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Religiocentrism in consumption: a literature review

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Abstract

Purpose – This paper aims to conceptually extend the religious aspect of consumption beyond the intrinsic motivation, i.e. religiosity, to a broader consideration of its social and cultural surroundings by highlighting the concept of "religiocentrism".

Design/methodology/approach – The paper is conceptual and qualitative. It explores the concept of religiocentrism in several disciplines, including theology, politics, sociology, marketing and consumption.

Findings – The paper introduces the concept of religiocentrism in understanding religious consumption and marketing among consumers within a religious context. This paper further discusses the origin of the term religiocentrism; religiocentrism as looking beyond the intrinsic motivation, i.e. religiosity, religiocentrism from the social identity theory; past research on religiocentrism in theology, politics, sociology, education, marketing and consumption, as well as suggesting potential future research in religiocentrism within marketing and consumption studies.

Research limitations/implications – The lack of research relating to religiocentrism in marketing makes the depth of the discussion rather limited. This paper, however, does not discuss the term religiocentrism from the theology roots but focuses more on the marketing and consumption aspects of religiocentrism.

Originality/value – Several research papers exist within the different disciplines about religiocentrism. However, to the best of the authors' knowledge, it can be argued that this paper is one of its kind to highlight the concept of "religiocentrism" in consumption and marketing that considers the social and cultural surroundings.

Keywords Religion, Religious consumption, Religiocentrism, Islamic, Religiocentric

Paper type Conceptual paper

Introduction

There has been a surge of interest in researching Muslim consumers and their consumption in the past few decades. This quickly developed into a new standalone field in researching "Islamic marketing". Despite the establishment of this emerging field with many publications (Sandıkcı and Rice, 2011) expanding into this academic area, the literature has yet to gain recognition in mainstream marketing research (Wilson *et al.*, 2013; Koku and Jusoh, 2014). This is further evidenced by the limited research conducted on religious consumption, as seen in the *Journal of Macromarketing* from 1981 to 2014 (Drenten and McManus, 2016), and Islamic consumption is even less recognised (Alserhan and Alserhan, 2012; Karatas and Sandikci, 2013). Acknowledging the heterogeneity of Muslims worldwide (Jafari, 2012), this paper does not aim to generalise the concept to the whole of Muslims but instead looks into specific consumption practices in a Muslim community that may also exist in other contexts.

In agreement with the previous Islamic scholars, Islam is the determining factor in consuming Islamic products and services (Aziz *et al.*, 2018; Bhatti and Md Husin, 2019; Bukhari *et al.*, 2019; Hassan and Abbas, 2019; Schmidt, 2019). However, past scholars tend to



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treat Islam as the distinguishing factor in consumption among Muslims. Thus, religious elements such as religiosity (Delener, 1994; Alam *et al.*, 2011; Razzaque and Chaudhry, 2013; Souiden and Marzouki, 2015; Ali *et al.*, 2019; Hassan and Abbas, 2019) become variables that distinguish Muslim consumers from other consumers. Nevertheless, religion is not the only reason for consuming an Islamic alternative. Religion should not be considered and analysed out of its context. Bearing in mind the tendency of past scholars to essentialising Islam (Sandikci and Ger, 2010; Jafari and Sandikci, 2016), this paper argues that a consumer, despite their religious background, is inevitable from social and cultural influences. Thus, consuming certain objects or experiences is much more complex and intertwines with other symbolic meanings.

For example, the Malaysian Islamic Consumers Association introduces the "buy Muslim first" campaign in Malaysia. This movement did not receive much attention until mid-2019, following several issues on the abuse and misuse of halal certificates to gain a competitive advantage in the Malaysian marketplace (Ruslan *et al.*, 2018). This movement was not aimed at boycotting non-Muslim products. The aim is to prioritise Muslim businesses to sustain the market (Hassan *et al.*, 2020). The introduction of this movement resonates well among the Malays (who typically professed Islam), raising their tendencies to prioritise Islamic products and services. The movement uses various communication mediums to induce the sensitivity of the Malays in prioritising Muslim products and services. Thus, in this specific context, their consumption carries other symbolic meanings.

Given Malaysia's multi-ethnic and multireligious environment, it is unrealistic to say there are no debates or arguments concerning these diversities. Islam in Malaysia is increasingly subject to not only political but also cultural and ethnic contestation, individually and collectively. Nevertheless, this discursive tradition is even more evident in how Malays consume things. The contestation and debates around consumption resulted in different ontologies of *proper Islamic consumption'* that relate to their desires and moral, social and familial anxieties (Fischer, 2008). Following these sentiments, various market actors are striving to accommodate and capture the need and sensitivity of this group of consumers. Businesses produce products with packaging that displays Islamic cues, such as a picture of a mosque, moon or Arabic written text on the packaging, blurring the originality of the business owners' religious profession. A similar scenario occurs in the fashion industry. The fashion industrial players creatively accommodate Muslimah with beautiful and trendy apparel that blurs a typical Muslimah attire line. The introduction of "halal slippers" has recently gained various consumer debates in Malaysia (Adreena, 2021). Such a claim raises debates on the "Islamicness" aspect of such a mundane object.

These scenarios exemplify that it is inevitable to study religious consumption without its context. Religiosity is one of the factors influencing a purchase decision. But it is not the distinguishing aspect between a religious consumer and a non-religious consumer. These scenarios raise several questions; how does religious context help to shape consumers' consumption decisions? How do these consumers living in a religious context negotiate the tensions that arise during their consumption? This paper, therefore, aims to extend the religious aspect of consumption beyond the intrinsic motivation, i.e. religiosity, to a broader consideration of its social and cultural surroundings – through religiocentrism.

Literature review

Religion, ethnocentrism and religiocentrism

Religion stands out as a frequently discussed topic concerning various other disciplines within the literature, namely, the relationship between religion and business administration issues such as entrepreneurship (Dana, 2010; Ramadani *et al.*, 2017; Block *et al.*, 2019),

management (Gundolf and Filser, 2012; Tracey, 2012), accounting (Noresmabt, 2004; McKernan and Kosmala, 2007; Cordery, 2015; Ma *et al.*, 2019), human resources (Cash and Gray, 2000) and consumer culture (Sandikci and Ger, 2010; Ger, 2013; McAlexander *et al.*, 2014b; Andreini *et al.*, 2017; Rauf *et al.*, 2019; Rinallo and Oliver, 2019).

In addition to the wealth of research on religion as an antecedent in purchasing products or services in the literature, this paper defines religion as a "system of meaning embodied in a pattern of life, a community of faith and a worldview that articulate a view of the sacred and of what ultimately matters" (Mathras *et al.*, 2016, p. 300). Rather than enjoying the monopolistic role (O'Guinn and Belk, 1989; McAlexander *et al.*, 2014a; Rinallo and Alemany Oliver, 2019), religions today compete for "consumers" who consume objects that provide the meanings that fit their lifestyle in the market (Berger and Luckmann, 1967; Hendar *et al.*, 2020). Rather than viewing religion as independent of its context, this paper views religion in relation to its contextual surroundings – through a concept of religiocentrism.

Rooted in the ethnocentrism concept, religiocentrism is defined as the combination of positive attitudes towards the religious in-group and negative attitudes towards religious out-groups (Sterkens and Anthony, 2008). This definition is a direct analogy deeply rooted in a well-studied concept of ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism is defined as an individual's predisposition of assuming one's social group is the centre of everything, and all others are evaluated with reference to it (Ha, 2020). In simple words, ethnocentrism is the tendency or belief that one's social group is superior to others – thus, categorising the human being into in-groups and out-groups. According to a social and cultural development study in The Netherlands, ethnocentrism coincides with two other factors that are important in a context, namely, authoritarianism and localism (Eisinga and Scheepers, 1989, pp. 133–150). Firstly, authoritarianism consists of three significant properties – *conventionalism, authoritarian submission* and *authoritarian aggression.*

Conventionalism refers to a rigid adherence towards conservative values and norms. That means an individual clings tightly to the positively perceived values and norms of the in-group and rejects the (supposedly) negative ones of the out-groups. In contrast, authoritarian submission refers to an uncritical attitude towards human and superhuman authority and is unquestioningly submitted to it. They will associate themselves as belonging with the in-group as superior. Finally, authoritarian aggression refers to the tendency to condemn and punish people who do not respect their authority and violate one's values and norms. So, the people who fall under authoritarian aggression tend to social contra-identification with the "inferior" out-group who does not live up to the values and norms of the in-group (Sterkens and Anthony, 2008). Finally, the second factor of ethnocentrism is localism. Localism is defined as the tendency to identify oneself with the local community (Roof, 1974).

This paper, however, is not focusing on ethnocentrism but religiocentrism – a religious notion that principally cuts across the boundaries of ethnicity. By analogy, religiocentrism is rooted in the concept of ethnocentrism. Thus, it is essential to understand the properties of ethnocentrism that can relate to religiocentrism. From this perspective, religiocentrism is inherent in religion as it establishes the identity of both individuals and groups. Religiocentrism is, therefore, a part of ethnocentrism. Religiocentrism implies a combination of a positive attitude towards members of the same religious group and a negative attitude towards members of other religious groups (Sterkens and Anthony, 2008, p. 34). Religiocentrism echoes the religious sentiment that seeking fulfilment of personal interest should align with the teaching of one's religion (Ray, 1972). Faithful individuals who are religiocentric will deny the truth of other religions and hold the absolute truth of their religion (Abu-Nimer, 2004). Meanwhile, the members of the religious groups that hold similar religiocentric elements will

consider the attributes of religiosity of their religion better than the attributes of other religious groups (Sterkens and Anthony, 2008).

Religiocentrism from the perspective of social identity theory

In social psychology, religiocentrism is regarded both as individually and contextually related. Such integration of both individual and contextual is concerning as empirical personality psychology has failed to find specific personality traits for specific religious attitudes, i.e. fundamentalism (Hood *et al.*, 2005). From the social psychological perspective, religion is embedded in religion since religion establishes an identity for both individuals and groups – thus, leading to religiocentrism and ethnocentrism as far as religious communities are defined by ethnicities.

Social identity theory (SIT) attempts to explain the intergroup attitudes similar to religiocentrism through psychological processes of cognitive perception of the underlying group identification. Coenders *et al.* (2004) describe several linked concepts that can be helpful to explain the development of an individual's identity in relation to a group identity. SIT distinguishes three concepts that help explain religiocentrism: social categorisation, social identity and social comparison.

Social categorisation occurs when the differences between members of the same group are seen as unimportant while similarities between members of the same group become more central. Similarities between out-group members are evaluated as more important than similarities in one's group. In simple terms, members of the out-group are perceived as having shared ideas and feelings, whereas the characteristics of the in-group are considered more diversified and nuanced (Sterkens and Anthony, 2008). This is termed "depersonalisation" or "dehumanisation" of the out-group (Tajfel, 1981).

The second concept is social identity. This concept views that every individual derives his self-image from the knowledge he gained of a social group(s) together with the value and emotional feelings attached to that membership (Tajfel, 1981). The concept posits that individuals will strive to sustain an appositive self-image by attempting to join the groups that they perceive as positive and minimise the identification with the group(s) that they perceive negatively, even if they belong to the latter. In social identification, the positive stereotypes are applied to oneself, whereas they resist belonging or are associated with the negative characteristic of the out-group – also known as social contra-identification (Brown, 1995). In sum, social identity refers to an individual's identity formation as an iterative process between social inclusion and exclusion.

The third concept of SIT is social comparison. Here, the individuals describe the features of the in-group as "more valuable" or "better" than those from the out-group. The positive stereotypes are applied to oneself and in-groups. In comparison, negative stereotypes are applied to the members of out-groups. Therefore, prejudices are the matter of relations between groups and how individuals think about themselves as part of a particular social group. While some tensions or conflicts result from a sharply distinct group identity, at the same time, the distinction between groups is established through conflicts. In the former case, the different social constructions of needs and satisfiers in the distinct groups compete and frustrating relationships. In the latter case, conflicts are the means of making social comparison and social identity construction possible and strengthening the internal cohesion of the various groups (Coser, 1956; Blumer, 1958).

Following these SIT discussions on SIT, the significance of the context in terms of secularization or desecularisation should also be taken into consideration. As some Muslim consumers live in societies where they experience desecularisation (Former Socialist or Communist states), they may have distinctive practices on religious products

or be more/less religiocentric in the marketplace. Zeqiri *et al.* (2022) stated in their recent research that desecularisation is not driving consumer behaviour regarding religious products, nor does the purchase of religious products relate to the establishment and expression of social identity and religiosity is positively and significantly associated with attitudes towards purchase intention. These findings must be challenged in different contexts, especially through cross-cultural comparisons (Zeqiri *et al.*, 2019).

SIT acknowledges the conflicts or tensions between the in-group and out-group and their contextual aspects in shaping an individual's social identity. Therefore, it remains essential to study the context in which identity is constructed, specifically regarding the interests at stake and the societal conditions under which competition or tensions arise. Specifically, SIT explores how consumers in a religious context manoeuvre their social identity and tensions in their consumption.

Religiocentrism in literature

Theology. Research in religiocentrism is evident in various disciplines and literature (Table 1). It is extensively discussed in theology as a means to understand how an individual's religious affiliation influence the various aspect of identity, attitudes, social interaction and religiosity. Religiosity is a structure that is difficult to measure, and its meaning can be transformed in different contexts. A religious person may not consider his or her religiosity sufficient, or a person with less religious practices may consider himself very religious. Moreover, in a Western context, secularism has set up a specific modular conception of religiosity, which is intrinsically linked and historically conjoined to the modern category of the "secular" (Baldi, 2018), which is why religiosity is a context-dependent conception. So, in non-Western contexts, religiosity may have meanings and constructs. Religiocentrism reflects a believer's elemental religious tension more effectively than other religion-related concepts (Ha, 2020, p. 62).

Meanwhile, Sterkens and Anthony (2008) view religiocentrism from the individual perspective. Thus, they explore how students from various religious background view and perceive the other religions within the same school. They also introduce religiocentrism scales based on these students' positive and negative in-group and out-group responses towards the other religions. On another note, they further use the SIT, which derives from the ethnocentrism literature, in measuring the religiocentrism among their respondents. They found that SIT can provide some possible explanations for the cross-religious differences affecting the levels of religiocentrism (Anthony *et al.*, 2015). Nevertheless, the issue of understanding religiocentrism within theology is still an ongoing area for further research.

Politics, sociology and education. The term religiocentrism also emerged within the politics, sociology and education disciplines in understanding how one human behaves within a social context and its political stands. Ray and Doratis (1971) were among the first to explore religiocentrism in sociological literature. They defined religiocentrism as "religiously based sentiments of exclusiveness-beliefs that one should marry within one's religion, work with members of one's religion, and in general prefer members of one's religion above others" (Ray and Doratis, 1971, p. 170). Initially, religiocentrism and religious conservatism were being used interchangeably. However, they found that ethnocentrism, religiocentrism and religious conservatism were all shown to be separate and distinct factors of attitudes. They are not just three aspects of one thing. However, they find that religiocentric people tend to be religiously conservative and ethnocentric.

Meanwhile, the political aspect of religiocentrism is also evident in understanding how an individual with religiocentrism elements hold their political stands towards specific political issues such as voting rights, homosexuality, abortion, immigrants, authoritarianism and

Table 1.
Summary of religiocentrism-related research in literature

Author	Disciplines	Terminology	Definition	Ontology on religiocentrism	Points of theoretical contribution
Ray and Doratis (1971)	Sociology, Education	Religiocentrism, Religious conservatism	"Religiously based sentiments of exclusiveness-beliefs that one should marry within one's own religion, work with members of one's own religion, and in general prefer members of one's own religion above others" (p. 170)	View religiocentrism from the individual perspective	– Introduces Religiocentrism scale for students in Australian Catholic secondary schools – The results suggest the students are neither ethnocentric nor religiocentric than the others – Found that ethnocentrism, religiocentrisms and religious conservatism were all shown to be separate and distinct factors of attitudes. They are not just three aspects of one thing – Religiocentric people do, however, tend to be both religiously conservative and ethnocentric
Sterkens and Anthony (2008)	Theology	Religiocentrism	"The bi-factorial structure of religiocentrism (positive in-group attitudes combined with negative out-group attitudes)" (p. 32)	View religiocentrism from the individual perspective	– Provide findings on how Christian, Muslim and Hindu students in Tamil Nadu, India, respond to the cross-religious study on religiocentrism scales – The measurement uses the ingroup and outgroup positive and negative responses
Anthony *et al.* (2015)	Theology	Religiocentrism	"The bi-factorial structure of religiocentrism (positive in-group attitudes combined with negative out-group attitudes)" (p. 143)	View religiocentrism from the individual perspective	– Define the concept "of religiocentrism" and explain the phenomenon by describing its origins from the angle of social identity theory (SIT) – Offering some possible explanations of cross-religious differences in levels of religiocentrism
Hendar *et al.* (2017)	Marketing	Religiocentric	Refers to 'those companies which use religion as the basis market segmentation and targeting, focusing on meeting	View religiocentric from the	– Introduces Religiocentric Positional Advantage (RPA) dimensions in measuring marketing performance

(*continued*)

Table 1.

Author	Disciplines	Terminology	Definition	Ontology on religiocentrism	Points of theoretical contribution
			customer needs for products that support their commitment to their religious values and beliefs, building bonds with targeted customers, providing the best service to customers and branding the company with values of religiosity' (p. 79)	market/ business perspective	– Utilises social identity theory (SIT) – Found that small companies in these religion-based market segments are likely to have better marketing performance if they have religiocentric positional advantage – Claim that religiocentric positional advantage indeed plays a role as a mediator in the correlation between marketing innovativeness, customers' responsiveness and competitors' responsiveness and marketing performance
Ha (2020)	Politics	Religiocentrism	Defined as the "combination of positive attitudes toward religious in- group and negative attitudes toward religious out-groups"(Sterkens and Anthony, 2008, p. 32)	View religiocentrism from the individual perspective	– Utilising Kinder and Kam's (2010) ethnocentrism: four distinct theoretical perspectives, namely, as an expression of social identity, because of realistic group conflict, as an outgrowth of the authoritarian personality, and as an outcome of natural selection – Found that individuals high on religiocentrism are prejudiced against other religious groups, have conservative opinions on social issues such as homosexuality and abortion, hold negative attitudes toward immigrants, are authoritarian, are less likely to trust others, and are less likely to vote in South Korea
Hendar *et al.* (2020)	Marketing	Religiocentric	Uses Religiocentric Product Strategy (RPS) concept to explain the development	View religiocentric from the	– Focuses on the role of the four dimensions of marketing capability, namely, marketing innovativeness (MI),

(*continued*)

Table 1.

Author	Disciplines	Terminology	Definition	Ontology on religiocentrism	Points of theoretical contribution
			activities and product offerings of companies that focus on religious values	market/ business perspective	market sensing capability (MSC), customer relationship management capability (CRMC) and brand management capability (BMC) in supporting RPS and Marketing Performance (MP)
Sudarti (2022)	Marketing	Religiocentric	Defined as the "combination of positive attitudes toward religious in- group and negative attitudes toward religious out-groups"(Sterkens and Anthony, 2008, p. 32)	View religiocentric from the individual perspective	– Utilises social identity theory (SIT) – The addition of a dimension of value in an exchange simultaneously provides a critique of the Social Exchange Theory (SET) claimed by (Blau, 1964), who postulates that individuals will react reciprocally in exchange when they feel that another individual has given something to them

others (Ha, 2020). Using Sterkens and Anthony (2008, p. 32) definition of religiocentrism, *a combination of positive attitudes towards religious in-groups and negative attitudes towards religious out-groups*, Ha (2020) explores the political aspects of people with religious beliefs in Korea. They found that individuals high on religiocentrism are prejudiced against other religious groups, have conservative opinions on social issues such as homosexuality and abortion, hold negative attitudes towards immigrants, are authoritarian, are less likely to trust others and are less likely to vote in South Korea.

Marketing and consumption. In marketing and consumption research, there is a broadly accepted notion that Islam significantly impacts Muslim consumers' characteristics. Consumption practices among Muslims are shaped by several factors and constructs, including their beliefs and religious practice. In Islamic marketing literature, there are two prominent concepts that researchers show interest in more: religiosity and the concept of Halal. Understanding Muslim consumers' religiosity seems essential, whereas the concept may have some deficits in giving us a clearer picture of the Muslim consumer context. Religiosity is a structure that is difficult to measure, and its meaning can be transformed in different contexts. A religious person may not consider his or her religiosity sufficient, or a person with less religious practices may consider himself very religious. Instead, religiocentrism combines positive attitudes towards the religious in-group and negative attitudes towards religious out-groups. Religiocentrism reflects a believer's elemental religious tension more effectively than other religion-related concepts. Unfortunately, in contrast to other disciplines, research on how religiocentrism helps to shape a consumer's identity or marketing activities remained under-researched. Some past scholars viewed religiocentric elements in implementing marketing activities and strategies within the marketing literature (Hendar *et al.*, 2017; Hendar *et al.*, 2020; Sudarti, 2022). However, they view the religiocentric elements from the business or marketing perspectives. The tensions or conflicts that consumers within a religious context are experiencing remained unvoiced.

This paper emphasises how Islam has a compelling impact on individuals to live their life harmoniously with its rules and restrictions. Muslims are trying to do their best to live in compliance with the religious rules (Boğan and Sarıışık, 2019). However, because the intention for consumption and religious motivation are different concepts, there are no homogeneous groups, as every Muslim embrace Islam differently. Therefore, differences in practice may occur even if all believers try to follow the same rules. Religiocentrism may have different levels in consumption practices. Some may behave in a religiocentric way but only to the extent of their small Islamic group (community). Others may understand the religiocentric values on the national level, or some may practice religiocentric values at the ummah level. Some groups buy in-groups and understand this kind of behaviour as religiocentric. For example, they go to a grocery store which is owned by a person who is a member of their Islamic community (positive in-group attitudes combined with negative out-group attitudes). Another level is national-level religiocentric consumption behaviour, which consists of understanding in-group and primarily out-group cultural and national levels. Finally, ummah-level religiocentric consumption behaviour occurs when the boundary of in-group and out-group attitudes are widely constituted. These three levels of religiocentrism will experience different types of practices altogether. At every level, the meaning of in-group and out-group changes. The tensions or conflicts that arise may differ. Nevertheless, how religiocentrism is practised on different levels is yet to be explored in consumption research. This is an excellent opportunity to explore how consumers negotiate these tensions on different levels in shaping their consumption decision.

As suggested by Sterkens and Anthony (2008), positive in-group attitudes and negative out-group attitudes may change. For instance, Sterkens and Anthony (2008) examined the

cross-religious comparisons between Christians, Muslims and Hindus. They concluded that in the case of negative out-group attitudes, every group has a specific type of prejudice towards each religious group. By expanding their findings, we anticipate that there could be different levels of religiocentric practices for groups that share the same religious beliefs. Similar interesting findings were found by Anthony *et al.* (2015), who imply that cross-religious comparative measurement of religiocentrism is problematic because in-groups and out-groups differ depending on the respondent's tradition. Therefore, it is helpful to understand the concept that could have different layers as this will challenge the perception of people about what is in-group and out-group and where this boundary lies within the consumer's context.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper hopes to provide another insight into the intersection between religious belief, social and cultural aspects of material consumption. This intersection is neither unusual nor unimportant in understanding consumers and their consumption (O'Guinn and Belk, 1989; Muñiz and Schau, 2005). It is acknowledged that religion is a crucial element in shaping and sustaining cultures, helping to frame a general conception of the world and self (Tillich, 1946; O'Guinn and Belk, 1989). Yet, there remains a limited understanding of this overlapping area of religion and consumption (Drenten and McManus, 2016).

Despite Islamic marketing receiving an upsurge interest in researching religious consumers and their consumption in recent years, the growing literature exploring Islamic consumption, marketing and scholarship remain restricted to various criticisms and has failed to gain mainstream recognition (Alserhan and Alserhan, 2012; Jafari, 2012; Wilson *et al.*, 2013). Past scholarship in Islamic consumption and marketing has been criticised for treating Muslim consumers as a homogeneous consumer segment; for mainly adopting a reductionist approach; and for oversimplifying Islam as the distinguishing factor in the consumption, thereby overlooking consumers' unique sociocultural environment (Sandikci, 2011; Sandikci and Ger, 2011; Jafari, 2012; Jafari and Suerdem, 2012; Sandikci and Jafari, 2013; Wilson *et al.*, 2013). Similarly, Dana (2010) highlighted the significance of the context while explaining the religious factor in entrepreneurship. According to his study, different religious values have substantial roles in shaping entrepreneurship, one of the prominent market practices. On the other hand, consumption is another market practice in the marketplace, which is also context-dependent. Religiocentric consumption practices could take place differently in various contextual backgrounds, not only in the same religious context but also across religious contexts.

Religiocentrism is, therefore, another term that can help explain how certain consumers behave in certain ways within a specific context. To this end, the purpose of this paper is to provide a review of relevant literature relating to religiocentrism and how it may help scholars understand consumption and marketing within a religious context. With this, it is also hoped that other scholars can explore how certain consumption is practised and experienced without dismissing its social and cultural context as it matters (Arnould *et al.*, 2006). As the key finding of this paper, we can anticipate that:

- suggest a concept that can explain religiocentric practices that relates to both individual intrinsic values as well as their social surroundings;
- religiocentric practice can be different in one group to another; and
- there could potentially be three layers of religiocentrism: community level, national level and ummah level.

Nevertheless, this paper is not without limitations. This paper's discussions are limited to religiocentrism in politics, sociology, education, marketing and consumption. There was a brief discussion on how religiocentrism exists in theological research. But the paper did not delve deeper into the theological aspect of the term, instead focusing more on the marketing and consumption aspect of it. It is also worth noting the scarcity of empirical research on religiocentrism, making the discussion less rigour from the theoretical perspectives.

Therefore, religiocentrism should be examined in future research to provide further empirical evidence of its existence and explore how consumers within religious settings practice this concept alternatively, whether different religions yield distinct patterns of consumption, as is the case within the context of entrepreneurship Dana (2010). Another future direction of religiocentrism studies can be to explore the relationship between religiocentric consumption behaviour and sustainability. Examining how consumers perceive sustainable options and offer while being religiocentric in the marketplace would be a significant question to be answered.

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