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Switching Behavior of Banks' Customers: Does It Exist?

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Abstract

This study aims to understand why the influence of switching behavior has a minimal effect on the improvement of market share in the Indonesian environment. This study examines Indonesian bank customers' switching behaviour using descriptive quantitative methods. Our random purposive sampling included persons working and using conventional and Islamic bank products and services. 128 respondents completed the online survey and met data analysis criteria. After general questions about respondents' profiles, the questionnaire examined switching behaviour. The data will be analysed to determine how respondents chose their bank and why they use Islamic or conventional banks. These data suggest that customers become more religiously committed and select Islamic banking. An important finding from this investigation was that customers were not fully switching to Islamic banks. Conventional bank services are used. The payroll system, notably for public employees and private company personnel, make it intriguing. Despite their strong religious beliefs, their customer agency contract with a conventional bank. This is the "conventional system trap". Indonesia, with one of the world's largest Muslim populations, has not been able to maximize its potential as a worldwide Islamic banking leader for this reason. Islamic bank assets always lower than conventional banks.

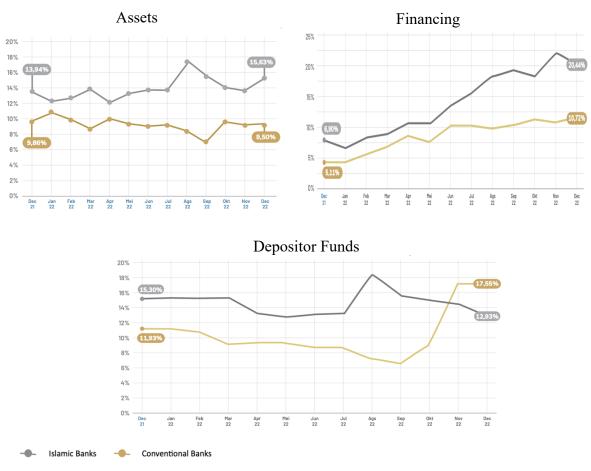
Keywords: Conventional Banking; Islamic Banking; Customer Perceptions: Switching Behavior

INTRODUCTION

The initiative of Islamic bank establishment in Indonesia had been started in 1980s through wide discussion regarding Islamic bank as the pillar of Islamic economy. Baitul Maal Watamwil (BMT) of Masjid Salman in Bandung and Cooperative of Ridho Gusti in Jakarta marked the initiative in the small scale, until in the 1990 the Indonesian Coulcil of Ulama (MUI) established a working group to discuss the issue of bank interest and initiate the establishment of Islamic bank in Indonesia. Consequently, the first Islamic bank, Bank Muamalat Indonesia (BMI), brought its presence as a significant milestone in the Islamic economy development in Indonesia.

Obtaining strong support from the government through the birth of Islamic banking law in 2008, the Islamic banking industry grew tremendously. Otoritas Jasa Keuangan (OJK) (2023) reports that currently there are 13 sharia commercial banks, 20 sharia business units of conventional bank, and 171 rural banks operating in Indonesia. The growing number of Islamic banks indicated the increasing number of the customers as well as wide acceptance and application of the products and services. Figure 1 compares Islamic and conventional bank in Indonesia from their growth in assets, financing, and depositor funds (OJK, 2023). It shows that the growth of Islamic bank is outrate the conventional bank in the three respective measures.

Figure 1. Comparison of asset, financing and depositor funds growth between Islamic and conventional bank in Indonesia



Source: OJK (2023)

However, despite the relatively steady growth in assets, financing, and depositor funds, the market share of Islamic bank in its three decades of development is still low. Ideally, Indonesia with the largest Muslim population in the world is able to optimize its potential to become the prominent global player in Islamic finance industry. Unexpectedly, Indonesia is ranked at 9th position of global Islamic banking market (Islamic Financial Services Board, 2023). OJK (2023) highlights that the market share of Islamic bank in Indonesia has just reached 7.09% in 2022, far below its conventional counterpart. This phenomenon ironically hits Indonesia given the fact that efforts have

been put in place from both government and community. Specific infrastructures such as regulations, shariah rules (fatwa from Indonesian Council of Ulama), as well as the accounting standards have been established to support the industry (Rulindo et al., 2022). Furthermore, government purposedly built the National Islamic Economic and Finance Committee (KNEKS), previously known as National Islamic Economic Committee (KNKS), to develop the national plan of Islamic economy and finance industry in Indonesia. Several governmental institutions such as Central Bank of Indonesia (BI), the Financial Service Authority (OJK), the Ministry of Finance are also committed to contribute to the development of Islamic economy including Islamic banking industry. The recent movement from the government is the merger of three state-owned Islamic banks in Indonesia namely Bank Syariah Mandiri, BNI Syariah, and BRI Syariah into Bank Syariah Indonesia (BSI) in 2021 hoping to address the issue of small market penetration of Islamic bank. The breakthrough was expected to merge the resources of the three banks in order to increase its competitiveness which in turn to expand the market share of Islamic bank (Baharudin et al., 2022). Unfortunately, this apparently has no significant contribution yet to boost the percentage, indicating the absence of massive switching behaviour from conventional to Islamic bank.

Studying the switching behaviour of customers in countries implementing dual banking system where Islamic and conventional bank operate side by side and compete one another is important. In this system, competition does not merely exist between Islamic and conventional banks, but also within their segments (Alam et al., 2019; Aysan et al., 2018). While Indonesia may benefit from its Muslim dominating society, the empirical data proposes that conventional banks are still gaining market power compared to Islamic banks. Having gained long banking experiences in addition to its more advanced facilities and sound management, conventional banks are operating more efficiently in attracting customers (Sukmana & Febriyati, 2016).

Several studies have been conducting across countries with dual-banking system scheme to investigate the factor influencing the switching behaviour of customer from conventional to Islamic banks. A study in Oman proposes that the switching decisions are strongly determined by religion reason. Additionally, the society of Oman are influenced by quality of service, customer service and trust before deciding to switch to Islamic bank (Faiza, 2023). Consistently, Pirzada et al (2014) suggest that people of Pakistan consider service quality in addition to number of branches and profit rate when considering their banking preferences. Bukhari (2019) supplied this study by adding religion as strong motives to select bank as well as based on recommendation from family and friends. Applying performance and importance matrix, Altwijry & Abduh (2013) explores the satisfaction level and switching behaviour of Islamic banks' customer in Saudi. The results found that technology, shariah compliance, and service quality are among factors contributing to customer satisfaction. Meanwhile, Islamic bank should improve its performance in the aspect of ATM location, complaints handling, and staffs understanding of Islamic contracts in order to prevent its customers from switching to other banks. The people of Kuwait, similarly, importantly rely on shariah compliance, service convenience and reliability, as well as the technology in choosing banks (Ghamry & Shamma, 2022). Moving to neighbour country, Malaysia is no significantly difference

from other countries considering religion as determining factor. However, the Malaysian also consider type of account and possession of conventional bank account (Abduh et al., 2013).

Some empirical researchers have also been carried out in Indonesia to assess factors determining switching behaviour of bank customers. Similar to study in other countries, religion plays a significant role in determining customer satisfaction. Therefore, Islamic bank should prioritize their reputation of being shariah compliant to retain their customer and attract new customer base (Hafandi et al., 2021; Mochlasin et al., 2023). Moreover, Abduh et al (2012) have statistically proven that dimensions such as staffs, physical appearance and accessibility of bank, and cost of fund are significantly affecting customers' intention to switch. This study examines the presence of switching behaviour of society in Indonesia by addressing why the impact of switching behaviour has small impact on the market share improvement in the context of Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The financial sector, as a dynamic landscape of consumer behaviour and institutional evolution, constantly undergoes transformations influenced by multifaceted factors. In recent years, the emergence of Islamic banking institutions, grounded in ethical principles and Sharia compliance, has provided an alternative to conventional banking. However, despite the significant growth of Islamic banking, a persistent challenge remains—the relatively low market share when compared to conventional counterparts. This literature review embarks on a comprehensive exploration of the cognitive factors that underpin this phenomenon, positioning itself at the intersection of cognitive psychology and banking preferences.

In the context of intense national and international banking competition, Islamic banks place paramount importance on customer satisfaction as the focal point of their operations (Mir et al., 2023). Customer satisfaction serves as a reflective measure of a bank's performance in meeting customer expectations, thereby fostering trust and loyalty (Alharthi et al., 2022; Biswas et al., 2023; Jawaid et al., 2023; Muhammad & Bin Ngah, 2023; Senthil, 2022; Uppal, 2022). The establishment of satisfaction not only generates trust among customers, stemming from proper treatment by the company (Alhawamdeh et al., 2022) but also forms the foundation for customer loyalty (Alqasa & Afaneh, 2022; Biswas et al., 2023; Damberg et al., 2022).

While research in private sector banks has extensively investigated factors influencing customer satisfaction, emphasizing the positive impact of a bank's reputation and innovation, the concurrent examination of Customer Switching Behaviour (CSB) remains relatively unexplored. Customer loyalty also correlates with customer satisfaction, and customer satisfaction, in turn, is associated with four service quality factors: assurance, tangibility, reliability, and responsiveness (Miah, 2021). It is noteworthy that heightened levels of customer satisfaction, as revealed by existing studies, not only contribute to improved customer retention but also offer management valuable insights for effectively managing and mitigating customer switching behaviour. Customers who do not identify as Muslim prioritize satisfaction and image when

evaluating their Islamic bank, and their loyalty tends to increase when their satisfaction levels are met. Conversely, for Muslim customers, a favourable perception of their Islamic bank can lead to a higher tolerance for certain levels of dissatisfaction (Moosa & Kashiramka, 2022).

The existing literature extensively explores the phenomenon of switching behaviour, a concept rooted in consumer choices and decision-making. Correspondingly, Islamic banks (IBs) confront risks similar to their conventional counterparts (CBs) during processes such as deposit-taking and fund provision to customers. The determinants of switching behaviour, as outlined by Yudiana (2021), are intricately linked to the principles of capitalist economic theory, forming a contextual foundation for understanding consumer choices within the banking sector. In the contemporary landscape of open banking, characterized by enhanced financial transparency and accessibility, the phenomenon of switching behaviour has gained prominence (Szopiński, 2021). Nonetheless, in regions where Muslims lack access to an Islamic bank or other Sharia-compliant services, their credit behaviour, including the decision to avail credit and the choice of credit type, may be influenced (Thippayana & Thinnam, 2023).

Recent studies by Baruna et al. (2023), Makudza (2021), Taoana et al. (2022), and Zhao et al. (2023) advocate for a proactive approach by bank management. A nuanced understanding of the cognitive processes driving individuals to switch banks forms the bedrock for tailored strategies that enhance customer satisfaction, loyalty, and overall service quality. As Islamic banking undergoes evolutionary transformations within the purview of open banking, an insightful examination of switching behaviour becomes indispensable. This literature review aspires to synthesize insights from existing studies, particularly those authored by Ben Lahouel et al. (2022), Baruna et al. (2023), Makudza (2021), Taoana et al. (2022), and Zhao et al. (2023).

In the dynamic landscape of banking, individuals face a myriad of considerations when deciding between staying with a conventional bank or transitioning to a Sharia-compliant alternative. One pivotal aspect is the influence of religious beliefs on banking choices, as individuals seek financial institutions that align with their moral and ethical convictions. This review aims to unravel the complexities surrounding religious considerations and their impact on individuals' decisions, shedding light on the motivations that drive individuals to either remain within the confines of conventional banking or explore the offerings of Sharia-compliant banks (Suhartanto, 2019; Hoque et al., 2019)

Switching gears to Sharia banks, the correlation between high-quality products and customer satisfaction takes center stage, particularly in the context of Islamic banking operations. Research by Belás and Gabčová (2016), Hassani and Taati (2020), Kolapo et al. (2021), Rod et al. (2016), and Sipayung et al. (2021) underscores that quality products significantly enhance customer satisfaction. Further studies by Gani and Oroh (2021), Muafa et al. (2020), and Srivastava and Sharma (2013) establish the pivotal role of product quality in shaping customer satisfaction, and by extension, customer loyalty. Notably, customer interest in Islamic banking is intricately tied to the quality of its products, serving as a decisive factor in fostering customer loyalty (Newton et al., 2018; Nikhashemi et al., 2017). Customer loyalty in conventional banks is closely tied to deposit

interest rates, with the extent and alignment of physical attributes such as service office networks, internet connectivity, ATMs, and ATM card services playing a pivotal role in determining the level of loyalty (Subagiyo et al., 2021).

Moving on to service quality, a critical determinant of customer satisfaction in Islamic banks, a wealth of research by Ahmed et al. (2020), Biswas et al. (2023), Chatterjee et al. (2023), Jasin and Firmansyah (2023), Kim et al. (2023), Mir et al. (2023), Ong et al. (2023), and Yalcinkaya and Just (2023) accentuates its paramount importance. Post-merger, service quality in Islamic banks typically results in heightened customer satisfaction, with good service quality positively impacting customer loyalty, while service failures can lead to switching behaviour (Zhao et al., 2022, 2023).

Shariah compliance emerges as a critical immaterial factor significantly affecting customer satisfaction, as highlighted by Anouze et al. (2019, 2019), Asnawi et al. (2020), Ghamry & Shamma (2022), and Hosen et al. (2021, 2021). The majority Muslim population in Indonesia emphasizes the importance of Sharia compliance in Islamic banking, contributing significantly to increased customer trust and loyalty, as well as influencing customer switching behaviour.

In the digital era, the presence of technology becomes pivotal for the quality of Islamic banking services, streamlining transactions and enhancing customer experiences. Technological sophistication, as emphasized by Angusamy et al. (2022), Ghamry & Shamma (2022), Ighomereho et al. (2022), Jaiwani et al. (2022), Kou et al. (2021), Tahtamouni (2022), Wiryawan et al. (2022), and Zyberi & Luzo (2022), significantly impacts customer satisfaction. The ease and speed of access, indicators of technological sophistication, become decisive factors in customers' decisions to stay or leave. Improving technology and e-services, therefore, becomes imperative for Islamic banks to mitigate customer switching behaviour, especially after mergers (Martins et al., 2013; Sharma & Sharma, 2018; Singh et al., 2016; Yongho Hyun et al., 2014).

In conclusion, the banking landscape, whether conventional or Islamic, is shaped by a multitude of factors influencing individuals' preferences and behaviours. The enduring loyalty within conventional banking is intricately tied to familiarity with established practices, reliable payroll services, and robust business relationships. These aspects, combined with practicality, comfort, and alignment of services with individual needs, underpin the sustained appeal of conventional banks. In the context of Islamic banking, the pursuit of high-quality products emerges as a pivotal driver of customer satisfaction and loyalty, with extensive research highlighting its direct correlation. Additionally, service quality, adherence to Sharia principles, and technological sophistication play crucial roles in shaping customer satisfaction in Islamic banks. The seamless integration of technology, especially in the digital era, becomes paramount for enhancing customer experiences and mitigating switching behaviours, particularly postmergers. As the banking sector continuously evolves, institutions must grasp and adeptly respond to these multifaceted elements to meet the diverse needs of their clientele effectively.

METHODOLOGY

This study deploys descriptive quantitative approach to examine the switching behaviour among the banks' customers in Indonesia. The population of this study is society in South Sulawesi. Random purposive sampling was applied where the criteria of samples are those currently working and using the product or services of both conventional and Islamic banks. Data were collected through online survey employing google form tools. There are 128 respondents answering the survey completely and fulfilling the criteria for further data analysis. General questions of respondents' profiles were asked in the first part of the questionnaire such as gender, age, job, and income per month. The following section of the survey questions are to examine the switching behaviour by addressing which bank account the respondent open for the first and last time, Islamic or conventional bank, as well as what factors influencing the banking preference. The data will be analysed by identifying how the respondents come to their existing current bank preference and reason of still using either Islamic or conventional bank. The switching behavior from conventional to Islamic bank was investigated if the respondents possess accounts in both banks, prefer Islamic bank for their religiosity but cannot leave conventional bank due to job requirement. The data of age and job will be used as supporting analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents a summary of the demographic profile of respondents. The research sample consisted of 52.8% men and 47.2% women, with a ratio of 1.09 women to one man. Based on age group, 67.7% of respondents were in the 26–45 years age group, 22.8% were in the 46–65 years age group, 8.7% were in the 12–25 year age group, and 0.8% of respondents are in the age group of 65 years and over. Most respondents have their main jobs as state civil servants (43.3%) and private company employees (23.6%). Then, 17.3 percent of respondents were self-employed, 10.2 percent were not yet employed. Based on income, in general more than 85 percent of respondents had an average income of above 3 million per month, 32.8% were at IDR 3-5 million per month, 26.6% were at IDR 5-10 million and 25.8% of respondents with an average income of more than IDR 10 million per month.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

	Category	Respondents	Frequency(%)
Gender	Male	67	52,3
	Female	61	47,7
Ages	12-25	12	9,4
	26-45	86	67,2
	46-65	29	22,7
	> 65	1	0,8
Main Occupation	Civil Cervant	55	43
	Private Company Emloyment	30	23,4

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Monthly Income	Enterpreneur	23	18	
	Students	13	10,2	
	Others	7	5,5	
	< 3 Million	19	14,8	
	3-5 Million	42	32,8	
	5-10 Million	34	26,6	
	> 10 Million	33	25,8	

Furthermore, data analysis shows that 89.8% of respondents chose to switch from conventional banks to Islamic banks. The main reason is because of religiosity or commitment to religion. There were around 77% of respondents who chose to use sharia banking services because of religiosity factors. Then, 26% of respondents said it was because of good service quality, 25% of respondents said it was because of lower costs, 17% was influenced by easy access to sharia banking services, and around 12% for other reasons such as hajj expense requirement and following their parents request to use Islamic banking.

Islamic Banking Determinants 77% 26% 25% 19% 19% 18% 17% 12% Religious Accessibity Services Less Costs Facilities Payroll Bussiness Others Consideration and Quality Relationship Convenience

Figure 2. Determinants of Preferring Islamic Banking

Source: processed

However, this shift in customer behaviour does not mean completely abandoning conventional banking products or services. Most of them or around 93.7% have savings in both Islamic and conventional banks. The main reason they still use conventional bank services is because of ease of access and salary requirements. Around 55% of respondents continue to use conventional bank services because access is easier than other bank services. Then, around 47% of them still have not completely switched to sharia banking because salary requirements require them to use conventional banking services. Apart from ease of access and salary requirements, the reason they still use conventional bank services is because of the good quality of facilities and services.

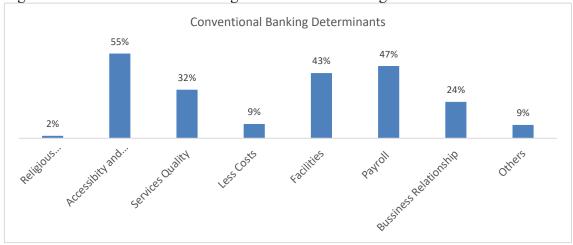


Figure 3. Determinants of Preferring Conventional Banking

Source: processed

The results of this research provide a reasonable explanation regarding the reasons why customers' choice of banking services is not only driven by how the service is provided but also by religiosity factors. This study expands our understanding of the drivers of banking customers switching from conventional to sharia services. These findings indicate that as customers become more committed to their religion, they are more likely to choose Islamic banking services. This research strengthens previous research regarding the determining factors that influence customers' decisions to switch from using conventional bank services to sharia banks (Suhartanto, 2019; Hoque et al., 2019)

However, we found an interesting thing from this analysis, that the customer shift to using Islamic banks was not complete. They still use conventional bank services. The reason it is interesting is because of the salary requirements, especially for those who work as state civil servants or employees in private companies. The contract between the customer agency where they work and a conventional bank requires them to continue using conventional services or products even though their commitment to their religion is high. This phenomenon is what we call the "conventional system trap". This reason also explains why Indonesia, as one of the largest Muslim populations in the world, has not been able to optimize its potential to become a leading global player in the Islamic finance industry. Islamic bank assets are always far below conventional banks.

CONCLUSION

This study indicates that the switching behavior does exist among the sample banks' customer. However, the conventional system trap such as job place requirement has contributed to the insignificant transfer. Beyond accessibility and convenience, several other factors significantly shape individuals' decisions in the banking realm. Religious considerations play a crucial role, is another determinant that influences whether individuals choose to stay with their current bank or seek alternative options. Moreover, the economic aspect of banking decisions is influenced by the perceived cost-effectiveness of services, including fees and interest rates. On the other side, in the realm of conventional banking, various factors impacting individuals' decisions about their banking preferences reveal why people frequently opt to remain with conventional banks.

Factors such as being accustomed to payroll services, having established business relationships, and maintaining adherence to familiar practices all play a role in fostering a preference for conventional banking. As we navigate through the intricate landscape of banking choices, it becomes clear that, for many individuals, the factors discussed underscore a lasting loyalty to conventional banks.

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