


AL-ḤISBAH AND SHARIA MARKET SUPERVISION: A QUALITATIVE STUDY FROM TRADERS' AND CONSUMERS' PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of *al-ḥisbah* as a market supervisory institution from the perspectives of traders and consumers, addressing the limited empirical evidence on dual-actor perspectives in contemporary Sharia markets. It focuses on the functions of *al-ḥisbah* in ensuring transactional fairness, preventing fraudulent practices, and upholding Sharia principles in trading activities. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through fieldwork at the Ulul Albab Sharia Market in Kampar Regency, Indonesia, involving in-depth interviews with five traders and five consumers, participatory observation, and documentation. Data analysis followed an interactive model comprising data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that *al-ḥisbah* is perceived as a moral overseer and regulator of market ethics, playing a crucial role in fostering trust between traders and consumers. Traders associate its presence with fair competition and price transparency, while consumers perceive stronger protection against fraud and product quality manipulation. Nevertheless, the implementation of *al-ḥisbah* faces challenges related to limited human resources, insufficient socialization, and the need to adapt supervisory mechanisms to modern trade systems. This study underscores the importance of strengthening institutional capacity and integrating digital technologies into market supervision to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of *al-ḥisbah* in the digital era.

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INTRODUCTION

Trade has been one of the most vital sectors in human life since the earliest civilizations, serving not only as a means of economic exchange but also as a foundation for social interaction and community welfare (Ling

et al., 2022; Morley, 2007). In Islamic tradition, trade occupies a particularly significant position, as material outcomes are not merely evaluated in terms of economic activities but are also assessed in terms of moral responsibility and spiritual accountability.

Commercial transactions are therefore regarded as a form of worship (*'ibadah mu'amalah*) that must comply with Sharia principles, emphasizing justice, honesty, and transparency while strictly prohibiting fraud, deception, usury (*ribā*), and practices that cause harm to others (Maharani, 2020; Ritonga & Jamal, 2025). These ethical foundations highlight Islam's comprehensive approach to economic life, in which markets are expected to function not only efficiently but also equitably and morally.

To safeguard these ethical principles in market activities, Islamic civilization developed institutional mechanisms to maintain market integrity and protect public welfare. One of the most important institutions in this regard is *al-ḥisbah*. Historically, *al-ḥisbah* functioned as a market supervisory body responsible for overseeing trade transactions, ensuring the accuracy of weights and measures, monitoring product quality, and addressing violations that could harm consumers and society at large. (Ritonga & Jamal, 2025). The origins of *al-ḥisbah* can be traced back to the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), who personally supervised market activities in Medina to prevent fraudulent practices and unethical behavior. (Rahman, 2021). This supervisory role was later institutionalized during the caliphate period and further developed under Abbasid governance, during which the *muḥtasib* was appointed as an official responsible for maintaining order and fairness in the market.

The functions of *al-ḥisbah* extend beyond technical supervision. In classical *fiqh* literature, *al-ḥisbah* is understood as an institutional manifestation of the obligation of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, enjoining good and forbidding evil, in socio-economic life. (Abdullah, 2018; Hidayatina & Hananan, 2017). Accordingly, *al-*

ḥisbah embodies a moral and social mandate that seeks to balance individual profit-seeking with collective welfare. Its role is not limited to detecting violations and imposing sanctions, but also includes preventive and educative functions aimed at cultivating ethical awareness among market participants. Through this approach, markets are positioned not merely as spaces of exchange but as moral institutions that contribute to social justice and public benefit.

In the contemporary era, although *al-ḥisbah* is not always formally institutionalized in every Muslim-majority country, its principles remain highly relevant, particularly in the context of Islamic economics and Sharia-compliant markets. (Al Kutsi & Kom, 2024). Modern markets continue to face challenges such as price manipulation, unfair competition, weak consumer protection, and declining trust between sellers and buyers. In Indonesia, growing awareness of Sharia-based economic practices has encouraged the development of Sharia markets that aim to integrate Islamic ethical values into everyday commercial activities. (Siahaan & Rialdy, 2024). These markets are expected not only to facilitate buying and selling but also to function as instruments of *da'wah* and ethical education in *mu'amalah*.

One notable example is the Ulul Albab Sharia Market located in Siak Hulu District, Kampar Regency. This market was established with the explicit intention of creating a trading environment grounded in Sharia principles, encompassing pricing mechanisms, trading practices, and interactions between sellers and buyers. To ensure the consistent implementation of these values, an effective supervisory mechanism is essential. In this context, *al-ḥisbah* plays a central role in monitoring market activities, ensuring honesty,

preventing fraudulent practices, maintaining accurate measurements, and promoting fair pricing. Beyond regulation, *al-hisbah* helps foster a safe, orderly, and trustworthy market environment, thereby strengthening public confidence in Sharia-based trade.

However, implementing *al-hisbah* in modern market settings is not without challenges. Limited human resources with adequate expertise in *fiqh mu'amalah* and technical market supervision often constrain its effectiveness (Azhar et al., 2020; Hassan & Ilias, 2019). In addition, not all traders fully understand the principles underlying Sharia markets, making continuous guidance and education a necessary complement to supervision. The rapid development of technology and modern trading systems further complicates this landscape. The rise of online trading, changing consumer behavior, and competition with large conventional markets require *al-hisbah* to adapt its supervisory mechanisms to remain relevant and practical (Muhammad & Ridwan, 2024; Ramadani & Nasution, 2024).

The effectiveness of *al-hisbah* is closely linked to how it is perceived and accepted by key market actors, particularly traders and consumers (Winarnio, 2017). From the traders' perspective, supervision may be viewed either as an additional burden or as a mechanism that enhances business credibility, fair competition, and long-term sustainability. From the consumers' perspective, *al-hisbah* is often associated with protection, transparency, and transactional fairness. The interaction between these perceptions plays a crucial role in shaping the overall effectiveness of Sharia-based market supervision (Hassan & Ilias, 2019). Empirical observations at the Ulul Albab Sharia Market indicate that supervision is implemented not only through enforcement mechanisms but also

through preventive and educative approaches, such as guidance, warnings, and mediation, which are embedded within the implementation of a Sharia-compliant buying and selling system and reflect the ethical orientation of *al-hisbah* that prioritizes moral correction, fairness, and balance in market transactions (Azhar et al., 2020; Hassan & Ilias, 2019; Mardan & Waldelmi, 2020).

Despite the growing body of literature on *al-hisbah*, existing studies have predominantly focused on its normative, conceptual, and historical dimensions. Much of the literature discusses *al-hisbah* as an ideal institution for maintaining market justice, protecting consumers, and overseeing prohibited trading practices within an Islamic legal framework. However, empirical research examining how *al-hisbah* operates in contemporary market settings remains limited. Moreover, most existing empirical studies tend to adopt a single perspective, either from traders or from consumers, resulting in a fragmented understanding of how *al-hisbah* values are experienced and practiced in fundamental market interactions.

The lack of studies that integrate both traders' and consumers' perspectives has created a crucial empirical gap in the literature. In modern markets characterized by complex interactions, technological change, and diverse economic actors, understanding the effectiveness of *al-hisbah* requires capturing the lived experiences of all parties involved. Without such a dual-perspective approach, it is difficult to assess whether *al-hisbah*-based supervision truly achieves its intended goals of fairness, transparency, and protection of market rights.

By adopting a dual-actor qualitative approach, this study offers novel empirical insights into the practical functioning of *al-*

hisbah by simultaneously capturing traders' and consumers' lived experiences within a contemporary Sharia market. Through an in-depth qualitative investigation of the Ulul Albab Sharia Market, this study examines how *al-hisbah* operates in practice, identifies the challenges it faces, and explores opportunities to strengthen its role in modern Sharia markets. Theoretically, this research contributes to Islamic economic scholarship by moving beyond normative discussions and empirically operationalizing *al-hisbah* as a market governance mechanism. In practice, the findings are expected to provide valuable insights for market managers, policymakers, and Islamic economic institutions in designing more effective, adaptive, and context-sensitive Sharia-compliant market supervision systems.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Foundation of al-hisbah

Al-hisbah is one of the most significant institutions in the history of Islamic civilization, functioning as a supervisory mechanism particularly in economic and market activities. Etymologically, the term *hisbah* derives from *ihtisāb*, meaning "to calculate" or "to evaluate." At the same time, terminologically it refers to the authority to uphold *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, enjoining good and forbidding wrong, within the socio-economic sphere to ensure fairness and Sharia compliance in market transactions (Rozi, 2019). This institution is led by a *muhtasib* (ombudsman), whose responsibilities include supervising trade practices, preventing fraud, and balancing the interests of traders and consumers.

The classical *hisbah* institution serves as a strong model for the formation of regulatory bodies and dispute-resolution mechanisms. Building on this foundation, contemporary

scholars argue that the classical structure of *hisbah* requires contextual adaptation to remain relevant in modern economic systems. Such adaptation includes the specialization of supervisory roles, more explicit institutional mandates, and updated qualifications for the *muhtasib* to address increasingly complex market dynamics.

Normative Foundation of al-hisbah

The legitimacy of *al-hisbah* is firmly grounded in Islamic normative sources, notably the Qur'an and Hadith. Qur'anic injunctions, such as Surah Ali Imran [3]:104, emphasize the collective obligation to promote good and prevent wrongdoing, forming the ethical basis of market supervision. Likewise, prophetic traditions underscore the prohibition of fraudulent trade practices, most notably the hadith stating, "Whoever cheats is not one of us" (Narrated by Muslim).

Based on this evidence, *hisbah* is not merely an administrative institution but also a manifestation of Islamic moral values in safeguarding justice within the market. From an Islamic economic perspective, these normative foundations position *al-hisbah* not only as a regulatory apparatus but also as a moral framework that integrates legal enforcement with ethical accountability.

The Functions and Role of al-hisbah in the Market

Historically, *al-hisbah* has played a strategic role in safeguarding market fairness and order. Its core functions include supervising prices, weights, and measures; preventing fraudulent practices and hoarding (*ihtikār*); and ensuring transparency in transactions. In addition, *al-hisbah* serves as a consumer protection mechanism by guaranteeing product quality, accurate

quantity, and reasonable pricing. Beyond technical oversight, it regulates business ethics by discouraging false oaths, unfair competition, and transactions involving *ribā*.

According to Chapra (2016) The Hisbah institution is essential for upholding economic justice in Islam, as it protects markets from distortions and aligns economic activity with Sharia objectives. This dual role, technical supervision and moral regulation, highlights *al-hisbah* as a comprehensive governance mechanism rather than a purely punitive institution.

Beyond its classical normative role, *al-hisbah* may be conceptualized as an early form of market governance that integrates ethical regulation, consumer protection, and public accountability within Islamic economic systems. Contemporary scholarship emphasizes that hisbah operates not merely as moral supervision but as an institutional mechanism to prevent market distortions, safeguard consumer interests, and promote fair competition in accordance with Sharia principles (Bello Dogarawa, 2013; Hassan & Ilias, 2019).

Traders' Perspective on al-hisbah

From the traders' perspective, *al-hisbah* is often perceived as a supervisory mechanism that promotes healthier competition by reducing opportunities for monopolistic practices and fraudulent behavior. Empirical studies on Islamic market governance indicate that *hisbah*-based supervision contributes to fair competition and ethical business conduct by limiting market distortions and opportunistic behavior (Bello Dogarawa, 2013; Hassan & Ilias, 2019). However, existing studies primarily emphasize compliance-oriented outcomes and regulatory effectiveness, with limited attention to how traders internally negotiate supervision

as both a perceived operational constraint and a source of long-term reputational legitimacy. This indicates that traders' perceptions of *al-hisbah* extend beyond rule enforcement toward broader considerations of trust, credibility, and sustainability in market participation, highlighting the need for more actor-centered analyses of Islamic market supervision.

Consumers' Perspective on al-hisbah

From the consumers' standpoint, *al-hisbah* is commonly associated with safety, comfort, and protection in market transactions, particularly through reduced exposure to fraudulent practices such as inaccurate weighing, counterfeit goods, and non-transparent pricing. Empirical evidence from supervised Islamic and traditional markets indicates that effective market oversight significantly enhances consumers' satisfaction, trust, and loyalty (Hassan & Ilias, 2019; Jaenudin, 2025). Consumers tend to perceive the presence of supervisory institutions grounded in Islamic ethical principles as a guarantee of fairness and transactional justice, reinforcing confidence in market participation (Khan, 2012).

Nevertheless, much of the existing literature continues to portray consumers primarily as passive beneficiaries of supervision, emphasizing protection outcomes rather than consumer agency. Limited scholarly attention has been devoted to examining how consumers actively perceive, interpret, and engage with *al-hisbah* practices in their everyday market interactions, particularly within contemporary Sharia markets characterized by increasing complexity and evolving governance structures. This gap highlights the need for more actor-centered analyses that capture consumers' lived

experiences and interpretive responses to Islamic market supervision.

Relevance of the al-ḥisbah Concept in Contemporary Markets

Although rooted in classical Islamic tradition, the principles of *al-ḥisbah* remain highly relevant in modern economic contexts. Contemporary markets continue to face challenges such as price manipulation, oligopolistic behavior, and weak consumer protection. Anwar et al. (2025) Argue that *hisbah*-based principles can inform the development of fairer, welfare-oriented market policies. Within the broader framework of Islamic economic development, *al-ḥisbah* offers a normative and institutional model for creating ethical, competitive, and socially responsible markets. However, the literature indicates that its contemporary application remains underexplored from an integrated actor-based perspective, particularly regarding how supervisory practices are experienced and interpreted by both traders and consumers.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive design to examine the role of *al-ḥisbah*, a market supervisory institution, from the perspectives of traders and consumers. This approach is appropriate for capturing the meanings, interpretations, and lived experiences of market actors within their natural setting, thereby enabling a contextualized understanding of Sharia-based market supervision.

The study was conducted at the Ulul Albab Sharia Market in Siak Hulu District, Kampar Regency. The site was purposively selected for its explicit adoption of Sharia-compliant trading principles and for

implementing an *al-ḥisbah*-based supervisory mechanism. Participants comprised five traders and five consumers, recruited through purposive sampling, with a minimum of 1 year of active engagement in market transactions to ensure informed and relevant perspectives.

Data were collected using multiple qualitative techniques, including semi-structured in-depth interviews, participatory observation of supervisory practices and market interactions, and document analysis of relevant records and field notes. Data collection proceeded until thematic saturation was achieved, with no new substantive insights emerging from additional interviews.

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles and Huberman, involving iterative processes of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. To enhance the rigor and trustworthiness of the findings, the study employed source and method triangulation, member checking, and thick description to ensure credibility, dependability, and confirmability.

Through this methodological framework, the study provides an empirically grounded, context-sensitive account of how *al-ḥisbah* operates in practice, highlighting stakeholders' perceptions and the challenges and opportunities associated with its implementation in a contemporary Sharia market setting.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

General Overview of Ulul Albab Sharia Market

The Ulul Albab Sharia Market is a community and government-initiated market established to create a trading ecosystem based on Sharia principles. Located in Siak Hulu District, Kampar Regency, the market has been

operating since 2018. The Sharia market concept not only regulates buying and selling activities but also emphasizes ethical values, justice, and blessings (*barakah*) in trade (Waldelmi et al., 2019).

One of the defining characteristics of this market is the presence of *al-hisbah* as a market supervisory institution. The primary responsibilities of *al-hisbah* include monitoring weights and measures, ensuring product quality, overseeing price transparency, and maintaining a safe and orderly market environment (Jaelani, 2013). Interviews with five traders indicate that the presence of *al-hisbah* has generally contributed to improved market order, although several implementation challenges were also noted.

Traders reported that *al-hisbah* supervision has strengthened market discipline and improved interactions between traders and consumers. Pricing practices have become more controlled, reducing arbitrary price setting and increasing consumer confidence. Regular inspections of weighing instruments were also considered essential to ensuring fairness in transactions.

Although some traders initially perceived inspections as disruptive, they later came to be seen as beneficial for maintaining consumer trust. Trust was repeatedly identified as a key factor in sustaining customer loyalty, as satisfied buyers are more likely to return, ultimately benefiting traders in the long term. Traders also acknowledged that occasional violations, particularly involving inaccurate scales, still occur. In such cases, the gradual enforcement approach adopted by *al-hisbah*, beginning with warnings and followed by sanctions when violations persist, was considered fair and corrective.

Several traders emphasized the importance of complementing supervision

with continuous socialization and education. According to these respondents, compliance driven solely by fear of sanctions is less sustainable than compliance based on a clear understanding of Sharia market principles. Education was therefore viewed as essential for fostering ethical awareness and voluntary adherence to regulations. In addition, traders appreciated the role of *al-hisbah* as a mediator in resolving disputes, particularly in addressing consumer complaints, which helps prevent tension and maintain a harmonious market atmosphere.

Overall, traders' responses suggest that *al-hisbah* supervision not only maintains market order but also enhances consumer trust, promotes fair competition, and supports harmonious trading relationships within the Ulul Albab Sharia Market.

Findings Analysis

Traders' Perceptions of the Role of al-hisbah

Interview findings indicate that traders generally hold a positive perception of the role of *al-hisbah*. Its presence is perceived to enhance consumer trust, promote fair competition, and function as a mediator in resolving conflicts. Nevertheless, traders emphasized the need for more frequent socialization and educational activities so that supervision is perceived as instructive and value-based rather than merely repressive.

Consumers' Perceptions of the Role of al-hisbah

Consumers, as the primary beneficiaries of market supervision, tend to view the presence of *al-hisbah* positively. They reported greater feelings of safety and comfort when shopping at the market. Interview data suggest that *al-hisbah* contributes to a stronger sense of security and increased public trust. Consumers

noted that accurate weighing practices and clearly displayed prices allow them to shop with confidence and to report irregularities without hesitation.

Several consumers shared personal experiences that illustrate the practical benefits of supervision. One consumer reported purchasing less fresh fish from *al-hisbah* officers, after which the trader was required to replace the product. This experience reinforced the perception that supervision provides tangible protection against potential losses. Other consumers expressed a preference for shopping in markets supervised by *al-hisbah*, as direct observation of active monitoring reduced concerns about fraud.

While acknowledging that minor violations still occur, consumers emphasized that such cases are relatively limited and manageable. The visible presence of *al-hisbah* officers increased consumers' confidence in

voicing complaints and asserting their rights. In addition, consumers highlighted the importance of consistent and regular supervision to ensure that traders continuously maintain product quality and service standards. Overall, the findings demonstrate that *al-hisbah* provides strong security and protection for consumers. Easily accessible reporting mechanisms and prompt complaint handling were identified as highly valued aspects of supervision. Beyond preventing violations, supervisory practices empower consumers to actively participate in maintaining market integrity. At the same time, the consistency and sustainability of supervision are critical for preserving long-term trust in the Sharia market. To further clarify these findings, Table 1 compares traders' and consumers' perspectives across key aspects of *al-hisbah*.

Table 1. Comparison of Traders' and Consumers' Perspectives

Aspects of <i>al-hisbah</i>	Traders' Perspectives	Consumers' Perspectives
Justice (<i>'Adl</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traders feel that Islamic market regulations help create healthier competition. - Reduce the potential for fraud among traders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consumers perceive the market as fairer in price determination. - Feel more secure from deceptive practices.
Honesty and Transparency (<i>Shidq & Wudhūh</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traders feel required to be more honest in providing product information, such as quality and origin. - Transparency is seen as increasing customer trust. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consumers observe clear information regarding prices and product quality. - Feel more confident because information is openly disclosed.
Price Balance (<i>Tawāzun al-As'ār</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traders believe that Sharia-based market regulations prevent unhealthy price wars and price manipulation. - Prices are relatively more stable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consumers consider prices in the Ulul Albab Sharia Market to be reasonable and not excessive. - There is no impression of monopoly or price manipulation.

Aspects of <i>al-hisbah</i>	Traders' Perspectives	Consumers' Perspectives
Consumer Protection (<i>Himāyah al-Mustahlik</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traders understand the obligation to comply with halal standards, hygiene, and safety. - Regulations are perceived to enhance business reputation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consumers feel their rights are better protected, particularly regarding food safety and product halalness. - Feel comfortable while shopping.
Prohibition of Fraud (<i>Tadlis</i>) and Unfair Practices	Traders are aware of the moral supervision that discourages manipulation of weights, mixing goods, or misrepresentation of quality.	Consumers perceive ethical supervision that reassures them that goods are not fraudulent or deceptive.
Market Supervision (<i>hisbah/muhtasib</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traders believe that the presence of supervision (formal and moral) helps maintain market order. - Do not feel burdened, as regulations are considered clear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consumers feel more secure due to supervision over product quality and traders' behavior. - Perceive the market as more orderly and trustworthy.
Business Ethics and Morality	Traders feel that hisbah values help them maintain moral conduct in trading, such as being polite, non-coercive, and honest.	Consumers perceive traders in the Sharia market as more friendly, honest, and trustworthy, enhancing shopping comfort.

Source: interview result

Al-hisbah Supervision Mechanism at the Ulul Albab Sharia Market

Observations reveal that *al-hisbah* supervision at the Ulul Albab Sharia Market is implemented through several interconnected stages: daily routine monitoring of weights, product quality, and prices; incidental supervision based on reports and complaints; trader development through socialization and education; and the application of gradual warnings and sanctions to maintain order and uphold Sharia market principles.

Daily Routine Supervision

Daily routine supervision is a consistent activity carried out by *al-hisbah* officers to ensure that all trading activities comply with

Sharia principles. Officers regularly patrol the market to verify the accuracy of scales and measurements, assess product quality, and ensure that prices displayed by traders are transparent and fair. Beyond detecting violations, this routine monitoring also helps build trust between traders and consumers. Through continuous supervision, the potential for fraudulent practices is minimized, while traders are encouraged to maintain the quality of their products and services.

Incidental Supervision

In addition to routine monitoring, *al-hisbah* conducts incidental supervision in response to specific reports or complaints from consumers or traders. This mechanism enables

swift and targeted intervention, preventing minor issues from escalating into more serious problems. Incidental supervision is flexible and responsive to the urgency of reported cases. For example, reports of inaccurate weighing or the sale of expired goods prompt immediate field inspections, clarification, and enforcement actions by *al-hisbah* officers.

Trader Development

Alongside its supervisory function, *al-hisbah* prioritizes an educational approach through periodic trader development programs. These activities include group meetings, counseling sessions, and training focused on Sharia-compliant trade practices, applicable regulations, and ethical business conduct. The objective of trader development is to foster traders' awareness and internal commitment so that compliance is driven by understanding rather than constant external control. Through continuous guidance, a culture of honest, fair, and respectful trading relationships between sellers and buyers is expected to develop.

Issuing Warnings and Sanctions

When violations are identified, *al-hisbah* applies a gradual enforcement procedure. Initial responses typically involve verbal warnings to offending traders. If violations persist, written warnings are issued, followed by administrative sanctions such as fines, suspension of trading permits, or temporary revocation of trading rights. This graduated approach aims to deter while maintaining fairness and providing traders with opportunities to correct their behavior. In this way, enforcement is not merely repressive but also corrective and educative.

Through the integration of routine monitoring, responsive complaint handling,

continuous trader development, and proportional enforcement, *al-hisbah* seeks to foster a market environment that is safe, fair, and Sharia-compliant, thereby sustaining public trust in the Sharia market over time.

Discussion

This supervisory system reflects the Islamic principle of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* (enjoining good and forbidding wrong), in which preventive measures are prioritized before the application of sanctions. Such an approach is consistent with *fiqh* literature, which emphasizes that the primary purpose of *al-hisbah* is moral improvement and social order rather than punishment alone.

Challenges in the Implementation of al-hisbah

Limited Human Resources

One of the main obstacles in implementing *al-hisbah* duties is the limited availability of human resources. The current number of officers is insufficient to supervise all traders across both traditional markets and modern trade centers. This limitation limits the ability to conduct comprehensive, continuous supervision. As a result, the potential for violations of Sharia market principles remains relatively high, as not all trading activities can be directly monitored. Given the broad scope of supervision required, *al-hisbah's* limited personnel force is unable to prioritize specific locations or traders, thereby increasing the risk of overlooked violations.

Lack of Trader Understanding

In addition to internal constraints, challenges also arise from traders' limited understanding of Sharia market principles, such as the prohibition of fraud, usury, and price manipulation. This lack of experience may

lead to violations, whether intentional or unintentional. Although socialization efforts have been undertaken, they remain uneven and have not reached all business actors. Some traders continue to apply conventional trading practices inconsistent with Sharia principles, posing a significant challenge to achieving a fully Sharia-compliant market environment.

Adaptation to Modern Trade

Rapid technological developments have encouraged the expansion of online trading models, which are increasingly popular among consumers. However, *al-hisbah* supervision has thus far remained focused mainly on offline transactions in physical markets. The absence of adequate monitoring mechanisms for online trade makes it difficult to detect violations in the digital sphere, including fraudulent practices, the sale of prohibited goods, and the manipulation of product information. Limited adaptation to these developments risks diminishing *al-hisbah*'s relevance in the digital trade era.

Consumer Awareness

The effectiveness of Sharia market supervision largely depends on active consumer participation; however, consumer awareness and willingness to report violations remain relatively low. Many consumers are reluctant to report misconduct due to perceived procedural complexity, fear of conflict with traders, or the belief that reporting is not their responsibility. As consumer reports constitute a vital source of information for *al-hisbah*, limited participation constrains supervisory effectiveness and forces greater reliance on direct field observations with restricted coverage. This condition underscores the need to strengthen institutional capacity, enhance consumer awareness, and integrate supportive

mechanisms to ensure the sustainability and integrity of Sharia market supervision.

Discussion from a Theoretical Perspective

This preventive–educative orientation is consistent with contemporary interpretations of *al-hisbah*, which emphasize proportional supervision, ethical correction, and the promotion of public welfare rather than purely punitive enforcement. Similar patterns have been documented in modern *hisbah* practices, where supervision prioritizes guidance, mediation, and the application of gradual sanctions to sustain market order and ensure Sharia compliance (Azhar et al., 2020).

The findings of this study further align with Islamic economic theories of market supervision, which conceptualize *al-hisbah* as an institutional mechanism for upholding fairness, transparency, and transactional security. Ibn Taymiyyah (1994) asserts that the primary duty of *al-hisbah* is to safeguard public rights and prevent economic harm arising from fraudulent and unethical trade practices. Within the Ulul Albab Sharia Market, this theoretical framework is empirically reflected in three interrelated dimensions:

Aspect of Honesty and Fairness

One of the primary roles of *al-hisbah* in Sharia market supervision is ensuring honesty and fairness in every transaction. Monitoring scales, measurements, and prices aims to prevent fraudulent practices that harm both consumers and other traders. Through such supervision, traders become more cautious and are more likely to comply with established regulations. This condition fosters healthy business competition, in which success is determined by product quality and service rather than manipulative practices. Fair pricing also contributes to market stability and protects consumers from excessive pricing.

Aspect of Consumer Protection

The responsiveness of *al-hisbah* in handling consumer complaints is crucial to building and sustaining public trust. When consumers feel protected, they are more confident in engaging in market transactions. Prompt responses to reports of violations, such as product fraud, unreasonable pricing, or poor-quality goods, provide buyers with a sense of security. This not only safeguards consumer rights but also encourages traders to improve product quality and service standards, thereby strengthening the overall credibility of the Sharia market.

Aspect of Education

Beyond its supervisory function, *al-hisbah* also plays a strategic role in educating traders. Educational efforts are carried out through socialization, training, and counseling on Sharia trade principles, including the prohibition of usury and fraud, as well as the obligation to maintain product quality. These initiatives aim not only to reduce violations but also to foster traders' ethical awareness and voluntary compliance with Sharia regulations. Continuous education fosters a culture of honesty and fairness in trade, which is essential to the long-term sustainability of Sharia markets.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the role of *al-hisbah* as a market supervisory institution from the perspectives of traders and consumers at the Ulul Albab Sharia Market using a qualitative approach. The findings demonstrate that *al-hisbah* functions as a moral overseer and regulator of market ethics, contributing significantly to the development of trust between traders and consumers. From the

traders' perspective, *al-hisbah* supports fair competition and price transparency, while consumers perceive its presence as providing adequate protection against fraudulent practices and product quality manipulation.

Despite these positive roles, the implementation of *al-hisbah* faces several challenges, including limited human resources, uneven socialization, and the need to adapt supervisory mechanisms to contemporary trade systems. From a practical standpoint, this study highlights the importance of strengthening institutional capacity and integrating digital technologies into market supervision to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of *al-hisbah* in the digital era.

This study is limited to a single Sharia market and relies on qualitative data from a relatively small number of informants. Future research is encouraged to broaden the empirical scope by examining multiple Sharia markets, employing mixed or quantitative methods, and exploring the application of *al-hisbah* principles in online and digital trading environments.

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