

## INFLUENCE OF *TARBIYYAH* IN CONSUMER EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY IN EMPOWERING INDIVIDUAL CONSUMERS FOR EFFICIENT CONSUMER PROTECTION

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### ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the effect of *tarbiyyah* (a systematic education system) on consumer education and advocacy, concentrating on its role in empowering individuals for effective consumer protection. The purpose of this study is to determine how *tarbiyyah* influences consumer behaviour and promotes responsible consumption, thereby contributing to Sustainable Development Goal 12 (SDG 12) on responsible consumption. An in-depth examination of the experiences and viewpoints of three consumer advocates who are included in the research's scope is made possible via qualitative personal interviews. Two primary research objectives have been identified: first, to examine the effect of *tarbiyyah* on consumer education and awareness; and second, to evaluate its efficacy in empowering individuals to safeguard their rights as consumers. The results emphasise the importance of a structured *tarbiyyah* education system in influencing consumer behaviour and encouraging responsible consumption. The study highlights the pragmatic ramifications for consumer associations and civic organisations involved in promoting conscientious consumer behaviour, underscoring the significance of incorporating *tarbiyyah* principles into their instructional curricula. By offering insights into empowering people for effective consumer protection, this research adds to the general knowledge of the function of *tarbiyyah* in consumer education and advocacy. The study has a limitation in that it is based solely on three consumer advocates, which may not fully represent the broader consumer population. While this sample size is suitable for qualitative research to ground insights, it may not effectively capture quantitative aspects and statistical significance. Nonetheless, the study still offers valuable insights into the potential impact of *tarbiyyah* on consumer behavior. and its contribution to Sustainable Development Goal 12.

**Keywords:** *Tarbiyyah*, Consumer education, Advocacy, Responsible consumption, Sustainable Development Goal 12

## INTRODUCTION

Consumer education and advocacy are crucial to empowering individuals to defend their rights and make informed decisions in the marketplace. Adkins & Ozanne (2005), McGregor (2005), Armstrong & Armstrong (2021), Srivastava (2022), and Maciejewski & Lesznik (2002) have argued that there is a growing recognition of the need for comprehensive pedagogical strategies that go beyond conventional methodologies.

The provision of consumer education is of paramount importance in enabling individuals with low literacy levels to safeguard their rights and exercise informed judgement. Adkins and Ozanne (2005) argued that traditional approaches to consumer education may not reach individuals with limited reading and comprehension skills regarding consumerism.

Adkins and Ozanne (2005) advocated for accessible formats, visual aids, and interactive methods in critical consumer education. Tailoring consumer education to individuals with low literacy skills enables them to effectively navigate complex consumer situations. In fact, McGregor (2005) argued that by employing a critical approach to consumer education, individuals can acquire the skills and knowledge required to evaluate the social and environmental effects of their consumption patterns. This enables consumers to make knowledgeable choices that are consistent with their principles and promote greater sustainability and accountability in consumption patterns.

Consumer education ought to keep up with the current pace and trends. Armstrong & Armstrong (2021) argued that consumer education is crucial in today's fast-paced, ever-changing world, where individuals are bombarded with immense amounts of information and presented with a variety of options. Individuals can analyse marketing messages, evaluate the quality and safety of products, and take into account the social and environmental effects of their purchases by learning to be critical consumers. Therefore, Srivastava (2022) argued that advocacy strengthens the position of the consumer by amplifying voices, educating and enlightening, promoting ethical consumption, influencing legislation, and creating communities that are supportive of the defence of rights.

Additionally, consumer education should adhere to the global agenda. Maciejewski and Lesznik (2022) assert that the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 12 is contingent upon the active participation of consumers. Consumers can play a significant role in promoting sustainable lifestyles and contributing to a more sustainable and equitable future by engaging in responsible consumption and production practises. This involves making deliberate choices that reduce waste and conserve resources. Kozinets, Ferreira, and Chimenti (2021) underscored the significance of consumer education and advocacy as a means to empower consumers to exert their influence, demand accountability, and seek redress from companies, thereby altering the power dynamics in the consumer-brand relationship. According to Murphy's (2016) argument, consumers hold the ability to influence the culture and society of consumerism through their vocal expressions. Consumers wield significant influence over businesses by exercising intentional decision-making, articulating their preferences, and advocating for ethical and sustainable practises. This influence promotes responsible consumption and facilitates constructive progress towards a more sustainable and socially conscious society.

### Research gaps

Firstly, there is a limited focus on individuals with low literacy levels, creating a research gap in exploring tailored pedagogical strategies for this demographic. Secondly, critical consumer

education lacks emphasis, leaving a research gap in understanding its implementation, outcomes, and impact on sustainable and responsible consumption. Thirdly, insufficient research exists on the global impact of consumer education and advocacy efforts, hindering the exploration of their contributions to broader sustainability goals. Lastly, the study's focus on *tarbiyyah*'s influence reveals a research gap in understanding how it empowers individuals for effective consumer protection and responsible consumption. Further research should explore practical aspects and outcomes of implementing *tarbiyyah* to positively shape consumer behavior.

### Research problem

Despite the increasing focus that has been given to consumer education and advocacy through seminal and advocacy efforts (Adkins & Ozanne, 2005; McGregor, 2005; Armstrong & Armstrong, 2021; Srivastava, 2022; Maciejewski & Lesznik, 2022), there remains a need for a systematic pedagogical approach that can effectively educate, nurture, and empower customers to defend their rights and make informed decisions. *Tarbiyyah* is a system of education that incorporates moral and ethical instruction alongside academic knowledge (Khan, 2011).

### Research objectives

The study has two distinct objectives. The principal aim of the research is to examine the influence of *tarbiyyah* on consumer education and awareness. The aim of this research is to examine the impact of *tarbiyyah* in educational settings, with the purpose of clarifying its potential to shape consumer behaviour and encourage responsible consumption practises. The study's secondary aim is to evaluate the efficacy of *tarbiyyah* in empowering individuals to safeguard their consumer rights. This objective concerns the practical aspects of implementing *tarbiyyah* and its effectiveness in promoting competent consumer protection.

### Significance

The study's significance transcends consumer advocacy and education. The present research enhances the comprehension of the function of *tarbiyyah* in fostering responsible consumption behaviours by offering perspectives on empowering individuals to ensure efficient consumer protection. Furthermore, this aligns with the worldwide initiatives aimed at attaining Sustainable Development Goal 12 and advocates for sustainable development by encouraging responsible consumption behaviours.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Knowledge related to consumption

The act of consumption holds a significant position in our everyday lives, exerting an impact on our actions and commercial engagements. As individuals who participate in economic activities, we engage in transactions that have both direct and indirect impacts on not only ourselves but also on the individuals who depend on us. Although consumers are the driving force behind the economy, they often lack knowledge regarding their legal entitlements and the degree to which they are safeguarded by consumer protection legislation.

Concerns exist regarding the extent to which consumers are aware of and comprehend their legal entitlements and protections as outlined in the Consumer Protection Act. According to Dol, Bakar, and Said (2015), a significant proportion of consumers exhibit a lack of awareness regarding consumerism and the legal framework that safeguards their rights. Dol, Bakar, and Said (2015) have noted that the lack of knowledge is not confined to the layman but also extends to consumers who are members of various associations. The understanding of consumerism in

both conceptual and visual terms does not effectively translate into a concrete consumer movement, as noted by Lau (2010) and Ishak and Zabil (2012). Hence, there is an urgent need for consumer education initiatives to address the knowledge gap as identified by Mazlan, Redzuan, and Bakar (2014).

Fortunately, there are laws in place to protect consumers, as Sabri (2014) and Yoga have explained. Nonetheless, it is insufficient for consumers to simply possess knowledge of their entitlements; they must take proactive measures to assert and promote them. Individuals are required to take proactive measures in seeking legal redress when their rights have been infringed upon and to engage in the dissemination of knowledge to others.

Regrettably, research indicates that consumers often exhibit a lack of motivation or inclination to collectively advocate for consumer protection (Sabri, 2014; Zulkefli, Abdullah, & Endut, 2022). The impact of religious beliefs and values on the ethical and consumerist behaviours of consumers has been documented in various studies (Ramly, Chai, & Lung, 2008; Azhar, 2019; Mat, Sulaiman, Abdghanian, & Mohammad, 2020). Hence, there exists a potential benefit to integrating religious doctrines and viewpoints into consumer education initiatives with the aim of fostering a more robust sense of consumer accountability and support.

### **Legal entitlements and safeguards**

While consumers may possess a restricted understanding of their legal entitlements and safeguards, it is incumbent upon both individuals and entities to impart knowledge and enhance consciousness regarding consumerism and the importance of joint representation. The cultivation of an informed and responsible consumer culture can be facilitated by providing consumers with the requisite knowledge and promoting their active participation in advocating for consumer protection.

Insufficient awareness of legal matters among consumers is a significant concern. Dol, Bakar, and Said (2015) have reported that consumers exhibit a significant deficit in their legal knowledge pertaining to consumerism. The lack of sufficient comprehension among consumers regarding their entitlements and the legal safeguards that ensure their protection is a predictable occurrence. Khan (2011) argued that despite the existence of laws intended to protect consumers, the average consumer frequently misunderstands the complexities and ramifications of such regulations. Consequently, consumers may unintentionally relinquish their entitlements and neglect to pursue remedies for any issues they may encounter in the commercial sphere.

### **Collective efforts of individuals and organisations**

Consumer associations are instrumental in advocating for the rights and safeguarding the welfare of consumers. The impact of these organisations in Malaysia has been limited due to various factors, including low membership and inadequate consumer awareness among their constituents (Dol, Bakar, & Said, 2015). In order to effectively tackle this challenge, it is recommended that consumer associations give priority to the dissemination of knowledge and education among their members, with a particular emphasis on consumer protection and the inculcation of consumerist values.

Through the augmentation of consumer awareness, organisations can enable individuals to assert their entitlements and engage proactively in endeavours aimed at protecting the welfare

of consumers (Lau, 2010; Dol, Bakar, & Said, 2015). Education can encompass a multitude of facets, such as disseminating information to individuals regarding their legal entitlements, instructing them on fraudulent marketing tactics, fostering consciousness of product safety protocols, and providing direction on how to redress consumer complaints.

Consumer education can be improved through various means, such as workshops, seminars, and public awareness campaigns that are coordinated by consumer associations. These endeavours may encompass subject matters such as the labelling of products, equitable pricing, mechanisms for resolving disputes, and the responsibility of regulatory entities in guaranteeing the safety of consumers (Lau, 2010; Ishak & Zabil, 2012). In addition, it is possible for consumer associations to engage in partnerships with governmental bodies, academic establishments, and other pertinent stakeholders to provide their members with thorough and current data.

Additionally, it is imperative for consumer associations to underscore the importance of consumerism as a unified entity that can bring about significant transformations. Through the cultivation of a heightened awareness of consumer rights and the promotion of ethical and sustainable practises, these organisations have the potential to cultivate a climate of informed and conscientious consumption within their membership (Adkins & Ozanne, 2005; McGregor, 2005; Armstrong & Armstrong, 2021; Srivastava, 2022, and Maciejewski & Lesznik, 2002). Promoting informed decision-making, endorsing businesses that prioritise consumer welfare, and engaging in sustainable initiatives can enhance the influence of the consumer movement.

Consumer associations can augment their outreach endeavours to expand their membership base. Associations can effectively engage with consumers from diverse backgrounds and encourage their participation by utilising a range of communication channels, such as social media platforms, newsletters, and community events (Srivastava, 2022, and Maciejewski & Lesznik, 2002). Associations can motivate individuals to participate and make meaningful contributions to the consumer movement by providing concrete incentives and showcasing successful outcomes resulting from their advocacy efforts.

The efficacy of consumer associations as potent drivers of change hinges on their capacity to proficiently educate and mobilise consumers. By means of education and the inculcation of consumerist values, these organisations have the potential to endow individuals with the ability to assert their rights, effectively navigate the intricacies of the market, and collaboratively advocate for policies and practises that prioritise the welfare of consumers.

Consumer associations can effectively contribute to the protection and defence of consumer rights by utilising the power of an informed and engaged membership base. This approach can lead to significant and impactful changes in the consumer landscape.

### **Educating individuals with consumerism**

The provision of consumer education is a crucial tool in enhancing the level of awareness and comprehension among consumers regarding their entitlements and obligations. Mazlan, Redzuan, and Bakar (2014) underscore the significance of educational interventions aimed at endowing consumers with the requisite knowledge and competencies to proficiently navigate the market. Through the dissemination of knowledge regarding consumer protection laws, ethical consumption, and responsible purchasing, individuals can acquire the necessary information to make informed decisions and effectively advocate for their rights.



The domain of consumer education encompasses both cognitive and behavioural aspects, and it is crucial to acknowledge the impact of religiosity on consumers' ethical conduct and perspectives regarding consumption. The influence of religious beliefs and values on consumer behaviour has been the subject of various studies, such as those conducted by Ramly, Chai, and Lung (2008), Azhar (2019), and Mat, Sulaiman, Abdghana, and Mohamad (2020). Moreover, religious doctrines have the potential to imbue consumers with a perception of obligation and liability. This phenomenon may be observed through actions such as the reduction of excessive consumption, the implementation of mindful consumption practises, and the minimization of waste. The concept of stewardship emphasises the responsible management of resources that have been entrusted to a higher authority. This belief can serve as a motivating factor for consumers to adopt sustainable practises that have positive impacts on both the environment and society.

Religious communities and institutions are significant contributors to the promotion of conscientious consumer conduct. Individuals have the ability to utilise their agency to promote consciousness regarding ethical consumption, coordinate informative initiatives, and foster dialogues pertaining to the convergence of religion and consumerism (Ramly, Chai, & Lung, 2008; Azhar, 2019; Mat et al., 2020). Religious institutions can successfully involve their adherents and encourage a more socially aware consumer culture by incorporating concepts of responsible consumption, social justice, and sustainability into their teachings.

The incorporation of religion in consumer education has the potential to foster the development of a socially responsible and ecologically sustainable society. Through leveraging religious beliefs and values, consumer educators can establish a profound connection with individuals and motivate substantial transformation (Mazlan, Redzuan, & Bakar, 2014; Mat et al., 2020). The incorporation of religious doctrines into consumer education initiatives can furnish a robust ethical basis for conscientious consumption habits and motivate consumers to harmonise their conduct with their religious convictions. It is imperative to acknowledge that the impact of religiosity on consumer behaviour is intricate and subject to variability across diverse religious traditions and individual construals.

Heterogeneity in ethical consumption practises may exist among members of a religious community, as idiosyncratic factors and situational contingencies can exert influence on consumer behaviour. Hence, it is imperative for consumer education initiatives to strive towards imparting a comprehensive comprehension of the intricate dynamics between religion and consumerism (Lau, 2010; Azhar, 2019; Mat et al., 2020). This entails acknowledging the heterogeneity that exists within religious groups and fostering an environment conducive to candid deliberations that delve into the correlation between faith and consumption.

Religious beliefs and values possess the capacity to exert a substantial influence on the ethical practises and attitudes of consumers with regard to consumerism. The incorporation of religious doctrines into consumer education can potentially promote ethical prioritisation, responsible consumer practises, and the development of a socially and environmentally conscious consumer culture among individuals (Mazlan et al., 2014; Mat et al., 2020). The incorporation of religiosity in consumer education has the potential to facilitate constructive transformation by promoting ethical and sustainable practises and aligning consumer behaviour with religious values.

### C2C (consumer-to-consumer)

In order to guarantee the holistic welfare of consumers, it is crucial to promote synergy and coordination among diverse actors, encompassing consumers, policymakers, enterprises, and scholars. Sabri (2014) and Zulkefli, Abdullah, and Endut (2022) highlight the crucial role of consumer engagement in determining and moulding consumer welfare, wherein their requirements, ambitions, and anticipations are pivotal to the procedure. Through the implementation of a co-creation process, it is possible to integrate the viewpoints and opinions of consumers into the formulation of policies, regulations, and practices.

The aforementioned inclusive approach recognises that consumers are not mere passive recipients but rather active participants within the marketplace. The insights and experiences of individuals are of great value in comprehending the challenges they encounter and determining efficacious solutions that are tailored to their unique requirements (Sabri, 2014; Yoganand & Nair, 2019; Zulkefli, Abdullah, & Endut, 2022). Collaboration among consumers, policymakers, businesses, and researchers facilitates the promotion of a thorough understanding of consumer well-being.

Policymakers acquire significant perspectives regarding consumer issues, facilitating the development and execution of policies that effectively tackle these concerns. Consumer input is advantageous for businesses as it enables them to acquire a more comprehensive comprehension of their customers' preferences, expectations, and desired enhancements. Scholars have the potential to make valuable contributions through the execution of empirical investigations that yield recommendations grounded in evidence (Sabri, 2014; Zulkefli, Abdullah, & Endut, 2022). Such recommendations can be used to educate policymakers and business entities on effective strategies that can be employed to improve the welfare of consumers.

The adoption of a collaborative approach towards enhancing consumer well-being has been observed to result in outcomes that are more effective and equitable. The incorporation of a variety of stakeholders enables consideration of the interests and apprehensions of various consumer segments (Lau, 2010; Srivastava, 2022). This methodology aids in guaranteeing that policies and regulations are not partial towards particular groups but rather comprehensive and mindful of the overall welfare of the populace.

In addition, cooperative efforts have the potential to result in the discovery and execution of inventive resolutions to issues pertaining to consumers. The active involvement of consumers in the co-creation process can facilitate the sharing of their knowledge and perspectives, thereby contributing to the generation of innovative ideas and approaches (Maciejewski & Lesznik, 2002; Lau, 2010; Srivastava, 2022). Through the cultivation of a collaborative atmosphere, stakeholders have the ability to collaboratively generate and execute tactics aimed at enhancing consumer welfare, leading to enhanced products, services, and overall consumer encounters.

The collaborative approach necessitates the inclusion of transparency and open communication as fundamental components. It is recommended that stakeholders partake in productive discourse, exchanging knowledge, perspectives, and optimal methodologies (Lau, 2010; Sabri, 2014; Zulkefli et al., 2022). The establishment of an atmosphere of openness and mutual respect is conducive to the development of trust and cooperation among stakeholders, thereby fostering an environment that is conducive to meaningful collaboration.

Hence, it is imperative to foster collaboration among consumers, policymakers, businesses, and researchers to guarantee the holistic welfare of consumers. Involving consumers in a co-creation process recognises their active participation and integrates their requirements, ambitions, and anticipations into the formulation of policies and procedures (Mazlan et al., 2014; Mat et al., 2020). The adoption of a collaborative approach yields the development of policies, regulations, and practises that effectively cater to the needs of consumers, foster their welfare, and engender outcomes that are both equitable and sustainable. Through collaborative efforts, stakeholders can cultivate a milieu of confidence, openness, and creativity, thereby propelling favourable transformations for the overall welfare of consumers.

### ***Tarbiyyah***

*Tarbiyyah* refers to the systematic approach of developing an individual's knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, and habits through a nurturing process. The process of education constitutes a limited component within the broader framework of *tarbiyyah*. Nurmaidah (2022) posits that the principles of *tarbiyyah* are based on the pedagogical and methodological approaches demonstrated by the Prophet Muhammad (Peace be Upon him) in his nurturing practises. According to Yasin and Jani (2013), the primary objective of *tarbiyyah* is to provide sustenance to individuals. The objective of *Tarbiyyah* is to bring about societal improvement through the implementation of *syumuliyah*, or Islam, as a comprehensive way of life (Malik, Rahman, and Mat, 2016). According to Abdullah, Mat, Najid, Mustaffa, and Sawari (2014), the primary aim of *tarbiyyah* is to foster an individual's character.

The concept of *tarbiyyah* encompasses a series of principles that are based on Islamic teachings and aim to foster the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and moral growth of individuals through a set of values and practises. *Tarbiyyah* is a holistic approach that surpasses the mere transmission of knowledge and focuses on the all-encompassing growth and nurturing of individuals' moral and ethical values. *Tarbiyyah* has been identified as possessing unique characteristics and a customised approach, as observed by Chatti (2019) and Al-Mamari, Al-Shorbaji, and Hilal (2022). The phrase "*tarbiyyah fi aydikum fi aydikum faqat*," or "education is in your hands, in your hands only" (Masyhur, 1985; Abdullah, 2019), is commonly recognised. *Tarbiyyah* is primarily a self-directed process that involves personal efforts and authority.

It is a scheme of educational philosophy and aspiration that motivates individuals to establish objectives, pursue learning opportunities, explore diverse resources, and assume accountability for their academic and personal growth. The aforementioned concept fosters a cognitive framework of autonomy, agency, and continuous education, wherein individuals acknowledge their ability to influence their academic trajectory and ultimately attain their intended objectives.

The process of *tarbiyyah* is characterised by its systematic approach, which is guided by a structured syllabus (*manhaj*), a role model (*qudwah*), educators (*murabbi*), and contextual factors (*biah*). According to Sheikh Mustafa Al-Masyhur (1985), *tarbiyyah* is a crucial aspect that can lead to the achievement of various goals. The key principles of *tarbiyyah* involve the integration of *iman* (faith) and *ilm* (knowledge), *tatwir shakhssiyyat al-talib* (student personality development), *al-nahj al-shamil* (holistic approach), *al-namthajah al-qudwah* (role modelling), *al-irshad al-fardi* (individualised guidance), and *al-tatbiq al-'amali* (practical application) (Mhd. Sarif & Ismail, 2019; Mhd. Sarif, Zainudin & Ismail, 2021).



This study posited that the research framework of *tarbiyyah* has an impact on consumer education and advocacy, ultimately leading to the empowerment of consumers and more effective consumer protection. The study's research framework is depicted in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Research Framework**

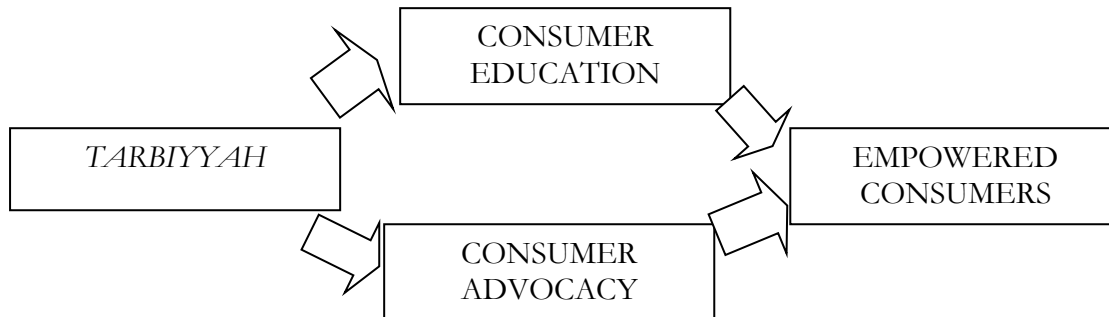


Figure 1 illustrates that the incorporation of *tarbiyyah*, which employs Islamic pedagogy and educational methodologies, into consumer education curricula had an impact on the fundamental principles and subject matter of consumer education. The concept of *tarbiyyah* places great emphasis on the comprehensive development of individuals, with a focus on instilling values that are deeply rooted in Islamic teachings. The integration of *tarbiyyah* into consumer education confers upon individuals the ability to assume the role of responsible consumers, possessing a comprehensive understanding of consumer rights and actively participating in consumer advocacy. Incorporating *tarbiyyah* principles and advocacy action within the curriculum of consumer education has a significant influence on both individual consumers and the broader society. *Tarbiyyah* imbues consumer education with an ethical and moral aspect, endowing individuals with the requisite knowledge, competencies, and principles to assume responsibility as consumers and champions of consumer rights. The incorporation of *tarbiyyah* into consumer education confers individuals with enhanced consumer protection capabilities, thereby promoting a marketplace that is more equitable and sustainable.

## METHODOLOGY

The phenomenon of the study allows it to use qualitative research. This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically utilising the personal interview method (Roulston & Choi, 2018; Merriam & Grenier, 2019). The researchers contacted three consumer advocates as part of their study. The rationale behind seeking the opinions of the three consumer advocates is rooted in their extensive backgrounds in consumer education and advocacy. The present study has conducted a comprehensive analysis of the perspectives and experiences of three consumer advocates. The study has successfully addressed two primary research objectives: exploring the impact of *tarbiyyah* on consumer education and awareness and assessing its effectiveness in enabling individuals to protect their consumer rights.

The investigators selected note-taking as the means of gathering data, as it was authorised and agreed upon by the participants (Byrne, 2001; Kyale & Brinkmann, 2009; Qu & Dumay, 2011). The researchers employed a convenient sampling technique to select informants from the consumer advocacy field, relying on their pre-existing contacts. The data collection process involved conducting interviews with the informants at their respective workplaces, with each session being approximately 40 to 50 minutes in duration. Throughout the course of the interviews, the researchers meticulously documented pertinent information, including salient themes, direct quotations, and noteworthy observations gleaned from the dialogues.

Subsequent to conducting the interviews, the researchers employed a thematic data analysis methodology to scrutinise the gathered data (Qu & Dumay, 2011; Roulston & Choi, 2018). Transcribing the notes taken during the researchers' interviews served as the starting point for the process (Byrne, 2001; Kyale & Brinkmann, 2009). In order to ensure precision and dependability, the researchers endeavoured to obtain corroboration from the informants with regards to the transcribed notes. Ensuring the accuracy of the data and preventing any misinterpretation was imperative, making this particular step of utmost importance (Franklin & Ballan, 2001; Flick, 2018).

Before initiating the analysis, the researchers acquainted themselves with the validated interview transcripts to acquire a comprehensive comprehension of the data (Flick, 2018; Morgan, 2022). The process of familiarisation enabled the researchers to discern prevalent themes, patterns, and nascent concepts within the dataset.

The researchers employed a triangulation approach in order to bolster the credibility and dependability of their results (Flick, 2018; Merriam & Grenier, 2019; Morgan, 2022). As a component of this methodology, proficient qualitative researchers were engaged to scrutinise the interview transcripts in an autonomous manner. The external review conducted was a means of quality assurance, serving to guarantee the precision and reliability of the analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section provides an account of the feedback received from the informants..

### Advocate 1

Advocate 1 demonstrated the embodiment of his Islamic teachings through his actions. Advocate 1 has stated that they have integrated their Islamic teachings into their advocacy work during their tenure as a member of the education committee within the consumer movement. The principle of *dakwah bil hal* has been adhered to, wherein the Islamic faith is demonstrated through actions and setting an example, rather than overtly preaching to consumers. Advocate 1 mentioned: *"This methodology has facilitated my ability to interact with individuals from diverse backgrounds, including those who do not identify as Muslims, and proficiently advocate for consumer rights and interests."*

Advocate 1 described his consumer education and advocacy as *dakwah bil hal*. Advocate 1 expounded that their approach has been influenced by *dakwah bil hal*, which underscores the significance of setting an example through one's actions. Instead of exclusively relying on verbal communication, Advocate 1 said: *"I have prioritised exhibiting the expression of consumer concerns through my conduct and demeanour. This methodology has facilitated my ability to establish a profound connection with customers, fostering reliance and legitimacy. Through the incorporation of principles such as equity, openness, and impartiality in my advocacy endeavours, I have successfully motivated individuals, irrespective of their religious affiliations, to adopt a more proactive stance in expressing their grievances."* Table 1 shows the thematic analysis for the feedback from Advocate 1. Three themes derived from the feedback of Advocate 1, namely consciousness, inclusion and ethical principles.

Table 1: Thematic analysis for Advocate 1

Keywords from Advocate 1's feedback	Themes
<i>"expression of consumer"</i>	Consciousness
<i>"profound connection"</i>	inclusion

<i>"principles such as equity, openness, and impartiality"</i>	ethical principles
<i>proactive stance</i>	

Advocate 1 expounded on the impact of his Islamic teachings on promoting consciousness and enabling individuals to engage in consumer activism. Advocate 1 has observed a positive impact on individuals' awareness by incorporating Islamic teachings into consumer education. The ethical principles that are emphasised in Islam, including honesty, fairness, and responsibility, have been shared through discussions and workshops. The aforementioned doctrines exhibit a strong appeal to consumers, regardless of their religious affiliations, due to their conformity with ubiquitous principles. The aforementioned phenomenon has served as a driving force for individuals to proactively engage in decision-making processes that are well-informed and mindful of the social and environmental ramifications associated with their consumption patterns.

Based on Advocate 1's feedback, consumer education allows for inclusion and consideration of people's various religious beliefs. It is imperative to establish a consensus and prioritise fundamental values such as impartiality, equity, and accountability that are universally applicable among diverse religious beliefs. Through this approach, advocates for consumers can establish a more cohesive and cooperative milieu for the purpose of advancing consumer advocacy. Regarding emerging trends, consumer advocates have placed significant emphasis on the concepts of sustainability and ethical consumption. The incorporation of Islamic principles pertaining to stewardship and responsibility is deemed essential in fostering sustainable consumer behaviour, particularly in light of the growing consciousness among individuals regarding the ecological and societal implications of their decisions (Azhar, 2019; Mat et al., 2020; Zulkifli et al., 2022). The aforementioned actions encompass advocating for waste reduction, endorsing environmentally sustainable products and enterprises, and selecting options that prioritise the welfare of both the populace and the environment, as posited by Kozinets et al. (2021) and Maciejewski & Lesznik (2022). According to the informant, the integration of Islamic teachings into consumer education and advocacy would result in a more comprehensive and value-oriented methodology. By utilising the tenets of equity, impartiality, and accountability, individuals can be enabled to make knowledgeable decisions and promote a market that is equitable, lucid, and socially accountable.

## Advocate 2

Advocate 2 employed the *haraki* (hierarchical) approach in the context of consumer education and advocacy. Advocate 2 has reported that in their work as a member of a special task force committee within the consumer movement, they have employed the *haraki* approach, which involves a structured movement strategy built upon the foundation of *tarbiyyah*, over the course of the last decade. This methodology is in accordance with the principles of Islam and has had a significant impact on the promotion of consumer education, consciousness, support, and implementation. A fundamental element of this methodology involves prioritising collaborative efforts and adhering to specific guidelines to facilitate the proficient expression of consumer perspectives.

Advocate 2 said: *"The Islamic doctrine places great emphasis on the significance of unity and cooperation, which enables us to effectively coordinate and articulate consumer issues in a coherent and influential manner. It is noteworthy that, despite having obtained a degree in Islamic studies, I have been afforded the chance to collaborate with a wide range of individuals, including those who do not identify as Muslims but share a fervent commitment to safeguarding consumer rights."* This statement underscores the cross-cultural appeal and pertinence of ethical practises and consumer rights, surpassing religious demarcations. Table 2

shows the thematic analysis for the feedback from Advocate 2. Three themes derived from the feedback of Advocate 2, namely consciousness, inclusion and ethical principles.

Table 2: Thematic analysis for Advocate 2

Keywords from Advocate 1's feedback	Themes
<i>"significance of unity and cooperation"</i> <i>"coherent and influential "</i> <i>"fervent commitment"</i>	tenets mechanisms Systematic synchronised endeavours efficacious expression

Advocate 2 expounded upon the tenets and mechanisms of *haraki*, stating that "The principles of *haraki* and *tarbiyyah* hold considerable sway in determining our methodology for consumer advocacy." *Haraki* is a term that denotes a systematic and deliberate motion, which places significant emphasis on the value of well-ordered and synchronised endeavours. The process entails the formulation of a strategic plan, the establishment of unambiguous objectives, and the proficient dissemination of information among team members.

In contrast, *tarbiyyah* places emphasis on the cultivation of individuals, fostering their personal and ethical growth. Consumer advocacy is operationalized through the establishment of a structured framework that serves as a guide for our actions. Protocols and regulations are implemented within our team to ensure that our work adheres to ethical standards and principles of justice. The objective of *tarbiyyah* is to facilitate the development of individuals who can effectively engage in the consumer movement by enhancing their comprehension of consumer rights and obligations.

The feedback obtained from Advocate 2's interview indicates that the implementation of the *haraki* approach in consumer education and advocacy has proven to be efficacious in fostering consumer consciousness, advocacy, and engagement (Chatti, 2019; Mhd. Sarif & Ismail, 2019; Nurmaidah, 2022). Advocate 2 emphasised the importance of teamwork and adherence to established protocols in order to facilitate the efficacious expression of consumer perspectives (Abdullah et al., 2014; Abdullah, 2019; Al-Mamari et al., 2022). This is consistent with the principles of Islam that prioritise unity and cooperation, ultimately facilitating the consolidation and articulation of consumer issues in a coherent and effective way.

The experience of Advocate 2 in collaborating with heterogeneous groups, which includes individuals who do not identify as Muslims, highlights the broad-based appeal and pertinence of ethical practises and consumer rights. The aforementioned statement underscores the capacity of the *haraki* methodology to surpass religious demarcations and involves individuals from diverse backgrounds in the advocacy for consumer protection (Mhd. Sarif & Ismail, 2019; Nurmaidah, 2022). Advocate 2 has successfully facilitated collaboration among team members and stakeholders by prioritising the principles of justice, fairness, and ethical conduct, thereby bridging cultural gaps.

The elucidation of the fundamental tenets and mechanisms of *haraki* and *tarbiyyah* serves to bolster the efficacy of this methodology in the realm of consumer advocacy. The principles of *haraki*, as posited by Mhd. Sarif and Ismail (2019) and Nurmaidah (2022), are reflected in the team's focus on organised movement, strategic planning, well-defined objectives, and efficient communication. Furthermore, the emphasis on fostering the growth of individuals, both in terms of their personal and ethical development, via *tarbiyyah* guarantees that team members are

enabled and possess a profound comprehension of consumer rights and obligations. In general, the utilisation of the *haraki* approach in consumer education and advocacy by Advocate 2 has demonstrated efficacy in fostering consumer consciousness, advocacy, and engagement. The prioritisation of collaborative efforts, regulations, moral principles, and personal growth within the consumer movement has facilitated the proficient advocacy of consumer perspectives and the advancement of consumer entitlements and ethical conduct.

### Advocate 3

Advocate 3 reported that he has been actively engaged in consumer education through print and social media publications for the past five years. Advocate 3 said: *“It is my firm conviction that any individual has the potential to become a consumer activist, given that we all engage in consumption and strive to exercise conscientiousness in our decision-making. As an individual who identifies as Muslim, I am inclined to utilise the tarbiyyah (upbringing) that I have received, specifically from my participation in the Muslim Student Society during my tertiary education, to effectively advocate for the interests of consumers through verbal and practical means.”*

Advocate 3 added: *“Furthermore, I have had the privilege of engaging in collaborative efforts with individuals of varying cultural and religious backgrounds, including those who do not identify as Muslim, but who possess a shared concern for safeguarding consumer rights. The objective of my work is to educate conscientious consumers to assume an activist role in the consumer movement, irrespective of their religious or cultural associations.”* The cause of consumer advocacy as noted by Advocate 3 is a unifying force that transcends boundaries, and it is noteworthy to observe individuals from diverse backgrounds collaborating to promote consumer rights.

Advocate 3 also stated that the main obstacle lies in dispelling misconceptions or misunderstandings surrounding Islam and its pertinence to consumer advocacy. Advocate 3 mentioned: *“There may be a perception among certain individuals that consumer advocacy from an Islamic standpoint is confined or restricted solely to the Muslim community. In order to tackle this matter, I have proactively participated in diverse collectives and associations, emphasising the all-encompassing principles of equity, impartiality, and liability that constitute the foundation of Islamic doctrines. Through prioritising the common objectives of safeguarding consumers and promoting the wider advantages of conscientious consumption, I have successfully facilitated cooperation and bridged divides among heterogeneous parties.”*

Advocate 3 expounded that the assimilation of Islamic teachings in consumer education and advocacy is often well-received by individuals hailing from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. Numerous individuals acknowledge the fundamental values and principles that serve as the foundation for conscientious consumption and ethical decision-making. Advocated 3 explained: *“Through the presentation of Islamic doctrines in a manner that accentuates their pertinence to the rights and obligations of consumers, I have successfully facilitated comprehension and established connections among heterogeneous societies. The experience of witnessing individuals from diverse backgrounds unite in their efforts to advocate for consumer protection and foster an equitable and lucid marketplace has been highly gratifying.”*

Table 3 shows the thematic analysis for the feedback from Advocate 3. Three themes derived from the feedback of Advocate 3, namely consciousness, inclusion and ethical principles.

Table 3: Thematic analysis for Advocate 3

Keywords from Advocate 1's feedback	Themes
<i>“exercise conscientiousness”</i>	unifying force
<i>“educate conscientious”</i>	dispelling misconceptions
<i>“perception among certain individuals”</i>	conscientious consumption



As per the input provided by Advocate 3, the informant emphasised their participation in the consumerism movement, specifically in the areas of consumer education and advocacy, for a duration of five years. According to Mazlan et al. (2014) and Mhd. Sarif & Ismail (2019), the informant and the consumerism movement assert that responsible consumption is a common goal that can be pursued by individuals from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds.

Mazlan et al. (2014) and Mhd. Sarif & Ismail (2019) also emphasise that anyone can become a consumer activist and promote responsible consumption. The adoption of an inclusive approach is praiseworthy, as it acknowledges the universal character of both consumer rights and responsibilities. While the inclusion of Islamic teachings is not obligatory, the informant chose to incorporate them into the work due to their inherent inclination as a Muslim and their upbringing within the Muslim Student Society. The informant and their team endeavour to advocate for the perspectives of consumers through verbal and nonverbal means, utilising the principles of *tarbiyyah* as a framework for their approach (Idris et al., 2018; Nurmaidah, 2022). The incorporation of Islamic principles offers a distinct viewpoint and enhances efforts to promote consumer rights.

Moreover, Advocate 3 recognises the difficulty of tackling misinterpretations or misapprehensions regarding Islam and its pertinence to consumer advocacy. The authors Mat et al. (2020) and Al-Mamari et al. (2022) reported that the individuals in question have proactively participated in multiple groups and organisations to emphasise the fundamental principles of justice, fairness, and accountability that are rooted in Islamic teachings. This methodology facilitates the bridging of divides and the cultivation of cooperation among heterogeneous parties, with a focus on the mutual objectives of safeguarding consumers and the wider advantages of conscientious consumption.

In short, the three informants' feedback emphasises the significance of implementing inclusive and value-oriented strategies in consumer education and advocacy. Identifying shared values and highlighting fundamental principles such as equity, impartiality, and accountability that hold significance across diverse religions and societies is of paramount importance. The integration of Islamic principles into consumer education and advocacy can facilitate the promotion of a comprehensive and enduring perspective on responsible consumerism. The contemporary phenomenon of sustainability and ethical consumption is in congruence with the Islamic principles of stewardship and accountability. Through the dissemination of information regarding the ecological and societal ramifications of consumer behaviour, it is possible to foster a culture of conscientious decision-making that prioritises the welfare of both individuals and the environment.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, informants' feedback highlights the significance of incorporating *tarbiyyah*, an educational approach based on Islamic principles, into consumer education and advocacy. By integrating *tarbiyyah* principles, including moral values, individual accountability, and continuous education, individuals are equipped with the tools to make informed choices and protect their entitlements. The integration of Islamic principles in consumer education and advocacy aligns with global sustainability trends, with *tarbiyyah* offering a unique perspective on responsible consumption, emphasizing stewardship and the social and environmental consequences of consumer decisions. By promoting sustainable practices, consumer advocates contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 12 on responsible consumption and production.

The efficacy of the *haraki* methodology, emphasizing collaboration, regulations, and proficient communication, transcends religious boundaries and involves diverse backgrounds in advocating for consumer perspectives. Integrating *tarbiyyah* and Islamic teachings can lead to a more comprehensive and principled approach, empowering individuals to make informed decisions and drive positive change in the commercial sphere. It fosters a conscientious and socially aware consumer ethos.

Addressing challenges in integrating *tarbiyyah* in responsible consumerism requires strategies such as cultural sensitivity, open dialogue, research, capacity building, flexibility in educational methods, collaboration with religious institutions, and active consumer engagement. Future qualitative research, like focus group discussions, could explore how *tarbiyyah* principles impact consumer behavior and decision-making further.

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