

The Role of Brand Authenticity in Building Consumer Loyalty Toward Islamic Brands: A Literature Review

Berry Dhiyashavana ^{a,1,*}, Ayulita Ramadhani ^{b,2}, Haryaji Catur Putera Hasman ^{c,3}

^{a,b,c} Universitas Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

¹berrydhiyashavana@usu.ac.id; ²ayulita@usu.ac.id; ³haryaji@usu.ac.id

*Correspondent Author; berrydhiyashavana@usu.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

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This article examines the role of brand authenticity in building consumer loyalty toward Islamic brands. The study responds to the growing use of halal labels, Islamic symbols, and religious narratives in marketing, where consumers increasingly evaluate whether brand claims are consistent with actual practices. A narrative literature review was conducted by synthesizing peer-reviewed international and national journal articles on brand authenticity, Islamic branding, brand trust, perceived value, repurchase intention, and consumer loyalty. The review shows that brand authenticity strengthens loyalty through four interrelated dimensions: continuity, credibility, integrity, and symbolism. In Islamic brands, these dimensions are reflected in consistent halal identity, credible halal claims, ethical and transparent business conduct, and the ability of the brand to represent consumers' religious and social values. The synthesis also indicates that brand trust and perceived value are important mechanisms that connect authenticity with loyalty. Consumers are more likely to repurchase, recommend, and defend Islamic brands when they perceive the brands as honest, value-consistent, and able to deliver functional, emotional, social, and spiritual benefits. This article proposes a conceptual framework in which brand authenticity influences consumer loyalty both directly and through brand trust and perceived value, while religiosity and halal awareness may strengthen the relationship. The review contributes to Islamic marketing literature by integrating brand authenticity theory with Islamic branding and offers practical implications for managers of halal-oriented brands.

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Introduction

The global and Indonesian halal markets have encouraged many firms to adopt Islamic symbols, halal certification, modest visual identity, and religious narratives as part of their brand strategy. Cosmetics, food and beverages, fashion, Islamic finance, hospitality, and digital services increasingly position themselves as Islamic or halal-oriented brands. This development creates market opportunities, but it also creates a managerial problem: consumers do not only ask whether a product is useful, affordable, or attractive; they also ask whether the brand is truly consistent with the Islamic values that it communicates. In

this context, Islamic brands are evaluated through both functional performance and moral consistency.

Islamic branding is commonly understood as a branding approach that connects products, organizations, and marketing practices with Islamic values and Muslim consumer needs. Alserhan (2010) explains Islamic brands as more than commercial identifiers because they may represent values, morality, and religious identity. Wilson and Liu (2011) also argue that halal branding involves emotional, ethical, and credibility challenges because Muslim consumers may become more cautious when a brand uses religious claims. Thus, an Islamic brand cannot rely only on a halal logo or Islamic vocabulary. It must demonstrate consistency between promise, process, communication, and consumer experience.

At the same time, the literature on brand authenticity has expanded because consumers are increasingly skeptical of artificial marketing claims. Brand authenticity refers to consumers' perception that a brand is genuine, honest, consistent with its core identity, and guided by values beyond short-term sales. Morhart et al. (2015) conceptualize perceived brand authenticity through continuity, credibility, integrity, and symbolism. Campagna et al. (2023) further synthesize the literature by defining brand authenticity as perceived genuineness and by emphasizing that authenticity is evaluated through multiple consumer-based cues. These perspectives are relevant for Islamic brands because religious identity can intensify consumer expectations of honesty and moral responsibility.

The problem becomes more complex when Islamic attributes are used only as symbolic communication. If a brand claims to be halal or Islamic but lacks transparent ingredients, questionable production practices, inconsistent messages, or opportunistic religious campaigns, consumers may interpret the brand as inauthentic. The authenticity gap can reduce trust and weaken loyalty. Conversely, when a brand consistently fulfills halal requirements, communicates honestly, maintains product quality, and reflects Islamic values in business behavior, consumers may perceive the brand as more trustworthy and valuable.

Consumer loyalty remains a central outcome in marketing. Classical loyalty theory views loyalty as a combination of favorable attitude and repeated behavior (Oliver, 1999), while contemporary loyalty research describes loyalty as a staged process from cognitive to affective, conative, and action loyalty. In Islamic brands, loyalty may involve more than repeat purchase. It can also include psychological comfort, confidence in halal compliance,

identification with Muslim identity, and willingness to recommend the brand to family or community members. This makes loyalty toward Islamic brands strongly connected to trust and value congruence.

Recent studies support the relevance of these relationships. Hendri and Abror (2023) found that brand authenticity influences brand loyalty in Wardah halal cosmetics through perceived value and brand trust. Rahmawaty and Rakhmawati (2022) show that Islamic branding and halal awareness positively affect trust and repurchase intention for halal cosmetics. Suhartanto et al. (2021) found that loyalty in halal cosmetics is shaped by emotional attachment and product quality, indicating that religious labels alone are insufficient. Studies on halal cosmetics further show the importance of halal certification, halal knowledge, religiosity, attitudes, digital communication, and social influence in shaping purchase and repurchase intentions (Afendi et al., 2024; Jalil et al., 2021; Kurniawati et al., 2023; Maulani et al., 2022; Shahid et al., 2023; Widyanto & Sitohang, 2022).

Although brand authenticity and Islamic branding have each been widely discussed, the integration of both streams remains limited. Most brand authenticity studies examine general consumer goods, hospitality, craft brands, or brand heritage, while Islamic branding studies often emphasize halal awareness, certification, religiosity, trust, and purchase intention. The specific role of authenticity in transforming Islamic brand claims into consumer loyalty therefore deserves conceptual synthesis. This article addresses that gap by reviewing how brand authenticity can build consumer loyalty toward Islamic brands.

The objectives of this article are threefold. First, it explains how brand authenticity is conceptualized in marketing literature. Second, it discusses how the Islamic brand context extends the meaning of authenticity through halal compliance, ethical consistency, and religious symbolism. Third, it proposes a conceptual pathway through which brand authenticity may strengthen loyalty via brand trust and perceived value. The solution offered by this review is a concise conceptual framework that can guide future empirical studies and help managers build Islamic brands that are not merely symbolic but genuinely trusted.

Method

This study uses a narrative literature review. This approach was selected because the purpose of the article is not to calculate statistical effect sizes as in a meta-analysis, but to synthesize concepts, identify patterns across previous studies, and develop a conceptual

explanation of the relationship between brand authenticity and consumer loyalty in Islamic brands. A narrative review is suitable when the literature is conceptually fragmented and when the researcher aims to connect related but not yet fully integrated research streams. The unit of analysis in this study is peer-reviewed journal articles. The literature search focused on articles published in international journals and nationally indexed Indonesian journals that discuss brand authenticity, Islamic branding, halal brands, brand trust, perceived value, consumer loyalty, repurchase intention, halal awareness, and religiosity. The search was conducted using keywords such as "brand authenticity", "Islamic branding", "Islamic brand", "halal cosmetics", "brand trust", "perceived value", "brand loyalty", and "repurchase intention". Sources were identified from journal platforms such as Emerald, Wiley, Taylor & Francis, SAGE, ScienceDirect-related databases, DOAJ, Garuda, and Indonesian open journal systems. The inclusion criteria were: (1) articles discussing brand authenticity, Islamic branding, halal brands, or consumer loyalty; (2) empirical or conceptual articles relevant to marketing and consumer behavior; (3) journal articles with clear publication information, preferably with DOI or stable journal links; and (4) studies that help explain the relationship among authenticity, trust, value, and loyalty. Foundational articles were retained when they provided key concepts, such as loyalty theory and the measurement of brand authenticity. Recent articles published from 2021 to 2026 were prioritized to meet the journal guideline requiring most references to come from the last five years. The review process was conducted in four steps. First, relevant articles were identified and screened based on title, abstract, and keywords. Second, the selected articles were grouped into three themes: brand authenticity theory, Islamic branding and halal consumer behavior, and loyalty mechanisms. Third, each article was examined using a simple extraction matrix consisting of author, year, context, main variables, and key findings. Fourth, the themes were synthesized into a conceptual framework. The analytical tool used in this article is thematic synthesis, supported by comparison across findings from previous studies. Because this is a literature review, there is no human population or survey sample; instead, the research corpus consists of selected journal articles used as the basis for conceptual analysis.

Results and Discussion

Brand Authenticity and the Authenticity Gap in Islamic Brands

Brand authenticity is important because it addresses consumer skepticism. In general marketing literature, authenticity signals that a brand is not merely manufactured through

persuasive communication but has a stable identity, credible promise, ethical orientation, and meaningful symbolic value. Morhart et al. (2015) propose four dimensions: continuity, credibility, integrity, and symbolism. Continuity reflects stability and consistency over time; credibility refers to the ability and willingness to deliver promises; integrity indicates moral principles and responsibility and symbolism captures the brand's capacity to help consumers express identity. Södergren (2021) notes that the term authenticity has developed across diverse contexts, yet its core concern remains the perceived genuineness of a brand.

In Islamic brands, authenticity becomes more sensitive because the brand borrows meaning from religion. The use of halal claims, Islamic names, Muslim influencers, modest packaging, or religious narratives can increase consumer attention, but it also raises expectations. Consumers may evaluate whether the brand's production process, ingredients, supply chain, communication style, and service behavior are consistent with the Islamic values being promoted. The problem is not the use of Islamic identity itself, but the possibility of symbolic Islamic branding without substantive commitment. This is the authenticity gap: the distance between what a brand claims and what consumers believe the brand truly practices.

Recent studies in halal cosmetics show that consumers are responsive to halal information, certification, trust, and social influence. Rahmawaty and Rakhmawati (2022) found that Islamic branding and halal awareness improve trust and repurchase intention. Widyanto and Sitohang (2022) show that halal knowledge and certification influence purchase intention through attitude among Muslim millennials. Afendi et al. (2024) find that halal awareness mediates the relationship between religiosity, country of origin, and purchase decision. These findings imply that Islamic brands need more than symbolic visibility, they need credible signals and value-based consistency.

Continuity and Credibility as the Foundation of Trust

Continuity means that a brand maintains a coherent identity across time and touchpoints. For Islamic brands, continuity can be observed in consistent halal positioning, stable product quality, careful ingredient selection, and coherent communication. A brand that frequently changes its message or uses religious identity only during seasonal campaigns may be perceived as less authentic. Continuity helps consumers feel that the brand has a clear commitment, not merely a temporary marketing tactic.

Credibility is equally important because halal claims require evidence. Islamic brands must be able to show that their promise is supported by certification, transparent information, reliable service, and consistent product performance. Wilson and Liu (2011) emphasize that halal branding involves emotional and credibility challenges because halal is associated with both religious compliance and consumer confidence. This is supported by studies showing the role of halal knowledge and certification in shaping consumer attitudes and intentions (Riswandi et al., 2022; Shahid et al., 2023; Widyanto & Sitohang, 2022).

Brand trust is therefore a central mechanism. Portal et al. (2019) argue that brand authenticity contributes to brand trust because consumers trust brands that appear sincere and consistent. Hernandez-Fernandez and Lewis (2019) also find that authenticity leads to perceived value and brand trust. In Islamic brands, trust is not limited to product reliability. It includes confidence that the brand respects halal standards, avoids misleading religious claims, and acts responsibly toward Muslim consumers. When trust is established, consumers experience reduced perceived risk and stronger willingness to repurchase.

Integrity and Symbolism as Sources of Perceived Value

Integrity refers to the perception that a brand is guided by moral principles. In Islamic brands, integrity is closely associated with honesty, fairness, transparency, and responsibility. This dimension is especially relevant because Islamic branding is linked to ethical expectations. A halal-oriented brand that communicates modesty but uses manipulative promotions, hides ingredient information, or ignores consumer complaints may be seen as inconsistent with Islamic values. By contrast, a brand that treats halal compliance as part of its organizational identity may generate stronger moral credibility.

Symbolism refers to the brand's ability to help consumers express who they are. Islamic brands can support identity expression by allowing consumers to align consumption with religious values, lifestyle aspirations, and social belonging. Muslim consumers may choose halal cosmetics or modest fashion not only because the products function well, but also because the brands help them express confidence, modesty, and religious consistency. This symbolic value becomes a source of emotional and social value. Suhartanto et al. (2021) found that emotional attachment and product quality are important drivers of loyalty in halal cosmetics, suggesting that loyalty is not built by religiosity alone but by the integration of quality and emotional meaning.

Perceived value links authenticity to loyalty because consumers evaluate whether a brand provides benefits that justify continued preference. For Islamic brands, perceived value includes functional value such as quality and safety, emotional value such as comfort and pride, social value such as identity recognition, and spiritual value such as confidence in halal compliance. Septyarini and Sekarsari (2024) show that halal brand image, perceived quality, and satisfaction influence purchase intention for Wardah products. This supports the argument that Islamic brand loyalty grows when consumers perceive both product value and value congruence.

Consumer Loyalty Toward Islamic Brands

Consumer loyalty toward Islamic brands can be viewed as a multidimensional outcome. It includes repeat purchase, positive word of mouth, resistance to switching, and willingness to defend the brand. Classical loyalty theory explains that loyalty requires both favorable attitude and repeat behavior (Oliver, 1999). In Islamic brands, favorable attitude may be formed through trust, religious fit, value congruence, and emotional attachment. Behavioral loyalty then appears in repurchase and recommendation.

Hendri and Abror (2023) provide direct evidence in the context of Wardah halal cosmetics by showing that brand authenticity influences brand loyalty and that perceived value and brand trust act as mediating variables. This finding is important because it connects authenticity theory with halal brand practice. The study suggests that authenticity is not simply an image variable; it can shape psychological mechanisms that lead to loyalty. Similar logic appears in general brand research, where brand trust and perceived authenticity are linked to loyalty-related outcomes (Portal et al., 2019), and in general brand research showing that authenticity strengthens relationship quality, trust, and behavioral intentions (Fritz et al., 2017; Portal et al., 2019). Recent evidence from Deng et al. (2025) further confirms that brand authenticity can shape brand loyalty directly and indirectly through brand attachment and brand trust.

However, loyalty in Islamic brands should not be assumed to arise automatically from religiosity. Several studies indicate that religiosity, halal awareness, certification, attitude, and social influence can have different strengths depending on consumer segment and product context (Al Gadri et al., 2025; Jalil et al., 2021; Maulani et al., 2022; Supriani et al., 2025; Ummah et al., 2025). This means that brand authenticity should be understood as a bridge. It translates Islamic symbols into credible experiences and transforms religious relevance into trust, perceived value, and loyalty.

The following synthesis summarizes how the four dimensions of brand authenticity may be applied to Islamic brands.

Table 1. Synthesis of Brand Authenticity Dimensions in Islamic Brands

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Meaning in Brand Authenticity</i>	<i>Translation in Islamic Brands</i>	<i>Loyalty Implication</i>
Continuity	Stable identity and consistency over time.	Consistent halal positioning, ingredients, quality, and communication.	Reduces uncertainty and supports repeated preference.
Credibility	Ability and willingness to deliver promises.	Reliable certification, transparent information, and evidence-based halal claims.	Builds confidence and strengthens brand trust.
Integrity	Moral principles and responsibility.	Ethical promotion, fair business conduct, and sincerity in Islamic values.	Creates moral credibility and emotional attachment.
Symbolism	Capacity to express consumer identity.	Represents Muslim lifestyle, modesty, and religious value congruence.	Encourages identification, recommendation, and loyalty.

Table source: Author's synthesis (2026)

Proposed Conceptual Framework

Based on the review, this article proposes that brand authenticity is an antecedent of consumer loyalty toward Islamic brands. The relationship can occur directly because an authentic brand creates a favorable overall evaluation. It can also occur indirectly through brand trust and perceived value. Brand trust explains why consumers feel confident that the brand's Islamic claims are reliable. Perceived value explains why consumers believe the brand offers functional, emotional, social, and spiritual benefits. Religiosity and halal awareness may strengthen these relationships because consumers with higher religious concern and halal knowledge may be more sensitive to authenticity cues.

The proposed framework can be expressed as follows: brand authenticity, consisting of continuity, credibility, integrity, and symbolism, influences brand trust and perceived value; brand trust and perceived value then influence consumer loyalty. Religiosity and halal awareness may moderate the effect of authenticity on trust and perceived value. This framework is consistent with the literature showing the role of authenticity in trust formation (Portal et al., 2019), the relationship between authenticity, perceived value, and trust (Hernandez-Fernandez & Lewis, 2019), and the specific evidence from halal cosmetics where authenticity affects loyalty through trust and value (Hendri & Abror, 2023).

The theoretical implication is that Islamic brand loyalty should be understood through both brand management and Islamic marketing lenses. Authenticity theory explains how

consumers judge whether a brand is genuine, while Islamic branding explains why halal, ethical behavior, and religious identity matter. Combining the two perspectives helps explain why some Islamic brands earn long-term loyalty while others remain vulnerable to consumer skepticism. The practical implication is that managers should build authenticity through substantive actions: transparent halal information, consistent product quality, ethical communication, community education, and alignment between religious claims and business practices. Putri and Dirgantari (2024) also emphasize the importance of consistency, transparency, and emotional connection in strengthening brand trust, which is relevant for Islamic brands that seek sustainable consumer relationships.

Digital Communication and Authenticity Cues

Digital communication is an increasingly important arena for Islamic brand authenticity. Many halal cosmetics and Muslim lifestyle brands interact with consumers through Instagram, TikTok, marketplace reviews, and influencer campaigns. These channels can strengthen authenticity when they provide transparent product education, honest ingredient information, realistic testimonials, and consistent religiously sensitive communication. However, digital channels can also expose authenticity problems faster than traditional media. Inconsistent influencer behavior, exaggerated claims, unclear sponsorship disclosure, or consumer complaints about halal information may damage trust. Studies on halal cosmetics show that online reviews, social media marketing, and influencer-related variables can shape purchase intention and repurchase intention (Al Gadri et al., 2025; Jalil et al., 2021; Supriani et al., 2025). This suggests that authenticity must be managed not only in product formulation and certification, but also in everyday digital interaction.

The digital context also changes the meaning of credibility. In the past, credibility was mostly communicated through packaging, advertising, and formal certification. Today, credibility is co-created through consumer comments, rating systems, beauty reviews, influencer narratives, and brand responses to public questions. Islamic brands that respond clearly to questions about ingredients, halal status, product safety, and ethical issues can strengthen perceived credibility. Brands that ignore criticism or provide vague responses may weaken perceived authenticity. Therefore, brand managers need a communication system that is consistent, evidence-based, and responsive. Authenticity should be visible in how a brand answers consumer concerns, not only in how it designs promotional campaigns.

Religiosity and Halal Awareness as Boundary Conditions

Religiosity and halal awareness are important boundary conditions in the relationship between brand authenticity and loyalty. Consumers with high halal awareness may evaluate authenticity more carefully because they understand the importance of ingredients, certification, and compliance. Consumers with strong religiosity may also be more sensitive to whether Islamic values are used sincerely or only commercially. However, previous studies show that religiosity does not always have a direct effect on loyalty or purchase intention. Suhartanto et al. (2021), for example, found that loyalty toward halal cosmetics is driven more by emotional attachment and product quality than by religiosity alone. This indicates that religiosity may strengthen attention to Islamic cues, but loyalty still requires credible value delivery.

This boundary condition is important for segmentation. Islamic brands serve consumers with different levels of religious knowledge, halal concern, lifestyle orientation, and brand involvement. For highly halal-conscious consumers, authenticity may depend strongly on certification, transparency, and sharia consistency. For lifestyle-oriented consumers, authenticity may also depend on design, social identity, influencer credibility, and emotional attachment. For price-sensitive consumers, authenticity must be accompanied by accessible value. Therefore, a single symbolic strategy is unlikely to build loyalty across all segments. Managers need to translate authenticity into specific value propositions that fit the target segment while maintaining the same core integrity.

Research Propositions Derived from the Literature

Based on the synthesis, several research propositions can be formulated for future empirical testing. First, perceived brand authenticity is expected to have a positive effect on consumer loyalty toward Islamic brands. Second, brand trust is expected to mediate the relationship between brand authenticity and consumer loyalty because authenticity reduces perceived risk and increases confidence in halal and ethical claims. Third, perceived value is expected to mediate the relationship between brand authenticity and loyalty because authentic Islamic brands offer not only functional benefits but also emotional, social, and spiritual value. Fourth, religiosity may strengthen the effect of authenticity on trust when consumers are highly attentive to Islamic values. Fifth, halal awareness may strengthen the effect of authenticity on perceived value because consumers with higher awareness can better appreciate transparent halal practices. These propositions

can be tested using survey-based quantitative methods such as structural equation modeling, or explored qualitatively through interviews with Muslim consumers.

Managerial Implications for Islamic Brand Managers

The review indicates several managerial implications. First, Islamic brands should make halal and ethical claims verifiable. Certification, ingredient transparency, supplier information, and production standards should be communicated in language that consumers can understand. Second, brands should maintain consistency across touchpoints. Packaging, advertising, customer service, influencer partnerships, and after-sales communication should communicate the same values. Third, brands should treat Islamic values as organizational principles, not as campaign themes. This means that honesty, fairness, modesty, and responsibility need to appear in pricing, product development, complaint handling, and community engagement. Fourth, brands should build emotional attachment through education and empowerment. For example, halal cosmetics brands can educate consumers about safe ingredients, self-care, modest beauty, and responsible consumption. Such actions make authenticity more concrete and can strengthen loyalty.

Finally, managers should monitor authenticity risk. When a brand uses religious identity, small inconsistencies can become reputational issues because consumers may interpret them as moral failure rather than ordinary marketing mistakes. Authenticity risk can be reduced through internal audits of halal compliance, clear influencer guidelines, transparent complaint handling, and continuous consumer education. Islamic brands that manage these aspects systematically are more likely to transform religious relevance into long-term loyalty.

Future research should test the proposed model empirically across different Islamic brand categories. Halal cosmetics are a promising context because consumers evaluate ingredients, safety, beauty identity, and religious fit at the same time. However, the model can also be examined in halal food, modest fashion, Islamic banking, halal tourism, and Muslim-friendly digital services. Future studies may also adapt existing brand authenticity scales to include halal transparency, sharia compliance, ethical communication, and spiritual value. Qualitative research is needed to understand how consumers interpret authenticity when brands use Islamic symbols, while quantitative research can examine mediation and moderation effects across consumer segments.

Conclusion

This literature review concludes that brand authenticity plays an important role in building consumer loyalty toward Islamic brands. In this context, authenticity is not only a matter of being original or unique. It is also a matter of consistency between Islamic claims, halal compliance, ethical behavior, communication, and consumer experience. Islamic brands become authentic when consumers perceive that the brand has continuity, credibility, integrity, and symbolism that are consistent with Islamic values.

The synthesis indicates that brand authenticity can strengthen loyalty through brand trust and perceived value. Trust emerges when consumers believe that a brand is honest, reliable, and consistent in fulfilling halal and ethical promises. Perceived value emerges when consumers experience functional, emotional, social, and spiritual benefits from the brand. Together, these mechanisms encourage repurchase, recommendation, and resistance to switching. Religiosity and halal awareness may further strengthen the effect because consumers with higher concern for halal and Islamic values are more likely to evaluate authenticity carefully.

The main contribution of this article is the integration of brand authenticity theory with Islamic branding literature. The proposed framework positions brand authenticity as an antecedent, brand trust and perceived value as mediators, consumer loyalty as the outcome, and religiosity and halal awareness as potential moderators. For practitioners, the review suggests that Islamic brands should avoid relying only on symbols and slogans. Sustainable loyalty requires transparent halal information, consistent product quality, ethical communication, and genuine alignment between brand promises and business practices. Future empirical research should test this framework across different Islamic brand categories and develop measurement indicators that are more sensitive to halal, sharia, and spiritual value dimensions.

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