility and information unevenly (Saidah et al., 2025; Sauqi, 2026). Accordingly, evaluating digital inclusion requires attention to the quality of participation, the transparency of platform decisions, and the capacity of smaller businesses to respond to changes in marketplace governance. This perspective extends the conventional understanding of digital empowerment by recognizing that access to technological infrastructure does not necessarily eliminate institutional asymmetries.

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Taken together, platform power, algorithmic transparency, and competitive inequality represent interconnected dimensions of digital halal governance. Platform power establishes the institutional conditions of participation, algorithmic mechanisms influence the allocation of visibility and commercial opportunities, while transparency determines the extent to which affected sellers can understand and evaluate these processes. The central analytical argument of this study is that the inclusiveness of digital halal ecosystems depends not merely on technological accessibility but also on the accountability of platform governance. This provides the conceptual foundation for examining partnership fairness and the reconstruction of Islamic economic governance in the subsequent discussion.

Partnership Fairness and the Reconstruction of Islamic Economic Governance in Digital Platforms

Partnership fairness in digital platforms requires a broader understanding of justice that extends beyond contractual compliance and the formal acceptance of commercial agreements. In platform-mediated markets, relationships between platform operators and participating sellers are frequently characterized by differences in bargaining capacity, technological resources, and access to commercially relevant information. Although sellers may formally agree to platform terms and conditions, their ability to negotiate, understand, or challenge these arrangements may remain limited. This distinction raises an important question concerning the substantive fairness of digital commercial relationships (Ahmid, 2025; Al-Sadr, 1982). From an institutional perspective, fair partnerships should provide reasonable protection for the interests of participating parties, ensure consistency in the implementation of contractual obligations, and establish mechanisms through which unfavorable decisions can be questioned. Adinugraha emphasizes that Islamic entrepreneurship should be understood within a comprehensive governance system rather than being limited to financial performance. This perspective is relevant to digital platforms because commercial sustainability should be evaluated alongside ethical responsibility, institutional accountability, and the broader objectives of Islamic economic activity (Adinugraha et al., 2024).

Within Islamic economic thought, the principle of *al-'adl* (justice) provides a fundamental normative basis for evaluating relationships between platform operators and business partners. Justice in commercial transactions requires that rights, obligations, opportunities, and economic responsibilities are not distributed through arbitrary or exploitative arrangements. This principle does not necessarily require identical treatment of all platform participants, since differences in business capacity and operational circumstances may justify differentiated commercial arrangements. Rather, it requires that such differences are governed by reasonable, transparent, and defensible criteria

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(Adinugraha et al., 2024; Choudhury, 2025). When platforms introduce changes to commission structures, promotional requirements, product rankings, or account restrictions without adequate explanation, sellers may experience difficulties protecting their legitimate commercial interests. Such conditions raise concerns regarding procedural and distributive justice. From an Islamic economic perspective, the legitimacy of a commercial relationship therefore cannot be assessed exclusively through the existence of contractual consent; it must also consider whether the conditions governing that relationship preserve fairness and prevent unjust harm.

The principle of *amanah* (trustworthiness) provides a complementary foundation for reconstructing digital partnership governance. In Islamic commercial ethics, trust involves fulfilling obligations, protecting entrusted interests, and acting responsibly toward parties affected by economic decisions. Applied to digital platforms, *amanah* extends beyond the accurate presentation of products and the security of transactions to include responsible management of seller information, transparent communication of commercial policies, and accountable implementation of automated decisions (Choudhury, 2011). Hanif develop an Islamic Data Ethics Theory that identifies trust, justice, honesty, dignity, and caution as important foundations for responsible data practices in business. Their framework demonstrates that Islamic ethical principles can be translated into practical standards for data governance, including transparent consent, equitable data use, and accountability (Adinugraha et al., 2024; Hanif et al., 2024). This contribution is particularly relevant to digital marketplaces because platforms frequently possess substantial amounts of information concerning seller performance, consumer preferences, and transaction histories. The ethical management of such information should therefore be understood as an institutional responsibility rather than merely a technological or operational function.

Another essential dimension of partnership fairness concerns *ridha* (mutual consent), which emphasizes the voluntary and informed nature of commercial agreements. In digital environments, consent is frequently expressed through electronic acceptance of standardized terms and conditions. However, formal acceptance does not necessarily indicate that sellers possess sufficient understanding of the implications of contractual provisions or meaningful opportunities to negotiate their obligations (D. I. Aisyah et al., 2023). The distinction between formal and substantive consent becomes particularly important when platforms retain broad discretion to modify policies or determine the consequences of non-compliance. From the perspective of Islamic commercial jurisprudence, mutual consent should be accompanied by adequate clarity concerning the subject matter, obligations, and consequences of transactions. Uncertainty arising from unclear contractual conditions may also raise concerns associated with *gharar*, particularly when it creates material ambiguity concerning the

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rights and responsibilities of contracting parties (Abduroman et al., 2020). Accordingly, digital partnership arrangements should provide accessible explanations of commission structures, policy modifications, account restrictions, and procedures for resolving commercial disputes.

The principle of *maqasid al-Shariah* further expands this analysis by connecting partnership fairness with the protection of broader economic and social interests. Islamic governance should not focus exclusively on the formal permissibility of transactions but also consider their implications for human welfare, economic participation, and the protection of wealth (*hifz al-mal*). Hanif argues that Islamic entrepreneurship should pursue the comprehensive objectives of Shariah rather than being restricted to financial sustainability (Hanif et al., 2024). Similarly, Anisa et al. demonstrate the relevance of *maqasid al-Shariah* to algorithmic decision-making by emphasizing equitable access, the prevention of exploitation, and the protection of users' legitimate interests (Anisa et al., 2024). These perspectives suggest that platform governance should be evaluated according to whether its institutional mechanisms protect sellers from unjustified economic disadvantages and support meaningful participation in digital markets. In the halal economy, such considerations are particularly important because the credibility of halal business activities depends not only on product compliance but also on the ethical integrity of commercial relationships throughout the digital value chain.

Recent scholarship also indicates that the ethical responsibilities of halal businesses must extend into the technological systems through which commercial activities are conducted. Koswara and Sahirul Alim propose an Ethical Digital Governance Framework for Halal Business that integrates Islamic ethical principles with contemporary digital governance requirements (Koswara & Alim, 2026). Their analysis emphasizes the importance of *sidq* (honesty), *amanah*, *'adl*, transparency, and the prevention of deceptive digital practices. This approach offers an important foundation for extending halal governance beyond conventional concerns regarding product certification and supply-chain integrity (Koswara & Alim, 2026). Nevertheless, the ethical responsibilities of digital platforms should also be examined at the institutional level, particularly when platform operators exercise authority over seller participation, information distribution, and commercial visibility. Therefore, halal digital governance requires a framework that connects ethical business conduct with accountable platform policies and fair partnership arrangements.

Based on these considerations, the reconstruction of Islamic economic governance in digital platforms requires the integration of normative principles into operational governance mechanisms. Justice should be reflected in reasonable commercial policies and non-arbitrary decision-making; *amanah* should be translated into responsible data management and institutional accountability; *ridha* should be supported

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through understandable contractual terms and informed participation; and the protection of wealth should be reflected in safeguards against unjustified economic losses (Adinugraha et al., 2024). Transparency should function as a cross-cutting governance requirement, enabling sellers to understand relevant platform decisions and access appropriate complaint and appeal procedures. These principles do not necessarily require the elimination of platform authority or the disclosure of proprietary technological systems. Instead, they establish ethical boundaries within which platform authority should be exercised.

Accordingly, this study conceptualizes Islamic economic governance as an ethical and institutional approach to strengthening partnership fairness within digital halal ecosystems. Its central argument is that the legitimacy of digital commercial relationships depends not merely on contractual consent or technological efficiency but also on the extent to which platform governance protects justice, trust, accountability, and the legitimate interests of participating businesses. By integrating *al-'adl*, *amanah*, *ridha*, and *maqasid al-Shariah* into the evaluation of platform-mediated partnerships, Islamic economic thought can contribute a distinctive normative perspective to contemporary debates on platform accountability and digital market governance. This perspective positions the halal digital ecosystem not simply as a technologically enabled marketplace but as an economic institution whose governance should be consistent with the ethical objectives of Islamic commercial relations.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the relationship between platform power, algorithmic transparency, and partnership fairness within digital halal ecosystems from the perspective of Islamic economic governance. The analysis highlights that digital platforms should not be understood merely as technological intermediaries facilitating commercial transactions, but also as institutional actors whose governance mechanisms influence market participation, competitive opportunities, and relationships between platform operators and business users. Platform-controlled ranking systems, recommendation mechanisms, commercial policies, and information structures may create asymmetrical relationships, particularly for halal micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) that depend on digital marketplaces to access consumers. Consequently, digital market inclusion should be evaluated not only through technological accessibility and business expansion but also through the fairness and accountability of the institutional arrangements governing platform participation.

The study further emphasizes that algorithmic transparency is an essential condition for strengthening accountability and partnership fairness. Meaningful transparency requires more than general disclosure of technological information; it

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involves understandable explanations of decisions, adequate notification of policy changes, clarity regarding commercial obligations, and accessible mechanisms for questioning decisions that affect sellers' economic interests. In this regard, partnership fairness should extend beyond formal contractual consent to encompass procedural consistency, reasonable distribution of responsibilities, and protection against arbitrary or disproportionate platform decisions. These considerations are particularly important in digital halal markets, where the sustainability of small businesses depends partly on their ability to understand and respond to platform governance mechanisms.

From an Islamic economic perspective, the study advances an ethical understanding of digital platform governance through the principles of *al-'adl* (justice), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *ridha* (mutual consent), and *hifz al-mal* (protection of wealth). These principles provide a normative foundation for evaluating the legitimacy of platform-mediated commercial relationships and establishing ethical boundaries for the exercise of platform authority. The conceptual contribution of this study lies in connecting Islamic economic ethics with platform governance and algorithmic accountability, thereby extending the discussion of halal digital transformation beyond product compliance and technological adoption toward institutional justice and responsible market organization. The proposed Islamic Ethical Platform Governance Framework offers an initial conceptual direction for integrating contractual fairness, institutional accountability, informed participation, economic protection, and decision transparency into digital halal governance.

Practically, the study highlights the importance of developing platform governance mechanisms that provide clearer commercial policies, explainable decision-making procedures, responsible data management, and effective complaint and appeal systems. Platform operators should recognize that the sustainability of digital marketplaces depends not only on technological efficiency but also on the trust and legitimate interests of participating businesses. Policymakers and halal industry institutions should likewise consider strengthening regulatory oversight and developing governance standards that protect smaller businesses without undermining legitimate innovation and competition. For halal MSMEs, improved digital literacy and institutional support may also strengthen their capacity to understand platform policies and manage commercial risks.

This study has limitations that should be considered when interpreting its arguments. Its conceptual and literature-based analysis does not, by itself, establish the actual prevalence or magnitude of algorithmic inequality among halal MSMEs. Furthermore, differences in platform business models, regulatory environments, and seller characteristics may produce different governance outcomes. Future research should therefore employ empirical case studies, comparative platform analysis, and interviews with platform operators and halal MSMEs to examine how algorithmic

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decisions influence market visibility, contractual relationships, and economic outcomes. Further investigation could also develop and validate measurable indicators of Islamic ethical platform governance. Ultimately, building a fair digital halal ecosystem requires the integration of technological innovation with institutional accountability and the ethical objectives of Islamic economics.

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