

Entrepreneurial Marketing, Innovation, and Halal SME Performance: An Islamic Business Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Entrepreneurial Marketing; Halal SMEs; Innovation; Islamic Business Ethics; SME Performance;

Background: This study examines the role of entrepreneurial marketing in enhancing halal-oriented manufacturing SME performance in Indonesia from an Islamic business perspective. In increasingly uncertain and competitive business environments, halal-oriented SMEs are expected not only to achieve financial performance but also to maintain ethical integrity, transparency, and stakeholder trust in accordance with Islamic business principles. Despite the growing importance of halal business practices, limited research has explored how entrepreneurial marketing contributes to SME performance within an Islamic ethical context.

Method: This study employed a quantitative research approach using survey data collected from 75 manufacturing SMEs in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to examine the direct effect of entrepreneurial marketing on SME performance, the impact of entrepreneurial marketing on innovation, and the mediating role of innovation in the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing and SME performance.

Results: The findings reveal that entrepreneurial marketing has a positive and significant effect on both innovation and SME performance. Furthermore, innovation partially mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing and SME performance, indicating that SMEs with stronger entrepreneurial marketing capabilities are better positioned to enhance innovation and achieve superior organizational outcomes. These findings also suggest that ethical innovation and proactive market orientation contribute significantly to strengthening halal SME competitiveness.

Conclusion: Entrepreneurial marketing represents an important strategic capability for improving halal-oriented SME performance while remaining aligned with Islamic business ethics. The integration of entrepreneurial initiatives and innovation enables SMEs to strengthen competitiveness, enhance stakeholder trust, and generate sustainable organizational value. These outcomes are consistent with Islamic principles emphasizing amanah (trustworthiness), adl (fairness), and maslahah (social benefit), highlighting the relevance of ethical business practices in achieving long-term performance.

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INTRODUCTION

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play a vital role in economic development by contributing significantly to employment generation, industrial productivity, and innovation (Nunez et al., 2025). In Indonesia, manufacturing SMEs represent an important component of the national economy, particularly in emerging industrial regions where they serve as key drivers of business resilience and competitiveness (Radicic & Petkovi, 2023). However, increasingly dynamic business environments, accompanied by rapid technological advancements and evolving consumer expectations, have created significant challenges for SMEs seeking to maintain sustainable performance and competitiveness (Anggadwita & Indarti, 2023).

In the contemporary business landscape, organizational success is no longer evaluated solely based on financial outcomes, but also on the ability to create value through ethical conduct, transparency, and social responsibility (Chavez-Escobedo et al., 2025). This perspective is particularly relevant in Indonesia, where the rapid growth of the halal economy, combined with the presence of the world's largest Muslim population, has strengthened demand for business practices aligned with Islamic principles (Alhajja & Jaradat, 2025). The halal sector has expanded beyond food products into manufacturing, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and broader industrial activities, requiring firms to integrate competitiveness with ethical responsibility (Bahara, 2025). For SMEs, this creates both opportunities and challenges, as they must remain innovative and market-responsive while preserving trust, product integrity, and compliance with ethical expectations (Capeli et al., 2024).

From an Islamic business perspective, entrepreneurial activities should reflect ethical values that promote responsible market behavior and sustainable value creation (Nasir, 2026). Islamic business ethics emphasize principles such as *amanah* (trustworthiness), *sidq* (honesty), *adl* (fairness), and *maslahah* (social benefit), which encourage firms to balance economic objectives with ethical accountability (Wijaya, 2025). These principles have become increasingly relevant for SMEs operating in competitive markets, where maintaining stakeholder trust and organizational credibility is essential for long-term success (Meyer et al., 2023).

Against this backdrop, entrepreneurial marketing becomes particularly relevant as a strategic capability that enables SMEs to remain adaptive while operating within ethical business boundaries. Entrepreneurial marketing is commonly understood as a strategic orientation characterized by proactiveness, opportunity recognition, calculated risk-taking, innovation, and resource leveraging (Eggers & Breier, 2020). However, within an Islamic business perspective, entrepreneurial marketing must be interpreted within the ethical boundaries established by Sharia principles. In conventional entrepreneurship literature, risk-taking is often associated with uncertainty acceptance and aggressive opportunity pursuit (Belal, 2021). However, Islamic business ethics distinguish legitimate entrepreneurial risk from prohibited uncertainty (*gharar*) and speculative behavior (*maysir*). Islam encourages calculated and responsible entrepreneurial decision-making while discouraging excessive uncertainty, deception, and speculative transactions that may harm stakeholders (Wijaya, 2025). Therefore, risk-taking within an Islamic entrepreneurial marketing perspective should be understood as prudent and ethically accountable strategic action rather than uncontrolled speculation.

Islamic entrepreneurial marketing also extends beyond conventional profit-oriented competitiveness by incorporating broader ethical and spiritual objectives (Belal, 2021). The concept of *barakah* (divine blessing) suggests that business performance should not be evaluated solely through financial returns, but also through sustainable ethical conduct, trustworthiness, and social benefit. Similarly, halal sourcing and product integrity may serve as important differentiators in competitive markets, particularly in Muslim-majority economies such as Indonesia, where ethical product assurance significantly influences customer trust and purchasing behavior.

In addition, stakeholder relationship management within Islamic business extends beyond transactional exchange to include social accountability and wealth redistribution mechanisms such as *zakat* (Diallo, 2021). Compliance with Islamic ethical obligations strengthens trust, organizational legitimacy, and long-term stakeholder relationships. Consequently, entrepreneurial marketing within Islamic business contexts may be interpreted not merely as an opportunity-driven competitive capability, but as an ethically guided strategic orientation that balances competitiveness with responsibility, trust, and sustainable value creation (Primadasa et al., 2025). Although entrepreneurial marketing in this study

is measured using established conventional scales, its interpretation is contextualized through Islamic business ethics to reflect the realities of halal-oriented SME environments in Indonesia.

Innovation also plays a critical role in translating entrepreneurial orientation into superior organizational outcomes (Fernando et al., 2023). For SMEs, innovation enhances the ability to develop new products, improve operational processes, and respond effectively to evolving market demands (Hanoum et al., 2025). Within the context of Islamic business, innovation should not solely pursue economic performance but also preserve ethical integrity and create long-term stakeholder value (Hunein et al., 2026; Otache, 2022). Ethical innovation therefore becomes an important mechanism through which entrepreneurial firms can achieve competitiveness while maintaining alignment with responsible business conduct (Moreiraa et al., 2024).

Despite the growing body of research on entrepreneurial marketing and innovation, several important gaps remain. First, prior studies predominantly examine entrepreneurial marketing within conventional business contexts, providing limited understanding of its relevance within ethically oriented or Islamic business environments (Fahamsyah, 2026). Second, although innovation has been widely recognized as a mediating mechanism between entrepreneurial capability and performance, insufficient attention has been given to its role as a form of ethical value creation within halal-oriented SMEs (Hassan, 2024). Third, empirical evidence from manufacturing SMEs in emerging economies remains limited, particularly in Indonesia, where the halal economy presents unique strategic opportunities and challenges (Raza, 2023).

This study extends entrepreneurial marketing literature by integrating Islamic business ethics into the understanding of SME competitiveness. Rather than viewing performance solely from a financial perspective, this research highlights the importance of ethical capability, trust-building, and socially responsible innovation in achieving sustainable organizational outcomes (Hassan, 2025). Practically, the findings provide guidance for SME owners and managers in designing marketing strategies that enhance competitiveness while remaining aligned with Islamic ethical values, particularly in markets where trust, transparency, and ethical accountability increasingly influence purchasing decisions. (Mohd Zain, 2025)

Therefore, this research investigates the influence of entrepreneurial marketing on SME manufacturing performance, with innovation as a mediating variable, within the context of emerging markets. By integrating entrepreneurial marketing theory with Islamic business ethics, this study contributes to a broader understanding of how SMEs can achieve sustainable competitiveness while maintaining ethical responsibility and stakeholder trust. This perspective is particularly relevant in Muslim-majority economies, where business legitimacy is shaped not only by market performance but also by adherence to ethical and religious expectations.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research design to examine the relationships among entrepreneurial marketing, innovation performance, and halal SME performance from an Islamic business perspective. A quantitative approach was considered appropriate for empirically testing the proposed causal relationships among the study constructs. The research was conducted in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia, one of the country's major industrial centers with a substantial concentration of manufacturing SMEs. The respondents consisted of SME owners and senior managers, as they are directly involved in strategic decision-making related to entrepreneurial marketing, innovation, and organizational performance.

Data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed both directly and electronically via email. Due to the absence of a comprehensive sampling frame of manufacturing SMEs, non-probability sampling techniques, specifically convenience sampling and snowball sampling, were employed. These approaches enabled the researchers to access respondents through existing professional networks and referrals from participating firms. A total of 92 questionnaires were distributed to manufacturing SMEs. Of these, 81 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a response rate of approximately 88.0%. After the data screening process, six questionnaires were excluded due to incomplete responses, leaving 75 valid questionnaires for the final analysis.

The sample size was considered adequate for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). According to the ten-times rule, the minimum sample size should be at least ten times the

largest number of structural paths directed at a latent construct. In the proposed model, the maximum number of paths directed toward a single endogenous construct was two, resulting in a minimum sample requirement of 20 observations. Therefore, the final sample of 75 respondents exceeded the recommended threshold and was considered sufficient for model estimation. Furthermore, PLS-SEM is particularly suitable for predictive and exploratory studies involving relatively small samples and latent variable models (Hair et al., 2022).

The measurement instruments were adapted from established studies in the fields of entrepreneurial marketing, innovation, and SME performance. All constructs were measured using multiple-item scales on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 7 (“strongly agree”). Entrepreneurial marketing was measured using five indicators, innovation performance using three indicators, and halal SME performance using three indicators. In this study, halal SME performance refers to organizational performance within halal-conscious business environments, where business competitiveness is complemented by ethical credibility, stakeholder trust, and responsible value creation.

Data analysis was performed using SmartPLS. The analytical procedure consisted of two stages. First, the measurement model (outer model) was evaluated through indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity using factor loadings, Composite Reliability (CR), Cronbach’s Alpha, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Second, the structural model (inner model) was assessed through path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), and hypothesis testing using the bootstrapping procedure. To examine the mediating role of innovation performance, indirect effects were estimated using bootstrapping, and the significance of both direct and indirect relationships was evaluated. A path coefficient was considered statistically significant when the t-value exceeded 1.96 and the p-value was below 0.05.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The respondents in this study primarily consisted of owners and senior managers of manufacturing SMEs in East Java, Indonesia. These individuals were considered appropriate key informants due to their direct involvement in strategic decision-making related to entrepreneurial marketing, innovation initiatives, and organizational performance within increasingly halal-conscious and ethically oriented business environments.

As a preliminary assessment, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was conducted to examine the dimensional structure of the measurement items. This procedure was applied to confirm whether the indicators adequately represented the proposed constructs before proceeding to the structural model evaluation from the broader perspective of Islamic business-oriented competitiveness.

Table 1. Explanatory Factor Analysis

Item	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3
Co1	-0.082		
Co2	-0.084		
Co3	0.034		
Co4	0.804		
Co5	0.872		
Mdg1	0.815		
Mdg2	0.799		
Mdg3	0.742		
Ipo1		0.811	
Ipo2		0.854	
Ipo3		0.866	
FPO1			0.826
FPO2			0.761
FPO3			0.837

Source: Processed Data (2026)

Based on the results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) presented in Table 1, the indicators were grouped into three main constructs, namely Entrepreneurial Marketing (EM), Innovation Performance (IP), and Halal SME Performance (HSP). The factor loading values indicate the extent to which each indicator represents its respective construct. For the Entrepreneurial Marketing (EM) construct, the indicators Co4, Co5, Mdg1, Mdg2, and Mdg3 demonstrated relatively high factor loadings ranging from 0.742 to 0.872. These values exceed the recommended threshold of 0.50, indicating that the indicators adequately represent the EM construct. Among them, Co5 showed the highest loading value (0.872), suggesting that it is the most dominant indicator in explaining Entrepreneurial Marketing. Three Entrepreneurial Marketing indicators (Co1, Co2, and Co3) demonstrated low and negative factor loadings (-0.082, -0.084, and 0.034, respectively) and were therefore excluded from the final model. These indicators were originally intended to capture customer orientation and opportunity recognition dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing. Details of all retained and excluded items are reported in Appendix A.

Regarding the Innovation Performance (IP) construct, all indicators (Ipo1, Ipo2, and Ipo3) showed strong loading values of 0.811, 0.854, and 0.866, respectively. These findings indicate that the indicators possess good convergent validity in measuring Innovation Performance. Among them, Ipo3 had the highest loading value, making it the strongest indicator representing the construct.

Similarly, the Halal SME Performance construct demonstrated satisfactory results, with factor loadings ranging from 0.761 to 0.837 for indicators FPO1, FPO2, and FPO3. These values confirm that the indicators are reliable measures of Halal SME Performance. FPO3 was identified as the most representative indicator of the construct due to its highest loading value (0.837). Overall, the EFA results indicate that most indicators achieved factor loadings above the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming satisfactory construct validity. The three constructs successfully formed distinct dimensions that are consistent with the proposed research model. Following the EFA results, the measurement model was further evaluated using the reflective measurement model (outer model) assessment to examine indicator reliability and construct validity. Table 1 presents the standardized loading values obtained after the re-estimation process.

In (Hair et al., 2019) the evaluation of the reflective measurement model consists of a loading factor ≥ 0.70 . From Figure 1, there is an model that was tested statistically with SmartPLS. The results in table 1 show three items that are invalid because the outer loadings value is below 0.70. Namely the Co1, Co2, and Co3 indicators. Next, these three items are removed from the model and then re-estimated. Kaiser–Meyer– Olkin (KMO) sampling size. Bartlett's adequacy and sphericity tests were performed to assess the suitability of the data set for factor analysis. The KMO measurement produces a score of more than 0.70, which shows that the data is suitable for analysis.

Table 2. Construct reability and validity

Variable	AVE	CR	Cronbach Alpha
EM	0.654	0.904	0.867
IP	0.712	0.881	0.799
Halal SME P	0.654	0.850	0.735

Source: Processed Data (2026)

Table 3 shows that the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of each variable in this study has a value above 0.5. The AVE value above the recommended level demonstrates good discriminant validity of each variable indicator. shows the Cronbach Alpha value for each variable is more than 0.6. This indicates that all variables are declared reliable (Eggers et al., 2020). The composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) were calculated for the standardized loaded variables. The sub-dimensions CR and AVE values exceeded the recommended thresholds of 0.7 and 0.5, respectively indicating adequate convergent validity (Fornell, 1981)

Table 3. R-Square

Variable	R ²	Adjusted R ²
IP	0.673	0.667
Halal SME Performance	0.812	0.805

Source: Processed Data (2026)

Table 4 shows an structural model evaluation (inner model) $R^2 = 0.673$ for Innovative Performance \rightarrow EM explains 67.3% of its variance (substantial). $R^2 = 0.812$ for Halal SME Performance \rightarrow EM + IP explain 81.2% of performance variation (very substantial; (Hair et al., 2019) this indicates excellent predictive accuracy for an SME-focused behavioral model.

In the next step, we evaluated the structural model. Initially, the model was assessed without considering the mediation effect of IPO. Based on the influence of EM (independent variable) on FPO (dependent variable), we conducted a mediation test by introducing IPO as a mediator. If the relationship between EM and FPO remained statistically significant after introducing IPO, it would indicate partial mediation. On the other hand, if the EM-FPO relationship became insignificant, it would suggest full mediation. To assess the direct and indirect effects, we applied the Bootstrap method. The path relationship in the structural model must have a significant value. This can be achieved using bootstrapping, where the t-statistic is greater than 1.96 and the significance level is below 0.05. The results of this study are presented in the table below:

Table 4. Path Coefficient Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	T-value	p-value	Result
H1	EM \rightarrow IP	0.852	17.015	0.000	Supported
H2	EM \rightarrow HSP	0.428	4.844	0.000	Supported
H3	IP \rightarrow HSP	0.392	3.528	0.000	Supported

Source: Processed Data (2026)

Based on the results of the hypothesis test exceeded the value of 1.96, so the hypothesis is accepted. Hypothesis Testing 1: EM significantly has a positive influence on IP performance. Based on the results of testing hypothesis 1, the beta coefficient value of EM on IP performance is 0.852 (positive). This can be interpreted to mean that the higher the EM value, the higher the IP performance value. An increase in one EM unit will increase the performance of MSMEs by 82%. Apart from that, the results of hypothesis testing have a T-Statistics value of 17.015. This shows that this hypothesis has a significant influence because the T-Statistics value is > 1.96 with a p-value < 0.05 , so it can be concluded that EM has a significant positive influence on IP performance so that H1 is accepted. H2, namely EM leads to increased HSP and the results are significant. Furthermore, IP on HSP remains significant

Table 5. Mediation Test (Indirect Effect)

Path	Indirect β	T-value	p-value	Mediation Type
EM \rightarrow IP \rightarrow HSP	Significant	> 1.96	< 0.05	Partial Mediation

Source: Processed Data (2026)

Table 6 shows the results of the mediation test where the t statistical value shows a number > 1.96 and significance below 0.05. This means that there is an impact of entrepreneurial marketing on small medium enterprise manufacture performance through the mediation of innovation performance. The indirect path (EM \rightarrow IP \rightarrow HSP) is significant. The direct effect (EM \rightarrow HSP) remains significant after including the mediator. Thus, Innovation Performance partially mediates the relationship between Entrepreneurial Marketing and Halal SME Manufacturing Performance.

The findings of this study demonstrate that entrepreneurial marketing plays a significant role in enhancing innovation and halal SME performance among manufacturing SMEs in Indonesia. Consistent with the study's objective, the results confirm that entrepreneurial marketing serves as an important strategic capability that enables SMEs to strengthen competitiveness while responding effectively to dynamic market demands. These findings reinforce the argument that organizational performance in contemporary business environments should not be assessed solely through financial outcomes, but also through the ability to create responsible value, maintain stakeholder trust, and uphold ethical business conduct. The significant positive relationship between entrepreneurial marketing and innovation indicates that SMEs with stronger entrepreneurial marketing capabilities are better positioned to identify opportunities, respond proactively to changing market conditions and implement innovative business solutions. This finding supports previous studies that identify entrepreneurial marketing as a key driver of innovation capability. However, within the context of Islamic business and Indonesia's growing halal economy, innovation extends beyond operational efficiency or profit generation. Innovation should also

contribute to ethical value creation, product integrity, and market credibility, particularly in business environments where trust and transparency increasingly influence stakeholder decisions.

The results further reveal that entrepreneurial marketing has a direct positive effect on halal SME performance. This suggests that proactive market behavior, opportunity recognition, and adaptive strategic decision-making significantly contribute to organizational success (Darmalaksana, 2025). For SMEs operating in halal-conscious markets, entrepreneurial marketing becomes particularly relevant because competitiveness is increasingly associated not only with responsiveness and innovation, but also with ethical positioning and responsible business conduct. This interpretation aligns with Islamic business principles, where entrepreneurial activities are expected to balance economic objectives with broader social accountability and ethical responsibility (Azwar, 2024). The mediation analysis confirms that innovation partially mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing and halal SME performance. This indicates that entrepreneurial marketing contributes to organizational success both directly and indirectly through strengthened innovation capability. The partial mediation effect suggests that innovation serves as a critical strategic mechanism through which entrepreneurial initiatives are translated into measurable organizational outcomes. From an Islamic business perspective, innovation may also be viewed as a form of responsible capability development that enhances long-term competitiveness while preserving stakeholder trust and organizational credibility (Usmanova, 2022).

These findings can also be interpreted through the lens of Islamic business ethics, particularly the principles of Amanah (trustworthiness), sidq (honesty), adl (fairness), and maslahah (social benefit) (Jaaffar & Majid, 2024). From this perspective, entrepreneurial marketing should not be viewed merely as a competitive market strategy, but as an ethically guided organizational capability that supports responsible responsiveness, sustainable innovation, and long-term value creation (Marjudi, 2023). Firms that successfully integrate entrepreneurial orientation with Islamic ethical principles are more likely to strengthen both organizational performance and stakeholder relationships.

Overall, the findings suggest that manufacturing SMEs in Indonesia can benefit significantly from integrating entrepreneurial marketing and innovation as complementary strategic capabilities. The study highlights the importance of developing not only adaptive and opportunity-driven business strategies, but also ethically grounded approaches that align competitiveness with responsible value creation. This becomes increasingly relevant in halal-oriented business environments, where long-term organizational performance is strongly influenced by trust, transparency, and ethical credibility.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that entrepreneurial marketing plays a significant role in enhancing innovation capability and halal SME performance among manufacturing SMEs in Indonesia. The findings demonstrate that entrepreneurial marketing not only directly improves organizational performance but also indirectly strengthens performance through innovation as a mediating mechanism. These results confirm that entrepreneurial capability, proactive market responsiveness, and innovation remain essential strategic resources for SMEs seeking sustainable competitiveness in dynamic business environments.

From the perspective of Islamic marketing, competitiveness should not be understood solely in terms of profit generation, but also through ethical responsibility, stakeholder trust, transparency, and sustainable value creation (Shah, 2021). Entrepreneurial marketing, when interpreted through Islamic business principles, becomes more than a competitive strategy; it represents an ethically guided organizational capability that supports responsible opportunity recognition, market responsiveness, and long-term relationship building (Hassan, 2022).

This study also highlights the relevance of Islamic business ethics, particularly the principles of amanah (trustworthiness), sidq (honesty), adl (fairness), and maslahah (social benefit), in shaping entrepreneurial and innovation-driven business performance. In halal-conscious business environments, these values may strengthen organizational credibility, enhance customer trust, and contribute to sustainable competitive advantage (Sofyan & Rusanti, 2026). The findings therefore suggest that integrating entrepreneurial marketing with Islamic marketing principles can provide SMEs with a stronger strategic foundation for achieving both competitiveness and ethical legitimacy.

Practically, the findings provide important implications for SME owners and managers in designing business strategies that integrate entrepreneurial capability, innovation, and Islamic ethical values. Long-term success in increasingly competitive and ethically sensitive markets depends not only on identifying opportunities and responding to market changes, but also on the ability to create responsible, trustworthy, and sustainable value for stakeholders.

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