

Perception, Motivation, and Brand Image in Shaping Generation Z's Saving Intention: The Moderating Effect of Religiosity in Islamic Banking

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Perception, Motivation, Brand Image, Religiosity

Received : 4, June

Revised : 20, June

Accepted: 22, July

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to understand the factors that influence Generation Z's interest in saving in Islamic banking in Malang City, a city with a fairly high Gen Z population. The main focus of the study is to analyze the influence of perception, motivation, and brand image on interest in saving, as well as to test the role of religiosity as a moderating variable. The method used is a quantitative approach through an online survey with a questionnaire. A total of 195 respondents were selected using a purposive sampling technique with the criteria of being 17–26 years old, domiciled in Malang City, and Muslim. Data analysis was carried out using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (SmartPLS) method which is considered suitable for testing complex relationships and moderation between variables even though the sample size is relatively small. The results of the study indicate that perception, motivation, and brand image have a significant effect on Gen Z's interest in saving in Islamic banks.

INTRODUCTION

The development of the Islamic banking industry in Indonesia has experienced a significant increase along with the increasing public awareness of the financial system based on Islamic values (Tuzuhro & Rozaini, 2023). Data from the Financial Services Authority (OJK) in (2023) shows that the growth of Third Party Funds (DPK) of Islamic banking continues to increase every year, reflecting the increasingly strong existence of Islamic banking as a financial solution free of usury. However, the participation of the younger generation, especially Generation Z, in using Islamic banking services is still relatively low. In fact, based on the 2020 Population Census, Generation Z is the largest population in Indonesia, namely 75.49 million people or around 27.94% of the total population. Malang City as a student city also faces similar conditions, marked by the high number of students from various regions who live and settle in this area (Pratama et al., 2022).

Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, is known as a generation that grew up with the rapid development of digital technology (Mustafa et al., 2018). They have characteristics that are adaptive to information, critical thinkers, and sensitive to social and religious values. In the context of Islamic banking, Gen Z's preferences are not only based on product functionality, but also on their adherence to the principles they adhere to. Therefore, to understand their interest in saving in Islamic banks, it is necessary to study factors such as perception, motivation, and brand image in more depth. Perception plays a role as an individual's interpretation of the quality and benefits of the services offered. A number of studies Arifin (2023) and Rahmawati (2022) confirm that perception has a positive and significant effect on interest in saving, especially if the perception formed is that Islamic banks are free from usury and in accordance with Islamic principles.

In addition to perception, motivation is also an important factor that drives individuals to make financial decisions. Motivation can come from internal or external drives, such as the desire to achieve financial goals or carry out religious orders. Research by Fatimah and Zariah (2022), Fardaniyah (2023), and Rambe (2018) shows that motivation has a positive and significant influence on interest in saving. The greater the motivation a person has, the higher the tendency to save in Islamic banks. On the other hand, brand image also determines customer interest. According to Cleanita and Mustofa (2022) and Pamilih and Widhiastuti (2020), a strong brand image creates trust and increases consumer interest, in line with the Theory of Planned Behavior. However, there are also different findings from Widiawati (2020), which states that brand image does not always have a significant effect on interest, because interest can be influenced by the psychological condition of the individual.

No less important, the religiosity factor can act as a moderating variable in the relationship between perception, motivation, and brand image on interest in saving. In Islamic economics, religiosity is not only a spiritual guideline, but also a framework for making economic decisions. Ambarwati (2023) stated that religiosity can strengthen or even weaken the influence of previous variables on interest in saving. By considering the complexity of these factors, this study aims

to examine the influence of perception, motivation, and brand image on Generation Z's interest in saving in Islamic banking, as well as to analyze the moderating role of religiosity in strengthening or weakening the relationship.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Perception

Perception is a process carried out by individuals in interpreting a stimulus or stimulation received through their senses. According to Supiani et al. (2021) perception is something that comes from the process of sensing stimuli received by the senses and transmitted by the nervous system so that individuals are able to understand information or events around them. In line with that, Fauziah (2022) explains that perception is an experience of objects, events, or relationships obtained by concluding information and interpreting messages. Rahayuningsih (2018) adds that perception is the process of becoming aware of the stimulus received by the five senses, which is then translated into the individual's mind to be used as a basis for action. Meanwhile, Ummu Razim (2020) states that perception is a cognitive process used by individuals to understand the environment around them, so that they are able to assess, respond, and make decisions. Factors that influence perception include attention, needs, cultural values, past experiences, and expectations (Aisyah, 2020). In the context of Islamic banking, perceptions of the Islamic financial system are greatly influenced by the level of customer knowledge regarding sharia principles such as the prohibition of usury, transparent contracts, and fairness in transactions.

Motivation

Motivation is an internal or external force that drives individuals to act or behave in achieving a goal. According to Oktiani (2017) motivation is an urge that causes a person to act, either due to factors from within themselves (intrinsic) or from outside (extrinsic). Motivation arises because of unmet needs, which drives individuals to try to fulfill these needs through certain actions. Tiyas (2021) states that motivation arises when a person has needs and desires to fulfill their life goals, including in economic behavior such as saving. According to Nurmalasari (2019), motivation is divided into two, namely intrinsic motivation that comes from within oneself (such as spiritual desires or awareness of the future), and extrinsic motivation that comes from outside oneself such as gifts, promotions, or social pressure. In the context of this study, the motivation to save at a sharia bank can come from an awareness of the importance of saving money, the desire to obtain financial blessings, and long-term needs such as education, the Hajj pilgrimage, or household planning.

Brand Image

Brand image refers to a set of perceptions formed in the minds of consumers towards a brand based on the experiences and interactions they have. Muti et al. (2025) state that brand image is an impression formed in the minds of consumers based on perceptions, personal experiences, and marketing communications received. Factors that form brand image include brand name,

logo, color, slogan, service quality, and company reputation (Taufiqurrahman & Hasan, 2024). A brand that has a positive image will increase consumer loyalty and foster trust in the products or services offered. Achmad et al (2021) state that a good brand image will provide a positive perception of service quality, thus having an impact on increasing interest in using the product. In the context of Islamic banking, brand image is not only assessed from the aspects of professionalism and service, but also from the extent to which the bank reflects consistent Islamic values in its operations. Consumers will be more interested in banks that are not only able to provide financial services, but also strengthen Islamic identity through their work culture and products.

Religiosity

Religiosity is a concept that shows the extent to which a person's religious beliefs, understanding, and values are reflected in their daily attitudes and behaviors (Andaresta & Solekah, 2024). According to Hakim et al (2024), religiosity is the level of knowledge and practice of a person's religious values, which then become guidelines for behaving and making decisions. Meanwhile, Rafidah et al (2022) classify religiosity into five dimensions, namely ideological beliefs, ritual practices, religious experiences, religious knowledge, and the consequences of religiosity. This shows that religiosity includes broad internal and external dimensions, which can affect various aspects of life, including choices in using financial products or services. Religiosity is also often associated with an individual's orientation in carrying out economic activities (Rachmatulloh & Solekah, 2021). From an Islamic perspective, economic activities must be carried out based on the principles of justice, honesty, and avoidance of usury. Therefore, individuals who have a high level of religiosity will tend to choose financial products that are in accordance with sharia principles. Prasetyoningrum (2012) stated that the higher a person's religiosity, the more likely they are to comply with Islamic rules and values in their financial activities. In this study, religiosity is used as a moderating variable, namely a variable that influences the strength or direction of the relationship between the independent variables (perception, motivation, and brand image) and the dependent variable (interest in saving). The use of religiosity as a moderating variable is based on the assumption that someone who has high religious values will consider aspects of sharia compliance more in choosing savings products. For example, individuals with positive perceptions of Islamic banks may have a stronger interest in saving if supported by a high level of religiosity. Based on the theory above, the following framework can be used to describe the relationship and influence between the variables studied:

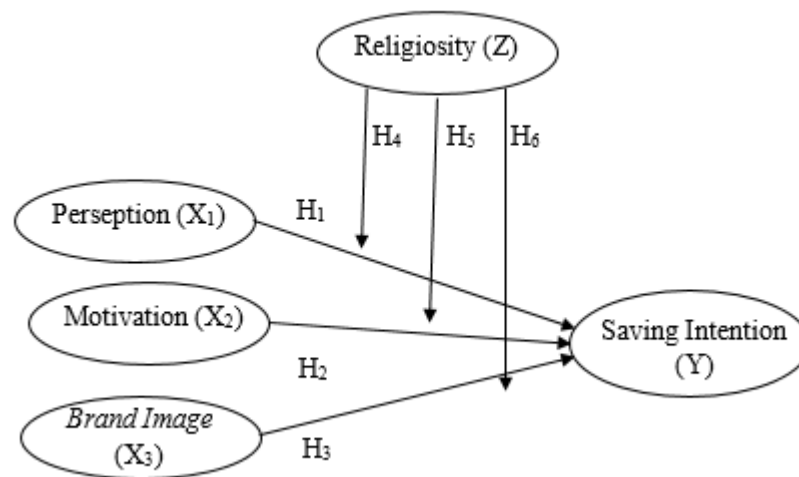


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a quantitative approach with a descriptive correlational type to test the relationship between perception, motivation, and brand image on interest in saving, with religiosity as a moderating variable. The study population was Generation Z in Malang City, which was chosen because it is an educational city with a high number of young people. A sample of 195 respondents was determined using a non-probability sampling technique with a purposive sampling method, based on the following criteria: domiciled in Malang City, aged 17–26 years, and Muslim. Primary data were collected through an online questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale, while secondary data were obtained from scientific literature and official data such as BPS and OJK. Data analysis was carried out using the SEM-PLS method using SmartPLS software because it is able to analyze complex relationships between variables, including moderation tests, even with limited samples. Validity and reliability tests were carried out through outer loading, AVE, Composite Reliability, and Cronbach's Alpha, while discriminant validity was tested using HTMT. Hypothesis testing was carried out by bootstrapping, and moderation tests were used to determine the role of religiosity in strengthening or weakening the relationship between variables.

RESEARCH RESULT

This study was conducted using the Partial Least Square - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach, the analysis consists of two main parts, namely the outer model and the inner model. The outer model or measurement model functions to evaluate the relationship between latent constructs (such as perception, motivation, brand image, religiosity, and interest in saving) with the indicators that measure them. In other words, the outer model ensures that each question or item in the questionnaire validly and reliably reflects the variables studied.

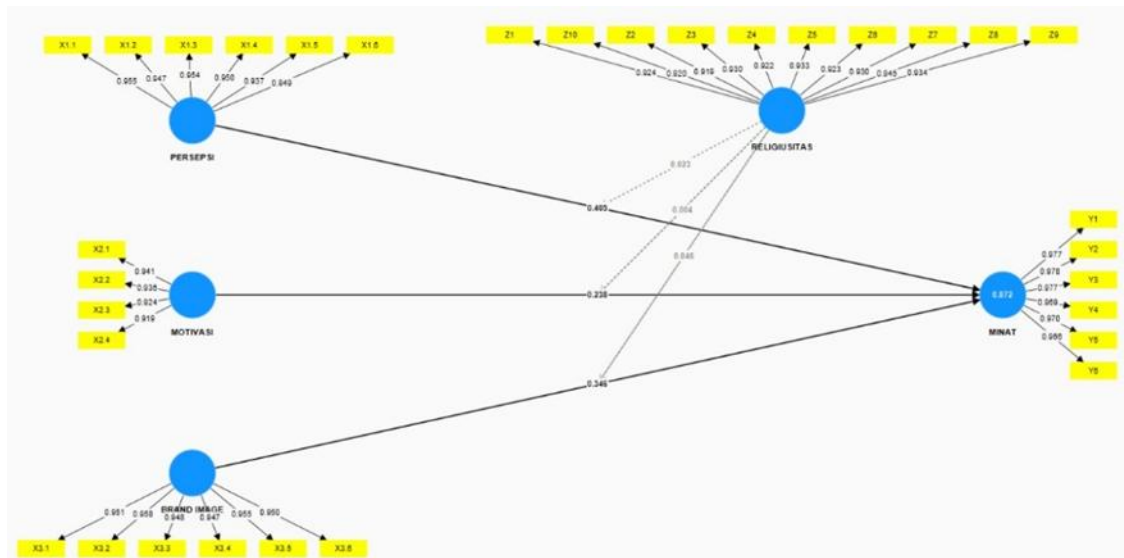


Figure 2. Outer Model

Source: Smart PLS Output, Data Processed 2025

Comvergent Validity

Convergent validity is a measurement that shows how strong the relationship is between a construct (Abstract Concept) and the indicators used to measure it. In this analysis of convergent validity, the standardized loading factor value can be seen which shows the level of correlation between each indicator and the construct in question. Ideally, a good loading factor value is above 0.7. However, a value between 0.5-0.6 can still be accepted as evidence of convergent validity (Ghozali & Latan, 2014).

Outer Loading

The magnitude of the loading factor value reflects how strong the relationship is between an indicator and the concept it represents. Indicators that have low loading factor values indicate that the indicator is less relevant or does not match the construct to be measured, so it needs to be reconsidered in the measurement model.

Table 1. Loading Factor

Item	Perseption (X1)	Motivation (X2)	Brand Image (X3)	Intention (Y)	Religiosity (Z)	Information
X1 1	0.955					Valid
X1 2	0.947					Valid
X1 3	0.954					Valid
X1 4	0.950					Valid
X1 5	0.937					Valid
X1 6	0.949					Valid
X2 1		0.941				Valid
X2 2		0.936				Valid
X2 3		0.924				Valid
X2 4		0.919				Valid
X3 1			0.951			Valid

X3 2	0.958	Valid
X3 3	0.948	Valid
X3 4	0.947	Valid
X3 5	0.955	Valid
X3 6	0.950	Valid
Y 1	0.977	Valid
Y 2	0.978	Valid
Y 3	0.977	Valid
Y 4	0.969	Valid
Y 5	0.970	Valid
Y 6	0.966	Valid
Z 1	0.924	Valid
Z 2	0.919	Valid
Z 3	0.930	Valid
Z 4	0.922	Valid
Z 5	0.933	Valid
Z 6	0.923	Valid
Z 7	0.930	Valid
Z 8	0.945	Valid
Z 9	0.934	Valid
Z 10	0.920	Valid

Source: Smart PLS Output, Data Processed 2025

The results of the convergent validity test from 195 respondents have been presented in the table above, which can identify the indicators of each variable studied, namely perception, motivation, brand image, interest and religiosity, which have an outer loading value > 0.7 , which means that the item is declared valid.

Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

The AVE value can be said to be valid if > 0.5 . Based on this figure, we can examine that it has a strong relationship with its indicators. In other words, this main variable is able to explain more than half of the variations found in these indicators on average. The following are the AVE values of the digital marketing, brand image, interest and religiosity variables in this study.

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Variable	AVE	Criteria	Information
Perseption (X1)	0.901	> 0.50	Valid
Motivation (X2)	0.865	> 0.50	Valid
Brand Image (X3)	0.905	> 0.50	Valid
Intention (Y)	0.946	> 0.50	Valid
Religiosity (Z)	0.861	> 0.50	Valid

Source: Smart PLS Output, Data Processed 2025

Based on table 2 above, it states that the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for each variable has a value >0.5 . This shows that each of these variables can be declared valid. The highest AVE value for the variable of interest is 0.946.

Composite Reliability

Composite reliability test is conducted to measure the level of internal consistency of each latent variable. Based on the opinion of Ghazali and Latan (2014) a variable is considered reliable if its composite reliability value is more than 0.7. The results of the composite reliability calculation for each variable in this study are as follows:

Table 3. Composite Reliability

Variable	Composite reliability	Kriteria	Information
Perception (X1)	0.979	>0.70	Valid
Motivation (X2)	0.954	>0.70	Valid
Brand Image (X3)	0.984	>0.70	Valid
Intention (Y)	0.989	>0.70	Valid
Religiosity (Z)	0.982	>0.70	Valid

Source: Smart PLS Output, Data Processed 2025

Based on the results of the composite reliability value in table 3 above, it can be seen that the variables of perception, motivation, brand image, interest and religiosity have composite reliability values >0.70 . Each variable has its own characteristics and roles above can be said to be reliable and valid.

Cronbach Alpha

Data reliability can be assessed from two aspects, namely composite reliability and Cronbach alpha. After ensuring that the composite reliability meets the requirements, we strengthen the results of the reliability test by looking at the Cronbach alpha value. Ghazali and Latan (2014) stated that a variable is said to be reliable if its composite reliability value is >0.7 . The following are the results of reliability measurements using the Cronbach alpha value for each research variable:

Table 4. Cronbach Alpha

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Kriteria	Information
Perseption (X1)	0.978	>0.70	Valid
Motivation (X2)	0.948	>0.70	Valid
Brand Image (X3)	0.979	>0.70	Valid
Intention (Y)	0.989	>0.70	Valid
Religiosity (Z)	0.982	>0.70	Valid

Source: Smart PLS Output, Data Processed 2025

Based on the results of the Cronbach alpha value in table 4 above, it can be seen that the variables of digital marketing, brand image, interest and religiosity have values >0.70 . This can be said that each of the variables above can be stated as reliable and valid.

Coefficient Determination (R-square)

Structural model testing is carried out to identify and measure the strength of the relationship between abstract concepts (constructs) in the study. The accuracy of the model in explaining data can be assessed from the R-Square value. This value indicates the proportion of variation in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variable. Hair Jr et al., (2021) there are three groupings in the R-Square value category, namely >0.75 strong category, 0.50 moderate category and 0.25 weak category. The results of the R-Square calculation using SmartPLS software are presented in the table below:

Table 5. R-Square

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Intention (Y)	0.872	0.868

Source: Smart PLS Output, Data Processed 2025

Based on the R-Square results in table 5 above, it can be seen that the endogenous variables, namely perception, motivation and brand image can explain the exogenous variables, namely interest, by 87.2% and the remaining 12.8% is influenced by other variables not included in this study. The influence of perception, motivation and brand image of 0.872 is included in the strong category, because it is at a value of >0.75, this makes the value fall into the strong category.

The inner model or structural model is used to analyze the relationship between latent constructs that have been proven valid and reliable. The inner model tests the significance of the influence between variables, including the direct influence of perception, motivation, and brand image on interest in saving, as well as the moderating role of religiosity. Through the inner model, researchers can determine the extent to which each independent variable influences the dependent variable, as well as the strength of the contribution of each relationship path in the model built.

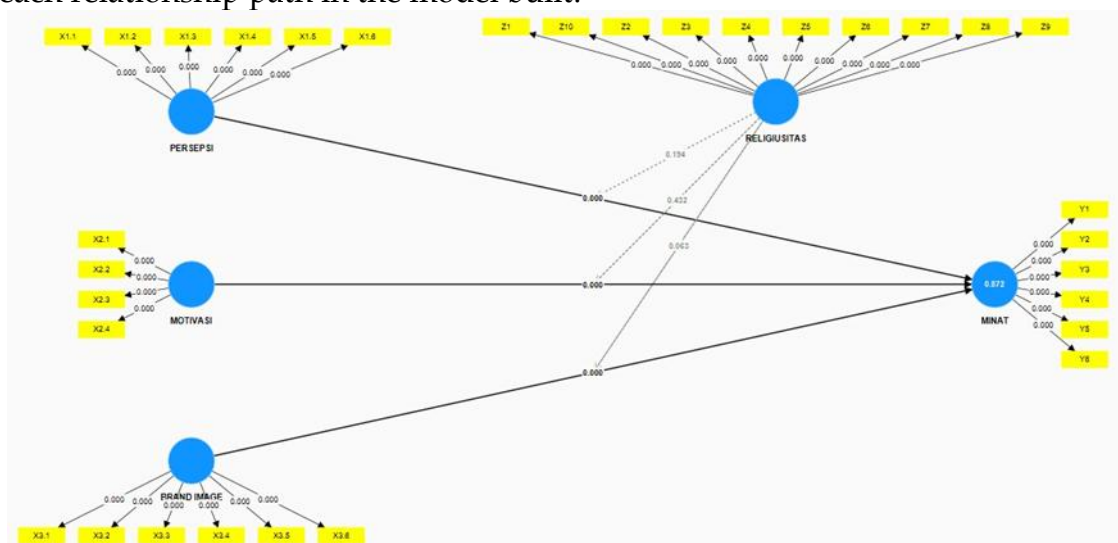


Figure 3. Inner Model

Source: Smart PLS Output, Data Processed 2025

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing aims to empirically evaluate whether there is sufficient evidence to support or reject the proposed hypothesis, so that it can produce valid conclusions regarding the relationship between variables in the study. This hypothesis testing uses SmartPLS 4 using the bootstrapping technique from all samples to determine the direct effect and relationship of moderation. The expected P value for the inner model is less than 0.05 (<0.05), which indicates a significance level of 5%. In addition to meeting the p-value criteria, the hypothesis is also considered valid if the t-statistic value exceeds 1.96 (> 1.96). There is a statistically significant difference in the data. The hypothesis testing has the following results:

Table 6. Bootstrapping Calculation for Testing the Influence Between Variables

Hypotesis	Relationship between variables	Original Sample (O)	Standard deviation	T Statistics	P Values	Information
H1	Perception (X1) -> Intention (Y)	0.405	0.033	10.909	0.000	Accepted
H2	Motivation (X2) -> Intention (Y)	0.238	0.028	8.496	0.000	Accepted
H3	Brand Image (X3) -> Intention (Y)	0.346	0.037	10.508	0.000	Accepted

Source: Smart PLS Output, Data Processed 2025

Based on the results of the bootstrapping calculations in the table above, each variable can be identified as follows:

H1: Perception has a significant influence on Gen Z's interest in saving in Islamic banking in Malang City.

Based on the table above, for the Perception variable, it has a t-statistic value of $10.929 > 1.96$ and the p-value has a value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Thus, H1 in this study is accepted. Thus, H1 in this study is accepted. The results of this study confirm that perception plays an important role in increasing the interest in saving gen Z in the city of Malang, with support from the results of testing relevant indicators.

H2: Motivation has a significant effect on the interest in saving of Gen Z in Islamic banking in Malang City.

Based on the table above, the motivation variable has a t-statistic value of $8.496 > 1.96$ and the p-value has a value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Thus, H2 in this study is accepted. Thus, H2 in this study is accepted. The results of this study confirm that motivation plays an important role in increasing the interest in saving of Gen Z in Malang City, with support from the results of testing relevant indicators.

H3: Brand image has a significant effect on the interest in saving of Gen Z in Islamic banking in Malang City.

Based on the table above, the brand image variable has a t-statistic value of $10.508 > 1.96$ and the p-value has a value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Thus, H3 in this study

is accepted. Thus, H3 in this study is accepted. The results of this study confirm that brand image plays an important role in increasing the interest in saving of Gen Z in Malang City, with support from the results of testing relevant indicators.

Table 7. Bootstrapping Calculation of Moderation Effect Test

Hypotesis	Moderation Relationship	Original Sample (O)	Standard deviation	T Statistics	P Values	Information
H4	Religiosity (Z) x Perception (X1) -> Intention (Y)	0.046	0.027	1.531	0.063*	Accepted
H5	Religiosity (Z) x Motivation (X2) -> Intention (Y)	0.004	0.026	0.171	0.432	Rejected
H6	Religiosity (Z) x Brand Image (X3) -> Intention (Y)	0.023	0.03	0.865	0.194	Rejected

(*) to indicate that the significance <0.10

Source: Smart PLS Output, Data Processed 2025

Based on the results of the bootstrapping calculations in the table above, each variable can be identified as follows:

H4: Religiosity has a significant influence and moderates' perceptions of interest in saving in Islamic banks.

Based on the table above, for the Religiosity variable, it has a t-statistic value of 1.531 <1.96 and the p-value has a value of 0.063 <0.10. Thus, H5 in this study is accepted. The results of this study confirm that religiosity moderates' perceptions in increasing the interest in saving gen Z in the city of Malang.

H5: Religiosity has a significant influence and moderates' motivation towards interest in saving in Islamic banks.

Based on the table above, for the Religiosity variable, it has a t-statistic value of 0.171 <1.96 and the p-value has a value of 0.432 > 0.05. Thus, H6 in this study is rejected. The results of this study confirm that religiosity does not moderate motivation in increasing the interest in saving gen Z in the city of Malang.

H6: Religiosity has a significant influence and moderates Brand Image on interest in saving in Islamic banks.

Based on the table above, for the Religiosity variable, it has a t-statistic value of 0.865 <1.96 and the p-value has a value of 0.194 > 0.05. Thus, H7 in this study is rejected. The results of this study confirm that religiosity does not

moderate brand image in increasing the interest in saving gen Z in the city of Malang.

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Perception on Saving Interest

The test results indicate that perception has a significant influence on Generation Z's intention to save in Islamic banks in Malang City. The t-statistic value of 10.929 exceeds the critical value of 1.96, and the p-value of 0.000 is well below the threshold of 0.05, confirming that the first hypothesis (H1) is accepted. This implies that the more positive an individual's perception of Islamic banks, the greater their intention to save in such institutions.

Perception in this study was measured using three indicators: absorption of stimuli, understanding, and assessment or evaluation. These indicators reflect how respondents receive, comprehend, and evaluate information related to Islamic banking services.

The data analysis shows that the majority of respondents hold a positive perception of Islamic banking, particularly in relation to its adherence to Islamic principles, service quality, and the range of financial products offered. This positive perception enhances their saving interest, as Islamic banks are viewed as providing secure, transparent, and religiously compliant financial services. Such qualities resonate with the values held by many Generation Z individuals, making Islamic banks a more attractive option for saving.

These findings are consistent with the research of Sulis Rahmawati (2022), who found that a favorable perception of Islamic values significantly encourages the intention to save. This alignment highlights that positive perception is a key factor in fostering value-based financial behavior, particularly among younger generations who not only seek convenience and modernity but also institutional integrity and alignment with their personal beliefs.

Therefore, enhancing public perception of Islamic banks—through education, value-based marketing, and continuous service improvement—is essential to increasing saving interest, especially among Generation Z consumers.

The Influence of Motivation on Saving Interest

The testing of the H2 hypothesis reveals that motivation also has a significant effect on Generation Z's intention to save. The t-statistic value of 8.496 is greater than the critical value of 1.96, and the p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05, thus confirming the acceptance of the second hypothesis (H2). This indicates that the stronger the internal and external motivational factors, the greater the interest in saving among Generation Z. In this study, motivation was measured using two main indicators: **intrinsic motivation** (such as interest and a positive attitude toward saving) and **extrinsic motivation** (such as external encouragement and environmental stimuli). The questionnaire results show that the majority of respondents were intrinsically motivated by a desire to manage their finances more effectively and to attain spiritual peace by choosing financial institutions aligned with Islamic principles. This internal drive reflects a growing awareness among Generation Z of the importance of financial responsibility and religious compatibility in financial decision-making.

In addition to intrinsic factors, extrinsic motivators also played a role. Respondents reported that family influence, social environment, and emotional appeals from digital campaigns and promotions by Islamic banks significantly encouraged them to consider saving. These digital strategies helped Islamic banks reach Generation Z more effectively by aligning their promotional messages with the values and emotional needs of this tech-savvy and socially aware generation.

These findings are consistent with the opinion of Fardaniyah (2023), who emphasized that the higher a person's motivation, the greater their tendency to engage in saving behavior. Motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, acts as a key driver that transforms intention into action, particularly when supported by values that resonate personally and socially.

In conclusion, enhancing both internal and external motivational factors—through financial education, values-based marketing, and inclusive digital campaigns—can further strengthen the saving intention of Generation Z in Islamic banking contexts.

The Influence of Brand Image on Saving Interest

The results of hypothesis testing for H3 indicate that brand image has a significant effect on Generation Z's interest in saving in Islamic banks. The hypothesis is supported by a t-statistic value of 10.508, which exceeds the critical value of 1.96, and a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the standard significance level of 0.05. Therefore, H3 is accepted, confirming that a more positive brand image correlates with a higher interest in saving among Gen Z.

In this study, brand image was measured using three indicators: product image, company image, and service image. The results of the questionnaire revealed that most respondents perceive Islamic banks as having a strong and positive reputation, offering friendly service, and providing a variety of accessible and relevant financial products. These factors contribute to the formation of a solid brand image in the minds of young consumers.

A favorable brand image plays a crucial role in influencing financial behavior. For Generation Z, who are often highly image-conscious and influenced by trust and reputation, a strong brand image offers a sense of security and confidence in making savings-related decisions. When Islamic banks are perceived as modern, transparent, and aligned with both ethical and religious values, young consumers are more inclined to engage with their services.

These findings are consistent with the study by Khasanah (2022), which found that a positive brand image significantly enhances consumer interest in saving. A strong brand does not only attract initial attention but also fosters long-term trust and loyalty, especially among younger demographics who seek reliability and alignment with their values in financial institutions.

In conclusion, Islamic banks should continue to invest in strengthening their brand image by improving service quality, enhancing product accessibility, and maintaining a strong ethical and religious identity. These efforts are essential for capturing the interest and trust of Generation Z in a competitive financial landscape.

Religiosity moderates' perception of interest in saving

The test results for hypothesis H4 indicate that religiosity moderates the relationship between perception and saving interest among Generation Z. The hypothesis is supported by a t-statistic value of 1.531 and a p-value of 0.063, which is below the 10% significance level threshold. Although the result does not meet the conventional 5% significance level, the hypothesis is considered accepted at the 10% significance level, indicating a modest but meaningful moderating effect.

These findings suggest that the positive perception of Islamic banks exerts a stronger influence on saving interest when accompanied by a high level of religiosity. In other words, individuals who not only perceive Islamic banks favorably but also hold strong religious beliefs are more likely to develop the intention to save in these institutions. This interaction reflects how religiosity can enhance the psychological and emotional connection between personal beliefs and financial behavior.

This result supports the view that religiosity serves as a reinforcing factor in the context of Islamic banking. For individuals with high religiosity, trust in the religious compliance and ethical standards of Islamic banks becomes an essential criterion in their decision-making process. As such, positive perceptions are more likely to translate into action – in this case, saving – when aligned with deeply held religious values.

Although the level of statistical significance is moderate, the findings remain highly relevant, especially in the current landscape where Islamic banks are working to overcome lingering negative perceptions related to transparency, service quality, or authenticity. A spiritual and educational approach, emphasizing the alignment of Islamic banking with core religious principles, can be a strategic tool in strengthening public trust and engagement. As noted by previous scholars, religious commitment can influence financial preferences and behavior, particularly in predominantly Muslim societies (Abduh & Omar, 2012).

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of religiosity not only as a personal value but also as a moderating variable that can amplify the impact of positive perceptions. Islamic banks are encouraged to integrate religious education, ethical branding, and value-based outreach to more effectively engage consumers with strong religious orientations.

Religiosity moderates' motivation towards saving interest

The test results for hypothesis H5 indicate that religiosity does not significantly moderate the relationship between motivation and saving interest among Generation Z. This is evidenced by a t-statistic value of 0.171, which is less than the critical value of 1.645, and a p-value of 0.432, which is well above the 0.10 significance threshold. Therefore, H5 is rejected, indicating that the level of religiosity neither strengthens nor weakens the effect of motivation on an individual's intention to save in Islamic banks.

This finding suggests that motivation to save – whether intrinsic (such as financial planning or positive attitudes) or extrinsic (such as family encouragement or promotional incentives) – functions independently of an

individual's religiosity level. In other words, individuals who are motivated to save are likely to do so regardless of whether they are highly religious or not. In the current context of Islamic banking, this may be explained by the fact that many customers approach saving from a practical or rational perspective, driven by factors such as lower administrative costs, perceived financial benefits, or ease of access to services. These motivations are not necessarily influenced by religious considerations. Furthermore, saving is often viewed as a general financial activity rather than a religious obligation, which may diminish the role of religiosity in strengthening the motivational drive.

This finding aligns with prior research suggesting that financial behavior in certain domains can be dominated by rational economic motives rather than spiritual or religious values, especially when the behavior is perceived as secular or universal (Azmi & Baharuddin, 2018). Therefore, while religiosity may influence other aspects of Islamic banking (such as product choice or compliance concerns), its role in moderating motivation toward saving may be limited.

In conclusion, this result highlights the importance of recognizing diverse consumer motivations in Islamic banking. While some individuals may be influenced by religious values, others may be primarily driven by functional benefits. As such, marketing and engagement strategies in Islamic financial institutions should balance value-based appeals with pragmatic offerings to effectively reach a broader customer base

Religiosity moderates brand image on interest in saving

The results of the H6 hypothesis test indicate that religiosity does not significantly moderate the relationship between brand image and saving interest among Generation Z. This is evidenced by a t-statistic value of 0.865, which is below the critical threshold of 1.645, and a p-value of 0.194, which is greater than the 0.10 significance level. Accordingly, hypothesis H6 is rejected, suggesting that religiosity neither strengthens nor weakens the effect of brand image on the intention to save in Islamic banks.

These findings imply that the perception of brand image operates independently of an individual's level of religiosity. In the current digital landscape, the brand image of Islamic banks is often shaped by media presence, promotional campaigns, technological innovation, and user-friendly services. While these elements contribute to the overall appeal of the brand, they do not necessarily reflect or emphasize religious values in a way that resonates with consumers' spiritual beliefs.

Moreover, this result may be influenced by a perceived gap between the Islamic identity of banks and how that identity is manifested in everyday services. For some consumers, especially younger ones, the association between Islamic values and actual banking practices may not be clearly visible. As a result, religiosity does not play a meaningful role in enhancing or diminishing the effect of brand image on their saving behavior.

This finding aligns with prior research that highlights the importance of authentic religious integration in brand communication to establish stronger emotional and value-based connections with religious consumers (Mukhtar &

Butt, 2012). Without a clear alignment between brand image and religious principles, even highly religious individuals may not perceive the brand as significantly more appealing than others, thus weakening the moderating role of religiosity.

In light of these results, Islamic banks are encouraged to deepen the integration of Islamic values into their brand strategies, ensuring that religious identity is not merely symbolic but is consistently reflected in messaging, service experience, and customer engagement. Doing so may help bridge the gap between perception and identity, allowing religiosity to more effectively interact with brand image in influencing saving intentions.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the discussion above, it can be concluded that partially perception, motivation, and brand image have a significant influence on Gen Z's interest in saving in Islamic banking. Positive perceptions of Islamic banking services and systems, internal motivations such as the desire for security and a better future, and a positive image of the bank can encourage Gen Z to become active customers. In addition, religiosity is only proven to moderate the relationship between perception and interest in saving, but has no moderating effect on the relationship between motivation and brand image. This indicates that non-religious factors also play an important role in shaping Gen Z's financial decisions.

These findings have practical implications for Islamic banking in developing marketing strategies and service development. Islamic banks need to build positive perceptions by improving service quality, delivering transparent information, and a communication approach that is relevant to the characteristics of Gen Z. Given that religiosity is not always a dominant factor in the financial decisions of the younger generation, a more modern, creative approach that is in accordance with their digital lifestyle needs to be applied – for example through the use of social media, Islamic-based financial applications, and flexible and easily accessible savings products. For further research, it is recommended to expand the scope of the region and consider other variables such as Islamic financial literacy, peer influence, and digital consumption patterns so that the results are more comprehensive and nationally representative.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Given the dynamics of Gen Z's financial behavior that continues to develop amidst technological advances and social changes, further research is needed to provide a deeper understanding. Further research is recommended to use a mixed-method approach (quantitative and qualitative) to explore psychological and social factors that may not be fully measured through questionnaires. In addition, further research can also explore the use of behavioral theory models such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) or the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to see the effect of behavioral intentions on the adoption of digital services from Islamic banks. The addition of variables such as digital Islamic financial literacy, personal branding from Muslim public figures, and the influence of social media on perceptions and interests in saving

are also opportunities to enrich the analysis. The use of advanced analysis techniques such as Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Square (PLS) can also provide more accurate and comprehensive results in understanding the relationship between variables in a more complex context.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author would like to express his deepest gratitude to all parties who have provided moral, material, and intellectual support in the process of compiling this research. Special gratitude is expressed to the supervising lecturer who has provided guidance, direction, and very valuable input in compiling and refining this research. The author also thanks all respondents who have taken the time to fill out the questionnaire honestly and responsibly. Hopefully this research can provide a positive contribution to the development of science, especially in the field of Islamic banking and the financial behavior of the younger generation.

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