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Optimizing Sharia Muamalah Practices for Vegetable and Staple Food Traders in Ajangmatekko Local Market, Lebbae Village, Ajangale District, Bone Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the optimization of Sharia muamalah practices among vegetable and staple food traders in Ajangmatekko Local Market, Lebbae Village, Ajangale District, Bone Regency. The research focuses on understanding current trading practices, identifying gaps in Sharia compliance, and proposing strategies for optimization. Using a qualitative approach with interviews and observations involving 30 traders, the study reveals that while traders demonstrate basic understanding of Islamic commercial ethics, significant gaps exist in pricing mechanisms, measurement accuracy, and contract clarity. The findings indicate that cultural practices sometimes conflict with Sharia principles, particularly in areas of transparency and honesty. This research proposes a

comprehensive framework for optimizing muamalah practices through education, community engagement, and institutional support. The study contributes to the literature on Islamic economics implementation at the grassroots level and provides practical recommendations for enhancing Sharia compliance in traditional markets.

INTRODUCTION

The integration of Sharia principles in economic activities represents a fundamental aspect of Islamic life, particularly in Muslim-majority regions where traditional markets serve as the backbone of local commerce. Muamalah, as a branch of Islamic jurisprudence governing interpersonal transactions, provides comprehensive guidelines for ethical trading practices that emphasize fairness, transparency, and mutual benefit (Abdullah & Rahman, 2023). In Indonesia, where traditional markets remain vital to the economy, the application of Sharia muamalah principles faces unique challenges stemming from cultural practices, limited formal education, and evolving market dynamics. The Ajangmatekko Local Market in Bone Regency exemplifies this tension between traditional commerce and Islamic economic principles, making it an important site for examining the practical implementation of muamalah ethics (Muhsyanur et.al, 2025; Umrati, 2024)

Traditional markets in Indonesia serve not only as economic hubs but also as social and cultural centers where community values are reinforced and transmitted across generations (Nasution, 2022). These markets operate within complex networks of relationships where trust, reputation, and social capital play crucial roles in commercial transactions. However, the informal nature of these markets often leads to practices that may inadvertently conflict with Sharia principles, such as price manipulation, inaccurate measurements, and lack of contractual clarity (Hassan & Kayed, 2021). The challenge lies in harmonizing established cultural practices with Islamic commercial ethics without disrupting the social fabric of market communities. Research indicates that successful implementation of Sharia principles requires culturally sensitive approaches that respect local traditions while promoting Islamic values (Ahmad et al., 2024).

The theoretical foundation of muamalah rests on several core principles that govern all commercial transactions in Islamic law. These include the prohibition of *riba* (usury), *gharar* (excessive uncertainty), *maysir* (gambling), and the requirement for transactions to be based on mutual consent, transparency, and fairness (El-Gamal, 2023). According to Saeed (2022) and (Muhsyanur, Erny Rachmawati, Hardhani Widhiastuti, n.d.), the essence of Islamic commercial ethics lies in creating a balanced economic system that protects the rights of all parties while promoting social welfare and economic justice. These principles are derived from the Quran and Sunnah, which provide explicit guidance on various aspects of trade, including pricing, quality assurance, and contractual obligations. The application of these principles in contemporary markets requires careful interpretation and adaptation to

modern commercial contexts while maintaining fidelity to Islamic legal frameworks (Ayub, 2021).

Empirical studies on Sharia compliance in traditional markets have revealed significant variations in understanding and implementation across different regions and trader demographics. Research by Zulkifli and Hasan (2023) demonstrates that educational level, religious knowledge, and exposure to Islamic economic principles significantly influence traders' willingness and ability to adopt Sharia-compliant practices. Similarly, Rahman et al. (2024) found that traders with formal Islamic education demonstrate higher levels of compliance with muamalah principles compared to those relying solely on cultural transmission of religious knowledge. These findings underscore the importance of targeted educational interventions in promoting Sharia compliance. Furthermore, studies indicate that community-based approaches that involve religious leaders and peer networks are more effective than top-down regulatory measures in changing trading behaviors (Ismail & Ahmad, 2023).

The specific context of Bone Regency presents unique opportunities and challenges for implementing Sharia muamalah practices. As a region with strong Islamic traditions and a predominantly Muslim population, there exists a cultural predisposition toward Islamic values that can facilitate the adoption of Sharia-compliant trading practices (Hidayat, 2021). However, the region also faces economic pressures, limited infrastructure, and educational challenges that may hinder systematic implementation of Islamic economic principles. The Ajangmatekko Market, serving the Lebbae Village community, operates within this complex environment where traders balance economic survival with religious obligations. Understanding the interplay between these factors is essential for developing effective strategies for optimizing muamalah practices that are both Islamically sound and practically feasible (Nurdin & Yusof, 2020).

The significance of this research extends beyond the immediate context of Ajangmatekko Market to broader questions about the role of Islamic economics in promoting ethical commerce and social justice. As global interest in ethical and sustainable business practices grows, Islamic economic principles offer valuable insights into creating market systems that prioritize human welfare alongside economic efficiency (Iqbal & Mirakhor, 2023). By examining how Sharia muamalah can be optimized in traditional market settings, this study contributes to both theoretical understanding and practical implementation of Islamic economics at the grassroots level. The findings have implications for policymakers, religious institutions, market management, and traders themselves in developing comprehensive approaches to promoting ethical commerce grounded in Islamic principles.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative approach using ethnographic methods to examine the muamalah practices of vegetable and staple food traders in

Ajangmatekko Local Market. The study was conducted over a six-month period from January to June 2024, involving 30 traders selected through purposive sampling to ensure representation across different product categories, age groups, and trading experience levels. Data collection utilized multiple methods including semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and document analysis of trading records where available. According to Creswell and Poth (2023), qualitative research methods are particularly appropriate for exploring complex social phenomena in their natural contexts, allowing researchers to develop deep understanding of participants' perspectives and practices. The interviews focused on traders' understanding of Islamic commercial ethics, current trading practices, challenges in implementing Sharia principles, and suggestions for improvement. Observations were conducted during peak and off-peak trading hours to capture variations in trading behaviors and interactions. Field notes were systematically recorded and later analyzed using thematic coding procedures to identify patterns and themes related to muamalah practices.

Data analysis followed the constant comparative method, involving iterative cycles of data collection, coding, and interpretation to develop theoretical insights grounded in empirical observations (Charmaz, 2021). The research employed triangulation of data sources and methods to enhance credibility and trustworthiness of findings. Initial codes were developed inductively from the data and then compared with theoretical frameworks of Islamic muamalah to identify convergences and divergences. The study received ethical approval from the institutional review board, and all participants provided informed consent after receiving detailed information about the research purpose and procedures. To ensure cultural sensitivity and rapport building, the research team included local community members who facilitated access and provided contextual interpretation. Member checking was conducted by sharing preliminary findings with selected participants to verify interpretations and gather additional insights (Merriam & Tisdell, 2022). The analytical framework was informed by Islamic jurisprudence literature and contemporary studies on Islamic economics implementation, allowing for both emic (insider) and etic (outsider) perspectives on muamalah practices. Limitations of the study include its focus on a single market, which may limit generalizability, and reliance on self-reported practices, which may be subject to social desirability bias (Silverman, 2020).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Current State of Muamalah Understanding and Practice

The analysis of traders' understanding of Sharia muamalah principles reveals a mixed picture characterized by basic awareness of Islamic commercial ethics coupled with significant gaps in detailed knowledge and systematic application. Most participants (27 out of 30) demonstrated familiarity with general Islamic values such as honesty (*amanah*), fairness (*adl*), and avoiding deception, which they learned primarily through religious education in childhood and community

religious gatherings. However, when probed about specific muamalah concepts such as gharar, khiyar (option rights), and the detailed requirements for valid contracts, only 8 traders showed comprehensive understanding. This finding aligns with Hassan and Said's (2021) research indicating that informal religious education often focuses on general moral principles rather than specific jurisprudential details necessary for implementing Sharia compliance in commercial contexts. The gap between general awareness and specific knowledge creates challenges in translating Islamic values into concrete trading practices.

Observations revealed that traders' daily practices reflect a pragmatic blend of Islamic ethics and conventional market behaviors. For instance, while traders expressed commitment to honesty in describing product quality, competitive pressures and economic necessity sometimes led to exaggeration of product attributes or concealment of defects. According to Ahmed et al. (2023), this tension between ideal Islamic conduct and market realities is common in traditional markets where informal norms and economic survival imperatives create complex ethical negotiations. The study found that traders were more likely to strictly adhere to Islamic principles when dealing with known community members compared to transactions with outsiders, suggesting that social relationships significantly mediate ethical behavior. This pattern corresponds with Abdullah's (2022) findings that trust networks in traditional markets create differentiated ethical frameworks based on relationship proximity.

The pricing practices observed in Ajangmatekko Market demonstrate both adherence to and deviation from Islamic principles of fair pricing. Most traders based their prices on procurement costs plus a reasonable markup, which aligns with the Islamic concept of avoiding price exploitation (*al-ghaban al-fahish*). However, instances of price discrimination based on customer bargaining power and perceived wealth were common, raising questions about consistency with Islamic requirements for price transparency and fairness. Research by Zainuddin and Nordin (2024) indicates that while Islamic law permits flexible pricing based on market conditions, systematic discrimination that exploits information asymmetries conflicts with muamalah principles. Interestingly, traders justified their pricing variations by citing the need to maintain different profit margins to balance higher-paying and lower-paying customers, viewing this as a form of social redistribution rather than exploitation. This rationalization reflects what Rahman (2023) describes as "practical Islam," where religious principles are reinterpreted through local cultural and economic lenses.

The concept of measurement accuracy (*mizan*) emerged as a critical area requiring attention. While all traders used measurement tools, the calibration and accuracy of these tools varied considerably. Ten traders used traditional measurement methods (such as estimates based on containers or hand measurements) that lacked precision, potentially leading to unintentional violations of Islamic requirements for accurate measurement. The Quran explicitly commands "Give full measure and do not be of those who cause loss" (26:181), making accurate

measurement a fundamental religious obligation. According to El-Ashker and Wilson (2022), measurement accuracy in Islamic economics is not merely a technical issue but a spiritual obligation that reflects the trader's commitment to justice and fairness. The research found that traders acknowledged the importance of accurate measurement but cited cost constraints and lack of access to calibrated equipment as barriers to achieving complete accuracy in this area.

Contractual clarity represents another dimension where current practices fall short of ideal Sharia standards. Most transactions in the market occurred through verbal agreements with minimal specification of terms, conditions, or recourse mechanisms in case of disputes. While Islamic law recognizes verbal contracts as valid, contemporary scholars emphasize the importance of clear contractual terms to avoid *gharar* (contractual uncertainty) and protect the rights of all parties (Ayub, 2021). The study documented several instances where disputes arose from unclear expectations about product quality, delivery timing, or payment terms, suggesting that more explicit contracting could reduce conflicts and enhance justice. However, traders expressed preference for informal agreements based on trust and relationship history, viewing formal contracts as unnecessary and potentially disruptive to established social norms. This tension between legal clarity and social trust reflects broader debates in Islamic economics about balancing formal Sharia requirements with practical market realities (Ismail, 2023).

Challenges in Implementing Sharia Muamalah Principles

Economic pressures emerged as the most significant barrier to consistent implementation of Sharia muamalah principles, with 23 out of 30 traders citing financial challenges as the primary reason for ethical compromises. Many traders operate on thin profit margins and face intense competition from both fellow market traders and modern retail outlets, creating pressure to engage in practices that maximize short-term profits even if they conflict with Islamic ethics. This finding resonates with research by Nurdin and Rahman (2022), who found that economic vulnerability significantly predicts non-compliance with ethical trading standards among small-scale merchants. The traders explained that survival in a competitive market sometimes requires prioritizing immediate economic needs over ideal Islamic conduct, particularly when customers themselves engage in aggressive bargaining that squeezes profit margins. According to Hassan (2023), this reflects a systemic challenge in implementing Islamic economics within capitalist market structures that prioritize profit maximization over ethical considerations.

The lack of formal institutional support for Sharia compliance represents another major challenge identified in this research. Unlike formal Islamic financial institutions that have regulatory oversight and standardized procedures for ensuring Sharia compliance, traditional markets operate with minimal external supervision and limited access to Islamic economic expertise. Only 5 traders reported ever receiving any formal training or guidance on implementing Sharia muamalah principles in their trading activities. This absence of institutional

infrastructure contrasts sharply with the elaborate governance mechanisms present in Islamic banking and finance sectors (Laldin & Furqani, 2021). Traders expressed desire for practical guidance from religious scholars who understand market realities and can provide contextually appropriate advice on applying Islamic principles to specific situations they encounter. The gap between theoretical Islamic jurisprudence and practical market application emerged as a significant frustration for traders attempting to align their businesses with religious values.

Educational limitations compound the challenge of implementing sophisticated Sharia principles in trading contexts. The study found that 18 traders had completed only elementary education, and 7 had no formal schooling, limiting their ability to engage with complex jurisprudential concepts and legal reasoning. While religious knowledge was generally present through informal channels, the depth of understanding necessary for applying Islamic law to novel or ambiguous situations was often lacking. Research by Ahmad and Abdullah (2024) demonstrates that educational attainment correlates strongly with sophisticated understanding and application of Islamic commercial law. The traders who had received secondary or higher education showed greater ability to analyze their practices from an Islamic legal perspective and identify areas for improvement. This suggests that educational interventions could significantly enhance muamalah compliance, though such interventions must be designed appropriately for diverse educational backgrounds and learning styles (Zulkifli, 2022).

Cultural practices and local customs sometimes create tensions with strict interpretations of Sharia muamalah requirements, presenting traders with difficult choices between religious obligations and social expectations. For example, the common practice of giving small additional amounts (termed "bonus" or "extra") to loyal customers, while intended as generosity, can create complications around pricing transparency and fairness if not systematically applied. Similarly, the cultural expectation of extended bargaining and the social offense that might result from refusing to negotiate can conflict with Islamic preferences for clear, fixed pricing. According to Saeed (2021), the relationship between Islamic law and local custom (*urf*) is complex, with some customs being recognized as valid sources of legal interpretation while others may be rejected if they contradict fundamental Islamic principles. Traders struggled to navigate these tensions, often defaulting to cultural practices when religious requirements seemed impractical or socially awkward. This highlights the need for culturally sensitive approaches to Sharia implementation that acknowledge local contexts while maintaining fidelity to Islamic values (Kamali, 2023).

The absence of peer support networks and collective mechanisms for promoting Sharia compliance emerged as a significant structural challenge. Unlike some other contexts where traders' associations or guilds promote ethical standards and mutual accountability, the Ajangmatekko Market lacked organized structures for collective action on muamalah issues. Individual traders attempting to implement stricter Islamic standards often faced competitive disadvantages if their

practices (such as refusing to engage in price manipulation or maintaining higher ethical standards) increased costs or reduced flexibility. Game theory research on ethical markets demonstrates that collective action problems make individual ethical behavior costly in the absence of shared norms and enforcement mechanisms (Rahman et al., 2022). Several traders expressed willingness to adopt better practices if others would do so simultaneously, but feared competitive disadvantages from unilateral ethical improvements. This suggests that market-wide initiatives involving collective commitments might be more effective than individual-level interventions in promoting Sharia compliance.

Table 1. Major Challenges in Implementing Sharia Muamalah Principles

Challenge Category	Frequency (n=30)	Percentage	Specific Examples
Economic Pressures	23	76.7%	Thin profit margins, intense competition, customer price expectations
Lack of Institutional Support	25	83.3%	No regulatory oversight, limited access to Islamic scholars, absence of training programs
Educational Limitations	18	60.0%	Limited formal education, insufficient religious knowledge, difficulty understanding complex concepts
Cultural Conflicts	15	50.0%	Bargaining expectations, customary practices conflicting with Sharia, social relationship obligations
Competitive Disadvantages	20	66.7%	Fear of losing customers, inability to match unethical competitors' prices, lack of collective standards

Opportunities for Optimizing Muamalah Practices

Despite the challenges identified, the research uncovered significant opportunities for optimizing Sharia muamalah practices in Ajangmatekko Market. The strong religious identity of the community represents a foundational asset that can be leveraged to promote Islamic economic practices. All 30 traders self-identified as practicing Muslims who pray regularly and participate in religious activities, indicating that religious values are important to their self-conception and community standing. This religious commitment creates intrinsic motivation for aligning trading practices with Islamic principles when clear guidance and supportive structures are available. Research by Abdullah and Ismail (2023) demonstrates that communities with strong Islamic identity are more receptive to Islamic economic initiatives and more willing to incur short-term costs for religious compliance. The traders expressed pride in their Muslim identity and desire to

ensure their livelihoods are halal (permissible) and blessed, providing a motivational foundation for reform efforts.

The existing social capital and trust networks within the market community offer another significant opportunity for promoting ethical practices. Traders described strong relationships with fellow merchants, characterized by mutual support, information sharing, and informal cooperation. These social bonds could serve as mechanisms for collective action on muamalah implementation, allowing traders to coordinate ethical standards and support each other in maintaining them. According to Coleman's (2021) social capital theory, dense social networks facilitate norm enforcement and collective problem-solving by increasing the costs of norm violation and the benefits of cooperation. Several traders suggested that if religious leaders or respected community elders championed Sharia compliance initiatives, they would be willing to participate and encourage others to do so. This indicates potential for community-based interventions that mobilize social influence and peer accountability to promote ethical trading.

The growing awareness of Islamic economics and halal business practices in Indonesian society creates a favorable external environment for muamalah optimization efforts. Fifteen traders mentioned exposure to Islamic economic concepts through television programs, social media, or community lectures, indicating increasing public discourse about Islamic finance and commerce. This broader societal trend, documented by Nasution (2022), creates opportunities to position Sharia-compliant trading as aligned with modern Islamic economic movements and potentially attractive to increasingly conscious Muslim consumers. Some traders expressed interest in obtaining halal certification or Islamic business credentials if such programs were available and affordable, suggesting that formal recognition of Sharia compliance could provide competitive advantages. The alignment between local market initiatives and national Islamic economic development strategies could attract institutional support and resources (Hidayat, 2023).

Technological solutions present novel opportunities for addressing practical challenges in implementing muamalah principles. Mobile applications and digital tools could provide traders with real-time access to Islamic jurisprudential guidance, calculation tools for determining fair prices and profits, and record-keeping systems for tracking transactions and ensuring transparency. Research by Ahmed and Khan (2024) demonstrates that digital technologies can significantly reduce information and transaction costs associated with Sharia compliance, making ethical practices more accessible to small-scale merchants. Several younger traders expressed enthusiasm about using smartphones for business purposes and indicated openness to Islamic business applications. However, successful technology adoption would require culturally appropriate design, local language interfaces, and training programs to ensure accessibility across different age groups and educational levels (Zainuddin, 2023).

Partnership opportunities with Islamic educational institutions, religious organizations, and government agencies could provide crucial support for muamalah optimization initiatives. The research identified several potential partners including the local Islamic boarding school (pesantren), the district religious affairs office (KUA), and university Islamic economics programs that could contribute expertise, training, or resources. Collaborative approaches that involve multiple stakeholders are more likely to succeed than isolated interventions, as they can address the multifaceted nature of the implementation challenge (Hassan & Rahman, 2022). Traders specifically requested periodic training sessions led by knowledgeable Islamic scholars who could explain muamalah principles in accessible language and respond to practical questions about applying these principles in specific situations. Such partnerships could also facilitate access to microfinance through Islamic financial institutions, reducing economic pressures that currently drive ethical compromises (Laldin, 2024).

Table 2. Opportunities for Muamalah Optimization

Opportunity Area	Potential Impact	Implementation Approach	Resource Requirements
Religious Identity & Motivation	High - affects all traders	Religious education programs, integration with existing religious activities	Religious scholars, educational materials
Social Capital & Networks	High - enables collective action	Trader associations, peer accountability mechanisms, community champions	Organizational support, meeting facilities
Growing Islamic Economic Awareness	Medium - creates favorable environment	Marketing Sharia compliance, consumer education, halal certification	Certification bodies, media campaigns
Digital Technologies	Medium - addresses practical barriers	Mobile applications, digital record-keeping, online consultations	Technology development, training programs
Institutional Partnerships	High - provides sustainable support	Collaboration with pesantren, universities, government, Islamic finance	Coordination mechanisms, funding

Proposed Framework for Muamalah Optimization

Based on the empirical findings and theoretical insights, this research proposes a comprehensive framework for optimizing Sharia muamalah practices in Ajangmatekko Market organized around four interconnected pillars: education, infrastructure, community engagement, and institutional support. The educational

pillar focuses on enhancing traders' understanding of Islamic commercial jurisprudence through accessible, practice-oriented training programs that connect theoretical principles to concrete trading situations. According to Ayub (2021), effective Islamic economic education must bridge the gap between classical jurisprudence and contemporary commercial contexts, providing practitioners with both foundational knowledge and practical problem-solving skills. The proposed educational intervention includes monthly workshops conducted by Islamic scholars with market expertise, development of simple reference guides on common muamalah issues, and peer learning circles where traders can share experiences and questions. These educational initiatives should emphasize not only prohibitions but also the positive vision of Islamic commerce as a means of achieving social justice and spiritual development (Iqbal, 2023).



Figure 1. Direct Review of Sharia Muamalah Practices for Vegetable and Staple Food Traders in Traditional Markets

The infrastructure pillar addresses practical barriers to Sharia compliance by developing tools, systems, and physical resources that facilitate ethical trading practices. This includes provision of calibrated measurement equipment to ensure accuracy, development of standardized contract templates for common transactions, creation of transparent pricing guidelines, and establishment of dispute resolution mechanisms grounded in Islamic principles. Research by El-Gamal (2023) demonstrates that reducing the transaction costs of ethical behavior is crucial for widespread adoption of Sharia-compliant practices. The infrastructure development should be accompanied by training on proper use and maintenance of these

resources. Additionally, this pillar includes development of record-keeping systems that enable traders to track their compliance with muamalah principles and identify areas for improvement. Simple mobile applications designed specifically for traditional market traders could serve multiple functions including transaction recording, profit calculation according to Islamic principles, and access to basic muamalah guidance (Ahmed, 2024).

The community engagement pillar recognizes that sustainable change requires collective commitment and social reinforcement of Islamic commercial ethics. This involves creating forums for dialogue among traders about muamalah challenges and solutions, establishing peer accountability mechanisms, and developing shared standards and commitments. According to social influence theory, behavior change is more likely when new practices are adopted collectively and visibly endorsed by respected community members (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2022). The proposed approach includes formation of a traders' association dedicated to promoting Islamic business ethics, designation of "muamalah champions" who model exemplary practices and mentor others, and periodic community celebrations recognizing traders who demonstrate outstanding commitment to Sharia principles. Engaging family members and the broader community creates additional social support and accountability, as traders' reputations and social standing become linked to their ethical conduct (Rahman, 2024).

The institutional support pillar addresses the need for external resources, expertise, and legitimacy to sustain muamalah optimization efforts over time. This includes establishing formal partnerships with Islamic educational institutions that can provide ongoing scholarly guidance and training, engaging with local government to secure policy support and potentially regulatory frameworks that favor ethical trading, and connecting traders with Islamic financial institutions that can offer Sharia-compliant financing and business development services. Research indicates that successful Islamic economic initiatives typically involve multi-stakeholder collaboration that combines grassroots participation with institutional backing (Hassan, 2023). The framework proposes creation of a muamalah advisory committee comprising religious scholars, experienced traders, market management representatives, and government officials that can provide oversight, resolve complex issues, and advocate for resources and policies supporting Islamic commerce. Regular evaluation and adaptation mechanisms should be built into the institutional structure to ensure the framework remains responsive to evolving needs and challenges (Laldin, 2024).

Implementation of this comprehensive framework should follow a phased approach beginning with pilot initiatives that demonstrate feasibility and build momentum. The initial phase focuses on awareness-raising and capacity-building, introducing traders to the framework and developing necessary resources and partnerships. The second phase involves implementing core interventions such as educational programs, infrastructure provision, and formation of trader associations. The third phase emphasizes scaling successful initiatives, refining approaches based

on feedback, and institutionalizing successful practices through formal policies and ongoing support structures. Throughout implementation, participatory approaches that involve traders in decision-making and adaptation processes are essential for ensuring cultural appropriateness and community ownership (Merriam & Tisdell, 2022). Success metrics should include both quantitative indicators (such as number of traders participating in programs, adoption rates of recommended practices, reduction in disputes) and qualitative assessments of changes in traders' understanding, attitudes, and community norms around Islamic commerce.

The proposed framework acknowledges that optimization is an ongoing process rather than a fixed endpoint, requiring continuous learning, adaptation, and renewal of commitment. Islamic scholars emphasize that the goal of muamalah is not merely technical compliance with legal requirements but cultivation of character virtues such as honesty, generosity, and justice that transform economic relationships into vehicles for spiritual and social development (Saeed, 2022). Therefore, the framework incorporates spiritual dimensions alongside practical reforms, encouraging traders to view their work as ibadah (worship) and to seek divine blessings through ethical conduct. This holistic approach, integrating legal, practical, social, and spiritual dimensions, offers the most promising path toward sustainable optimization of Sharia muamalah practices in Ajangmatekko Market and similar traditional market contexts (Abdullah, 2023).

CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates that while vegetable and staple food traders in Ajangmatekko Local Market possess basic awareness of Islamic commercial ethics, significant gaps exist in detailed knowledge and systematic implementation of Sharia muamalah principles. The challenges identified—including economic pressures, limited institutional support, educational constraints, cultural tensions, and competitive dynamics—are substantial but not insurmountable. The strong religious identity of the trading community, existing social capital, growing Islamic economic awareness, technological opportunities, and potential for institutional partnerships provide a solid foundation for optimization efforts. The proposed comprehensive framework, organized around education, infrastructure, community engagement, and institutional support pillars, offers a practical pathway for enhancing Sharia compliance while respecting local contexts and addressing real constraints faced by traders. Successful implementation requires sustained commitment from multiple stakeholders including traders themselves, religious scholars, educational institutions, market management, and government agencies. The findings contribute to the broader project of realizing Islamic economic principles in grassroots commercial contexts and demonstrate that with appropriate support and culturally sensitive approaches, traditional markets can become exemplars of ethical commerce grounded in Sharia values. Future research should examine the long-term impacts of muamalah optimization initiatives and explore

comparative experiences from other traditional markets to identify best practices and contextual variations in Islamic economic implementation.

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