

RELIGIOSITY AS A MODERATOR OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTION OF SAVING INTENTION

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Abstract

The development of the Islamic banking industry in Indonesia is growing rapidly in line with increasing public awareness of Sharia-based finance. Malang, as a city with a large student population, is a potential market for Islamic banks. However, despite the majority of Indonesians being Muslim, students' interest in saving in Islamic banks still faces challenges. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of knowledge and perception on students' interest in saving in Malang and to examine the role of religiosity as a moderating variable. This study used quantitative methods. Data were obtained by distributing questionnaires to students in Malang using a non-probability sampling technique. The sample size was set at 298 respondents, and data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares (PLS) with the assistance of SmartPLS software. The results show that knowledge and perception have a positive and significant effect on students' interest in saving in Islamic banks. However, religiosity was not proven to moderate the influence of knowledge or perception on interest in saving. This finding indicates that students' decisions to save are more influenced by rational considerations regarding Islamic banking products than by religiosity alone.

Keywords: Knowledge, Perception, Religiosity, Saving Intention

INTRODUCTION

Several years ago, the world experienced an economic crisis that also affected the Indonesian economy (Abdi, 2020). However, financial institutions played a key role in recovery by channeling funds and providing financial services to the public, thus supporting growth, equitable development, and national stability (Utama, 2020). Banking, as a financial institution, plays a crucial role in collecting public funds and redistributing them in the form of loans (Adawiyah, 2024). In Indonesia, banking is regulated by Law No. 7 of 1992, which distinguishes between commercial banks and Rural Credit Banks (BPR), both of which operate on conventional principles (Adawiyah, 2024). Over time, Islamic banking emerged in response to the aspirations of the Muslim community, who rejected the interest system as contrary to Islamic principles (Kholilah et al., 2020; Yeni et al., 2023). Indonesia, with the largest Muslim population in the world, at approximately 231 million people or 12.7% of the total global Muslim population (RISSC, 2021), holds significant potential for the development of Islamic banking. However, the growth of this sector still lags behind other countries (Selasi et al., 2022) even though the development trend continues to increase (Putra & Safitri, 2021).

In principle, Islamic banks offer a profit-sharing system that differentiates them from conventional banks. However, despite their well-known presence, public participation remains low. Data shows that only 9.8% of Islamic economics students save at Islamic banks, while 90.2% still prefer conventional banks (Prasasti, 2020). Similar findings were obtained by Imanuddin (Imanuddin, 2019) and Aliah (Aliah, 2021), who revealed that the majority of Islamic banking students prefer conventional banks. This indicates a gap between market potential and realized public interest in Islamic banking. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (Ajzen, 1985), knowledge, perception, and religiosity can influence a person's interest. If student interest is low, this can hinder the development of Islamic banks. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the factors involved, especially among students who are potential future users.

Several studies have shown that knowledge has a positive influence on interest in saving in Islamic banks (Hartiyah, 2014; Himmah, 2017; Mahgalena et al., 2021; Novianti & Hakim, 2021; Siregar et al., 2021). However, conflicting results were found by Wijaya et al. (Wijaya et al., 2020), Kurnia et al. (2024), and Nengsih et al. (Nengsih et al., 2021), who stated that knowledge had no significant effect. Similarly, with regard to perception, several studies found a significant influence on interest in saving (Afiah, 2021; Ilfita & Canggih, 2021; Siregar et al., 2021), but other studies found the opposite (Zuhirsyan & Nurlinda, 2021). Meanwhile, religiosity, as a factor influencing individual behavior has also been shown to moderate the relationship between knowledge and perceptions and savings interest (Araffi & Haryono, 2022; Firmansyah et al., 2019; Haryono et al., 2021). However, research by Novianti & Hakim (Novianti & Hakim, 2021) found that perceptions can act as a moderating variable between religiosity and savings interest.

Previous studies have produced mixed empirical evidence regarding the influence of knowledge and perception on saving interest in Islamic banks. Similarly, the moderating role of religiosity remains conceptually uncertain, as prior studies have reported inconsistent outcomes. These inconsistent highlight the importance of further investigation, particularly among university students in Malang City who, despite exposure to Islamic economics education, still predominantly prefer conventional banks, a behavioral paradox widely observed in previous studies (Prasasti, 2020); (Aliah, 2021) that offers a relevant context for examining the interplay of cognitive and religious factors in financial decision making. Given these inconsistent and the behavioral gap observed, this study aims to analyze the influence of knowledge and perception on students' saving interest in Islamic banks, with religiosity as a moderating variable. Theoretically, this research contributes to Islamic behavioral finance literature by clarifying the conceptual mechanism linking cognitive factors (knowledge and perception) and spiritual factors (religiosity) to saving behavior in Islamic banks. Practically, the findings are expected to guide Islamic banks in designing educational, marketing, and product strategies that align with the religiosity and financial literacy

levels of young consumers, thereby strengthening their engagement with Islamic financial institutions.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a quantitative approach to examine the influence of knowledge and perceptions on students' savings interest in Islamic banks, with religiosity as a moderating variable. The quantitative method was chosen because it emphasizes objective measurement of numerical data and statistical testing to analyze interactions between variables (Kusumastuti et al., 2020). The study was conducted in Malang City, East Java, known as one of the largest educational cities in Indonesia, with approximately 330,000 active students in 2022. This condition makes Malang a relevant location for researching student financial behavior.

The population of this study was all students in Malang City, both in public and private universities, as recorded in the 2024 data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS). Most students came from outside the region and temporarily resided in Malang during their studies. The research sample was determined using a purposive sampling technique with the criteria of respondents aged 18–26 years, domiciled in Malang, having student status, and having never used Islamic banking services. The sample size was determined using the Hair formula (Hair Jr et al., 2010), which is by multiplying the number of indicators by five, resulting in 280 respondents. The data used consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through a Google Form-based questionnaire distributed online to respondents, while secondary data came from books, articles, journals, and other scientific publications (Sugiyono, 2019). The research instrument was designed using a Likert scale with five answer choices, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree,” to measure the indicators of each variable (Asnawi & Masyhuri, 2011).

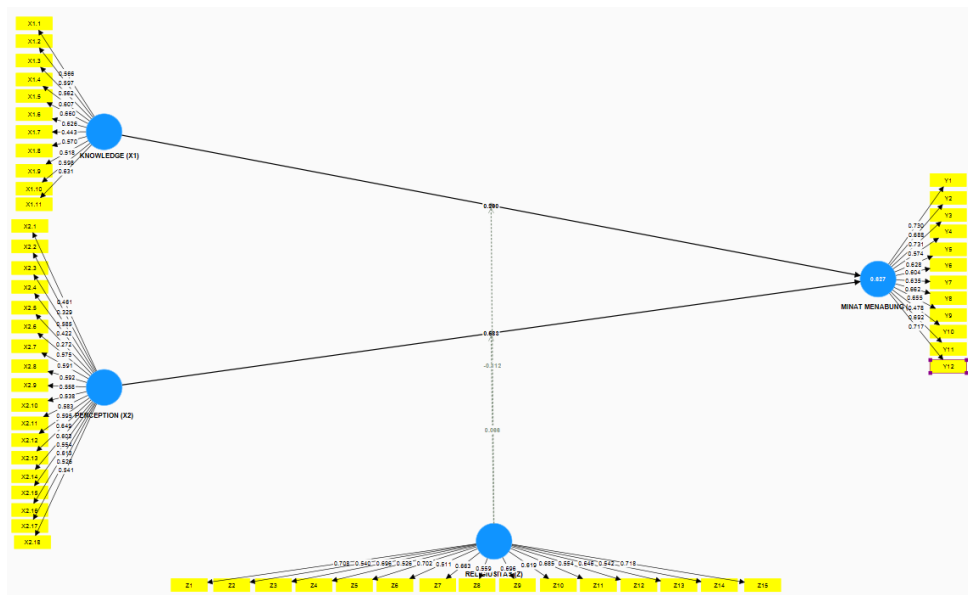
Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS software. The Partial Least Squares (PLS) method was chosen because it is suitable for limited sample sizes and does not require normally distributed data (Ghozali & Latan, 2014). The analysis consists of two stages: the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model). The outer model is used to test validity and reliability through loading factor values, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability (Ghozali & Ratmono, 2017). Meanwhile, the inner model is used to analyze the relationship between latent variables by observing the R-Square value and path coefficients tested using the bootstrapping method. In addition, a moderation test was also conducted to assess whether religiosity strengthens or weakens the influence of knowledge and perception on saving interest. The level of significance is determined based on the T-statistic and P-value. Thus, this study is expected to provide empirical evidence regarding how knowledge, perception, and religiosity play a role in shaping students' interest in saving at Islamic banks in Malang City.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This study uses the Partial Least Square (PLS) method based on Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) processed with SmartPLS 4.0.9.9 to analyze the relationship between dependent variables, independent variables, and moderating variables. According to Ghazali & Latan (Ghozali & Latan, 2014), PLS is a soft modeling analysis method because it does not require assumptions regarding the scale of data measurement, data distribution, or large sample sizes. Partial Least Square aims to detect the presence or absence of relationships between latent variables. With SmartPLS, researchers can use the bootstrapping method or random multiplication, so the assumption of normality is not a problem. SmartPLS has two main models in data analysis, namely the inner model and the outer model. The following is the PLS model scheme proposed in the program:

Figure 1. PLS Model Scheme



Source: data processed by researchers, 2025

Outer Model Analysis

Outer model analysis is an evaluation stage aimed at verifying the validity and reliability of indicators in measuring latent variable constructs. This evaluation involves several testing categories: convergent validity, discriminant validity, composite reliability, and Cronbach's alpha. The following are the results of the outer model testing and analysis :

Validity Test

1. Convergent validity

Convergent validity indicates that each indicator represents a single latent variable. According to Ghozali (2016), a factor loading value between 0.50 and 0.60 is acceptable for scale development research. The following table shows the outer loading values for meeting the convergent validity test:

Table 1. Outer Loadings Values of Convergent Validity Test

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loadings	Information
Knowledge (X1)	X1.1	0,566	Valid
	X1.2	0,597	Valid
	X1.3	0,562	Valid
	X1.4	0,607	Valid
	X1.5	0,660	Valid
	X1.6	0,626	Valid
	X1.7	0,443	Invalid
	X1.8	0,570	Valid
	X1.9	0,518	Valid
	X1.10	0,598	Valid
	X1.11	0,631	Valid
Perception (X2)	X2.1	0,461	Invalid
	X2.2	0,329	Invalid
	X2.3	0,585	Valid
	X2.4	0,422	Invalid
	X2.5	0,272	Invalid
	X2.6	0,575	Valid
	X2.7	0,591	Valid
	X2.8	0,592	Valid
	X2.9	0,558	Valid
	X2.10	0,538	Valid
	X2.11	0,583	Valid
	X2.12	0,595	Valid
	X2.13	0,649	Valid
	X2.14	0,603	Valid
	X2.15	0,554	Valid
	X2.16	0,613	Valid
	X2.17	0,526	Valid
	X2.18	0,541	Valid

Saving Intention (Y)	Y.1	0,730	Valid
	Y.2	0,688	Valid
	Y.3	0,731	Valid
	Y.4	0,574	Valid
	Y.5	0,628	Valid
	Y.6	0,604	Valid
	Y.7	0,635	Valid
	Y.8	0,662	Valid
	Y.9	0,662	Valid
	Y.10	0,478	Invalid
	Y.11	0,692	Valid
	Y.12	0,717	Valid
Religiosity (Z)	Z.1	0,708	Valid
	Z.2	0,540	Valid
	Z.3	0,696	Valid
	Z.4	0,526	Valid
	Z.5	0,702	Valid
	Z.6	0,511	Valid
	Z.7	0,663	Valid
	Z.8	0,559	Valid
	Z.9	0,696	Valid
	Z.10	0,619	Valid
	Z.11	0,685	Valid
	Z.12	0,554	Valid
	Z.13	0,646	Valid
	Z.14	0,542	Valid
	Z.15	0,718	Valid

Source: data processed by researchers, 2025

Based on Table 1, the outer loadings value from the convergent validity test shows that there are several indicators that have values below 0.5, namely indicators X1.7, X2.1, X2.2, X2.4, X2.5, and Y.10. Therefore, these indicators can be eliminated.

2. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is conducted by comparing the correlation between indicators and their constructs with the correlation between indicators and other constructs. According to Ghazali, 2018, discriminant validity is considered good if the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value is greater than 0.50. The following table shows the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for discriminant validity testing:

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) Value

Variable	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Information
Knowledge (X1)	0,600	Valid
Perception (X2)	0,670	Valid
Saving Intention (Y)	0,587	Valid
Religiosity (Z)	0,628	Valid

Source: data processed by researchers, 2025

Based on Table 2, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value in the discriminant validity test for all variables is more than 0.5. Therefore, it can be declared valid.

Realibility Test

1. Composite Realibility

Composite reliability is used to determine whether a construct's indicators have good reliability. A construct is considered reliable if the composite reliability value exceeds 0.70 (Ghozali, 2016). The following table shows composite reliability values to meet the reliability test:

Table 3. Composite Reliability Values

Variable	Composite Reliability	Information
Knowledge (X1)	0,848	Realiable
Perception (X2)	0,898	Realiable
Saving Intention (Y)	0,878	Realiable
Religiosity (Z)	0,906	Realiable

Source: data processed by researchers, 2025

Based on Table 3, the composite reliability value in the reliability test of all variables is more than 0.70. Therefore, it can be declared reliable.

2. Cronbach's Alpha

The use of Cronbach's alpha values aims to increase reliability in tests that have been conducted on composite reliability. The following table shows Cronbach's alpha values to meet the reliability test:

Tabel 4. Nilai Composite Realibility

Variable	Composite Reliability	Information
Knowledge (X1)	0,803	Realiable
Perception (X2)	0,876	Realiable
Saving Intention (Y)	0,853	Realiable
Religiosity (Z)	0,891	Realiable

Source: data processed by researchers, 2025

Based on Table 4, the Cronbach's alpha value for the reliability test of all variables is more than 0.70. Therefore, it can be declared reliable.

Inner Model Analysis

1. Coefficient Determination (R^2)

The coefficient of determination (R^2) is used to assess the extent to which independent variables can explain the dependent variable in a model (Chin, 1998). The R-Square test assesses the influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables with the following category values: 0.19 (weak), 0.33 (moderate), 0.67 (substantial), and 0.7 (strong) (Ghozali, 2016). The following table shows the R^2 values for fulfilling the coefficient of determination test:

Table 5. Coefficient Determination (R^2)

Variable	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Saving Intention(Y)	0,612	0,605

Source: data processed by researchers, 2025

Based on Table 5, the R-square value of the saving interest variable (Y) is 0.612. This means that the knowledge variable (X_1) and the perception variable (X_2) can explain the saving interest variable (Y) by 61.2%, while the remaining 38.8% is explained by other variables not mentioned in this study. The R-square value of the saving interest variable (Y) is categorized as moderate.

2. Effect Size

Effect size indicates the extent of influence or strength of the relationship between variables, not simply whether it is significant or not. According to Cohen (2013) in the context of f^2 in PLS analysis, it is divided into three categories: small (0.02), medium (0.15), and large (0.35).

Table 6. Effect Size (f^2)

Variable	Effect Size
$X_1 \Rightarrow Y$	0,082
$X_2 \Rightarrow Y$	0,420
$X_1 \Rightarrow Z \Rightarrow Y$	0,045
$X_2 \Rightarrow Z \Rightarrow Y$	0,021

Source: data processed by researchers, 2025

Based on Table 6, it can be seen that the variable Knowledge on Interest in Saving ($X_1 \Rightarrow Y$) has an effect size value of 0.082 which is included in the small-medium category, so the influence is quite significant although not dominant. The variable Perception on Interest in Saving ($X_2 \Rightarrow Y$) shows an effect size value of 0.420 which is in the large category, so it can be concluded that Perception has the strongest influence on students' Interest in Saving. Meanwhile, the

moderating variable Religiosity on the relationship between Knowledge and Interest in Saving ($X_1 \Rightarrow Z \Rightarrow Y$) only produces an effect size value of 0.045 which is included in the small category, and the moderation of Religiosity on the relationship between Perception and Interest in Saving ($X_2 \Rightarrow Z \Rightarrow Y$) has an effect size value of 0.021 which is also in the small category. Thus, it can be concluded that although Religiosity can moderate the relationship between independent variables on Interest in Saving, the strength of its influence is relatively weak, while the largest influence actually comes from the variable Perception.

3. Goodness of Fit

The goodness of fit test is a parameter used to evaluate the extent to which the estimated model matches the observed data (Setiaman, 2023). The following table shows the average AVE and average R-Square values:

Table 7. Average AVE and R-Square

Variabel	AVE	R-Square Adjusted
Knowledge (X1)	0,600	
Perception (X2)	0,670	
Saving Intention (Y)	0,587	0,605
Religipsity (Z)	0,628	
Rata-rata	0,621	0,605

Source: data processed by researchers, 2025

$$\text{Nilai GoF} = \sqrt{\text{rata - rata AVE} \times \text{rata - rata R Square}}$$

$$\text{Nilai GoF} = \sqrt{0,621 \times 0,605}$$

$$\text{Nilai GoF} = 0,613$$

Based on Table 7, the GoF value for the model was 0.613, or 61.3%. This value indicates that the model can represent 61.3% of the variation in the data, while the remaining 38.7% is represented by other variations not analyzed in this study. The GoF value generated by the model is in the high category.

Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis testing is conducted to examine and prove the influence between the variables constructed in the model, particularly the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. This testing process is based on the t-statistic value, with the criterion that if the t-statistic exceeds the t-table of 1.96, the

relationship is declared significant. The following are the results and analysis of the partial hypothesis testing:

Table 8. Partial Test

Konstruk	Original Sample (O)	Sampel Mean (M)	Standar Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistis > 1.96	P Values < 0,05	Significance test	Direction
$X_1 \Rightarrow Y$	0,271	0,262	0,080	3,386	0,000	Signifikan	Positif
$X_2 \Rightarrow Y$	0,579	0,588	0,068	8,477	0,000	Signifikan	Positif

Source: data processed by researchers, 2025

Based on table 8 partial test results using the SmartPLS bootstrapping method, it is known that the knowledge variable (X_1) has a significant effect on students' interest in saving in Malang City, indicated by a t-statistic value of 3.386 greater than the t-table of 1.96, a p-value of 0.000 less than 0.05, and a positive path coefficient of 0.271, so that the first hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. In addition, the perception variable (X_2) also has a positive and significant effect on interest in saving with a t-statistic value of 8.477 greater than 1.96 and a p-value of 0.000 less than 0.05, so that the second hypothesis (H_2) is accepted.

Next, a moderation test is conducted to assess whether the moderating variable is able to strengthen or weaken the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The following are the results and analysis of the moderation hypothesis test :

Table 9. Moderation Test

Konstruk	Original Sample (O)	Sampel Mean (M)	Standar Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistis > 1.96	P Values < 0,05	Significance test	Direction
$X_1 \Rightarrow Z \Rightarrow Y$	-0,118	-0,114	0,060	1,954	0,025	Signifikan	Negatif
$X_2 \Rightarrow Z \Rightarrow Y$	0,080	0,074	0,061	1,318	0,094	Tidak Signifikan	Positif

Source: data processed by researchers, 2025

Based on the results of the moderation test analysis in table 8, it is known that the interaction between knowledge and religiosity on interest in saving produces a t-statistic value of 1.954 with a p-value of 0.025 (<0.05), which indicates that religiosity plays a significant moderator role, but with a negative influence direction so that the higher religiosity actually weakens the influence of knowledge on interest in saving and the third hypothesis (H_3) is declared not accepted. Meanwhile, the interaction between perception and religiosity on interest in saving shows a t-statistic value of 1.318 (<1.96) with a p-value of 0.094 (>0.05), which means that religiosity does not moderate the

relationship between perception and interest in saving, so that the fourth hypothesis (H4) is also declared not accepted.

Discussion

Knowledge influences in saving intention

Based on the results of the first hypothesis test, it was found that the knowledge variable has a positive and significant effect on students' savings interest in Malang City. This is evident from the t-statistic value of 3.386, which is greater than the t-table of 1.96, and the significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Furthermore, the path coefficient is positive at 0.271, indicating that the higher the students' knowledge level regarding banking products, the greater their interest in saving. Therefore, the first hypothesis (H1) is accepted, meaning that the knowledge variable has a positive and significant effect on students' savings interest in Malang City.

The results of this study align with the findings of D. Siregar et al. (2021) who stated that customer knowledge can increase interest in saving in Islamic banking products. However, the bank's current outreach efforts through religious study groups are considered ineffective. Public knowledge about the fundamental differences between the profit-sharing system in Islamic banking and the interest system in conventional banks is a crucial factor that can influence savings decisions. Therefore, the strategy that needs to be pursued is not limited to outreach, but also to encourage the public to switch to a Sharia-based financial system that emphasizes balance between worldly and afterlife success.

Similarly, Mulyaningtyas et al. (2020) emphasized that understanding the operational principles of Islamic banks, management concepts, and the variety of Islamic banking products can increase customer interest in saving. This is supported by Kotler's (2008) opinion, which explains that the emergence of interest in individuals is influenced not only by internal factors but also by reference groups. These reference groups play a role through their knowledge and lifestyle. Based on this view, an individual's knowledge can influence their interest in choosing a financial product. Furthermore, according to Taylor (2015), the process of developing consumer interest in a product or service goes through several stages. First, consumers will pay attention to products they deem relevant. Next, consumers seek information and the product's features to meet their needs. If the information obtained aligns with expectations, consumers will show interest. Thus, it can be concluded that without adequate knowledge about Islamic banking, customers will not have any interest in saving at this institution.

Perception influences in saving intention

Based on the results of the second hypothesis test, it was found that the perception variable has a positive and significant effect on students' interest in saving

in Malang City. This is evident from the t-statistic value of 8.477, which is greater than the t-table of 1.96, and the significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Furthermore, the positive path coefficient of 0.679 indicates that the more favorable students' perceptions of banking products, the greater their interest in saving. Therefore, the second hypothesis (H₂) is accepted, meaning that the perception variable has a positive and significant effect on students' interest in saving in Malang City.

The results of this study align with those of Ilfita et al (2021) who showed that positive public perceptions of Islamic banks can increase their interest in saving in these institutions. The stronger the public's belief that bank interest is haram (forbidden), the greater the level of customer compliance and adherence to Islamic principles. This leads customers to prefer saving in Islamic banks over conventional banks that still use the interest system. Furthermore, the higher the perception of the profit-sharing system, the greater the level of customer trust and confidence in Islamic banks, thus influencing their interest in saving. Customer perceptions that Islamic banking products offer innovation and diverse benefits are also a driving factor in increasing public interest in saving, as product diversity provides flexibility in decision-making. Therefore, it can be concluded that a positive perception of Islamic banking products will increase interest in saving, while a negative perception will actually decrease interest in becoming a customer.

Furthermore, when individuals possess adequate resources, including material resources, skills, and knowledge about Islamic banking, they are able to exercise self-control, thus strengthening their drive to save. This aligns with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) proposed by Ajzen (1991), where perceived behavioral control is defined as an individual's belief in their capacity to perform a particular action. Behavioral control itself is a combination of control beliefs and the individual's perceived power. Ajzen (Ajzen, 1991) emphasized that every action essentially goes through a pre-planning process. Thus, a positive perception of behavioral control will encourage someone to behave according to the plan, including when deciding to save at a Sharia bank. This finding is supported by research by Rahmawati (2022) which states that individuals with sufficient resources, including material resources, skills, and knowledge regarding Sharia investments, are more likely to save at a Sharia bank.

Religiosity moderates the influence of knowledge on saving intention

Based on the results of the third hypothesis test, it was found that religiosity moderated the effect of knowledge on students' savings interest in Malang City. This is evident from the t-statistic value of 1.954, which is close to the critical limit of 1.96, and the significance value of $0.025 < 0.05$. The path coefficient indicated a negative trend, indicating that higher levels of religiosity actually weaken the effect of knowledge on savings interest. Therefore, the third hypothesis (H₃) was rejected, meaning that

religiosity did not strengthen the relationship between knowledge and students' savings interest in Malang City.

Based on research conducted by Rahmawati (2022) which stated that religiosity did not moderate the relationship between knowledge and savings interest. A person's level of religiosity, whether high or low, did not necessarily strengthen students' use of knowledge to increase their interest in saving. These results are inconsistent with consumer behavior theory, which argues that religious understanding or religiosity is a factor influencing savings interest in Islamic banks. This means that even though students have a high level of religiosity, this does not automatically strengthen the relationship between their knowledge and interest in saving at Islamic banks.

The results of this study are also supported by research Muhyidin (2018) which shows that many students still prefer conventional banking services over Islamic banks. This indicates that knowledge and religiosity alone are not strong enough to motivate concrete action in choosing an Islamic bank as a savings account. One reason that may explain this phenomenon is that customers/communities with high levels of religiosity tend to rely on personal beliefs in making decisions, rather than solely on rational knowledge about Islamic banking products.

Religiosity moderates the influence of perception on saving intention

Based on the results of the fourth hypothesis test, it was found that religiosity did not moderate the influence of perception on students' savings interest in Malang City. This is evident from the t-statistic of 1.318, which is smaller than the t-table of 1.96, and the significance value of $0.094 > 0.05$. These results confirm that the interaction between perception and religiosity does not significantly influence savings interest. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis (H4) is rejected, meaning that religiosity does not act as a moderating variable in the relationship between perception and students' savings interest in Malang City.

The results of this study indicate that religiosity does not act as a moderating variable in the relationship between perception and students' savings interest. Although no previous research has explicitly examined the moderation of religiosity in the perception-to-saving pathway, a study by Mustaqfiroh & Rahayu (2025) which used brand image as a perception variable, found that religiosity also did not play a significant role as a moderator. This research is understandable because both perception and brand image reflect an individual's cognitive evaluation of a product or service. Thus, even though students have a high level of religiosity, their decisions about saving are still influenced by more rational considerations. This confirms that religiosity does not automatically strengthen the influence of perceptions on interest in saving, as students' preferences for Islamic savings products are based more on practical logic and the immediate benefit they experience rather than purely religious considerations.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that knowledge has a positive and significant effect on students' interest in saving in Islamic banks in Malang City. The better students' knowledge of the concepts, benefits, and advantages of Islamic banks, the higher their tendency to save in Islamic financial institutions. Furthermore, perception has also been shown to have a positive and significant effect on interest in saving, meaning that when students perceive Islamic banks to be in accordance with Islamic principles, safe, and have competitive products, this will increase their interest in saving. However, religiosity cannot moderate the relationship between knowledge and interest in saving or between perception and interest in saving. This finding indicates that religiosity cannot strengthen or weaken the influence of knowledge or perception, because students' preferences for Islamic savings products are based more on practical logic and the direct benefits they experience rather than solely on religious considerations. The implication of this study is that marketing strategies and product development for Islamic banking should not only emphasize religiosity but also be directed towards improving Islamic financial literacy and providing services that suit students' practical needs. Based on these findings, recommendations for Islamic banks include placing greater emphasis on product functionality, such as improving the quality of digital banking services, cost transparency, and savings product innovation, to further enhance student perceptions. Although religiosity has not been shown to strengthen perceptions of savings intentions, Islamic banks can still leverage religious values as a branding strategy, provided they are accompanied by tangible rational advantages, thereby attracting students' interest in saving more consistently.

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