

Exploring The Marketing Performance of Pemalang Muslim Fashion SMEs Through Religious Product Advantage Strategy

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Abstract

This research aims to determine role of religious product advantage strategies to improve marketing performance in Pemalang Muslim fashion SMEs, Central Java. For this reason, it is done by analyzing influence entrepreneurial orientation to religious product advantage strategy, market orientation to religious product advantage strategy, religious product advantage strategy to marketing performance, entrepreneurial orientation to marketing performance and market orientation to marketing performance. Research was based on research gap influence of entrepreneurial orientation to marketing performance and market orientation to marketing performance. Research gap raises the question of what must be done to improve marketing performance. A concept, religious product advantage strategy, is proposed as bridging variable in increasing marketing performance by developing five hypotheses and using data 108 respondents. Samples were obtained using purposive sampling techniques, tested and processed with AMOS 22.0. Results found that religious product advantage strategy could improve marketing performance of Muslim fashion SMEs. Keywords : Entrepreneurial and Market Orientation; Religious Product Advantage Strategy; Marketing Performance

Abstrak

Studi ini bertujuan mengetahui peran strategi keunggulan produk religiusitas dalam rangka meningkatkan kinerja pemasaran UKM busana muslim di Kabupaten Pemalang, Jawa Tengah. Untuk itu dilakukan dengan menganalisis peran orientasi kewirausahaan kepada strategi keunggulan produk religiusitas, orientasi pasar kepada strategi keunggulan produk religiusitas, strategi keunggulan produk religiusitas kepada kinerja pemasaran, orientasi kewirausahaan kepada kinerja pemasaran serta orientasi pasar kepada kinerja pemasaran. Penelitian ini dibuat berdasarkan research gap peran orientasi kewirausahaan kepada kinerja pemasaran dan peran orientasi pasar kepada kinerja pemasaran. Research gap tersebut menimbulkan pertanyaan apa yang harus dilakukan untuk meningkatkan kinerja pemasaran. Sebuah konsep yaitu strategi keunggulan produk religiusitas diusulkan sebagai variabel yang menjembatani dalam menaikkan kinerja pemasaran dengan mengembangkan lima hipotesis dan diuji menggunakan data 108 responden. Sampel diperoleh dengan teknik purposive sampling serta diuji dan diolah dengan AMOS 22.0. Hasilnya menemukan bahwa strategi keunggulan produk religiusitas dapat meningkatkan kinerja pemasaran UKM busana muslim.

Kata Kunci : Orientasi Kewirausahaan dan Pasar, Strategi Keunggulan Produk Religiusitas, Kinerja Pemasaran

Introduction

Indonesia is the ten country the largest Muslim population in the world. Based on data from Badan Pusat Statistik Republik Indonesia (2023), the population of Indonesia will be 277.53 million people in mid-2023. Of this number, the Muslim population in Indonesia reached 240.62 million people or the equivalent of 86.7% of the national population (The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre, 2024). This makes Indonesia one of the countries the largest number of Muslim product consumers in the world (Direktorat Jenderal Kependudukan & Pencatatan Sipil Kementerian Dalam Negeri, 2021). As a country the largest Muslim population in the world, the Indonesian population is experiencing a transformation phenomenon known as the commodification of religion. Religious commodification is the use of values in a religion to be incorporated into a product so that it has exchange value (Aeni, 2022). As can be seen in Table 1, the majority of Indonesia's citizen is Muslim, the population of Pemalang Regency numbering 1,526,760 people in 2023, 1,523,023 of whom are also Muslim or the equivalent of 0.99% of the entire population of Pemalang Regency (Pemerintah Kabupaten Pemalang, 2023).

Table 1. Number of Population According to Religion in Pemalang Regency in 2023

Subdistrict	Islam	Protestan	Katolik	Hindu	Budha	Konghuchu	Other
Moga	76.417	349	11	1	-	-	1
Warungpring	46.011	5	6	-	-	-	1
Pulosari	63.851	366	2	-	-	-	1
Belik	123.568	27	10	1	-	-	2
Watukumpul	77.908	5	1	-	-	-	4
Bodeh	64.313	51	15	-	-	-	4
Bantarbolang	88.667	25	12	-	-	-	12
Randudongkal	115.236	410	98	1	13	-	1
Pemalang	206.816	1.142	779	58	87	9	84
Taman	192.872	701	328	13	3	6	43
Petarukan	176.340	713	70	6	12	-	25
Ampelgading	77.253	126	19	-	8	-	45
Comal	96.279	693	189	6	33	2	40
Ulujami	117.492	23	23	2	4	1	82
Kabupaten Pemalang	1.523.023	1.563	1.563	88	160	18	345

Source : Pemerintah Kabupaten Pemalang, 2023

Pemalang Regency is the one of Muslim fashion producing districts in Indonesia. The favorite Muslim fashion product in Pemalang Regency is Goyor weaving with the product being the typical Pemalang goyor toldem sarong (Wijanarko & Adhi, 2022). Even though it is considered successful, in fact Muslim fashion SMEs are faced with several challenges in developing their business. Some of them are changes in the dynamic and uncertain business environment caused by the rapid development of technology, science, culture, lifestyle, competition with similar products or substitutes and the speed of product innovation. Muslim fashion industry itself has a market nature with style elements that tend to last a short time, so that consumers in the Muslim fashion industry have an awareness of Muslim fashion that tends to be stable, change quickly, unpredictably which has an impact on competition, shifts in price and product quality (Hendar et al., 2018).

Table 2. Number of Muslim Fashion Production in Pemalang Regency 2014 – 2016

Muslim Fashion Center	Production Quantity (piece)		
	Tahun 2014	Tahun 2015	Tahun 2016
Wanarejan Utara	640.320	594.240	548.528
Beji	7.200	6.000	8.640
Jebed Utara	960	2.880	2.880
Kaligelang	700	700	500
Kabunan	1.600	1.440	1.440
Taman	7.200	6.900	7.200

Source : Dinas Perindagkop dan UMKM Kabupaten Pemalang, 2017

Table 2 shows that the amount of production from 2014 to 2016 experienced fluctuations, the amount of production from the six Muslim fashion centers experienced ups and downs. Total production is goods produced from combinations of inputs or production factors used (Sari & Kardoyo, 2018). For this reason, driving variables are needed to be able to face these challenges. As a district with a majority Muslim population, it requires commodification of religion in the form of transforming religious values.

Religiosity is the extent of a person's knowledge about religion, and the clothing worn must reflect the personality of a Muslim, whether it is the method of obtaining it or the processing process. Currently, Muslim fashion is no longer a lifestyle, but is a necessity for all consumers and producers, especially those who are Muslim (Sudarti & Ulum, 2020). Religiosity has a deep meaning for every person in which there are instructions regarding life guidelines to achieve happiness in this world and the afterlife. Religiosity is a representation of a person's religious attitude which is believed in their heart (Musyaffa & Iqbal, 2022). Sahlan (2011) defines religiosity as an attitude based on belief in religion. Religious attitude is person's condition that encourages them to behave according to their level of religious observance (Jalaluddin, 2010). Religious activities are not only ritual acts of worship, but also when other activities are dominated by other forces. It is not only related to activities that are visible to the eye, but also activities that are invisible and occur to someone with that attitude (Iranati, 2017).

The research gap between entrepreneurial and market orientation on marketing performance is a problem in this research. Zahara et al., (2023) and Rahmidani et al., (2023) found entrepreneurial orientation influences the marketing performance of SMEs. On the other hand, Felisia et al., (2020) show that entrepreneurial orientation has no effect on the marketing performance of SMEs. Then the research results of Putranto et al., (2023) and Wahyuni & Sara (2020) show market orientation has a significant influence on SME market performance. On the other hand, Solikahan & Mohammad (2019) also found that market orientation has no effect on the marketing performance of SMEs. To bridge research gap, a mediating variable religious product advantage strategy is proposed, then 5 hypotheses were formed to prove whether the religious product advantage strategy could mediate entrepreneurial and market orientation on the marketing performance of Muslim fashion SMEs (Figure 1).

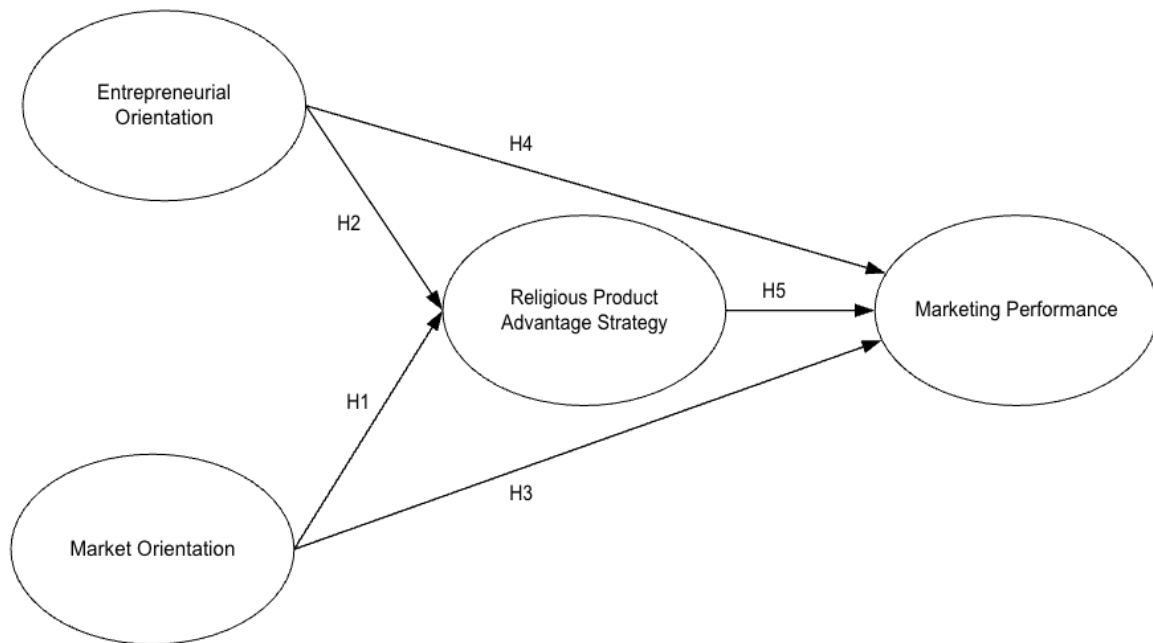


Figure 1. Empirical Research Models and Hypothesis
 Source: Developed for this study, 2024

Literature Review

Entrepreneurial Orientation

Entrepreneurship is creative and innovative capability that is used as a basis, tips and resources for seeking opportunities for success. Management literature provides three basic dimensions of organizational tendencies for the entrepreneurial management process: innovation capability, risk taking capability and proactive nature (Weerawardeena, 2003; Matsuno et al., 2002). Entrepreneurial orientation is company's strategic orientation to capture certain entrepreneurial aspects of decision making style, methods and practices (Wiklund & Shepherd, 2005). Entrepreneurial orientation has five multidimensional constructs: risk taking, innovation, proactiveness, competitive aggressiveness and autonomy (Buli, 2017). Companies with a strong entrepreneurial orientation continue to observe and monitor their operating environment to identify new opportunities and strengthen the competitiveness of their position (Setiawan & Soelaiman, 2021). Entrepreneurial orientation increases competitive advantage through strategic agility consisting of three dimensions, as well as exploring and exploiting innovation to encourage SME entrepreneurship in increasing sustainable competitive advantage (Aswan, 2023), then put forward a hypothesis: H1: The higher the entrepreneurial orientation, the higher the religious product advantage strategy.

Market orientation

Narver & Slater (1990) define market orientation as the most effective and efficient organizational culture for creating the behaviors needed to create excellent value for buyers and produce superior performance for the company, especially fiercely competitive environment. In highly competitive environment, only companies that have added value will survive. Companies have made market orientation their organizational culture will focus on external market needs, market desires and demands as a basis for formulating strategies for each business unit in the organization and determining the company's success (Carbonell & Escudero, 2010; Chung, 2012). Three component behaviors such as customer orientation, competitor orientation and inter functional coordination are key to organizational success

(Narver & Slater, 1990; Wang & Chung, 2013; Trarintya et al., 2020). Company's willingness and efforts to gather market information (e.g. price information, desired products, customers, competitors, suppliers, government regulations and environmental changes) and disseminate the information throughout the organization and respond to market intelligence represent examples of behavior strengthen a market oriented company identity (Newman et al., 2016). According to Na et al., (2019) market orientation makes companies better at responding to market demand and predicting market changes well and creating sustainable competition, for this reason a hypothesis is proposed:

H2: The higher the market orientation, the higher the religious product advantage strategy.

Marketing Performance

Adesoga & James (2019) define marketing performance as marketing's measurement and assessment of organizational goals related to the market such as revenue, growth and market share. Performance shows the company's success in achieving its goals. There are two categories of performance based perceptions: financial performance perceptions and marketing performance perceptions. In measuring SME performance, it is more appropriate to use marketing performance perceptions, because it is difficult to gain access to financial performance archives (Killa, 2017). Hanfan (2021) in his research on the ability to configure products said that SME marketing performance indicators consist of product success, growth in product marketing reach and market share. The research which aims to analyze competitive advantage as variable that mediates market orientation on marketing performance, found that market oriented SMEs contribute to competitive advantage by creating product uniqueness, product quality and competitive prices, ultimately influencing SME marketing performance (Puspaningrum, 2020), then a hypothesis is proposed:

H3: The higher the religious product advantage strategy, the higher the marketing performance.

Analysis of empirical studies conducted to see the role of entrepreneurial orientation, relational abilities and value creation to improve marketing performance, found entrepreneurial orientation has important role on the marketing performance of SMEs in the fashion apparel industry in Central Java, Indonesia through relational abilities (Indriastuti, 2019). Keh et al., (2007) stated that entrepreneurial orientation plays a role in the acquisition and use of marketing information, and also has a direct influence on SME performance, for this reason a hypothesis is proposed:

H4: The higher the entrepreneurial orientation, the higher the marketing performance.

Then research looking the influence of market orientation on market performance with two intervening variables: service innovation and total management quality with Muslim fashion MSMEs as research objects, found that market orientation influences market performance both directly and through mediating variables namely service innovation and total management quality (Fikri et al., 2022). Abshar & Septrizola (2023) also found market orientation has a positive influence on the marketing performance of small and medium enterprises, so a hypothesis is proposed:

H5: The higher the market orientation, the higher the marketing performance.

Religious Product Advantage Strategy Concept

Bharadwaj et al., (1993) explained competitive advantage is the result of implementing strategies that utilize various resources owned by the company. This research explains the relationship between several interrelated concepts: the concept of sustainable competitive advantage and the concept of religiosity. Religiosity is complex integration of religious knowledge, feelings and religious actions within person (King & Williamson, 2010). The concept proposed is to implement a religious product advantage strategy, namely the advantage of the company's products in placing the product in consumers' minds using

the superiority of sharia products, the uniqueness of sharia products and the irreplaceable experience of using sharia products (Hanfan et al., 2023). Sharia products are products that comply with the provisions set by Allah or the result of understanding on the basis of these provisions to be used as a guide for mankind both in their relationship with God, their relationship with other human beings, their relationship with nature, and their relationship in managing this life (Masykur, 2023).

Research Methodology

This research uses primary data through interviews with a number of selected respondents. Descriptive research design was used in this research. Survey method using a structured questionnaire with a ten point rating scale was used to collect data. AMOS 22.0 was used to analyze and process the questionnaire. The study population was 6,437 SMEs in Pemalang Regency, Central Java, Indonesia (Dinas Koperasi, Usaha Kecil & Menengah Provinsi Jawa Tengah, 2024). Sample size of 108 respondents was stated by Hair et al., (2021) who stated that the sample size was 5 times the number of indicators. This research uses 12 indicators, thus the number of samples used in this research is $5 \times 12 = 60$ samples. The sample size used was between 100 and 200 SMEs. The total sample is 108, so the required sample size meets the requirements.

Sampling based on random sampling techniques is carried out on members of the population at random without regard to strata in the population, and is carried out in such a way as to guarantee that the selection of elements to be studied is based on objectivity (Ferdinand, 2016). Primary data in this research was obtained from questionnaires distributed directly to 108 respondents. Data collection uses a survey using a research instrument, namely a questionnaire with open questions consisting of items representing independent and dependent variables. Data collection through surveys using research instruments, namely questionnaires with open questions consisting of items representing independent and dependent variables.

Open questions are given to respondents directly so that respondents can provide scores and short answers. The understanding of various experts regarding the antecedents and consequences of variables is transformed into core definitions to sharpen the explanation of variables. Variables describe in general what you want to research, but variable measurement must be concreted with operational measurements in the form of variable indicators (Table 3).

Table 3. Operational Definitions and Indicators

Variables	Operational Definitions	Indicators
Entrepreneurial Orientation	Company's strategic orientation that accommodates the entrepreneurial aspects of its decision-making style, methods and practices (Wiklund & Shepherd, 2005).	x1: Taking risks. x2: Innovative attitude. x3: Competitive aggressiveness.
Market Orientation	A process of understanding and discovering the desires of customers and potential customers and observing competitor activities through developing management and organizational systems (Na et al., 2019).	x4: Orientation towards customers. x5: Orientation towards competitors. x6: Coordination between functions in SMEs.
Religious Product Advantage Strategy	The company's product excellence is in placing products in the minds of consumers by	x7: Advantages of sharia products.

Variables	Operational Definitions	Indicators
	utilizing the advantages of sharia products, the uniqueness of sharia products and the irreplaceable experience of using sharia products. (Hanfan et al., 2023).	x8: Uniqueness of sharia products. x9: Irreplaceable experience of using sharia products.
Marketing Performance	Marketing measurement and assessment of organizational goals related to the market (Adesoga & James, 2019).	x10: Company sales volume. x11: Company sales profits. x12: Number of company buyers.

Results and Discussion

Test the Significance of Loading Factors

The purpose of the factor loading significance test is to evaluate whether an indicator used confirms that the indicator together with other indicators can explain a variable with a loading factor value $\lambda \geq 0.50$ (Hair et al., 2021). Table 4 below shows that the coefficient value λ or loading factors has a value above 0.50, meaning that all the criteria meet the requirements and the model is worthy of testing.

Table 4. Loading Factors

Variables	Loading Factors Value
Entrepreneurial Orientation	x1 : .674 x2 : .832 x3 : .753
Market Orientation	x4 : .857 x5 : .856 x6 : .836
Religious Product Advantage Strategy	x7 : .877 x8 : .849 x9 : .843
Marketing Performance	x10 : .886 x11 : .906 x12 : .823

Source: Data output processed from Amos version 22.0, 2024

Test of Validity and Reliability

Validity is a tool for measuring the level of data accuracy, while reliability is a tool for measuring data consistency, both require high values above 0.50. Calculation results in Table 5 show that it has a value of more than 0.50; which shows that the indicators used in this research have good validity and reliability values in explaining variables.

Table 5. Construct Reliability and Extracted Variance of Full Model

Indicator	Estimates	Squared loading	Error	Construct reliability	Variance Extract
X1	0.674	0.454276	0.545724	0.798657719	0.571169667
X2	0.832	0.692224	0.307776		
X3	0.753	0.567009	0.432991		
Amount	2.259	1.713509	1.286491		
X4	0.857	0.734449	0.265551		
X5	0.856	0.732736	0.267264		
X6	0.836	0.698896	0.301104		

Indicator	Estimates	Squared loading	Error	Construct reliability	Variance Extract
Amount	2.549	2.166081	0.833919	0.886252544	0.722027
X7	0.877	0.769129	0.230871		
X8	0.849	0.720801	0.279199		
X9	0.843	0.710649	0.289351		
Amount	2.569	2.200579	0.799421	0.891958192	0.733526333
X10	0.866	0.749956	0.250044		
X11	0.906	0.820836	0.179164		
X12	0.823	0.677329	0.322671		
Amount	2.595	2.248121	0.751879	0.899560694	0.749373667

Hypothesis test

The full model test results as in Figure 2 below are: Chi-Square= 44.090; CMIN/DF= 44.090; probability= 0.6734; RMSEA= 0.038; GFI= 0.940; AGFI= 0.902; TLI= 1.008; CFI= 1.000. The critical analysis values of Hoelter's N 0.05= 159 and Hoelter's 0.01= 179 all meet the fit criteria recommended by Hoelter (1983) because the sample size is below 108.

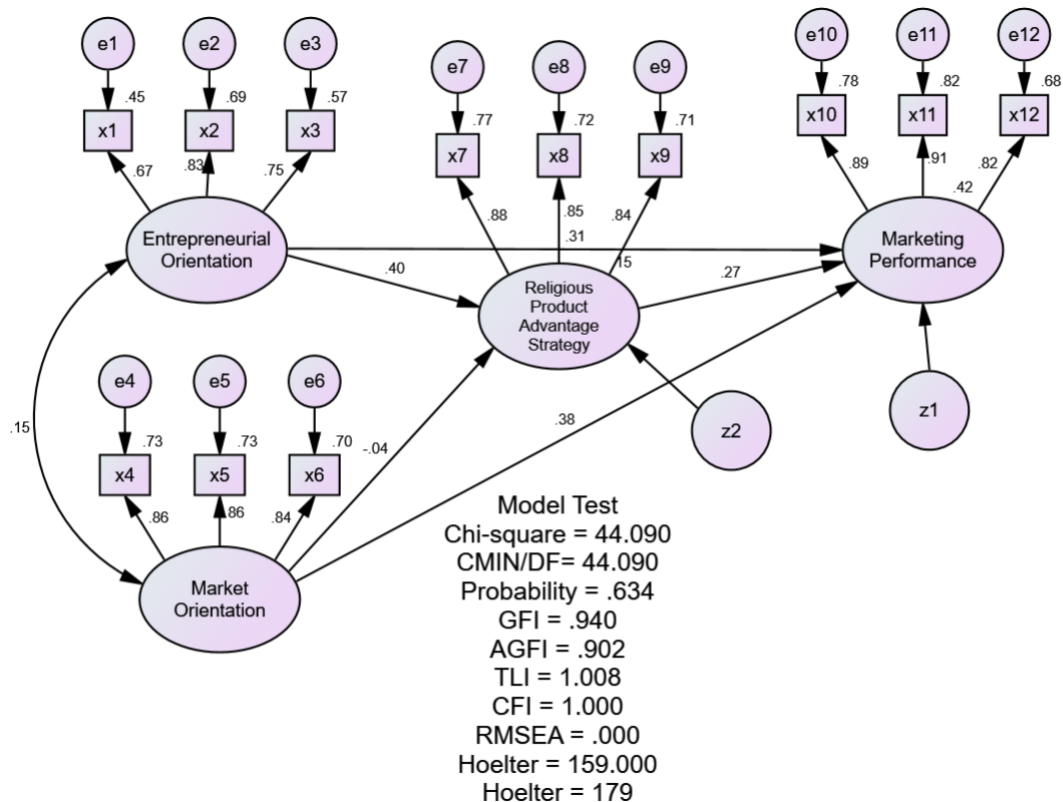


Figure 2. Test of Full Model

Source: Data output processed from Amos version 22.0 (2024)

The AMOS analysis tool version 22.0 was used to test the proposed hypothesis, and the results are as presented in Table 6 below:

Tabel 6. Full Model Test Results

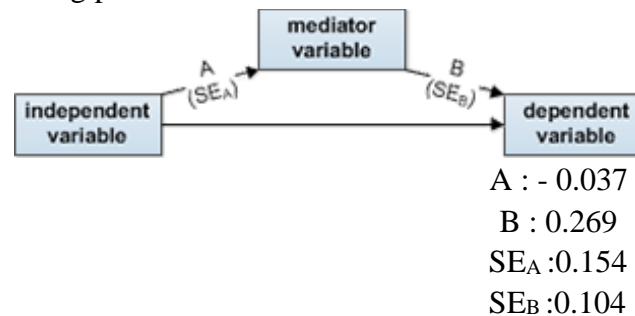
Variable Relationships			Estimate	S. E.	C. R	P	Hypothesis Results
Religious_Product_Advantage_Strategy	<-	Market_Orientation	.040	.112	.355	.723	Reject H1
Religious_Product_Advantage_Strategy	<-	Entrepreneurial_Orientation	.512	.154	3.326	***	Unreject H2
Marketing Performance	<-	Religious_Product_Advantage_Strategy	.280	.103	2.711	.007	Unreject H3
Marketing Performance	<-	Entrepreneurial_Orientation	.422	.148	2.852	.004	Unreject H4
Marketing_Performance	<-	Market_Orientation	.418	.103	4.040	***	Unreject H5

Source: Data output processed from Amos version 22.0, 2024

The H1 test results show that it is not significant because $CR = 0.355 \leq 1.96$ with a probability of 0.723 so the probability of the test does not meet the requirements below 0.05; so H1 in this research cannot be accepted. The H2 test results show that it is significant because $CR = 3.326 \geq 1.96$ with a probability of 0.000; probability test meets the requirements below 0.05; so H2 is accepted in this research. The H3 test results show that it is significant because $CR = 2.711 \geq 1.96$ with a probability of 0.007, probability test meets the requirements below 0.05; so H3 in this research can be accepted. The H4 test results show that it is significant because $CR = 2.852 \geq 1.96$ with a probability of 0.004, probability test meets the requirements below 0.05; so H4 in this research can be accepted. The H5 test results show that it is significant because $CR = 4.040 \geq 1.96$ with a probability of 0.000, probability test meets the requirements below 0.05; so H5 in this research can be accepted.

Sobel Testing

Sobel testing is useful to determine the role of the mediating variable religious product advantage strategy on the influence of entrepreneurial orientation and market orientation on marketing performance.

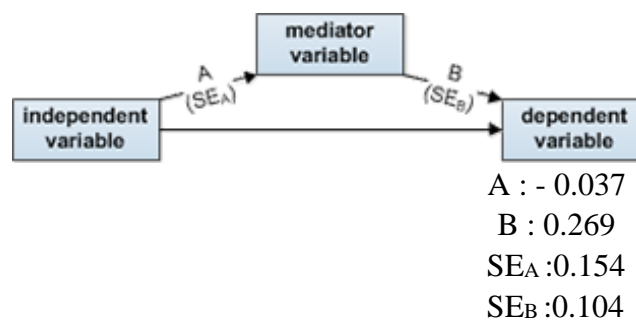


Sobel test statistic : - 0.23922989
 One-tailed probability : 0.40546366
 Two-tailed probability : 0.81092733

Figure 3. Sobel Testing

Source: Data output processed from sobel test, 2024

Meanwhile, Figure 3 explains that the religious product advantage strategy does not function as a mediating variable market orientation to marketing performance. This can be seen from the sobel testing value of - 0.23922989 which is smaller than 1.96 with p value of 0.40546366 and 0.81092733 which is above 0.05.



Sobel test statistic :	2.08292777
One-tailed probability :	0.01862890
Two-tailed probability :	0.03725781

Figure 4. Sobel Testing

Source: Data output processed from sobel test, 2024

Figure 4 shows the religious product advantage strategy functions significantly mediating variable entrepreneurial orientation to marketing performance. This can be seen from the Sobel testing value of 2.08292777 which is greater than 1.96 with p value of 0.01862890 and 0.03725781 which is below 0.05.

Discussion

Hypothesis testing found that market orientation has no influence on religious product advantage strategy according to research findings from the study of Zhou et. al., (2009) which states that competitor orientation does not have significant effect on innovation excellence and has significant negative influence on market advantage. The findings of Rokhayati & Suryoko (2020) also state that market orientation influences sustainable competitive advantage, but product uniqueness needs to be improved in small and medium industrial companies. Then the research findings of Zainul et. al., (2016) shows that market orientation has no influence on the sustainable competitive advantage of SMEs. Entrepreneurial orientation influences religious product advantage strategy in accordance with research results from Aswan (2023) and Ismail (2023) which show that entrepreneurial orientation can improve SMEs marketing performance.

Religious product advantage strategy influences marketing performance in line with study by Puspaningrum (2020), Yaskun et al., (2023) and Hanfan et al., (2023) which shows that sustainable competitive advantage can improve SMEs marketing performance. Then entrepreneurial orientation influences marketing performance in accordance with the study results of Keh et al., (2007), Rahmidani et al., (2023) and Rofiaty et al., (2022) that entrepreneurially oriented SMEs contribute to marketing performance. Then market orientation influences marketing performance in line with the study findings of Fikri et al., (2022), Marzuki et al., (2022), and Abshar & Septrizola (2023) who state that market orientation has a strong effect on marketing performance small and medium companies.

Conclusion

Market orientation has no influence on religious product advantage strategy, nor is market orientation mediated by religious product advantage strategy on marketing performance. The relationship between functions is included in the lowest category, for this reason Muslim fashion SME entrepreneurs must always strengthen coordination between functions because coordination inter functions is very important for the survival of companies that want to provide customer satisfaction while winning the competition by

carefully optimizing existing functions within the company. This step is also the company's capability to capture feedback from customers, respond and provide better service in the future. Then you must be diligent in getting correct and clear information about customers which is used to understand customer needs and expected values. The next stage is socialization where it is hoped that information can be disseminated to all divisions in the company, so that customers can understand the needs, then the company implementers will review their products by improving product quality in accordance with consumer desires. Orientation to markets and competitors must be improved. This is due to the lack of quick response from entrepreneurs consumer needs and desires and slow response to competitor products. Entrepreneurs are expected to be able to do it more quickly responding to actions that compete and threaten the business, such as improving product quality or creating new products to match competitors' products. In addition, entrepreneurs are expected to increase the frequency of sharing information within the organization about strategies for responding to competition so that when competing products appear on the market, entrepreneurs can respond quickly and appropriately.

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