

# Customer Satisfaction Analysis of Price Suitability at Toserba Karang Langit Based on the Principles of Islamic Price Justice

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## ABSTRACT

*This study examines the effect of price suitability on customer satisfaction in the retail sector, with Islamic price justice as a mediating variable. Grounded in expectation-disconfirmation theory and Islamic economic principles, this research employs a quantitative explanatory approach using survey data collected from 60 customers of Toserba Karang Langit. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that price suitability has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction and significantly influences perceptions of Islamic price justice. Furthermore, Islamic price justice, reflected through fairness (al-'adl), transparency (bayān), and the avoidance of deception (tadlīs) and uncertainty (gharar), has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction and partially mediates the relationship between price suitability and satisfaction. These findings demonstrate that customer satisfaction in Muslim consumer markets is shaped not only by economic considerations but also by ethical and religious evaluations. This study contributes to the empirical development of Islamic business and marketing literature by operationalizing Islamic price justice as a measurable construct and highlighting its strategic role in ethical pricing practices within the retail sector.*

**Keywords:** price suitability; Islamic price justice; customer satisfaction; retail; PLS-SEM

## ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh kesesuaian harga terhadap kepuasan pelanggan pada sektor ritel dengan keadilan harga Islam sebagai variabel mediasi. Penelitian ini didasarkan pada teori expectation-disconfirmation dan prinsip ekonomi Islam. Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif explanatory dengan data survei yang dikumpulkan dari 60 pelanggan Toserba Karang Langit. Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kesesuaian harga berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kepuasan pelanggan serta berpengaruh signifikan terhadap persepsi keadilan harga Islam. Selanjutnya, keadilan harga Islam—yang tercermin melalui prinsip keadilan (al-'adl), transparansi (bayān), serta penghindaran praktik penipuan (tadlīs) dan ketidakjelasan (gharar)—berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kepuasan pelanggan serta memediasi secara parsial hubungan antara kesesuaian harga dan kepuasan pelanggan. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa kepuasan pelanggan dalam pasar konsumen Muslim tidak hanya ditentukan oleh pertimbangan ekonomi, tetapi juga oleh evaluasi etis dan religius. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi empiris terhadap pengembangan kajian bisnis dan pemasaran Islam melalui pengukuran keadilan harga Islam secara terintegrasi dalam konteks ritel.

**Kata Kunci:** kesesuaian harga; keadilan harga Islam; kepuasan pelanggan; ritel; PLS-SEM

## INTRODUCTION

The advancement of globalization and the increasing intensity of competition in the retail market have driven fundamental changes in consumer behavior and corporate business strategies. At the global level, consumers no longer evaluate prices solely based on economic affordability but increasingly consider whether prices are perceived as fair, reasonable, and ethically justified. Price is no longer understood merely as a monetary instrument of exchange; rather, it represents a value-laden signal reflecting the relationship between business actors and consumers, encompassing moral, social, and relational dimensions (Syafiq, 2019). Consequently, retail firms are required to formulate pricing policies that are not only competitive but also aligned with consumers' expectations of fairness and ethical conduct (Chetveryk, 2024).

At the national level, Indonesia's retail trade sector has shown notable growth. Statistics Indonesia reports that the sector expanded by 8.5% in 2023, with department stores and convenience retail emerging as dominant subsectors (Yuwafi, 2024). However, this growth has been accompanied by increasingly intense price competition. Competitive pressures have encouraged some retailers to adopt aggressive pricing strategies that, in practice, may neglect aspects of price transparency, consistency, and fairness (Raikes, 2024). This situation presents a critical challenge for retail firms in maintaining a balance between short-term competitiveness and long-term customer satisfaction.

The relevance of this issue lies in the strategic role of price in shaping customer satisfaction. Price directly influences perceived value, purchase decisions, and the sustainability of relationships between consumers and firms (Aisyah & Kadir, 2023). From a behavioral perspective, customer satisfaction is formed through an evaluative process in which consumers compare the price paid with the benefits received. When prices are perceived as suitable—affordable, transparent, and proportional to product quality—consumers experience a sense of value congruence that strengthens satisfaction. Conversely, dissatisfaction often arises when prices are perceived as disproportionate or unjustified relative to product benefits. Such perceptions are commonly triggered by excessive mark-ups, unclear price information, misleading discounts, or inconsistencies between displayed and charged prices (Jimenez Mori, 2021).

This logical relationship between price suitability and customer satisfaction is particularly salient in the retail context, where purchasing decisions are frequent and rely heavily on price cues. Retail consumers often use price suitability as a heuristic to assess whether a seller behaves fairly and professionally. In the local context, similar issues have been observed at Toserba Karang Langit, where some products do not consistently display clear price labels. This lack of price clarity limits consumers' access to information prior to purchase, potentially reducing trust and harming the retailer's image (Jendle, 2023). These conditions make price suitability a critical determinant of customer satisfaction rather than a peripheral consideration.

The analysis of price suitability becomes even more significant when examined from an Islamic economic perspective. In Islam, justice constitutes a fundamental principle governing all muamalah (commercial transactions). The Qur'an and Hadith explicitly

prohibit practices involving deception, ambiguity, exploitation, and unfair advantage (M. G. Mohiuddin & Sarker, 2020). Islamic price justice emphasizes that a fair price is one that reflects a balanced exchange between sellers and buyers, avoids harm to either party, and is formed through transparent and honest market practices (Andani, 2023). Accordingly, price suitability in Muslim consumer markets cannot be separated from ethical and religious evaluations, as consumers assess not only whether prices are economically reasonable but also whether they comply with Islamic principles of justice (al-'adl) and transparency (bayān).

Despite its importance, previous studies on customer satisfaction have predominantly focused on conventional determinants such as price level, product quality, and service performance, with limited empirical integration of Islamic price justice as an analytical construct (Rachman & Oktavianti, 2021; Muhammad Ilham, 2023). Research on Islamic price justice itself has largely remained normative and conceptual, with minimal empirical application in measuring consumer perceptions within everyday retail settings (Lubis, 2024). As a result, there remains a clear research gap regarding how perceived price suitability translates into customer satisfaction through ethical evaluations grounded in Islamic values.

This gap highlights why the present topic is both theoretically and practically compelling. Theoretically, examining price suitability through the lens of Islamic price justice allows for a more comprehensive understanding of customer satisfaction as a multidimensional construct shaped by economic rationality and moral judgment. Practically, retail businesses operating in Muslim-majority societies face increasing pressure to demonstrate ethical pricing practices as part of their competitive strategy. Understanding how customers respond to price suitability and Islamic price justice is therefore essential for developing sustainable and trust-based retail relationships.

Based on this rationale, this study aims to identify customer perceptions of price suitability at Toserba Karang Langit, analyze the alignment of pricing practices with the principles of Islamic price justice, and examine the effect of price suitability on customer satisfaction. Theoretically, this study contributes to the Islamic economics and business literature by providing empirical evidence on the role of Islamic price justice in shaping customer satisfaction within a retail context. Practically, the findings are expected to serve as a reference for retail managers in formulating pricing policies that are fairer, more transparent, and more sustainable amid intensifying market competition.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

### **Research Design and Conceptual Model**

This study adopts a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design aimed at testing theoretically grounded causal relationships among latent variables within a structural model. The research is not merely empirical but is anchored in established behavioral and ethical theories that explain how consumers evaluate prices and form satisfaction judgments. Specifically, the proposed model examines the effect of Price Suitability (X) on Customer Satisfaction (Y), both directly and indirectly through Islamic Price Justice (Z).

The theoretical foundation of the model is twofold. First, expectation–disconfirmation theory explains the direct relationship between price suitability and customer satisfaction by positing that satisfaction arises when perceived performance, including price fairness and value congruence, meets or exceeds consumer expectations. Second, Islamic economic theory provides the ethical framework underpinning the mediating role of Islamic price justice, which conceptualizes price evaluation as a moral and religious judgment rather than a purely economic assessment. By integrating these perspectives, the model captures both the economic and ethical mechanisms through which price suitability influences customer satisfaction.

### Structural Equations and Hypothesized Relationships

Based on the proposed conceptual framework, the structural relationships among variables are specified in the following equations:

Islamic Price Justice equation (mediator model):

$$Z = \beta_1 X + \varepsilon_1 \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

This equation reflects the theoretical assumption that consumers’ perceptions of price suitability—such as affordability, transparency, and price–quality congruence— influence their evaluation of whether prices comply with Islamic principles of justice (al-‘adl), transparency (bayān), and the avoidance of deception (tadlīs) and uncertainty (gharar).

Customer Satisfaction equation (outcome model):

$$Y = \beta_2 X + \beta_3 Z + \varepsilon_2 \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

This equation represents two complementary mechanisms. The coefficient  $\beta_2$  captures the direct economic effect of price suitability on customer satisfaction, as explained by expectation–disconfirmation theory. The coefficient  $\beta_3$  captures the ethical–normative effect of Islamic price justice on satisfaction, reflecting the role of moral assurance and perceived fairness in shaping consumers’ affective responses.

Together, these equations form a theoretically informed mediation model, where Islamic price justice functions as an intervening construct that translates economic price evaluations into ethical judgments, which subsequently enhance customer satisfaction.

### Population and Sample

The population of this study comprises all customers of Toserba Karang Langit who made purchases during the research period. Given the absence of a fixed customer list and the dynamic nature of retail transactions, an accidental sampling technique was employed, whereby respondents were selected from customers who happened to shop at the research site and voluntarily agreed to participate. This sampling approach is commonly used in retail and consumer behavior research where probabilistic sampling is impractical (Sugiyono, 2019).

A total of 60 valid responses were collected and included in the analysis. This sample size satisfies the minimum requirement for Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) based on the ten-times rule, which recommends a sample size at

least ten times the maximum number of structural paths pointing at any latent construct (Hair et al., 2019). Therefore, the sample is considered adequate for estimating the structural relationships and testing the mediation effect proposed in this study.

### **Measurement Instruments and Theoretical Grounding**

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). All constructs were modeled as reflective constructs, as the indicators are assumed to reflect underlying latent variables rather than form them.

1. Price Suitability (X) was operationalized through indicators of price affordability, price-quality/benefit congruence, price transparency, and price consistency. These indicators are grounded in pricing and perceived value theory, which posits that consumers evaluate prices relative to expected benefits and available information.
2. Islamic Price Justice (Z) was measured using indicators derived from Islamic economic principles, namely fairness (al-'adl), transparency (bayān), the absence of deceptive practices (tadlīs), and the avoidance of ambiguity and uncertainty (gharar). These indicators reflect the normative foundations of Islamic market ethics, which conceptualize justice as a core objective of commercial transactions.
3. Customer Satisfaction (Y) was measured using indicators of overall satisfaction, expectation-experience congruence, perceived value, and emotional satisfaction during the shopping experience. These indicators are consistent with expectation-disconfirmation theory and contemporary service and retail marketing literature (Zeithaml et al., 2020).

Thus, the relationships among variables in this study are not merely empirical correlations but are explicitly grounded in both conventional consumer behavior theory and Islamic ethical theory.

#### **Data Analysis Technique**

Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS with a Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach. PLS-SEM was selected due to its suitability for theory development, predictive modeling, and mediation analysis, particularly in studies with relatively small sample sizes and non-normal data distributions (Hair et al., 2019; Sarstedt et al., 2021).

The analysis followed three main stages:

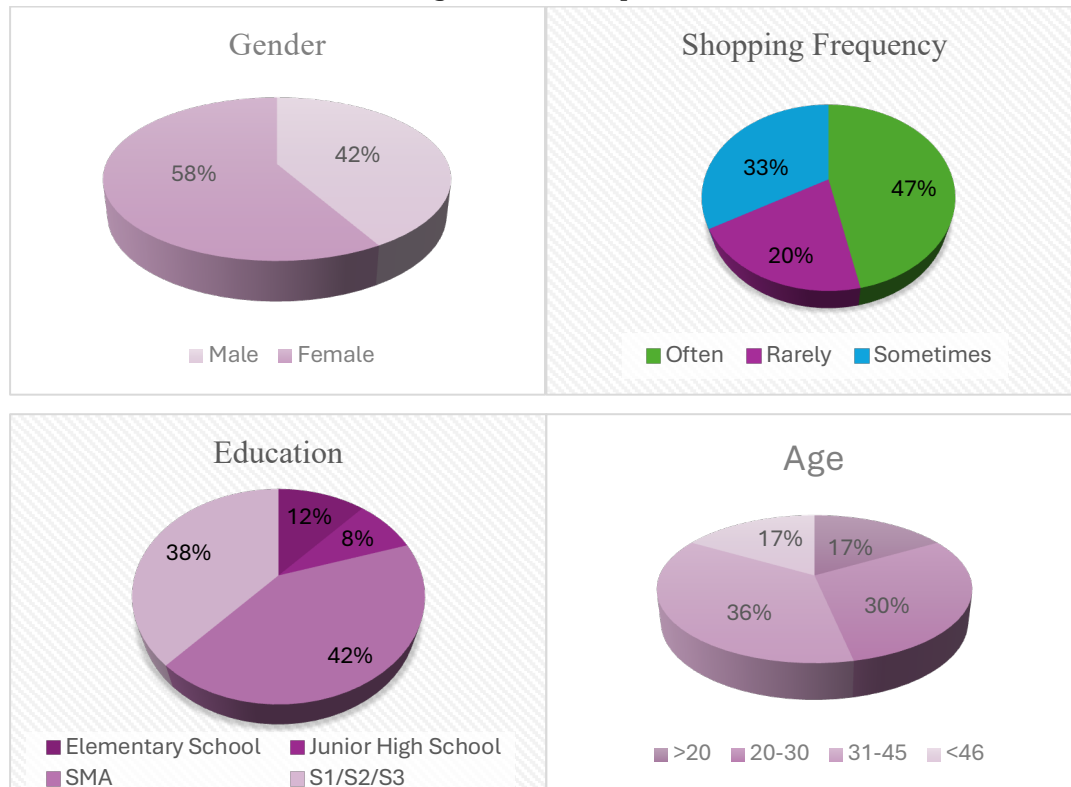
1. Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)  
The measurement model was assessed to ensure construct validity and reliability using indicator loadings, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability, Cronbach's Alpha, and discriminant validity assessed through the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).
2. Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)  
The structural model was evaluated by examining path coefficients, coefficients of determination ( $R^2$ ), predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ), and the statistical significance of hypothesized relationships using bootstrapping procedures.
3. Mediation Analysis

Mediation analysis was conducted to examine whether Islamic Price Justice (Z) mediates the relationship between Price Suitability (X) and Customer Satisfaction (Y). The significance of indirect effects was assessed using bootstrapping, with mediation considered significant when the t-statistic exceeded 1.96 and the p-value was below 0.05.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

**Figure 1. Descriptive Statistics**



Source: Primary Data, processed (2025)

The demographic profile of respondents in this study provides an overview of the characteristics of customers who evaluate price suitability at Toserba Karang Langit from the perspectives of customer satisfaction and Islamic price justice. Based on gender distribution, female respondents dominated the sample at 58%, while male respondents accounted for 42%. This composition indicates that female customers exhibit higher involvement in shopping activities, making their perceptions particularly influential in assessing whether the prices applied reflect fairness and appropriateness.

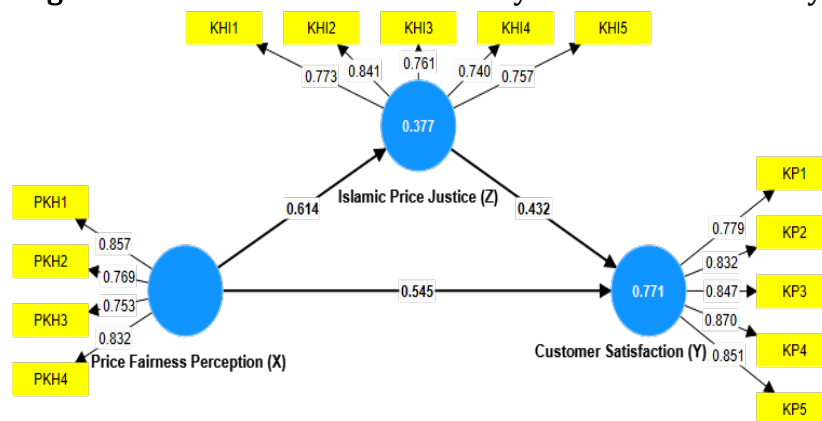
In terms of educational background, the majority of respondents were high school graduates (42%), followed by those with higher education degrees (undergraduate, master's, and doctoral levels) at 38%. Meanwhile, respondents with junior high school and elementary education accounted for 12% and 8%, respectively. This diversity in educational levels allows for both critical and practical evaluations of price suitability, as customers with different educational backgrounds may interpret the concept of fair pricing based on Islamic principles in varied ways.

Regarding age distribution, respondents aged 31–45 years constituted the largest group (36%), followed by those aged 20–30 years (30%). Respondents under 20 years of age and over 46 years of age each accounted for 17% of the sample. The dominance of respondents within the productive age range suggests that assessments of pricing practices at Toserba Karang Langit are largely based on stable consumption needs and relatively established economic capacity.

Shopping frequency further reflects respondents' familiarity with the store's pricing practices. A total of 47% of respondents reported shopping frequently at Toserba Karang Langit, 33% reported shopping occasionally, and 20% reported shopping rarely. This distribution indicates that most respondents possess sufficient direct experience in observing price practices and evaluating their consistency with product quality as well as with the principles of price justice in Islam.

Overall, the diversity of respondent demographics supports the validity of the study's findings, as the evaluations are derived from customers who genuinely understand and experience the pricing practices at Toserba Karang Langit.

**Figure 2.** Customer Satisfaction Analysis of Price Suitability



### Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

**Table 1.** Indicator Loadings and Convergent Validity

|      | Islamic Price Justice | Customer Satisfaction | Price Fairness Perception |
|------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| KHI1 | 0.773                 |                       |                           |
| KHI2 | 0.841                 |                       |                           |
| KHI3 | 0.761                 |                       |                           |
| KHI4 | 0.74                  |                       |                           |
| KHI5 | 0.757                 |                       |                           |
| KP1  |                       | 0.779                 |                           |
| KP2  |                       | 0.832                 |                           |
| KP3  |                       | 0.847                 |                           |
| KP4  |                       | 0.87                  |                           |
| KP5  |                       | 0.851                 |                           |
| PKH1 |                       |                       | 0.857                     |
| PKH2 |                       |                       | 0.769                     |
| PKH3 |                       |                       | 0.753                     |
| PKH4 |                       |                       | 0.832                     |

The results of the convergent validity test presented in Table 1 show the outer loading values for the three latent constructs—Islamic Price Justice, Customer Satisfaction, and Price Suitability—used to assess convergent validity, with the commonly accepted threshold of  $\geq 0.70$ . All indicators across the three constructs meet this criterion. The indicators of Islamic Price Justice (KHI1–KHI5) exhibit loading values ranging from 0.740 to 0.841, indicating that they validly represent the construct of price justice. The indicators of Customer Satisfaction (KP1–KP5) show loading values between 0.779 and 0.870, with KP4 identified as the strongest indicator. Meanwhile, the indicators of Price Suitability (PKH1–PKH4) range from 0.753 to 0.857, with PKH1 demonstrating the highest loading value. Overall, these results confirm that all indicators are adequate and capable of reliably measuring their respective constructs.

**Table 2.** Construct Reliability and Internal Consistency

|                           | Cronbach's alpha | Composite reliability (rho_c) |
|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Islamic Price Justice     | 0.835            | 0.883                         |
| Customer Satisfaction     | 0.892            | 0.921                         |
| Price Fairness Perception | 0.817            | 0.879                         |

The reliability test results indicate that all constructs in this study exhibit a satisfactory level of internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha values for Islamic Price Justice (0.835), Customer Satisfaction (0.892), and Price Suitability (0.817) all exceed the minimum threshold of 0.70, confirming that the indicators within each construct are reliable. In addition, the Composite Reliability ( $\rho_c$ ) values for the three constructs are also high, namely 0.883 for Islamic Price Justice, 0.921 for Customer Satisfaction, and 0.879 for Price Suitability. These results further demonstrate that the constructs possess strong measurement stability and consistency. Overall, the findings confirm that the research instruments meet the reliability criteria and are therefore suitable for subsequent analyses examining customer satisfaction and price suitability from the perspective of Islamic price justice at Toserba Karang Langit.

**Table 3.** Discriminant Validity (Fornell–Larcker Criterion)

|                           | Islamic Price Justice | Customer Satisfaction | Price Fairness Perception |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Islamic Price Justice     | 0.775                 |                       |                           |
| Customer Satisfaction     | 0.766                 | 0.836                 |                           |
| Price Fairness Perception | 0.614                 | 0.81                  | 0.804                     |

The results of the discriminant validity assessment using the Fornell–Larcker criterion present the square roots of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) on the diagonal and the inter-construct correlations off the diagonal. A construct is considered to demonstrate adequate discriminant validity when the diagonal value exceeds its correlations with other constructs. The results show that Islamic Price Justice has a square root of AVE of 0.775, which is higher than its correlations with Customer Satisfaction (0.766) and Price Suitability (0.614). Customer Satisfaction also meets the criterion, as its diagonal value of 0.836 is greater than its correlations with other constructs. However, for Price Suitability, the diagonal value of 0.804 is slightly lower than

its correlation with Customer Satisfaction (0.810), indicating a very small degree of overlap between the two constructs. Overall, the discriminant validity of the model remains acceptable; however, the very high correlation between Price Suitability and Customer Satisfaction should be further examined using additional criteria such as the Heterotrait–Monotrait ratio (HTMT) to ensure that the constructs are empirically distinct.

### Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

**Table 4.** Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ )

|                       | R-square | R-square adjusted |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Islamic Price Justice | 0.377    | 0.366             |
| Customer Satisfaction | 0.771    | 0.763             |

The R-square ( $R^2$ ) values indicate the extent to which the independent variables explain the variance in the dependent variables. Based on the analysis results, the R-square value for Islamic Price Justice is 0.377, with an adjusted R-square of 0.366, indicating that the predictor variables in the model explain approximately 36.6%–37.7% of the variance in the Islamic Price Justice construct, while the remaining variance is influenced by factors outside the model. This value reflects a moderate level of explanatory power. Furthermore, the R-square value for Customer Satisfaction is 0.771, with an adjusted R-square of 0.763, indicating that approximately 76.3%–77.1% of the variance in Customer Satisfaction can be explained by the variables included in the research model. This value can be categorized as strong, suggesting that the model has a very high explanatory capacity in explaining customer satisfaction. Overall, the R-square results demonstrate that the structural model employed in this study exhibits adequate to strong predictive power.

**Table 5.** Effect Size ( $f^2$ )

|                           | Islamic Price Justice | Customer Satisfaction | Price Fairness Perception |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Islamic Price Justice     |                       | 0.507                 |                           |
| Customer Satisfaction     |                       |                       |                           |
| Price Fairness Perception | 0.605                 | 0.808                 |                           |

The effect size ( $f^2$ ) results indicate the magnitude of the contribution of each exogenous variable to the endogenous variable, Customer Satisfaction. Based on commonly accepted criteria ( $f^2 = 0.02$  small; 0.15 medium; 0.35 large), the findings show that Islamic Price Justice has an  $f^2$  value of 0.507, which falls into the large effect category, indicating a substantial and strong influence on Customer Satisfaction. Meanwhile, Price Suitability Perception exhibits an  $f^2$  value of 0.808, which is also categorized as a very large effect, suggesting that this variable is the dominant contributor in explaining variations in Customer Satisfaction. Accordingly, while both variables play important roles, Price Suitability Perception exerts the strongest impact on Customer Satisfaction at Toserba Karang Langit.

**Table 6. Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing**

|                                                    | Original<br>sample<br>(O) | Sample<br>mean<br>(M) | Standard<br>deviation<br>(STDEV) | T statistics<br>( O/STDEV<br> ) | P<br>values |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Islamic Price Justice -> Customer Satisfaction     | 0.432                     | 0.432                 | 0.085                            | 5.066                           | 0           |
| Price Fairness Perception -> Islamic Price Justice | 0.614                     | 0.623                 | 0.074                            | 8.307                           | 0           |
| Price Fairness Perception -> Customer Satisfaction | 0.545                     | 0.542                 | 0.085                            | 6.388                           | 0           |

The path coefficient analysis indicates that all relationships among variables in the research model are positive and statistically significant. The relationship between Islamic Price Justice and Customer Satisfaction shows a path coefficient of 0.432, with a t-statistic of 5.066 and p-value < 0.001, indicating that Islamic Price Justice has a positive and significant effect on Customer Satisfaction. This result suggests that the greater the application of price justice in accordance with Islamic principles, the higher the level of customer satisfaction.

The relationship between Price Suitability Perception and Islamic Price Justice yields a path coefficient of 0.614, with a t-statistic of 8.307 and p-value < 0.001, demonstrating a positive and significant effect. This finding indicates that the stronger consumers' perceptions of price suitability relative to product value and quality, the higher their assessment of the implementation of price justice from an Islamic perspective. Furthermore, the relationship between Price Suitability Perception and Customer Satisfaction exhibits a path coefficient of 0.545, with a t-statistic of 6.388 and p-value < 0.001, confirming a positive and significant effect. This result emphasizes that price suitability perception is a key factor that directly enhances customer satisfaction.

Overall, the hypothesis testing results confirm that all hypotheses proposed in this study are supported, and the structural model developed demonstrates strong empirical support.

**Table 7. Mediation Analysis (Indirect Effect)**

|                                                                                         | Original<br>sample<br>(O) | Sample<br>mean<br>(M) | Standard<br>deviation<br>(STDEV) | T statistics<br>( O/STDEV<br> ) | P<br>val<br>ues |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Price Fairness Perception (X) -> Islamic Price Justice (Z) -> Customer Satisfaction (Y) | 0.265                     | 0.269                 | 0.063                            | 4.222                           | 0               |

The mediation analysis results indicate that Islamic Price Justice (Z) significantly mediates the effect of Price Fairness Perception (X) on Customer Satisfaction (Y). The indirect effect is positive (O = 0.265) and statistically significant (t = 4.222; p < 0.001), indicating that higher perceptions of price suitability strengthen perceptions of Islamic price justice, which in turn enhance customer satisfaction. This finding confirms that customer satisfaction is influenced not only by the economic reasonableness of prices but also by customers' beliefs that pricing practices are conducted fairly and transparently in accordance with Islamic principles.

**Table 8. Model Fit Indices (PLS-SEM)**

|            | Saturated model | Estimated model |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| SRMR       | 0.09            | 0.09            |
| d_ULS      | 0.85            | 0.85            |
| d_G        | 0.543           | 0.543           |
| Chi-square | 165.775         | 165.775         |
| NFI        | 0.72            | 0.72            |

The model fit assessment results show that the SRMR value is 0.09 for both the saturated model and the estimated model, which remains within the acceptable threshold for PLS-SEM studies, indicating an adequate level of model fit. The d\_ULS value of 0.85 and the d\_G value of 0.543 suggest that the distance between the empirical covariance matrix and the model-implied matrix is relatively small, implying that the discrepancy between the data and the model is not substantial.

The Chi-square value of 165.775 reflects the overall model discrepancy; however, in the PLS-SEM approach, this statistic is not considered a primary criterion for evaluating model fit. Furthermore, the Normed Fit Index (NFI) value of 0.72 indicates an acceptable level of model fit, although it does not yet reach a very good fit category. Overall, the model fit indices demonstrate that the research model exhibits an adequate level of fit, supporting its suitability for explaining the relationships among variables in the structural model.

## Discussion

This study provides empirical evidence on how price suitability influences customer satisfaction in the retail sector, both directly and indirectly through Islamic price justice. The findings emphasize that customer satisfaction is not solely the result of economic considerations but also reflects ethical and normative evaluations, particularly in societies where Islamic values shape consumption expectations. By integrating marketing theory with principles of Islamic economics, this study broadens the understanding of pricing behavior and consumer responses in a more comprehensive manner.

## Price Suitability as an Economic and Ethical Determinant of Customer Satisfaction

The findings confirm that price suitability has a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction, reinforcing the core proposition of expectation–disconfirmation theory that satisfaction emerges from the congruence between expected and perceived value (Wang, 2024). From a managerial perspective, this result underscores that price is not merely an operational variable but a strategic instrument shaping customer evaluations of fairness, quality, and reliability.

However, beyond its conventional economic interpretation, price suitability in this study operates within a broader normative framework informed by Islamic economic principles. In Islamic economics, price acceptability is not solely assessed by affordability or competitiveness, but by its conformity with ethical standards such as justice (*al-'adl*), proportionality, and transparency (*bayān*). When prices are perceived as suitable—

meaning affordable, consistent, and aligned with product quality—customers experience both expectation confirmation and ethical reassurance, which jointly enhance satisfaction (Jimenez Mori, 2021; Modi, 2025).

This dual interpretation extends existing retail pricing literature, which often treats price suitability as a purely cognitive or utilitarian evaluation. In contrast, the present findings demonstrate that in Muslim consumer markets, price suitability also functions as a moral signal, communicating managerial integrity and respect for consumers. As Jendle (2023) notes, inconsistent pricing practices undermine perceived value; this study adds that such inconsistencies may also erode ethical legitimacy in contexts where religious values guide consumption behavior.

### **Price Suitability and Islamic Price Justice: Integrating Management and Islamic Economics**

The significant relationship between price suitability and Islamic price justice provides a clearer integration between management theory and Islamic economic thought. From a managerial standpoint, Islamic price justice represents an ethical governance mechanism embedded in pricing decisions. Customers interpret reasonable and transparent prices as evidence that retailers adhere not only to market efficiency but also to Islamic moral norms that prohibit deception (*tadlis*), uncertainty (*gharar*), and exploitation (Nurlia et al., 2025; Sari et al., 2025).

This finding aligns with Wahyudi's (2024) argument that Islamic business ethics extend beyond legal compliance to include moral accountability toward consumers. In practical retail settings such as Toserba Karang Langit—where price information is not always consistently displayed—price suitability becomes a critical managerial lever for sustaining ethical credibility. Price clarity and consistency serve as observable indicators of justice, enabling customers to evaluate whether retailers uphold Islamic values in everyday transactions.

Empirically, this study advances Islamic economics literature by shifting the focus from predominantly financial and banking institutions (M. Mohiuddin & Sarker, 2020b) to routine retail operations. This demonstrates that Islamic price justice is not an abstract or sector-specific concept, but a practical evaluative criterion shaping consumer perceptions across diverse market contexts.

### **Islamic Price Justice as a Moral-Based Source of Customer Satisfaction**

The results further reveal that Islamic price justice exerts a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction, highlighting that satisfaction is a multidimensional construct encompassing both economic utility and moral assurance. In Islamic economic theory, justice is a fundamental objective of market activity, and perceived injustice can undermine trust, social welfare, and long-term market stability (Sari et al., 2025).

From a management perspective, Islamic price justice functions as a relational asset that strengthens customer trust and reduces perceived transactional risk. Consistent with Syafiq (2019) and Rachman and Oktavianti (2021), ethical pricing practices foster satisfaction by signaling that firms prioritize fairness over short-term profit

maximization. Mohiuddin and Sarker (2020) further emphasize that such ethical alignment mitigates perceptions of moral hazard and exploitation, thereby enhancing relational continuity.

In retail environments serving Muslim-majority communities, Islamic price justice provides psychological comfort and moral legitimacy. Customers derive satisfaction not only from favorable prices but also from confidence that transactions conform to religious norms. This reinforces the managerial insight that ethical alignment is not a peripheral concern but a central determinant of customer satisfaction and loyalty.

### **The Mediating Role of Islamic Price Justice**

One of the main contributions of this study is the empirical demonstration that Islamic price justice mediates the relationship between price suitability and customer satisfaction. This finding indicates that price suitability affects customer satisfaction through two pathways: a direct economic pathway and an indirect ethical pathway. Suitable prices directly enhance perceived value while simultaneously strengthening perceptions of Islamic price justice, which in turn further increases customer satisfaction.

This result enriches the price fairness literature by explaining how and why price perceptions are translated into satisfaction in Islamic value-based consumer markets. Previous studies have confirmed direct relationships between price fairness and customer satisfaction (Jimenez Mori, 2021), but few have examined the ethical mechanisms underlying this relationship. By positioning Islamic price justice as a mediating variable, this study provides a deeper explanation of consumer responses to pricing practices.

Moreover, the mediation findings address critiques of Islamic economic research that often remains normative and conceptual (Muhammad Ilham, 2023). By operationalizing Islamic price justice as a measurable construct and testing it empirically, this study enhances the methodological rigor of Islamic business research and demonstrates its relevance to contemporary marketing theory.

### **Theoretical and Practical Implications**

Theoretically, this study contributes to the integration of marketing theory and Islamic economics by incorporating ethical principles into a structural model of customer satisfaction. The findings suggest that conventional satisfaction models can be enriched by moral and religious dimensions, particularly within specific social and cultural contexts.

Practically, the results highlight the importance of ethical pricing practices for retail managers. Clear price labeling, consistency between shelf prices and checkout systems, and the avoidance of misleading promotions are not only sound operational practices but also manifestations of Islamic ethical commitments. In Muslim consumer markets, such practices can serve as sources of competitive advantage by enhancing customer satisfaction and trust.

Furthermore, Islamic price justice can be viewed as an intangible asset that strengthens long-term customer relationships. This supports Andani's (2023) argument

that ethical pricing strategies can balance profitability with moral responsibility and legal compliance in the retail sector.

### **The Mediating Role of Islamic Price Justice: A Value-Based Mechanism**

One of the most important theoretical contributions of this study is the empirical validation of Islamic price justice as a mediating mechanism between price suitability and customer satisfaction. This mediation indicates that managerial pricing decisions influence satisfaction through both direct economic evaluations and indirect ethical interpretations.

While previous studies have established direct links between price fairness and satisfaction (Jimenez Mori, 2021), they often overlook the ethical processes through which consumers interpret pricing practices. By positioning Islamic price justice as an intervening construct, this study explains how suitable prices are transformed into higher satisfaction through moral validation, particularly in value-driven consumer markets.

This finding directly addresses critiques that Islamic economic research remains overly normative and insufficiently empirical (Muhammad Ilham, 2023). By operationalizing Islamic price justice as a measurable construct and integrating it into a structural model, this study strengthens the methodological rigor of Islamic business research and bridges it with contemporary marketing and management theory.

### **Theoretical and Managerial Implications**

#### **Theoretical Implications**

Theoretically, this study contributes to the enrichment of customer satisfaction models by integrating ethical and religious dimensions into mainstream marketing theory. The findings demonstrate that expectation–disconfirmation theory can be extended beyond functional performance to include moral expectations derived from Islamic values. This integration offers a more context-sensitive framework for understanding consumer behavior in Muslim-majority markets.

Moreover, by empirically validating Islamic price justice as both a direct predictor and a mediating variable, this study advances Islamic economics from a prescriptive framework toward an explanatory and testable theory within management research.

#### **Managerial Implications**

From a practical standpoint, the findings offer several actionable implications for retail managers:

##### **1. Pricing Transparency as Strategic Governance**

Clear price labeling, consistency between shelf and checkout prices, and transparent promotions are not merely operational necessities but strategic tools for reinforcing ethical legitimacy.

##### **2. Ethical Pricing as Competitive Advantage**

Islamic price justice functions as an intangible asset that enhances customer satisfaction, trust, and long-term loyalty, supporting Andani's (2023) argument that ethical pricing can align profitability with moral responsibility.

##### **3. Managerial Accountability in Muslim Consumer Markets**

Retail managers should recognize that pricing decisions are evaluated not only economically but also ethically. Failure to uphold justice-oriented pricing may lead to dissatisfaction even when prices are competitive.

#### 4. Integration of Ethics into Pricing Strategy

Embedding Islamic ethical principles into pricing policies can strengthen organizational reputation and customer relationships, particularly in markets where religious values shape consumption norms.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that price suitability is a critical determinant of customer satisfaction in the retail sector, both directly and indirectly through Islamic price justice. The findings confirm that customers evaluate prices not only based on economic considerations, such as affordability and price-quality congruence, but also through ethical judgments grounded in Islamic values. When prices are perceived as suitable and aligned with the principles of justice (al-'adl), transparency (bayān), and the avoidance of deception (tadlīs) and uncertainty (gharar), customer satisfaction increases significantly.

Further empirical evidence demonstrates that Islamic price justice partially mediates the relationship between price suitability and customer satisfaction. This indicates that ethical evaluation functions as an important explanatory mechanism in translating economic perceptions of price into customers' affective responses. These findings reinforce the argument that customer satisfaction in Muslim consumer markets is a multidimensional construct, shaped by both rational assessments and moral considerations.

By operationalizing Islamic price justice as a measurable construct and examining its mediating role using a PLS-SEM approach, this study provides empirical support for Islamic economic theory, which positions justice as a central objective of market activity. Overall, the results highlight the importance of integrating ethical and religious dimensions into pricing strategies to achieve sustainable customer satisfaction in the retail sector.

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