

Analysis of Traders' Behavior Reviewed from The Perspective of Islamic Business Ethics About Thrifting Trends at The Morning Market of Tugu Pahlawan Surabaya

Muhammad Farhan Arya Kusuma^{1*}, Clarashinta Canggih²

Abstract: *This research aims to analyze the behavior of thrift traders at Pasar Pagi Tugu Pahlawan, Surabaya, from the perspective of Islamic business ethics. The popular thrifting phenomenon is analyzed using a phenomenological approach to understand the experiences and values that underlie the business practices of traders. This research uses qualitative methods by collecting data through interviews and direct observation. Purposive sampling technique was applied to select informants who were relevant to the research objectives. The research results show that thrifty traders' behavior reflects the principles of Islamic business ethics, such as unity, balance, freedom, responsibility, truth and prosperity. Thrift traders combine financial profits with social and environmental responsibility, maintaining transparency and demonstrating integrity in business practices. They maintain a balance between personal profit by providing quality goods to buyers at affordable prices, supporting clothing recycling, and reducing textile waste. Apart from that, traders run their business creatively and innovatively, but still maintain honesty in describing the condition of the goods they sell. This research concludes that the business practices of thrift traders in Surabaya do not only focus on economic profits, but also contribute to environmental preservation and social empowerment. This study provides insight into how the principles of Islamic business ethics can be applied in a modern business context, particularly in supporting social and environmental goodwill.*

Keywords: Thrifting, Islamic Business Ethics, Trader Behavior.

¹Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Ketintang, Kec. Gayungan, Surabaya, Jawa Timur, 60231, Indonesia

²Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Ketintang, Kec. Gayungan, Surabaya, Jawa Timur, 60231, Indonesia

e-mail: muh.19058@mhs.unesa.ac.id¹, clarashintacanggih@unesa.ac.id².

*Corresponding Author

1. Introduction

Markets play a vital role in fulfilling people's daily needs by facilitating the exchange of goods and services while simultaneously serving as centers of economic and social interaction. Beyond their commercial function, markets provide opportunities for individuals to build relationships, exchange information, and support local economic activities. They exist in various forms, including traditional markets, retail stores, shopping malls, plazas, and trade centers, each serving different consumer preferences and business characteristics. Trade itself represents one of the oldest and most common forms of economic activity, encompassing the exchange of products ranging from basic necessities to luxury goods in order to satisfy diverse consumer needs (Alwi, 2018). Among the various traditional markets in Surabaya, the Tugu Pahlawan Morning Market has developed into one of the city's prominent centers for thrifting activities, operating as a legally recognized informal economic sector. The increasing popularity of thrift shopping, particularly among young consumers, reflects the growing demand for affordable imported second-hand products, as evidenced by the rising number of thrift bazaars and second-hand shopping activities reported in Surabaya (Liputan6.com, 2023).

The Tugu Pahlawan Morning Market, commonly known as TUPAL, accommodates approximately fifty traders who specialize in selling a wide variety of second-hand products, making it one of the largest thrifting marketplaces in Surabaya. The growing popularity of thrifting has transformed the market into an important commercial space where economic opportunities intersect with changing consumer lifestyles. Although thrifting is often associated simply with the sale of second-hand goods, the concept is broader than merely trading used products. Natalia (2020) explains that the term thrift literally refers to being economical or frugal, while in a business context it represents the practice of selling quality pre-owned products that remain suitable for use. Similarly, the Urban Dictionary describes thrifting as the activity of purchasing second-hand goods to obtain unique or high-quality items at more affordable prices. This understanding suggests that thrifting is not solely driven by economic considerations but is also influenced by changing consumer preferences

toward value-conscious and sustainable consumption. Consequently, the rapid growth of the thrifting industry raises important questions regarding how traders conduct their business activities and whether the ethical values promoted in Islamic business principles are reflected in their daily commercial practices.

Although the terms thrifting and preloved are often used interchangeably, they refer to different concepts. According to Aswadana et al. (2022), thrifting generally refers to imported second-hand products obtained from overseas markets, whereas preloved items are previously owned goods that are resold by their original owners. Despite sharing the common characteristic of offering reusable products, the two differ primarily in the origin and distribution of the goods. In practice, thrifting is predominantly associated with fashion products such as clothing, shoes, bags, and accessories, particularly those with vintage or retro characteristics that remain attractive to consumers. Consequently, the thrifting business has developed into more than simply the resale of used products; it has become a commercial activity that creates economic value by extending the life cycle of products that remain functional and marketable.

The rapid growth of the thrifting industry has been strongly influenced by changes in consumer behavior following the COVID-19 pandemic. Economic uncertainty encouraged many consumers to seek more affordable alternatives, making second-hand fashion products an attractive option due to their relatively lower prices compared to new products. As a result, thrifting has evolved from a cost-saving strategy into a lifestyle trend, particularly among younger generations who value affordability, uniqueness, and sustainability. This development is reflected in the increasing volume of imported used clothing as well as the growing number of thrift sellers operating through both traditional markets and e-commerce platforms (Athirah, 2022; Syahputra & Prastiwi, 2023). The expansion of the thrifting business not only creates new economic opportunities for traders but also raises important ethical considerations regarding transparency, fairness, responsibility, and honesty in commercial transactions. Therefore, examining the business behavior of thrift traders from the perspective of Islamic business ethics becomes increasingly relevant to understand how religious values are implemented within this emerging business model.

This market offers thrifting products such as clothing, shoes, bags, and accessories that have high economic value but are sold at affordable prices so that they attract public interest. Its strategic location around the Heroes Monument area also strengthens its attraction. One of the thrifting markets in Surabaya is the Tugu Pahlawan Morning Market (Tupal). This market is the center of second-hand sales in the city of Surabaya, with about fifty traders selling there every day. One of the traders in the Tupal Article is a thrifting trader. In Islam, buying and selling is basically allowed. This ability is based on the words of Allah QS. Al-Baqarah 275 as follows:

الَّذِينَ يَأْكُلُونَ الرِّبَا لَا يَقُومُونَ إِلَّا كَمَا يَقُومُ الَّذِي يَخِيطُهُ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنَ الْمَسِّ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّهُمْ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا الْبَيْعُ مِثْلُ الرِّبَا وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا فَمَنْ جَاءَهُ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ فَانْتَهَى فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَمَنْ عَادَ فَأُولَئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿٢٧٥﴾

It means: "Indeed, those who eat riba cannot stand except as the one who is entered by the devil because of the touch of madness. This is because they say, 'Indeed, buying and selling is the same as usury.' Even though Allah has legalized buying and selling and forbids usury. Whoever receives a warning from his Lord and ceases, then to him what was past; and the business is up to Allah. And whoever repeats (eating riba), then they are the inhabitants of Hell; they remain in it." The meaning of the verse is that Allah strictly forbids Muslims to illegally take other people's property or carry out economic transactions that violate sharia, such as those containing elements of usury, maysir, gharar, and other elements that are clearly prohibited in Islam.

In Islamic economics, all business activities are expected to comply with the principles of Sharia to ensure that economic transactions generate not only financial benefits but also ethical and spiritual value. Accordingly, commercial transactions must be free from elements prohibited in Islam, such as riba, maysir, and gharar. Hermawansyah et al. (2023) define riba as income obtained through unjust means, particularly in the form of additional charges or interest on principal debt. Similarly, Baihaqi and Akram (2023) describe maysir as transactions that rely on uncertainty or speculative outcomes, while Zulfahmi and Maulana (2022) explain that gharar refers to transactions containing excessive uncertainty or ambiguity that may cause injustice or financial loss to one of the contracting parties. Consequently, Muslims are encouraged to conduct business in accordance with established Islamic principles by fulfilling the essential pillars and conditions of trade, ensuring fairness, transparency, and mutual consent in every transaction. Compliance with these ethical principles is expected to create

business practices that not only achieve economic objectives but also promote justice, trust, and barakah (blessings) in both worldly and spiritual dimensions.

Previous studies have demonstrated that Islamic business ethics can be implemented in various forms of commercial activities. Hidayat and Rahmaniah (2019) found that many traditional market traders have practiced ethical principles such as unity (tawhid), balance ('adl), free will (ikhtiyar), responsibility, and ihsan through honest transactions, fairness in measurement, fulfillment of promises, and respectful treatment of consumers, although the implementation of these principles remains inconsistent among traders. These findings indicate that the application of Islamic business ethics varies depending on the characteristics of business actors and the context in which commercial activities take place. However, previous studies have primarily focused on conventional traditional markets, while limited attention has been given to the rapidly growing thrifting business, which possesses distinctive characteristics related to second-hand products, information asymmetry, product quality uncertainty, and increasing environmental awareness. These unique characteristics make the thrifting business an important context for examining how Islamic business ethics are interpreted and practiced in contemporary commercial activities. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the behavior of thrift traders at the Tugu Pahlawan Morning Market, Surabaya, from the perspective of Islamic business ethics, thereby providing a deeper understanding of the implementation of ethical principles within an emerging and increasingly popular business sector.

2. Materials and Methods

This study employed a qualitative research method to explore the behavior of thrift traders at the Tugu Pahlawan Morning Market, Surabaya, from the perspective of Islamic business ethics. A qualitative approach was selected because the study aims to gain an in-depth understanding of a contemporary social phenomenon by exploring the experiences, perspectives, and meanings constructed by individuals involved in the thrifting business. The study adopted a phenomenological approach, which seeks to understand how individuals interpret and experience a particular phenomenon in their daily lives. Through this approach, the researcher was able to explore the subjective dimensions of traders' business behavior and identify how Islamic ethical values are reflected in their commercial practices.

The primary data used in this study were obtained directly from the research participants. Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews, direct observations, and documentation. Interviews were carried out to explore the participants' experiences, perceptions, and business practices, while direct observations enabled the researcher to examine how these practices were implemented in the actual business environment. Documentation was also utilized to complement the information obtained from interviews and observations, providing a broader understanding of the research context and strengthening the overall description of the phenomenon under investigation.

This study employed a non-probability sampling method using a purposive sampling technique. This technique was chosen because it enables the researcher to select participants who possess relevant knowledge and experience related to the research objectives. Accordingly, the informants consisted of thrift traders actively operating at the Tugu Pahlawan Morning Market who were considered capable of providing rich and meaningful information regarding the implementation of Islamic business ethics in their daily business activities. The combination of interviews, observations, and documentation allowed the researcher to obtain comprehensive empirical data, thereby facilitating a deeper understanding of how the principles of Islamic business ethics are practiced within the context of the thrifting business.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Research Context and Informant Characteristics

The Tugu Pahlawan Morning Market is located in Bubutan District, Surabaya, an area recognized for its historical significance due to its proximity to the Heroes Monument, a landmark commemorating the Battle of November 10, 1945. Operating daily from approximately 06.00 to 11.00 WIB, the market functions as one of the major centers of informal economic activities in Surabaya, accommodating traders who offer a wide variety of products, including second-hand clothing (thrifting items), accessories, antiques, and daily necessities. The market attracts a diverse range of consumers, particularly on weekends and public holidays, because of its affordable prices and the availability of unique second-hand products with relatively good quality. Its strategic location and accessibility through both private and public transportation have further strengthened its position as one of the city's

most active traditional marketplaces.

Beyond its role as a trading center, the Tugu Pahlawan Morning Market represents an appropriate setting for examining the rapid growth of the thrifting industry in Indonesia. The increasing demand for second-hand fashion products reflects shifting consumer preferences toward affordable alternatives while simultaneously indicating greater awareness of sustainable consumption through product reuse and waste reduction. As a result, the market provides an empirical setting where economic objectives, environmental concerns, and ethical considerations intersect in everyday commercial activities. This context makes the market particularly relevant for investigating how Islamic business ethics are interpreted and implemented by thrift traders within a contemporary business environment.

To obtain a comprehensive understanding of these business practices, this study conducted in-depth interviews with two thrift traders selected through purposive sampling based on their business experience. The first informant, Mr. Yanto, has operated a thrift business for more than ten years and represents an experienced trader who has successfully established a reputable business within the market. The second informant, Mr. Feri, has been engaged in the thrifting business for approximately two years and represents a newer generation of traders adapting to the increasing popularity of the industry. The inclusion of informants with different levels of experience enables this study to capture diverse perspectives regarding the implementation of Islamic business ethics in daily business activities while identifying values that remain consistently practiced regardless of business tenure.

Overall, the findings indicate that although the informants differ in terms of business experience, both demonstrate a common commitment to conducting business in accordance with Islamic ethical values. Their perspectives consistently emphasize that business success should not be measured solely by financial gain but also by honesty, fairness, responsibility, and concern for consumers and the surrounding environment. These shared values provide the foundation for the subsequent discussion on how the principles of unity, balance, freedom, responsibility, truth, and virtue are manifested in the business behavior of thrift traders at the Tugu Pahlawan Morning Market.

3.2 Ethical Business Practices among Thrift Traders

Overall, the interview findings indicate that the business practices of thrift traders at the Tugu Pahlawan Morning Market reflect the practical implementation of Islamic business ethics in their daily commercial activities. Although the informants differ in terms of business experience, both consistently emphasized that business should not merely pursue financial gain but should also uphold ethical values that promote fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social welfare. The findings suggest that ethical considerations are embedded in the traders' decision-making processes, influencing how they interact with consumers, maintain product quality, determine prices, and fulfill their responsibilities toward society and the environment. Rather than operating as isolated ethical concepts, the principles of Islamic business ethics collectively shape the traders' business behavior and contribute to the sustainability of their commercial activities.

The analysis further demonstrates that the implementation of Islamic business ethics among thrift traders can be understood through six interrelated principles, namely unity (tawhid), balance ('adl), freedom (ikhtiyar), responsibility, truth (sidq), and virtue (ihsan). These principles do not function independently; instead, they complement one another in guiding ethical business conduct. Table 1 summarizes the key empirical findings and their interpretations based on the interview results.

Table 1. Summary of Ethical Business Practices among Thrift Traders

Principle	Empirical Findings	Interpretation
Unity (Tawhid)	Traders perceive business as a form of worship and emphasize ethical intentions beyond financial profit.	Business activities are oriented toward achieving barakah (blessings) by integrating religious values into commercial practices.
Balance ('Adl)	Traders offer affordable prices while maintaining product quality and considering customer satisfaction.	Economic objectives are balanced with social welfare and environmental sustainability.
Freedom (Ikhtiyar)	Traders independently determine prices and marketing strategies while providing	Entrepreneurial freedom is exercised within ethical boundaries that prioritize

Principle	Empirical Findings	Interpretation
Responsibility	transparent information regarding product conditions.	honesty and consumer rights.
	Traders remain accountable for product quality, provide accurate information, and respond to customer concerns.	Business responsibility extends beyond individual profit to include accountability toward consumers, society, and the environment.
Truth (Sidq) and Virtue (Ihsan)	Traders emphasize honesty, fairness, transparency, and good intentions in every transaction.	Ethical conduct strengthens consumer trust while promoting <i>maslahah</i> (public benefit) through responsible business practices.

Source: Data processed, 2025

As summarized in Table 1, the findings demonstrate that the ethical business practices of thrift traders are not represented by a single principle but rather by the integration of several interrelated principles of Islamic business ethics. Although each principle possesses its own conceptual characteristics, the interview results indicate that these values are implemented simultaneously in the traders' daily business activities. This suggests that ethical business behavior is not formed through isolated actions but through a holistic understanding of Islamic values that influence how traders make decisions, interact with consumers, and manage their businesses.

A closer examination of the findings reveals that the principles of unity, balance, freedom, responsibility, truth, and virtue reinforce one another in shaping ethical commercial practices. For example, the traders' commitment to providing transparent information regarding product conditions reflects not only the principles of truth and virtue, but also strengthens their responsibility toward consumers. Likewise, the freedom to determine prices and business strategies is consistently accompanied by fairness and honesty, demonstrating that entrepreneurial autonomy is exercised within the ethical boundaries prescribed by Islamic teachings. This interconnectedness indicates that Islamic business ethics should be understood as a comprehensive ethical framework rather than as a collection of independent moral principles.

Another important finding concerns the relationship between ethical values and business sustainability. The interview results suggest that the implementation of Islamic business ethics contributes not only to maintaining religious and moral commitments but also to strengthening consumer trust and long-term business relationships. Informants consistently emphasized that transparency, fairness, and responsibility encourage customer satisfaction and repeat purchases, thereby supporting the continuity of their businesses. This finding implies that ethical behavior is perceived not as an obstacle to business performance but as a strategic asset that enhances credibility and competitiveness in the increasingly popular thrifting industry.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that the application of Islamic business ethics extends beyond the relationship between traders and consumers. Ethical considerations are also reflected in the traders' awareness of broader social and environmental responsibilities. By promoting the circulation of reusable clothing, thrift traders indirectly contribute to reducing textile waste while providing affordable products to the community. This demonstrates that ethical business practices simultaneously generate economic, social, and environmental benefits, reflecting the Islamic concept of *maslahah* (public benefit). Therefore, the thrifting business illustrates how contemporary commercial activities can remain economically viable while upholding the ethical principles promoted in Islamic business teachings.

Based on these findings, the subsequent discussion elaborates on each principle of Islamic business ethics in greater detail. The analysis integrates empirical evidence from the interviews with the relevant theoretical framework to explain how each ethical principle is manifested in the everyday business practices of thrift traders at the Tugu Pahlawan Morning Market.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that the business behavior of thrift traders at the Tugu Pahlawan Morning Market generally reflects the implementation of the core principles of Islamic business ethics, namely unity, balance, free will, responsibility, truth, and virtue. The findings indicate that these principles are

manifested through honest and transparent business practices, responsibility for product quality, fair treatment of consumers, and awareness of social and environmental responsibilities. Rather than merely pursuing financial profit, thrift traders seek to balance economic objectives with broader ethical values by providing affordable quality products while supporting clothing reuse and reducing textile waste. These findings demonstrate that the growing thrifting business can serve as a contemporary example of how Islamic business ethics can be practically implemented in everyday commercial activities, where economic sustainability is aligned with social welfare and environmental preservation.

Furthermore, this study highlights that the application of Islamic business ethics is not limited to conventional business settings but is also relevant to emerging business models such as the thrifting industry. The findings provide empirical evidence that ethical values can coexist with commercial objectives, enabling traders to create economic value while contributing to social welfare and environmental sustainability. Therefore, this research contributes to enriching the discussion on Islamic business ethics by demonstrating its practical relevance in addressing contemporary business practices and promoting more responsible and sustainable entrepreneurial behavior.

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