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“The Role of “Shariah” in shaping Egyptians Consumer behavior towards Sales Promotion tools”

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“The Role of “Shariah” in shaping Egyptian Consumers behavior towards Sales Promotion tools”

ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study measures to what extent “compliance with Shariah” moderates the relationship between different sales promotion tools, namely - price discount, product demonstration/sampling, buy one get one free (bonus pack), sweepstakes/ lucky draws, scratch and win offer and free samples, and three consumers` behavioral responses (product trial, stockpiling, and spending more) for buying convenience products from supermarkets in Alexandria and Cairo.

Design: A total of 381 selected Muslim consumers/ shoppers were surveyed using a structured questionnaire.

Findings: Overall correlation analysis between the six proposed sales promotion tools and consumers` response behavior in general demonstrated a significant relationship. However, some specific tools did not indicate a significant relationship with specific response behaviors Furthermore, correlation analysis initially indicated that there is a positive significant relationship between all sales promotion tools and compliance with Shariah with exception of sweepstakes and scratch and win offers that demonstrated a significant negative relationship. Furthermore, after running linear stepwise regression the model was fit (58%) indicating the moderating role of “compliance with Shariah” in the relationship between specific sales promotions and Muslim consumer`s behavioral responses namely sweepstakes/games and scratch and win offers.

Research Implications: Generally, speaking marketers should consider Shairiah and Islamic principles issues before creatively crafting promotional tools to attract Muslim consumers.

Key Words: sales promotion tools, behavioral responses, compliance with Shariah, Egyptian Muslims, and convenience products.

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

There has been a drastic change in the shopping landscape in Egypt and the Arab region in general due to the proliferation of shopping malls, supermarkets, hypermarkets and food chain stores. This change has tempted marketers to better tailor their offerings to their target markets and attempt to understand their behavior and perceptions towards shopping in general. Shopping for food and convenient products in general is considered the most important item on any housewives' shopping list especially in developing countries like Egypt where the bulk of spending is dedicated to food. In a country where the majority of its population are Muslims, shopping habits and values are mainly derived from Islamic culture and traditions inherited from one generation to another have changed; however, has this change affected the way that we perceive what's *halal* (permissible) and what's *haram* (non- permissible) and what's in between or *Mushtabeh* (doubted) when it comes to sales promotion tools aggressively utilized by marketers lately?

The following Hadith narrated by the prophet Muhammed (PBUH) explains the matter of Halal and Haram in Islam:

“The halal is clear and the haram is clear. Between the two there are doubtful matters concerning which people do not know whether they are halal or haram. One who avoids them in order to safeguard his religion and his honor is safe, while if someone engages in a part of them he may be doing something haram, like one who grazes his animals near the hima (the grounds reserved for animals belonging to the King which are out of bounds for others' animals); it is thus quite likely that some of his animals will stray into it. Truly, every king has a hima, and the hima of Allah is what He has prohibited. Although not in the flesh if repaired reconciliation embryo whole body and if corrupt the whole body, namely the heart.”

(Reported by al-Bukhari' Muslim, and others; the narration is taken from al Tirmidhi.)

Accordingly, one may do what is lawful and must avoid what is prohibited insofar as he has the choice. However, there is a gray area between the clearly *halal* and the clearly *haram*. This is the area of what is doubtful that should be avoided by marketers. Some people may not be able to

decide whether a particular matter is permissible or forbidden; such confusion may be due either to doubtful evidence or because of doubt concerning the applicability of the promotional tool for example to the particular circumstance or matter in question. The Shariah is Islam's religious law that governs Muslims lives and living and dictates what is rightful from what is not. The beauty of Islam is that it provides a blue print for all our business practices whether we act as consumers or business people and it is not just practiced in the *Masjid*. We as Muslims are always spontaneously acting upon the above hadith whether we are consciously aware of that or not and we try to safeguard our Islam in every decision we make. Marketers targeting our markets must be aware of this and better understand the Islamic perspective on business and this has been the secret behind the West's success in actively penetrating our markets with millions of brands tailored to our needs. However, sales promotional tools have drastically proliferated in our cultures lately and many practices are questionable where they violate our Shariah or not.

The lifestyle of Egyptian consumers has changed to become more dynamic and time-pressured at the same time as a result of the modernism wave that has invaded our Islamic cultures.. Also, given the fact that most of our economies don't really consider Islamic fundamentals in their business practices such as equality, disclosure and free will, and that increases the gap between the rich and the poor. This research was designed to initially understand the relationship between different sales promotion tools and the responses of Muslim consumers in Egypt as well as their relationship with "compliance with Shariah" and its moderating role in one of the most important Islamic countries; the following research question has been proposed: *How effective are sales promotion tools in inducing Muslim consumers' behavior towards convenient products in Egypt given the moderating role of "compliance with Shariah"?*

More specifically, this research has four main objectives:

1. Evaluate the relationship between the six sales promotional tools and the three consumer behavior responses.
2. Understand the relationship between the six sales promotion tools and “compliance with Shariah”
3. Understanding the relationship between the three consumer behavioral responses and “compliance with shariah”
4. Evaluate the moderating role of “compliance with Shariah” in the relationship between sales promotion tools and consumer behavior.

PRIOR LITERATURE

Sales promotion has been defined as the offer of an incentive to induce a desired sales result (Gilbert, 1999). Shimp (2003) has defined sales promotion as any incentive used by a manufacturer to induce trade (wholesalers, retailers, or other channel members) and /or consumers to buy a brand and to encourage the sales force to aggressively sell it. Totten & Block (1994) stated that the term sales promotion refers to many kinds of selling incentives and techniques intended to produce immediate or short-term sales effects. The many definitions of sales promotions have a common viewpoint: they all involve a temporary and tangible modification of supply, for the ultimate goal of direct impact on the behavior of the consumer, retailer or sales force (Shi et al., 2005).

A large body of research on consumer sales promotions (e.g. Bawa and Shoemaker, 1987 and 1989; Blattberg and Neslin, 1990; Leone and Srinivasan, 1996; Huff and Alden, 1998) has proliferated over the past few decades. However, there has been much emphasis on coupons at the expense of other equally important promotional tools such as bonus packs and price discounts. Coupons in general are not a very common promotional tool used in Egyptian supermarkets and

convenient stores. This is why this study investigates the impact of other commonly adopted tools namely; price discounts, bonus packs (e.g. buy one get one free) and product displays/sampling, scratch & win offers, free samples and sweepstakes/luck draws on three main behavioral responses; stockpiling, product trial and spending more. Previous research has shown that sales promotion can encourage such behavioral responses (Shi et al., 2005; Ndubisi & Chew, 2006).

Furthermore, a very limited number of studies have been conducted in the Muslim world although such practices have been very significantly implemented lately in the Middle East, African and Asian regions where the majority of consumers are Muslims. For example, Jibrail Bin Yusef, (2010) examined the ethical implications of sales promotion in Ghana from an Islamic perspective. Findings revealed that Muslims can promote business but that must be done within the ethical framework of Islam and that the current Ghanaian promotional strategies are ethically questionable. They lead to unethical earning of livelihood and unequal acquisition of wealth through gambling and other ill-perceived means, which do not promote the ethical values of Muslims. Most studies in this area are also conceptual and theoretical in nature not really backed up with empirical findings. In Egypt, although most Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG's) companies purchase retail audits on a regular basis to track down the performance of their brands in terms of market share and sales, however there is no indication upon which specific tool triggers what kind of behavior and whether or not there is a relationship between the Islamic Shariah and sales promotion practices in Egypt.

It is important to highlight and provide a brief explanation of the main sales promotion tools used by Egyptian sellers to increase sales. A price discount is a temporary reduction of the list price of the product. The major strategic goal of a price discount is to discriminate between informed and uninformed consumers, or between loyal users and switchers. Research suggests that price discounts are particularly effective in inducing purchase acceleration and product trial (Gilbert &

Jackaria, 2002). Games such as sweepstakes (known as 'lucky draws') are used by supermarkets to attract traffic. People participate in these games for reasons such as the perceived value of the prize, or perceived fun and interest (Ward & Hill, 1991). This particular sales promotion tool has received limited research. Product demonstrations/sampling is widely used in Egyptian supermarkets, especially to promote new product ideas or new brands. In their study, Ram and Sheth, (1989) indicated that product demonstrations help reduce the resistance of consumers to new products by lowering functional and psychological barriers thus encouraging product trial. However, Gilbert and Jackaria, (2002) found that a free sample as a promotional offer had no significance on product trial, whereas Pramataris *et al.* (2001); Fill, (2002), and Shimp, (2003), have shown otherwise.

Bonus pack promotions (e.g. buy one get one free) may be offered to shoppers at the regular price, thus adding value to the product. Since an additional amount is given free of charge, consumers may be persuaded to buy the product. This means they must compare and evaluate the additional quantity received with respect to any costs they may incur. The literature examining the impact of bonus packs on stockpiling by consumers for example is inconclusive: Helsen and Schmittlein,(1992) found a significant link between buy one get one free and intention to stockpile, whereas Laroche *et al.*, (2003) did not. Finally the scratch and win offers is another tool that has originally been extensively used by the carbonated drink industry. A customer scratches a specific area on the package of the product, after purchasing it, and gets the benefit according to the message written there.

Promotions can encourage stockpiling (Chintagunta 1993; Heilman, Nakamoto, and Rao 2002; Nijss *et al.* 2001; Pauwels, Hanssens, and Siddarth 2002). Consumer stockpiling is a fundamental consequence of sales promotions (Neslin, 2002). It occurs because the promotion induces consumers to buy more than they would have otherwise (Blattberg *et al.*, 1981; Neslin *et*

al., 1985), so consumers end up with more quantity than they would have had in the absence of the promotion. Sales promotions tools when used strategically not only increase brand awareness, but also encourage customers to try new products. Product trial can be induced by promotions such as in-store demonstrations, because they lower the customer's perceived risk associated with trying a new, less familiar product for the first time (Blattberg *et al.* 1981). Finally, consumers may also spend more as they might purchase regular-priced items in addition to the promoted merchandise when they are attracted to store by a promotion (Mulhern and Padget, 1995).

Islam lays much emphasis on ethical behavior in society; therefore, it is a code of life as previously explained. Islam has laid down moral principles regarding business transactions and failure to adhere to them deprives a transaction of its integration into any category of Islamic decorum. Justice is an important consideration in acceptable Islamic business transactions (Yusuf, 2010). In Egypt, sales promotion tools enable producers to genuinely draw the attention of or create new customers for their products. In Egypt, many sales promotion practices are related to religious and specifically Islamic occasions, like for example during Id-ul-Fitr and Id-ul-Adha, (the two main Muslim Feasts), the holy month of Ramadan and El-Mawled Al-Nabawy (Birth of Prophet Muhammed, PBUH).

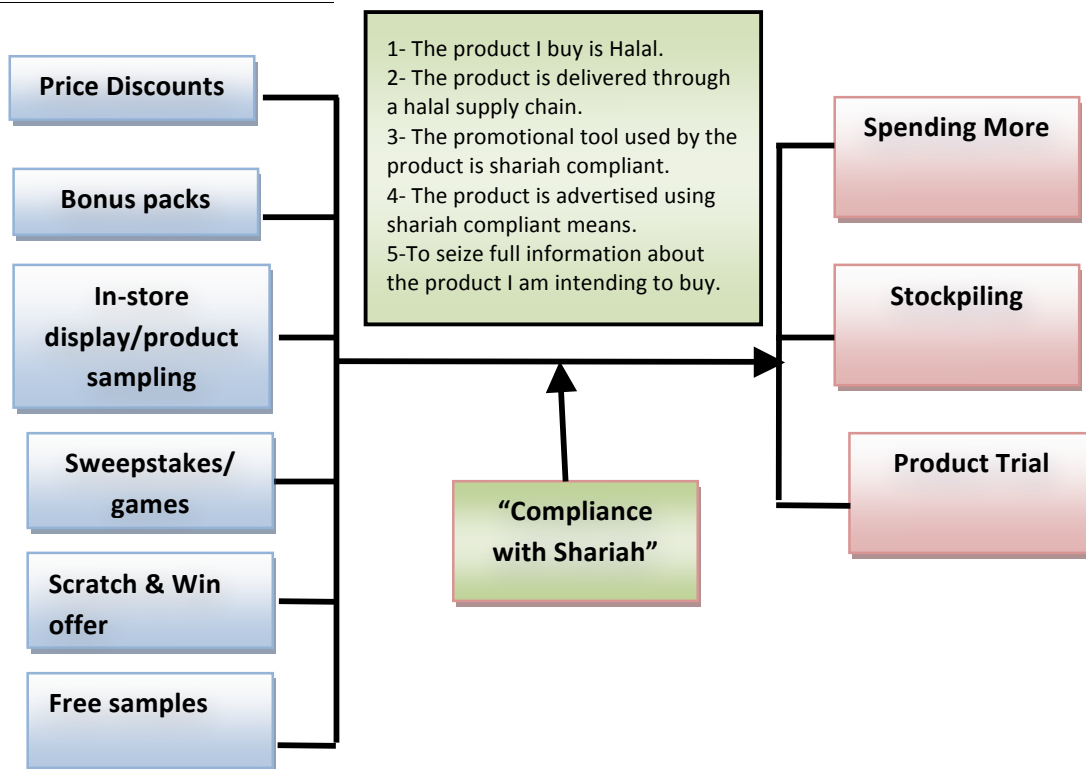
There are a limited number of studies that attempted to investigate the link between Shariah and trading/ business transactions. However, majority of these studies focused on financial services due to the popularization of Islamic banking concepts and practices that prevail in many Islamic countries (Borhan, 1999). Other studies focused on Islamic branding. This study focuses on one of the most basic shopping activities that affect every household, which is convenient, and grocery shopping. Sellers in Egypt are implementing many sales promotion strategies and tools. In business dealings, any attempt to increase production and patronage is very necessary and a welcome

development; but one needs to observe the issues that bother on ethical values to ensure the compliance with Shariah. There have been serious ethical issues that can be mind boggling to religious and moral thinkers, including Muslim consumers, as far as promotional devices are concerned.

METHODOLOGY

The main objective of this study is to initially investigate the relationship between the six commonly used promotional tools and three of the most significant consumer behavioral responses and with the Islamic Shariah from the Muslim consumer’s point of view and to investigate the moderating role of Shariah in this relationship. More specifically, consider the following proposed research model:

Figure 1: Research Framework



Accordingly, the following hypotheses have been derived:

The First Hypothesis

It was important to initially understand from the consumer's perspective in the relationship between sales promotion tools prevailing in super and hypermarkets and their behavioral responses.

H1: There is a relationship between sales promotion tools consumer behavioral responses.

- H1a: There is a positive relationship between price discounts and behavioral responses.
- H2b: There is a positive relationship between bonus packs and behavioral responses.
- H3c: There is a positive relationship between sweepstakes/games and behavioral responses.
- H4d: There is a positive relationship between in-store displays/ and behavioral responses.
- H5e: There is a positive relationship between scratch and win offers and behavioral responses.
- H6f: There is a positive relationship between free samples and behavioral responses.

The Second Hypothesis

Due to the fact that a limited number of studies attempted to understand the nature of the relationship between the sales promotional tools and compliance with Shariah or Islamic ethics, the following hypotheses has been developed:

- H2: There is a significant relationship between sales promotion tools and compliance with Shariah.
 - H2a: There is a significant relationship between price discounts and compliance with Shariah.
 - H2b: There is a significant relationship between bonus packs and compliance with Shariah.
 - H2c: There is a significant relationship between sweepstakes/games and compliance with Shariah.
 - H2d: There is a significant relationship between in-store displays and compliance with Shariah.

- H2e: There is a significant relationship between scratch and win offers and compliance with Shariah.
- H2f: There is a significant relationship between free samples and compliance with Shariah.

The Third hypothesis:

It is of equal importance also to understand the nature of the relationship between consumer 's behavioral responses and compliance with Shariah.

- H3: There is a significant relationship between consumer behavioral responses and compliance with Shariah.
 - H3a: There is a significant relationship between compliance with Shariah and product trial.
 - H3b: There is a significant relationship between compliance with Shariah and spending more.
 - H3c: There is a significant relationship between compliance with Shariah and stockpiling.

The Fourth hypothesis:

Finally, does compliance with Shariah play a moderating role in the relationship between the sales promotion tools and consumer behavioral responses? And is this model viable and fit?

H4: Compliance with Shariah shall strengthen the relationship between sales promotion tools and consumer behavioral responses.

A close-ended questionnaire was used for the study and administered face to face with respondents to ensure a high response rate, accurate sampling and a minimum of interviewer bias, while permitting interviewer assessments, providing necessary explanations and giving the benefit of a degree of personal contact (Oppenheim, 1992, p.103). Scale items for the promotional tools and behavioral responses in the form of statements were selected based on a previous study by Gilbert and Jackaria (2002). A five point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree) was

used to indicate the respondents behavioral response to each of the six sales promotion tools. A total of 430 questionnaires were distributed and only 381 were returned which represents a response rate of 91%. Shariah- compliant statements were derived from the Shariah- compliant conditions stated by Bakr (2011, p.90).

FINDINGS

Before discussing the findings of our hypotheses testing the following tables demonstrate the actual sample structure for the study.

Table 1: Gender

	Frequency	Percent
Males	95	24.9
Females	286	75.1
Total	381	100.0

Table 3: Marital Status

	Frequency	Percent
Single	77	20.3
Married	278	73.0
Widowed	14	3.7
Divorced	11	3.0
Total	381	100.0

Table 4: Occupation

	Frequency	Percent
Housewife	133	35.0
Private Business	46	12.1
Professional (Doctor, lawyer..etc.)	39	10.2
Employee in Public sector	36	9.5
Employee in Private sector	127	33.2
Total	381	100.0

Table 2: Age

Age	Frequency	Percent
21 – 25 Yrs	30	8.0
26 - 30 Yrs	48	12.5
31 - 35 Yrs	91	24.0
36 - 40 Yrs	76	20.0
41 - 50 Yrs	71	18.6
More than50	65	17.0
Total	381	100.0

Table 5: Education

	Frequency	Percent
University Graduate	259	68
Completed high school	32	8.4
Diploma holder	13	3.4
Masters holder	38	10.1
PHD holder	23	6.0
others	16	4.1
Total	381	100.0

Table 6: Monthly Household Income

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1000 L.E.	28	7.4
1001 – 3000 L.E.	76	20.0
3001 – 6000 L.E.	130	34.0
6001 - 9000 L.E.	84	22.0
More than 9000 L.E.	67	17.6
Total	381	100.0

From the above tables we can observe that the majority of the sample is skewed more towards females (75%) as the main decision maker in the household when it comes to purchasing food and convenient products in general. Most of which are married mainly belonging to middle age brackets. There was also a considerable number of singles in the sample, although it's worth noting that in Muslim countries engaged individuals are still referred to as singles this is in addition to university students that may come from different parts of Egypt to study, residing alone or with colleagues and thus may frequently go shopping for convenient products as well.

Although most segments of the society visit super and hypermarkets, even families with monthly household income less than 1,000L.E. (\$180); however the majority are housewives and individuals working in the private sector that usually own cars and can visit such markets as most of them are located at the out-skirts of Cairo and Alexandria.

Testing the Hypotheses

Pearson Correlation was used to test the relationship between the different promotional tools and the three behavioral responses at a significance level of 95%.

Table 7: Correlation Coefficients: sales promotion tools and behavioral responses.

<u>Pearson Correlation</u>	Price Discounts	Bonus Packs	In-store demonstration/sampling	Sweepstakes/lucky draws	Scratch & Win offers	Free sample
Spending More	.436	.235	.003	.332	.534	.089
Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.963	.000	.000	.076
Product Trail	.067	.012	.628	.009	.028	.437
Sig (2-tailed)	.180	.633	.000	.912	.549	.000
Stock Piling	.646	.435	.233	.307	.206	.037
Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.067	.067	.753
Overall Behavior	.587	.315	.422	.284	.213	.228
Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.001
N	381	381	381	381	381	381

All Pearson correlation Coefficients in the table are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 8: Correlation Coefficients- Sales promotional Tools and Compliance with Shariah

Pearson Correlation	Price Discounts	Bonus Packs	In-store demonstration/sampling	Sweepstakes/ lucky draws	Scratch & Win offers	Free sample
Compliance with Shariah	.527	.433	.632	-.538	-.411	.321
Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
N	381	381	381	381	381	381

All Pearson correlation Coefficients in the table are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 9: Correlation Coefficients- Behavioral responses and Compliance with Shariah

Pearson Correlation	Spending more	Product Trail	Stock Piling	Overall Behavior
Compliance with Shariah	-.427	.228	-.590	-.312
Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
N	381	381	381	381

All Pearson correlation Coefficients in the table are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Correlation analysis was run to test the validity of the first three hypotheses related to the impact of the three sales promotional tools in shaping consumers' behavioral responses and the relationship of Shariah compliance with both tools and behavior. Table 7 highlights the correlation coefficients for the six types of the promotion with the three different behaviors.

Regarding price discount, as it is clear from the above table, it has an overall positive significant correlation of 59%; thus a variation in price discounts is related to approximately 59% variation in consumer's overall behavioral responses; thus H1a is supported. This is consistent with the study conducted by Shi *et al.*, 2005 in Hong Kong and most previous research showed significant relations between price discounts and consumers' in-store behaviors whether in Western or our Arab/Muslim markets (Ndubisi and Chew (2006); Blackwell *et al.* (2001); Gilbert and Jackaria (2002). Egyptian consumers are very price sensitive as evidenced that price discounts plays the most significant role in shaping consumers' stockpiling behavior (65%) and spending more (44%) in super and hyper markets. In a country where the majority of consumers belong to C and D class (based on the Pan Arab Research Center (PARC) Egypt Target Group Index (TGI) study for 2009) the price of products is of utter importance to consumers and considered the strongest predictor of consumers' in-store behaviors.

Bonus packs demonstrated an overall positive significant relationship of 32% with consumer's behavioral responses; therefore, H1b is supported. More specifically, spending more and stockpiling had a positive significant relationship with bonus packs (similar to price discounts) whilst the relationship with product trial was not significant. Again this is related to the economic conditions prevailing in Egypt and most Islamic nations that tempt individuals to stockpile and purchase more quantities earlier than planned to save money and benefit from the price or quantity discount.

Product displays and sampling has also a significant role but in shaping behavioral overall; 42% and more specifically of course it is very much related to product trial; 63% which is also consistent with previous literature (Percy et al. (2001); Pramataris et al. (2001); Ndubisi and Chew (2006) and Blackwell et al. (2001). Therefore, H3c is supported. Sweepstakes/ lucky draws had a positive significant yet weak relationship with consumers' behavioral responses (H1d) as well as scratch and win offers (H1e) and free samples (H1f).

The role of compliance with Shariah has been tackled in the second, third and fourth hypotheses. Surprisingly there seems to be a significant relationship between compliance with Shariah and all sales promotional tools. The strongest relationship was with in-store demonstrations/ displays that are responsible for approximately 63% variance in compliance with Shariah. Followed by sweepstakes/ luck draws (-54%) that indicates a negative relationship with compliance with Shariah as well as scratch and win offers that also has a moderate negative relationship with compliance with Shariah. On the other hand price discounts, bonus packs and free samples have significant positive relationships with Shariah; 53%, 43% and 32% respectively. Furthermore, in investigating the nature of the relationship between compliance with Shariah and consumers' behavioral responses the strongest relationship was with stockpiling (59%) albeit a negative one as well as the

behavior of spending more (43%) indicating that the those behaviors may be somehow contradicting with Shariah principles. Finally, there is a positive relationship between compliance with Shariah and product trial (23%). In order to further understand the role of Shariah in shaping Muslim consumers' behavioral responses to prevailing sales promotional tools linear stepwise regression has been run with and without the compliance with Shariah variable as shown below in tables 10 and 11.

Table 10: Regression Model without “Compliance with Shariah”

Model	Change statistics						
	R Square	DF	F	Sig.	Beta	T	Sig.
	.589						
Regression		3	148.594	.000			
Residual		378					
Total		381					
Price Discounts					.519	16.840	.000
In-store demonstrations					.304	6.042	.000
Bonus Packs					.247	4.792	.000
Sweepstakes					-.072	-.478	.635
Free samples					.096	1.988	.037
Scratch & Win					-.034	-.494	.622

*Dependent variable: Consumers' Behavioral responses

Table 11: Regression Model with “Compliance with Shariah”

Model	Change statistics						
	R Square	DF	F	Sig.	Beta	T	Sig.
	.619						
Regression		4	168.824	.000			
Residual		377					
Total		381					
Price Discounts					.542	19.274	.000
In-store demonstration					.346	6.487	.000
Compliance with Shariah					-.270	-5.570	.000
Bonus Packs					.293	5.861	.000
Sweepstakes					-.149	-3.366	
Free samples					.210	.5437	.000
Scratch & win					-.131	-3.014	.001

*Dependent variable: Consumers' Behavioral responses

Compliance with Shariah plays an important role in affecting the relationship between sales promotional tools and behavioral responses as is clear from the above tables that the overall fitness

of the model has increased from approximately from 59% to 62% after including the compliance with Shariah. However, the Shariah specifically moderates the relationship between sweepstakes/lucky draws and scratch and win offers and consumer behavioral responses and this can be evident from the beta significance in table 11 compared to the insignificance in table 10 without the role of Shariah, indicating negative association, this may be due to the fact that these specific tools have always been questionable and many Muslims see these tools as somehow contradicting with Islamic ethics as it shall be discussed later on. On the other hand, beta has increased for all other tools after considering the role of Shariah as it is clear from comparing the betas in both tables. Thus H4 has been partially supported. Furthermore, price discounts remains the most important tool that can really trigger consumers' behavior followed by in-store demonstrations, bonus packs, sweepstakes/luck draws, free samples and finally scratch and win offers.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Islamic market is estimated at about 1.8 billion consumers and worth 2 trillion dollars in 2010 which constitutes an enormous market where Islamic values have helped shape the societal structures, cultures and legal norms that influence consumer preferences and behavior. Therefore, the following study plays an integral role in providing a better understanding of how Egyptian Muslim consumers are influenced by a very common phenomenon that has an impact on their daily purchases; sales promotions, and to prove that Islamic consumers think and act outside the conventions of western business theory and practice.

Islam introduces rules to control our desires for wealth, greed, spending and selfishness through the Quran and Sunna and guides the behavior of all parties involved. Overall, all hypotheses under study have been supported. Egyptian consumers respond more to price discounts compared to all other promotional tools as it scored the highest correlation (59%) with consumer

behavioral responses and was also the first variable to enter the model, as it is clear from tables 10 and 11. This may be due to the harsh economic circumstances prevailing in Egypt and similar Islamic nations also given its high compliance with Shariah as price discounts is a very obvious tool that is compatible with the idea of brotherhood and how a good Muslim should aid his/her Muslim brother to pursue a better living. Furthermore, price discounts is not usually perceived as a *Mushtabeh* (doubted) act compared to other tools and thus is considered a *halal* temptation thus spending more and stockpiling are favorably perceived by Muslim consumers in this circumstance, albeit the insignificant association with Shariah as it is clear from the beta findings in the regression model.

Our Islamic nation cultures are very much obsessed with cooking, taste and preparing different recipes; most of our occasions involve food like for example “Fatta” (bread with rice, meat and garlic sauce) that is traditionally eaten in Egypt during “Eid El Adha”(Feast). This study showed the importance of product display/sampling and how it positively affects the behavior of consumers directing them towards immediate purchase of the product (product trial); ($r= 32\%$). It is also an important tool that allows the consumer to seize full information about the product that he/she is going to buy which is an important ethical consideration in Islam and Shariah.

The third most important tool in the model is bonus packs that scored a relatively weak correlation with behavioral responses but a higher one with Shariah. Bonus packs provides benefits to both consumers through inducing them to buy products and rewarding them with a higher value than it's original one, and producers through allowing them to get rid of products with near expiry dates instead of throwing them away which is wasteful and against Islamic principles. A free sample has been rated as fifth in terms of importance and is the final tool that demonstrated a positive relationship with behavioral tools; specifically product trail ($r=43\%$) and compliance with

Shariah. A free sample gives Muslims the opportunity to try the product before actually buying a full version of it which is very Shariah- compliant and compatible with the concepts of disclosure, transparency and free will allowing consumers to make informed decisions.

Sweepstakes/lucky draws and scratch and win offers (ranked 4th and 6th in the model) are responsible for a positive variance in behavioral intentions and specifically related to the spending more and stockpiling behaviors. The love for the prize in a draw can lead to deception, cheating and dishonesty that are very much related to gambling by Islamic standard and description. This is because it leads to wrongful taking of people's wealth (Yusuf, 2010). The Quran makes it clear that prosperity does not come through gambling:

"They ask you (O Muhammad) concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say: In them is a great sin, and (some) benefit for men, but the sin of them is greater than their benefit" (Al- Bakara, 219)

In Islam the same behavior can be perceived differently based on the consequences of such behavior on the consumer. In other words purchasing for feeding your family is not the same as purchasing for the sake of winning a competition/gift or participating in a draw; i.e. the consumer doesn't really need the product in the second situation. This may be the case in these types of tools as it was evident that they have a negative relationship with compliance with Shariah as well as a negative association with behavior when Shariah was introduced as a moderating variable. In this situation spending more is very much related to being a spendthrift as it can be revealed from the following hadith:

"Verily spendthrifts are brothers of the Evil Ones; and the Evil One is to his Lord (himself) ungrateful." (Al—Israa, 27)

On the other hand, stockpiling may resemble greed, which is also against the Shariah given the following Hadith:

“O you who have believed, indeed many of the scholars and the monks devour the wealth of people unjustly and avert [them] from the way of Allah. And those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah - give them tidings of a painful punishment” (Al-Tawba, 34)

Unfortunately we are generally suffering a problem of trust and credibility across most of our Islamic nations due to historical and psychological reasons that most manufacturers shall not really focus on the consumers’ benefit over their own benefit and profit and that’s why a clear price discount is considered the most tangible and believable promotional tool for consumers because it is considered the least doubtful from the eye of the consumer and benefits them in terms of saving money on items on sale and compatible with what is stated in the Quran:

“Those who, when they spend, are not extravagant and not niggardly, but hold a just (balance) between those (extremes)” (Al-Furqan, 67).

Accordingly, a promotional appeal that propagates wasteful spending and stockpiling on unnecessary things through the various special price offers is against the teachings of Islam that fosters moderation both in spending and saving (Abdullah & Mohd, 2010), as it is clear from the above Quran verse. Therefore, marketers’ that are capable of providing effective and credible promotional tools shall gain consumers’ trust with time and easily capture the consumers’ loyal interest in their products because sales promotions proved to be an important strategic tool. Such approach from marketers is also very consistent with our Islamic ethics and fundamentals (Shariah); however, believability and accountability are a must.

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