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Examining The Sales Performance Of Muslim Fashion SMEs In Central Java-Indonesia: Perspectizing Resource-Advantage (R-A) Theory

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Abstract

This study examines consumer behavior in the Indonesian Halal Industry, specifically in Central Java, with a focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the Muslim fashion sector. The Indonesian market is highly dependent on imported halal products, making it imperative for local SMEs to take advantage of the available opportunities. The objective of this study is to investigate the entrepreneurial orientation of Muslim fashion SMEs and its alignment with market demands to achieve a competitive advantage. To bridge the gap between entrepreneurial orientation and sales performance, the concept of 'Creative Selling Resources' is proposed. Data was collected from 383 Muslim Clothing SMEs in Central Java that have been operational for at least three years. The study's findings highlight the significance of strategic orientation and resource allocation for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the Indonesian Halal Industry.

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Keywords: Entrepreneurial Orientation, Creative Selling Resources, Customer Relationship Performance, Sales Performance, Resource-Advantage (R-A) Theory

INTRODUCTION

The global Halal industry has enormous potential due to the projected increase in the Muslim population. It is estimated that the population will increase by 1.8 billion people in 2019 and is expected to reach 2.9 billion people by 2060. This indicates a growing demand for halal products in the world economy. In 2019, the global consumption of halal products exceeded USD 2.2 trillion, with an annual growth rate of 5.2%. The State of Global Islamic Economic Report 2019/2020 ranks Indonesia as the 5th largest global Islamic economy, following Malaysia, UAE, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia. However, Indonesia's reliance on imported halal products indicates that there is still room for improvement. This study focuses on consumer behavior in Indonesia regarding food choices, product shopping, wearing Muslim clothing, recreation at Muslim-friendly tourist sites, and transactions using Sharia products. The findings suggest that this trend presents an opportunity for the growth of the Indonesian Halal industry in the future (halal.go.id2023).

This research focuses on Muslim Fashion SMEs in Central Java, Indonesia, within the halal industry. The choice of this region and industry was based on three main reasons. Firstly, Muslim fashion is a unique resource in Indonesia's halal industry, as most food and beverage products, medicines, and cosmetics are imported. Secondly, Muslim fashion SMEs have significant opportunities to gain market share and profit from the destination market in Central Java, considering the large Muslim population of 36.21 million. Additionally, the growing halal industry in Indonesia provides an ideal opportunity for Muslim fashion SMEs to meet the needs and wants of the domestic and global markets for Muslim fashion products. This study focuses on Muslim Fashion SMEs in the Indonesian halal industry in Central Java.

Entrepreneurial orientation (EO) is a concept that companies use to maintain business performance in target markets by overcoming competitive provocations and changing consumer preferences. According to R-A Theory, EO also involves resource capital that supports modifying strategies and operations, providing a basis for effective business decisions and behaviors. Several studies agree on the five elements of (EO): innovativeness, proactiveness, risk-taking, competitiveness, and autonomy. Innovativeness, as one of the elements of EO, helps firms deal

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with competitors' aggressiveness by provoking market imbalances. These studies provide insights into the importance of EO and its elements in maintaining a competitive advantage in a dynamic business environment. Overall, the adoption of EO is considered crucial for businesses seeking to adapt and thrive in the face of market challenges and uncertainties (Alves & Yang, 2022; Nair, Sundar, & Mangadu Paramasivam, 2020).

This study examines the entrepreneurial orientation of Muslim Fashion SMEs that tailor their business operations to meet the demands of the destination market. The study applies the Resource-Advantage (R-A) Theory to develop an exploratory model of entrepreneurial orientation. By adjusting their strategies, these SMEs can take advantage of opportunities and achieve superior sales performance (Hunt & Madhavaram, 2020). The relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and sales performance is still unclear due to conflicting results in previous research. While some studies suggest that entrepreneurial orientation does not affect sales performance, others indicate that it is a key factor for success. This study aims to address this research gap by investigating the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and sales performance in Muslim Fashion SMEs. This study aims to contribute to the existing literature and provide insights for practitioners in the Muslim Fashion industry by exploring this dynamic. The sources cited include Adam et al. (2022); İpek, Bıçakcıoğlu-Peynirci, and Hizarcı (2023); Troise, Dana, Tani, and Lee (2022).

LITERATURE ANALYSIS AND METHODOLOGY

Literature Review

Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO) refers to the process of developing entrepreneurial strategies related to planning, decision-making, and strategic management used by startup founders to achieve their organizational goals, fulfill their vision, and build a competitive advantage in the market. The entrepreneurial orientation of a company can be described as reflecting its innovativeness, risk-taking, and proactiveness. Risk-taking refers to the company's tendency to take bold actions. Proactiveness refers to the extent to which the company seeks new opportunities and aims to be at the forefront among competitors. Innovativeness refers to the company's tendency to engage in creativity and experimentation through the introduction of new products/services. The joint variance of these three characteristics is considered to determine the extent to which a company is entrepreneurial. In this regard, companies become more proactive and risk-taking in innovation to address new markets. Entrepreneurial

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orientation has been extensively studied by researchers in the fields of business and management, resulting in a wealth of knowledge. The concept of EO directs a company's activities towards being more effective in seeking new business opportunities. Hence, it can be said that entrepreneurial orientation comprises innovative, proactive, and risk-taking behavior, which is fostered and promoted by top management teams as a factor influencing the company's competitive strategy(Boldureanu, Ionescu, Ana-Maria, Bedrule-Grigoruță, & Boldureanu, 2020; Chang & Chen, 2020; Chatterjee, Dutta Gupta, & Upadhyay, 2020).

The concept of creative selling resources involves expanding the customer-oriented sales approach and incorporating innovation. The company obtains knowledge about its customers through effective knowledge sharing. Additionally, the concept of creative selling resources is built upon innovativeness and proactiveness, as outlined by Edwards, Miles, D'Alessandro, and Frost (2022, 2023). The concept of selling resources creatively serves as a bridge between the EO and CKS concepts, enhancing the customer relationship performance and strategy-making flexibility of companies in destination markets (Herzallah, Muñoz Leiva, & Liébana-Cabanillas, 2021; Jeng, 2018).

The role of knowledge in shaping sales behavior is being explored. It is hypothesized that a hunting and farming orientation is positively correlated with the utilization of creative selling resources, based on the long-standing theoretical idea that knowledge empowers salespeople(Edwards et al., 2022, 2023; Locander, Darrat, & Babin, 2023). This involves being aware of different conditions or environments and responding appropriately. Sales practitioners adapt their selling resources based on their understanding of customers. Recent qualitative research supports this approach. According to our study, it has been suggested that salespeople with a high hunting and farming orientation tend to develop a mental or personal 'database' of customer situations, which they can draw upon for creative selling resources(Rajabi, Brashear Alejandro, & Hashemi, 2024).

Customer relationship performance (CRP) is a critical asset for companies, providing them with a competitive advantage and protection against rival threats in the market. The significance of CRP is reinforced by the relational perspective of R-A Theory, which emphasizes its importance in building long-term relationships with customers and destination markets. Building strong seller-buyer relationships relies on paying attention to customer needs and desires throughout all stages of the sales process. The concept of CRP enables companies to persuade the destination market that choosing their products and services is the best decision.

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In the Muslim Fashion Industry, CRP plays a vital role in maintaining and improving market share, ultimately leading to the achievement of sales targets (Hunt & Madhavaram, 2020; Yen-Chun, Ya-Hui, & Hsien-Tung, 2020; Zhang, Wang, & Jia, 2020).

Previous research has shown that adaptive sales behavior can have a positive impact on sales performance. This positive effect can be achieved by a salesperson's ability to create innovative approaches to managing nonverbal and empathetic signals, which can help build customer relationships and trust. Additionally, a creative salesperson can have a positive impact by utilizing appropriate information with the right customer at the right time. R-A Theory posits that superior performance is the result of distinctive resource, capability, and relational capital (Edwards et al., 2023; Rodriguez, Roberts-Lombard, Høgevold, & Svensson, 2022; Shamsudheen & Mahomed, 2022). This study positions entrepreneurial orientation (EO) as a distinctive capital resource of the firm. The concept of creative selling resources is identified as the capital capability of the company (Kuo, Kao, Tang, & Tsai, 2022). Additionally, the study highlights the importance of customer relationship performance as the company's relational capital.

METHODOLOGY

This study aims to establish cause-and-effect relationships between variables, such as Entrepreneurial Orientation, Customer Knowledge Sharing, Creative Sales Resources, Customer Relationship Performance, Strategy Making Flexibility, and Sales Performance in the Indonesian Halal Fashion industry in Central Java. The primary data used in this research were obtained from the responses and perceptions of 383 research respondents. Purposive sampling was used to select Muslim Fashion SMEs that have been operating for at least three years in Central Java as samples. The research methodology employed the Regression Equation Test, which included Confirmatory Factor Analysis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to identify the most dominant factors in each group of variables, and Regression Weight in SEM to test the relationship between variables. This study aims to investigate the relationship between various factors and their impact on sales performance in the Indonesian Halal Fashion industry in Central Java. This study uses a questionnaire with a rating scale of 1-10. It is necessary to assess the reliability and validity of this research tool to ensure that the results are suitable for further testing.

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Table 1 Instrument Test Results of Sales Performance Research Model

Construct/Latent Variable	Cronbach α	Item (Indicator)	*Valid*
Entrepreneurial Orientation	0.879	Investment of product item development time (X1)	0.755
		Proactive in business operations (X2)	0.698
		Likes to make bold investments that can generate superior returns (X3)	0.703
		Strive to take customers away from competitors (X4)	0.727
		Always have a positive attitude towards problems that arise in business, and solve them on their own (X5)	0.670
Creative Selling Resources	0.837	Mobilize all resources for sales tasks in resourceful ways (X6)	0.682
		Mobilize all resources to generate new ideas to satisfy customer needs (X7)	0.675
		Mobilize all resources to generate and evaluate various alternatives (X8)	0.652
		Mobilize all resources to make sales presentations in innovative ways (X9)	0.665
Customer Relationship Performance	0.822	Have more consideration and understanding of customer wishes (X10)	0.609
		Have a long-term view of customer relationships (X11)	0.689
		Making decisions in a team manner (X12)	0.672
		Paying attention to external/market developments and changes (X13)	0.609
Sales Performance	0.837	The sales volume of our Muslim Fashion SME products meets our target (X14)	0.674
		The profit from our Muslim Fashion SME products met our target (X15)	0.720

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Construct/Latent Variable	Cronbach α	Item (Indicator)	*Valid*
		The number of customers of our Muslim Fashion SME products increased to meet our target (X16)	0.649
		Customer satisfaction of our Muslim Fashion SMEs meets the company's target (X17)	0.628

Instrument testing concluded that all latent constructs/variables formed from 16 items were declared fully reliable (above 0.70), allowing them to form a sales performance research model.

RESEARCH AND RESULTS

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is used to test the model and hypotheses for sales performance research. The aim is to ensure that the model meets the eligibility criteria for a good model. Both statistical and non-statistical approaches are used to test the feasibility of the research model.

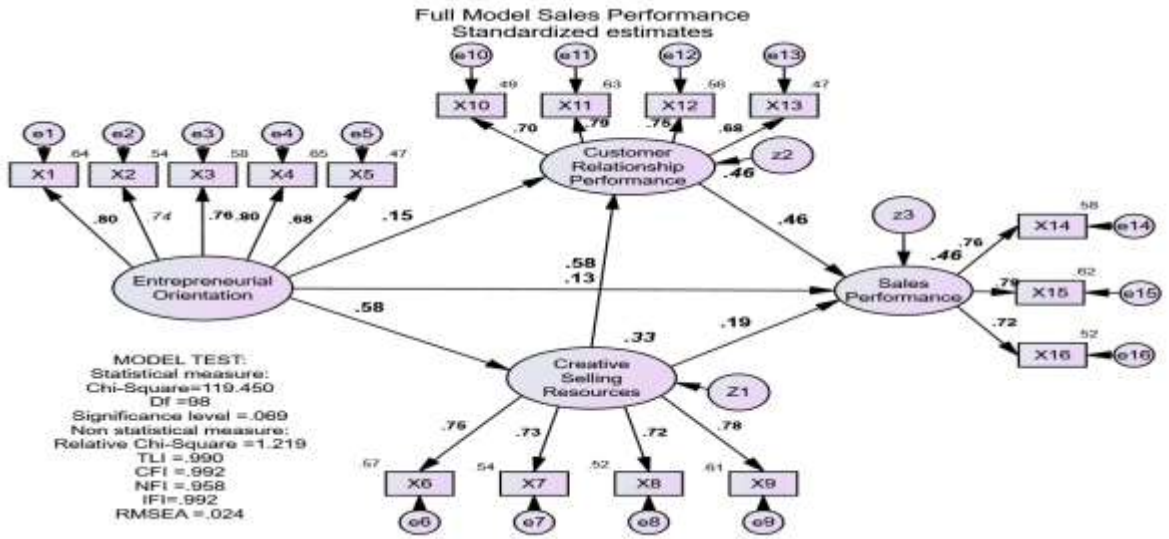


Figure 1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis Test Results Full Model Construct Sales Performance

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Confirmatory factor analysis of the full construct of the sales performance model indicates that it meets the fit criteria for the formation of a research model. The figure above displays the goodness of fit criteria, indicating that the TLI, CFI, NFI, and IFI values meet the provisions for the sales performance model constructs. Therefore, it can be concluded that the sales performance model used is capable of forming a research model.

The following test is used to assess the normality of the data. Due to its sensitivity to deviations from multivariate normality, the test of the normality of the data is a crucial step in the modeling of the structural equation model. The results of SEM-AMOS analysis of data normality in the full structural equation model are presented in the following table.

Table 2: Assessment of Normality Test Results for Sales Performance Research Model

Variable	min	max	skew	c.r.	kurtosis	c.r.
X16	3.000	10.000	-.245	-1.959	-.479	-1.913
X15	3.000	10.000	-.237	-1.893	-.426	-1.702
X14	3.000	10.000	-.204	-1.633	-.495	-1.976
X13	3.000	10.000	-.323	-2.581	-.358	-1.432
X12	3.000	10.000	-.224	-1.787	-.584	-2.333
X11	3.000	10.000	-.270	-2.156	-.408	-1.631
X10	3.000	10.000	-.292	-2.332	-.351	-1.401
X6	3.000	10.000	-.167	-1.334	-.413	-1.648
X7	4.000	10.000	-.295	-2.354	-.301	-1.202
X8	4.000	10.000	-.112	-.897	-.376	-1.501
X9	4.000	10.000	-.098	-.783	-.731	-2.921
X5	4.000	10.000	-.089	-.710	-.599	-2.395
X4	4.000	10.000	-.284	-2.272	-.653	-2.609
X3	4.000	10.000	-.199	-1.593	-.567	-2.266
X2	4.000	10.000	-.261	-2.089	-.551	-2.200
X1	4.000	10.000	-.123	-.982	-.768	-3.066
Multivariate					10.618	4.329

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The normality of the data was assessed using the criteria for the critical ratio skewness value of ±2.58 (for an error rate of 10%). Table 2 shows the results of the data normality analysis, indicating that all constructs have a critical value below 2.58. The next step is to test the hypothesis on the sales performance model, after obtaining a model test that meets the goodness of fit index and test data that shows normal.

Table 3 Sales Performance Model Hypothesis Testing Results

			Estimate	C.R.	P	Conclusion
Entrepreneurial_Orientation	→	Creative_Selling_Resources	.554	9.266	***	Supported
Entrepreneurial_Orientation	→	Customer_Relationship_ Performance	.136	2.282	.022	Supported
Entrepreneurial_Orientation	→	Sales_Performance	.125	1.948	.051	Rejected
Creative_Selling_Resources	→	Customer_Relationship_ Performance	.541	7.499	***	Supported
Creative_Selling_Resources	→	Sales_Performance	.187	2.168	.030	Supported
Customer_Relationship_ Performance	→	Sales_Performance	.496	5.480	***	Supported

Table 3 shows that CR is over 1.96, P is under .05 and Lambda or factor loading is over .5. Based on these results, it can be concluded that of the 5 proposed hypotheses, one hypothesis H3 in the sales performance model cannot be accepted.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The data analysis results indicate that the Creative Selling Resources research model meets the criteria for goodness of fit. It is important to note that no subjective evaluations were included in this analysis. Additionally, the t-test on Regression Weights also yielded positive results. This study aims to address the research problems and gaps in the Indonesian Halal Industry of Muslim Fashion SMEs in Central Java by exploring how the empirical model of Creative Selling Resources, as an extension of the Resource-Advantage (R-A) theory, can provide solutions. The language used is clear, objective, and value-neutral, with a formal register and precise word choice. The text follows a conventional structure with common academic sections and maintains regular author

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and institution formatting. The sentences and paragraphs create a logical flow of information with causal connections between statements. The text is free from grammatical errors, spelling mistakes, and punctuation errors. No changes in content have been made to the original text.

Based on the data analysis illustrated in the full model analysis graph, the results of this study suggest that sales performance can be increased as expected. The study provides policy implications for modeling sales performance in the corporate policy model of SMEs Muslim Clothing Halal Industry Indonesia in Central Java in the long term, by the priorities. Entrepreneurial orientation is the main variable that significantly increases sales performance in the Creative Selling Resources model for SMEs in the Muslim Clothing Halal Industry in Central Java in the long term(Rodríguez, Høgevold, Otero-Neira, & Svensson, 2022; Shamsudheen & Mahomed, 2022).

The policy implications of this study are consistent with the priority of measuring sales performance as the most dominant indicator of entrepreneurial orientation. Respondents should be encouraged to develop persistent problem-solving behavior, as overcoming challenges is a crucial aspect of building a superior entrepreneurial character. Muslim Clothing SMEs in the Indonesian Halal Industry in Central Java can find solutions to their problems through trial and error, gaining experience in problem management.

The measurement of respondents' sales performance indicates entrepreneurial orientation in Muslim Fashion SMEs. To maintain a competitive edge, these SMEs should prioritize maintaining product quality at least equal to that of their competitors and providing superior supporting services, such as free shipping for purchases over a certain amount. Secondly, develop and implement an appealing promotional mix program that allows Muslim fashion SMEs to take full advantage of social media marketing platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp more intensively and creatively. Thirdly, Muslim clothing SMEs should differentiate their products from those of their competitors, maintain a friendly demeanor, ensure customer comfort, and create an attractive store ambiance to attract customers.

According to the sales performance model, customer knowledge sharing is the second most influential variable. This refers to the measurement of sales performance by respondents, where the key is to build harmonious relationships with customers and business partners. Muslim fashion SMEs can improve their communication by providing the latest marketing information and soliciting feedback. Additionally, creating a separate group with special pricing for members can be beneficial. Muslim Fashion SMEs offer efficient and satisfactory seller services to ensure customer satisfaction.

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Future research on Creative Selling Resources could expand to test Muslim Fashion SMEs in other regions of the Indonesian Halal Industry to enrich further and strengthen theories and previous research. Secondly, future research should aim to expand the R-A Theory by adding variables to the Creative Selling Resources model, such as entrepreneurial sales actions and entrepreneurial strategy-making (Edwards et al., 2023).

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