

## An Analysis of the Application of Sharia Business Ethics Among Vendors at Tourist Markets (A Case Study of Lereng Market in Bukittinggi)

Pitri Sesnawati<sup>1\*</sup>, Iiz Izmuddin<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business, Sjech M. Djamil Djambek State Islamic University, Bukittinggi

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### Abstract

This study aims to analyze how the implementation of sharia business ethics by traders in Lereng Market, and to identify the factors that cause high prices of goods sold by traders to consumers. The research method used is descriptive qualitative with data collection methods through interviews, direct observation, and documentation. The informants of this study consisted of traders, consumers and market managers. The results of this study indicate that some traders have implemented the values of sharia business ethics, such as honesty in conveying the condition of goods and responsibility in setting prices. However, it is undeniable that there are still traders who have not implemented sharia business ethics in their trading activities on the grounds of wanting to get higher profits. In practice, deviations are still found such as the sale of goods at high prices and injustice in service.

**Keywords:** Sharia Business Ethics, Traders, Tourism Market.

(\*) Corresponding Author: [pitrisesnawati03@gmail.com](mailto:pitrisesnawati03@gmail.com)

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## INTRODUCTION

Islam is a religion that encompasses values governing all aspects of human life, including muamalat (social and economic transactions). There are various forms of muamalat activities, one of which is trade, which includes buying and selling activities. Therefore, all trading activities must be conducted in accordance with Sharia principles. Along with the development of the era, business activities, especially in the trade sector, continue to increase. Business competition has also become increasingly intense. In this context, business actors are required to develop appropriate strategies in conducting their product trade and in winning competition in order to maximize income, profit, or earnings (Wahyu, 2021).

Sharia business ethics refers to Islamic ethical values in conducting business activities that are based on the principles of truthfulness, trustworthiness, sincerity, brotherhood, knowledge, and justice. Therefore, business ethics holds a very important position in Islam. It serves as a guiding framework for every business activity, not only to pursue profit but also to seek the pleasure of Allah SWT. Business planning requires both long-term and short-term strategies and a forward-looking perspective. Business planning that incorporates Sharia business ethics is highly beneficial for business practitioners operating in the era of globalization, as it is guided by the Qur'an and Hadith to avoid all actions prohibited by Allah SWT (Abdul, 2021).

This is also explained in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Ahzab verse 24, which illustrates that people who live their lives in falsehood will eventually become hypocrites. The foundation of faith is truthfulness, whereas the foundation of hypocrisy is lying; therefore, faith and falsehood cannot coexist. Allah SWT commands His servants to behave truthfully and strongly dislikes those who lie, especially those who deny Him and His blessings (Rias, 2021).

**Table 1. Types and Number of Traders in Lereng Bukittinggi Market**

<b>Num</b>	<b>Types of Merchants</b>	<b>Number of Merchants</b>
1.	Iron Goods	7
2.	Clothing	146
3.	Glassware and Ceramics	6
4.	Fruits	2
5.	Shoes and Sandals	39
6.	Accessories	16
7.	Toys	4
8.	Sanjai Chips and Crackers	14
9.	Bags and Wallets	24
10.	Belts	1
11.	Food and Beverages	3
12.	Books	2
13.	Coffee	2
14.	Mukena (Muslim Prayer Garments)	3
15.	Grocery Goods	2
16.	Audio Tapes/Music	1
17.	Chicken Meat	1
18.	Souvenirs	1
19.	Picture Frames	3
20.	Vacant/Stall Empty	6
<b>Total Number</b>		<b>283</b>

Pasar Lereng is one of the traditional markets located in the city of Bukittinggi. In its trading activities, some merchants in the traditional market of Pasar Lereng have not fully implemented Islamic business ethics, resulting in various deviations in business practices. Fraudulent practices in sales frequently occur, such as dishonest weighing methods. For example, in the sale of *sanjai* chips, the products are often not weighed properly but are instead measured using plastic bags. In this case, plastic bags function as measuring tools in the transaction process.

Differences in service quality also become a factor indicating unequal treatment between local and non-local visitors. In addition, there are inconsistencies between the prices of goods and the quality of products provided. For instance, miniature souvenirs sold in the market are often priced unreasonably high compared to their actual value. Such unfairness reflects the lack of full commitment to the principles of honesty, justice, and responsibility in business practices in accordance with Islamic teachings. Deviations from Islamic business

ethics, such as deception and fraud in the products being sold, are still found in the market. Other forms of unethical behavior include selling products that do not match their actual condition and merchants displaying unfriendly attitudes toward consumers.

Based on preliminary observations conducted by the researcher, it was found that differences in treatment are evident in the buying and selling process. Services provided to local consumers tend to be less friendly, with local buyers often being left waiting longer, while non-local consumers are prioritized during shopping transactions. Furthermore, there are cases where the prices charged do not correspond to the quality or value of the goods provided, such as the pricing of miniature Jam Gadang souvenirs sold by merchants.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Islamic Business Ethics**

The term ethics originates from the Greek word *ethos*, which means customs, habits, or ways of life. Ethics is closely related to good habits and moral values that guide human behavior. Ethics is also understood as the study of morality with the purpose of determining standards of right and wrong based on rational considerations. It seeks to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behavior as well as good and bad moral conduct. Meanwhile, the term business is derived from the English word *business*, which refers to commercial activities or efforts aimed at generating profit. According to the Indonesian Dictionary (*Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*), business refers to profit-oriented activities in the trade sector.

According to K. Bertens, ethics can be interpreted in three ways. First, ethics refers to moral values that become guidelines for individuals or groups in regulating their behavior. Second, ethics refers to a collection of moral principles or codes of conduct. Third, ethics is viewed as a branch of knowledge that studies good and bad behavior. Furthermore, Linda Klebe Treviño and Katherine Nelson explain that business ethics is a set of moral values and principles that regulate business conduct and interactions among companies, employees, customers, and society. Business ethics involves considerations regarding how business activities should be conducted fairly, honestly, responsibly, and sustainably (Muhammad, 2020).

Business itself can be defined as the exchange of goods, services, or money that provides mutual benefits. Fundamentally, business refers to “the buying and selling of goods and services.” Business activities occur because of interdependence among individuals, global opportunities, and efforts to maintain and improve living standards (Ika, 2018). In the Islamic perspective, business activities should not only prioritize profit but also uphold ethical values such as honesty, justice, responsibility, and transparency. Therefore, Islamic business ethics serves as a moral foundation in conducting commercial transactions in accordance with Islamic teachings.

### **Merchants**

Merchants are individuals or business entities engaged in buying and selling activities in the market. In trading activities, merchants distribute goods or services to consumers either directly or indirectly. Merchants are also defined as individuals who conduct trade by selling products that are not self-produced in order to obtain profit. The pursuit of profit is considered the ultimate objective expected by merchants in commercial activities (Afifah, 2021).

In Islamic business ethics, merchants are required to conduct trade honestly and fairly. Merchants should avoid fraudulent actions, manipulation, deception, and practices

that may harm consumers. Ethical conduct in trade includes providing accurate information about products, using fair measurements and scales, and delivering equal treatment to all customers regardless of their background.

### **Market**

A market is a place where sellers and buyers meet to conduct transactions involving goods or services. Markets function as systems of exchange that have naturally existed since the early development of human civilization. Markets were also present during the era of Prophet Muhammad and the Khulafaur Rashidin, becoming part of social and economic life for centuries.

A market can also be understood as a group of buyers and sellers involved in transactions of specific goods and services. Buyers collectively create demand for products, while sellers collectively determine the supply of those products (Ni'matul, 2020). Besides serving as economic centers, markets also function as spaces for social interaction within society.

Traditional markets, such as Pasar Lereng in Bukittinggi, hold an important role in supporting local economic activities and community livelihoods. However, in practice, traditional markets may still experience ethical problems such as dishonest measurements, unfair pricing, unequal service quality, and product misrepresentation. These practices indicate the importance of implementing Islamic business ethics in order to create fair, transparent, and trustworthy trading activities.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research employed a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were collected through observations, interviews with merchants, customers, and market management authorities, as well as documentation techniques. The informants were selected using a purposive sampling method consisting of merchants, market managers, and customers. Data analysis techniques included data reduction, data presentation, and data verification.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Overview of Pasar Lereng**

Pasar Lereng is one of the traditional markets located on Pasar Lereng Street, Aur Tajungkang Tengah Sawah Village, Guguk Panjang District, Bukittinggi, West Sumatra. Pasar Lereng has a historical background closely related to the development of traditional markets in the city during the Dutch colonial period. The market is situated on the slope of a hill and is strategically located between Pasar Atas and Pasar Putih. It offers a combination of culinary products, shopping activities, and Minangkabau souvenirs that attract both local residents and tourists.

### **1. Implementation of Islamic Business Ethics in Trading Activities at Pasar Lereng**

Islamic business ethics refers to a set of moral principles related to good and bad behavior, honesty and dishonesty, as well as fairness in commercial activities. In the context of trade, Islamic business ethics emphasizes honesty, justice, transparency, and responsibility between merchants and consumers.

### **a. Honesty**

Honesty is one of the most emphasized values in Islam, both in personal life and in business activities. In trading practices, honesty does not only represent moral conduct but also contributes directly to business sustainability and consumer trust.

Based on the research findings, merchants in Pasar Lereng generally explain the products they sell according to the prices offered. Honesty in business includes several aspects, such as price transparency, product quality, and good communication with consumers. Merchants who apply the principle of honesty in transactions tend to gain higher levels of customer trust and loyalty compared to those who do not implement such principles.

The implementation of honesty can also be seen in the efforts of merchants to provide information regarding the quality and function of products sold. In Islamic teachings, honesty is considered an essential element in creating fair and ethical transactions.

### **b. Justice**

Justice is a principle that requires every business actor or merchant to act fairly, impartially, and respectfully toward the rights and obligations of all parties involved in transactions, including sellers, buyers, and related stakeholders.

The findings indicate that merchants in Pasar Lereng generally provide equal prices to different consumers. Fairness in economic activities can be reflected in reasonable pricing practices, where prices are neither excessively cheap nor excessively expensive compared to other merchants. This practice helps maintain market stability and prevents unfair competition.

In addition, justice is also reflected in the conformity between product quality and the actual condition of goods sold. Merchants are expected to avoid deceptive practices by clearly explaining both the strengths and weaknesses of products offered to consumers.

### **c. Principle of Free Will**

The principle of free will in buying and selling transactions refers to the freedom possessed by both merchants and consumers in conducting transactions, choosing products, negotiating prices, and deciding whether to continue or cancel a trade agreement without coercion.

Trading activities in Pasar Lereng generally apply a bargaining system as part of traditional market culture. The research findings reveal that some merchants intentionally offer relatively high initial prices during bargaining processes. This strategy is commonly used as part of market negotiation practices. However, from the perspective of Islamic business ethics, pricing practices should still prioritize fairness and avoid exploiting consumers, especially tourists who may have limited knowledge regarding standard market prices.

## **2. Factors Causing High Selling Prices at Pasar Lereng**

In general, several factors contribute to the relatively high selling prices of goods in Pasar Lereng. One of the main factors is the strategic location of

the market near Jam Gadang, which is the primary tourism icon of Bukittinggi. Due to its strategic position, the market is frequently visited by tourists from both local and outside regions.

**a. Adjustment to Tourist Areas**

Merchants operating in tourism areas tend to adjust product prices according to the attractiveness and popularity of the tourist destination. The beauty and popularity of Jam Gadang significantly influence the increase in product prices at Pasar Lereng.

In trading activities, location is one of the major determinants affecting product prices. Merchants selling goods around tourist attractions generally set higher prices because of the high number of visitors and increased consumer purchasing potential. The more popular and crowded the tourism area becomes, the higher the prices of goods sold in the surrounding market environment.

**b. Transportation Costs**

Transportation costs also contribute to the high selling prices of products in Pasar Lereng. Some merchants obtain their products from suppliers located outside Bukittinggi, and several traders even purchase goods directly from large trading centers such as Jakarta.

This condition indicates that the high prices found in the market are not solely caused by merchants' intention to increase profits arbitrarily. Instead, there are additional distribution and operational costs involved in obtaining goods, particularly products that are not locally produced. Therefore, transportation expenses and increased capital costs from suppliers become significant factors influencing the final selling prices of goods in the market.

## CONCLUSION

This study analyzes the implementation of Islamic business ethics among merchants in Pasar Lereng. The findings indicate that the majority of merchants in the market have generally implemented Islamic business ethics in their trading activities. However, it cannot be denied that there are still some merchants who have not fully applied Islamic business ethics in their business practices due to the desire to obtain higher profits.

The high prices charged by merchants to consumers are influenced by several factors, including the relatively expensive rental fees that traders must pay. Although increasing prices may be considered part of business strategy, excessively raising prices is not recommended in Islamic teachings. As taught by Prophet Muhammad, business activities are regarded as a form of worship; therefore, they should be conducted without elements of injustice, exploitation, or harmful practices toward others.

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