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Analysis of Micro, Small, And Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Development Strategies With An Islamic Business Approach Ethics in Increasing Business Income

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: This study investigates the development strategy of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) at RnD Snack Labuhanbatu Selatan through the perspective of Islamic business ethics. The research aims to explore how Islamic ethical values are integrated into business development to support sustainability and competitiveness.
Methods: This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach by conducting in-depth interviews with business owners, employees, and three customers, as well as direct observation of operational activities. The data were analyzed using a combination of business strategy theory, Islamic business ethics principles, and the SWOT analysis framework.
Results: The findings indicate that RnD Snack implements business strategies such as improving product quality, innovating menu options, enhancing customer service, promoting through social media, expanding market reach, and applying the Islamic marketing mix. All these strategies are aligned with Islamic ethical principles, including honesty, transparency, fairness, and generosity.
Conclusion and suggestion: This study concludes that integrating Islamic business ethics into MSME development strategies contributes positively to sustainability and long-term performance. It is suggested that other similar businesses adopt ethical practices based on Islamic teachings to build customer trust and improve competitiveness.

Keywords: Development strategy, MSMEs, Islamic Business ethics, RnD Snack Labuhanbatu Selatan

Paper type: *Research paper*

A. INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are integral to Indonesia's economic landscape, contributing over 60% to the national GDP and absorbing approximately 97% of the labor force(Ridwan Maksum et al., 2020). These enterprises play a critical role in promoting employment, innovation, and local economic resilience. However, despite their importance, MSMEs face persistent structural challenges such as limited access to capital, inadequate managerial skills, and high market competition(Coscieme et al., 2020). These issues are particularly evident in small-scale businesses like RnD Snack in Labuhanbatu Selatan, which has experienced fluctuating income patterns and limitations in expanding market reach and product quality due to financial constraints(Fahira et al., 2023).

To address such challenges, the integration of Islamic Business Ethics (IBE) provides a compelling and contextually appropriate solution(Arif et al., 2023). IBE emphasizes core ethical values such as honesty (ṣidq), justice (‘adālah), trustworthiness (amānah), transparency (shafāfiyyah), and social responsibility (mas’uliyyah ijtimā‘iyyah), forming a moral foundation for business conduct that aligns with Sharia principles. These principles are deeply rooted in Islamic texts, including QS. Al-Muṭaffifīn:1 (“Woe to those that deal in fraud”), QS. Al-An‘ām:152 (“Give full measure and weight in justice”), and the hadith, “The truthful and trustworthy merchant is with the Prophets, the truthful, and the martyrs” (HR. Tirmidzi). Furthermore, IBE is consistent with the objectives of maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah, which include the protection of wealth (ḥifẓ al-māl), life (ḥifẓ al-nafs), intellect (ḥifẓ al-‘aql), and dignity (ḥifẓ al-‘ird), thereby ensuring that business practices are ethically grounded, socially responsible, and economically sustainable (Aryani et al., 2023; Jasri et al., 2023).

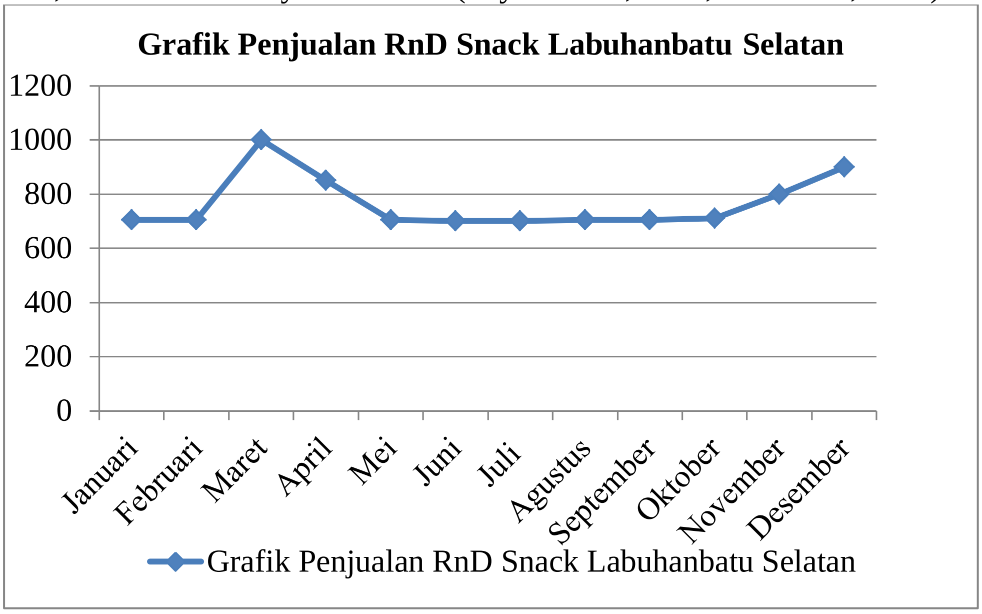

Figure 1. *Sales of RnD Snack Labuhanbatu Selatan*
Source: (RnD Snack annual sales report, 2024)

In support of this urgency, empirical evidence from RnD Snack's internal sales performance shows a fluctuating trend throughout the year(Kholis & Ekowati, 2023). The business recorded a stable output in January and February, followed by a peak in March approaching 1000 units sold. However, a notable decline occurred from April through August, with sales stagnating around 750–770 units. A recovery trend began in September and continued through December, with sales climbing back toward 950 units. This volatile pattern suggests that RnD Snack's income is sensitive to seasonal factors and market dynamics, underscoring the necessity for a stable, ethical, and strategic business development framework.

Despite their socio-economic contributions, many MSMEs in Indonesia, including RnD Snack, do not systematically implement ethical frameworks rooted in Islamic teachings. Challenges such as declining customer loyalty, income instability, and fierce competition demand more than just conventional business strategies. RnD Snack’s condition reflects a broader problem where business development is pursued without a solid ethical foundation, leading to unsustainable operations and vulnerability to market shock(Manggu & Beni, 2023)s.

To overcome these deficiencies, this study proposes a development strategy based on Islamic Business Ethics. IBE, as a theoretical framework, encompasses three principal elements: foundational values (*ṣidq, ‘adālah, amānah, shafāfiyyah*, and *mas’uliyyah ijtimā‘iyyah*), prohibitions against unethical practices such as riba and gharar, and alignment with maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah (Hendra et al., 2022). This comprehensive model ensures that ethical considerations are embedded in every aspect of business operation, enabling firms to build consumer trust, achieve fairness, and promote long-term sustainability (Mustafa et al., 2024). The application of IBE thus offers a dual benefit: improving competitiveness and fulfilling moral and religious obligations.

Research has shown that empowering MSMEs through Sharia principles leads to improvements in material and spiritual welfare. In Medan, for instance, MSMEs have demonstrated their capacity to drive economic empowerment, though limited access to resources continues to impede their optimal function (Luthfiyah & Nurfadila, 2025). Jasri emphasize that Sharia principles, grounded in values such as justice and prosperity, are essential to fostering holistic empowerment. These principles can be effectively operationalized in MSME strategy, thereby enhancing their contribution to the community(Jasri et al., 2023).

Islamic financial instruments also play a significant role in ethical MSME development. Murabaha contracts and microfinance institutions like BMT provide interest-free financing solutions that are compliant with Sharia(Diantara, 2023). These financial mechanisms have proven effective in increasing turnover, improving market penetration, and enhancing managerial capacities among MSMEs, as demonstrated in studies by Ali and Sono. By avoiding riba, these models facilitate access to capital while maintaining ethical integrity.

Furthermore, the Sharia green economy integrates Islamic ethics with environmental sustainability. Mustafa highlight that Islamic philanthropic institutions are instrumental in helping MSMEs transition toward environmentally responsible practices while adhering to religious principles. This convergence of ethics and sustainability demonstrates the multidimensional relevance of IBE in contemporary MSME development(Mustafa et al., 2024).

A systematic review of the literature reveals several notable gaps in the study of Islamic Business Ethics in MSMEs. First, many studies emphasize the conceptual importance of IBE but fail to operationalize it into practical business strategies specifically tailored for MSMEs(Anagnostopoulou et al., 2021). This leaves a void in translating ethical principles into measurable strategic actions within real-world contexts. Second, existing research seldom explores the mediating role of IBE in linking business strategies to financial outcomes such as income growth, particularly through variables like consumer trust and loyalty. This relationship remains largely theoretical and lacks empirical validation(Fauzi & Sheng, 2022). Third, there is a paucity of case-based studies that apply the IBE framework to Indonesian MSMEs using qualitative and quantitative data. Most current studies focus on macro-level analysis or on financial mechanisms, neglecting the nuanced application of ethical frameworks at the micro-enterprise level. These gaps underscore the need for a focused investigation that bridges theory and practice.

This study aims to analyze the application of Islamic Business Ethics in the strategic development of RnD Snack in Labuhanbatu Selatan, Sumatera Utara, with a specific focus on how these ethical principles influence business income and sustainability. The research tests three hypotheses: the direct effect of IBE-based strategies on income; the mediating role of IBE in linking business development and revenue; and the effect of ethical practice levels on consumer trust and loyalty.

The novelty of this study lies in its empirical validation of the IBE framework through a single-case study, offering a context-rich exploration of how ethical principles grounded in Islamic teachings can function as strategic tools. The scope covers data from 2023 to 2025, reflecting contemporary economic challenges and opportunities. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study not only advances theoretical discourse on IBE but also provides practical guidance for MSMEs seeking to enhance competitiveness through ethical and Sharia-compliant business practices.

B. THEORETICAL STUDY

1. Business Development Strategy

A business development strategy is essential for achieving long-term goals by creating sustainable competitive advantages. According to Yuan, a business strategy involves companies' actions and decisions to stay competitive(Yuan et al., 2020). This strategy entails analyzing internal and external environments to formulate, implement, and evaluate effective plans. By doing so, businesses can anticipate problems and adjust to changing market conditions, ensuring that challenges are overcome and objectives are met. In the context of MSMEs, business development strategies often focus on increasing customer acquisition, enhancing product quality, boosting sales, and generating higher profits.

For MSMEs, business development encompasses various strategies, including vertical and horizontal growth. Vertical development refers to expanding the core business by introducing related activities or products that align with the existing operations. On the other hand, horizontal development involves broadening the business scope by venturing into new areas that support the main business but are not directly related to it (Farida & Setiawan, 2022). These strategies are critical for MSMEs to adapt and grow while addressing changing market demands and ensuring business sustainability.

Mahmud Mach Foedz defines business development as the process by which organized groups of people earn profits by producing and selling goods or services that meet consumer needs. Similarly, Brown and Petrello, emphasize that business development refers to expanding a business to produce goods and services needed by society. As consumer needs grow, companies must scale their operations to meet these demands while maintaining profitability and ensuring long-term success.

While these definitions provide foundational insights into business development, it is important to recognize that MSMEs often face unique challenges, such as limited resources and market access. These challenges may hinder the full implementation of vertical and horizontal development strategies. Moreover, the emphasis on profitability in traditional business development definitions might not fully align with the ethical considerations necessary for MSMEs, especially when operating within a framework of Islamic business ethics. This highlights the gap in the existing literature, where more research is needed to explore how business development strategies in MSMEs can integrate ethical principles while still achieving growth and profitability.

2. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are pivotal to the economic landscape, especially in developing economies. MSMEs are businesses categorized based on size, defined by criteria such as net worth and annual sales revenue. In Indonesia, for instance, MSMEs are classified according to Law Number 20 of 2008, which provides specific criteria for each category. These businesses play a vital role in job creation, fostering innovation, and contributing significantly to the national economy (Aslikhah, 2021).

MSMEs are typically viewed as household businesses, with small businesses employing between 1 and 19 people while medium-sized businesses employ between 20 and 99 people. The definitions of micro, small, and medium enterprises, as provided by Law

Number 20 of 2008, categorize businesses based on their net worth and annual sales revenue, excluding land and buildings(Ridwan Maksum et al., 2020). These criteria are as follows:

a. Micro Business Criteria:
   1) Net worth of up to IDR 50,000,000, excluding land and buildings.
   2) Annual sales revenue not exceeding IDR 300,000,000.
b. Small Business Criteria:
   1) Net worth ranging from IDR 50,000,000 to a maximum of IDR 500,000,000, excluding land and buildings.
   2) Annual sales revenue ranges from IDR 300,000,000 to a maximum of IDR 2,500,000,000.
c. Medium Business Criteria:
   1) Net worth ranging from IDR 500,000,000 to a maximum of IDR 10,000,000,000, excluding land and buildings.
   2) Annual sales revenue ranges from IDR 2,500,000,000 to a maximum of IDR 50,000,000,000 (Ridwan Maksum et al., 2020).

These criteria define the scope and characteristics of MSMEs, setting clear boundaries for businesses to qualify for support programs and benefits intended to promote growth. MSMEs have significant challenges and opportunities that vary according to their size. Micro and small enterprises tend to be more flexible and adaptive but may face limitations regarding resources, financing, and market reach. Medium-sized businesses, while better resourced, often encounter more complex challenges, such as competition and the need for technological adaptation.

MSMEs face significant hurdles, including limited access to capital, skills, and infrastructure, yet they also contribute to the broader economic landscape through innovation, job creation, and social welfare. The business development strategies tailored for MSMEs, particularly those that adopt vertical and horizontal growth strategies, play a crucial role in addressing these challenges. These strategies can help MSMEs expand their operations, diversify their products or services, and create a more sustainable and competitive presence in the market.

By recognizing the distinct categories within MSMEs, this research underscores the importance of adopting tailored business development strategies that align with each business category's unique needs and capacities. Additionally, incorporating ethical business practices, such as those derived from Islamic business ethics, can further support the sustainable development of MSMEs. These strategies will be explored further in the subsequent sections to highlight how they contribute to the overall business success of MSMEs.

While the legal definitions and criteria for MSMEs provide a useful framework, one must examine how businesses in each category specifically navigate their challenges. For instance, micro and small businesses often struggle with access to finance and marketing channels, while medium-sized enterprises may grapple with scalability and management complexities. Thus, business development strategies must consider these variations to be effective. Furthermore, Islamic business ethics could offer a valuable model for developing MSMEs while ensuring social responsibility and ethical business practices. This dual focus on business strategy and ethical behaviour represents an opportunity for MSMEs to improve their market performance and societal impact.

3. Islamic Business Ethics

Ethics, derived from the Greek word *ethos*, encompasses customs, habits, and ways of thinking. It defines the conception of right and wrong behaviour, guiding human relationships and interactions (Trevino & Nelson, 2021). Business ethics applies these moral principles to business activities, focusing on fairness, honesty, and integrity in decision-making processes. It ensures that business operations align with universally accepted norms and support the overall goals of business activities, profit generation and societal well-being (Yuan et al., 2020).

In MSMEs, business ethics are crucial in fostering a positive internal culture and enhancing external reputation(Danil & Afif, 2022). By applying ethical principles, MSMEs can cultivate a work environment based on transparency, fairness, and respect, increasing employee morale, job satisfaction, and productivity (Freudenreich et al., 2020). Externally, businesses that operate ethically build strong trust with customers and partners, improving loyalty and avoiding legal issues or scandals that could harm their reputation (Iltiham & Apriliyah, 2022). Moreover, ethical business practices are integral to corporate social responsibility (CSR), which helps MSMEs build stronger relationships with local communities and gain support (Fauzi & Sheng, 2022).

Islamic business ethics are founded on several core principles that guide the behaviour and practices of Muslim entrepreneurs (Nursini, 2020). These principles emphasize justice, balance, transparency, and social responsibility, ensuring businesses operate ethically while contributing positively to society(Aman, 2019). The following principles are critical to Islamic business ethics:

a. Unity (Tawhid)

Unity integrates all aspects of life, religious, social, political, and economic, into a consistent and coherent whole. For MSMEs, this principle means that business practices should align with Islamic values, with all actions being guided by a commitment to uphold the teachings of Allah SWT. Businesses should operate under the belief that every aspect of life, including business, is under divine supervision, which prevents unethical practices and ensures adherence to Islamic law (Nizar & Sukamto, 2022). This concept is grounded in the Qur’anic verse:

“Say, indeed my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah,Lord of the worlds.” (QS. Al-An’am [6]: 162)

b. Balance (Justice or ʿAdl)

Balance is a principle that encourages fairness and harmony in all business operations. This means ensuring all stakeholders, including employees, customers, and suppliers, are treated equitably for MSMEs. In Islam, justice refers to the equal application of rights for all parties involved, ensuring that no one is deprived of their rightful share(Asutay & Yilmaz, 2021). This principle is explicitly stated in the Qur’an:

“Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice.”(QS. An-Nisa [4]: 58)

c. Free Will (Ikhtiyar)

The principle of free will emphasizes that individuals are free to make choices, but with this freedom comes responsibility. MSMEs, guided by Islamic ethics, must ensure that their decisions are made with full awareness and responsibility. Business decisions should be intentional, ethical, and aligned with the entrepreneur's values and societal good. Entrepreneurs should not abuse their freedom for selfish gain but instead consider the consequences of their actions on all stakeholders involved (Maghfur & Syu'aibi, 2020). The Qur'an provides this foundation by stating:

"Whoever does righteousness,it is for his own soul; and whoever does evil [does so] against it. And your Lord is not ever unjust to the servants." (QS. Fussilat [41]: 46)

d. Responsibility (Mas'uliyah/Amanah)

Responsibility in Islamic business ethics refers to the duty of business owners to act in a manner that is accountable and transparent. This responsibility extends to all aspects of the business, from the treatment of employees to the sustainability of products and services(Mancinelli, 2020).. As reflected in the hadith:

"Each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is responsible for his flock." (HR. Bukhari & Muslim)

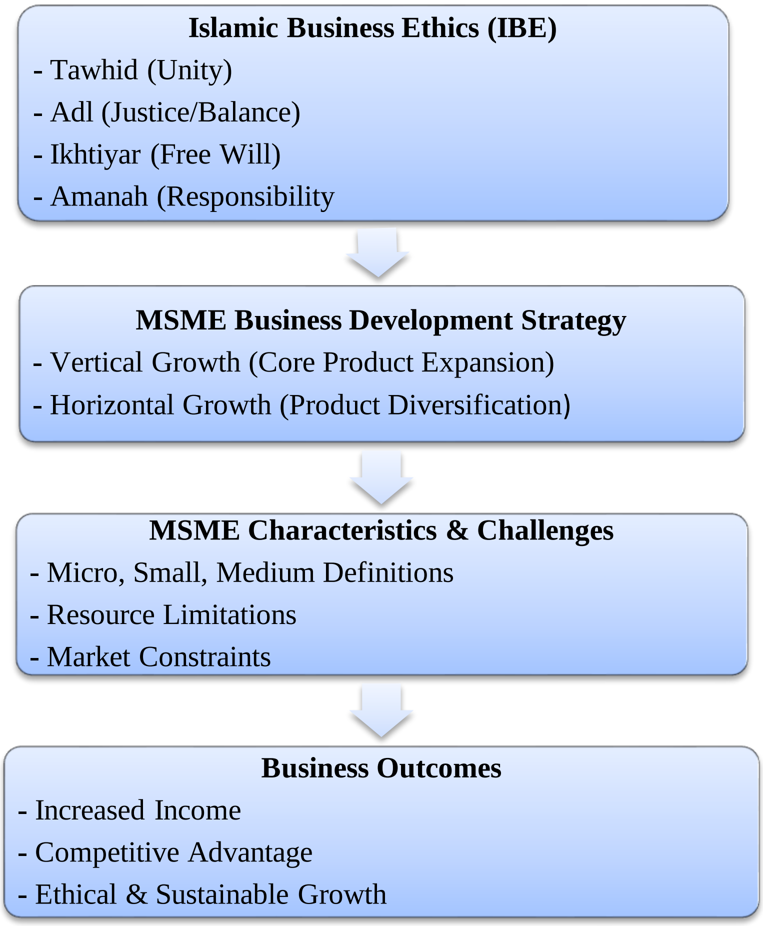

Figure 2. Diagram Integrating Islamic Business Ethics into MSME Development Strategy

In the context of MSMEs, this means making profitable, socially and environmentally responsible decisions.

The principles of Islamic business ethics offer not only a spiritual and moral compass but also a practical foundation for MSME development. By aligning their operations with values such as *tawhid*, *adl*, *ikhtiyar*, and *amanah*, MSMEs can achieve financial success while fulfilling religious obligations and social responsibilities. These values improve internal governance, enhance customer loyalty, and build long-term resilience.

This theoretical framework offers a comprehensive lens through which the integration of business development strategy, MSME characteristics, and Islamic business ethics can be understood. By synthesizing strategic management theories with Islamic ethical values, this study highlights the multidimensional nature of MSME development in Muslim-majority contexts(Kalkavan et al., 2021). The framework suggests that ethical principles are not merely complementary to economic goals, but essential drivers of sustainable growth, stakeholder trust, and market competitiveness(Buyondo, 2024). Future empirical models can build on this theoretical integration to measure the direct and indirect effects of Islamic ethical practices on MSME performance, social welfare, and innovation outcomes.

To visually consolidate this integration, a conceptual framework diagram will be presented in the following chapter, illustrating the interrelation between Islamic ethics, MSME development strategies, and business outcomes.

C. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research methodology with a descriptive approach to explore the development strategies of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), particularly RnD Snack Labuhanbatu Selatan, by integrating Islamic Business Ethics (IBE) to enhance business income. A qualitative approach was chosen because it provides an in-depth understanding of the complex factors influencing MSME strategies, particularly those related to ethical business practices and decision-making processes. The descriptive approach allows for a detailed examination of how Islamic Business Ethics can be applied in a real-world business setting and how these principles contribute to business sustainability and competitive advantage. Using semi-structured interviews and participant observation as data collection techniques enables the researcher to gather rich, contextual data from key informants, business owners, and consumers to explore the business's operational strategies, ethical considerations, and consumer experiences. Secondary data, including literature from books, articles, and reports, supplements the primary data and provides a broader theoretical context for the study.

The data analysis method used is SWOT analysis, which systematically categorizes the data into four key areas: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. This analysis is particularly relevant as it helps identify internal capabilities and challenges within RnD Snack and how these can be addressed through strategic planning. Each SWOT category will also be linked to economic, social, and environmental performance, ensuring a holistic understanding of the business's operations and ethical impacts (Van Belle et al., 2024). The strengths, such as product quality and customer trust, align with social responsibility principles, while weaknesses like limited capital or market competition present external threats. The data is then interpreted to highlight the strategic opportunities for RnD Snack, focusing on how Islamic Business Ethics can be integrated into business decisions to enhance revenue and ensure long-term sustainability. This methodology is supported by existing literature that demonstrates the utility of SWOT analysis in business strategy development, particularly in ethical business practices.

To ensure the validity and trustworthiness of the data, this study employs triangulation techniques. Methodological triangulation is applied by combining multiple data collection methods, namely semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and secondary document analysis, to cross-check and confirm findings. Additionally, data source triangulation involves gathering information from various stakeholders, including business owners, employees, and consumers, to obtain diverse perspectives. Member checking is also conducted by presenting the interpreted results to selected informants to verify the accuracy and consistency of the researcher’s interpretation. These validation techniques enhance the credibility and reliability of the research findings.

D. RESULTS

1. Brief Description of Small and Medium Enterprises RnD Snack

RnD Snack, a growing Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) located in North Aek Batu Hamlet, Asam Jawa Village, Torgamba District, South Labuhanbatu Regency, has been operational since 2022. The business was inspired by the desire to create souvenirs typical of South Labuhanbatu, starting with a modest capital of 500 thousand rupiah. With an entrepreneurial spirit, the owner, Mrs Novita Dwi, ventured into the snack business, offering products like potato sticks, corn sticks, sweet potato sticks, laughing bread, banana chips, and chilli sauce. These products quickly gained popularity across various customer groups, with each snack designed to have unique characteristics and creative variations. Mrs Novita Dwi continually introduced new product innovations to keep the business competitive and retain customer interest.

To further differentiate the brand in the market, Mrs Novita Dwi reinvented a unique product, the Palm Oil Diamond, which became a signature snack for South Labuhanbatu. The Palm Oil Diamond takes inspiration from a traditional Javanese wedding snack called "diamonds," made from glutinous rice, coconut milk, and brown sugar. While this conventional snack has been popular in Central and East Java, RnD Snack innovatively transformed it by incorporating palm oil, which is typically used for commercial agriculture, into a processed food snack. This creative twist gives RnD Snack a distinctive edge and showcases the business's ability to adapt traditional recipes into modern, marketable products.

The creation of the Palm Oil Diamond is not just a product innovation; it represents resilience in business development, particularly within Indonesia’s dynamic economic environment. As competition intensifies in the culinary sector, RnD Snack has strategically used product innovation to maintain relevance and create a niche market. By turning palm oil into a processed snack, RnD Snack has successfully leveraged local ingredients to offer something new and valuable, setting itself apart from other snack businesses in the area. This innovation serves as a cultural homage and a unique selling point, helping the company compete and thrive in a competitive market.

From the outset, Mrs Novita identified challenges such as fierce competition, pricing wars, and the need for capital to improve product offerings and obtain halal certification. To overcome these obstacles, she focused on enhancing product quality and introducing new product variants to keep customers engaged. She emphasized the importance of product innovation and continuously updated the packaging to attract consumers. Moreover, the business expanded its market reach through social media marketing, a delivery system, and partnerships with local stores, pharmacies, Islamic boarding schools, and modern retailers like Alfamidi and Indomaret.

Consumer feedback reflects the success of these efforts. Many customers, like Santi, appreciate the convenience of the delivery system and the consistent quality of the products. Despite initial challenges in marketing, word of mouth and social media promotion helped increase the business's visibility. However, as noted by Mrs Novita, capital remains a challenge, with the initial investment of only Rp 500,000 insufficient to fully develop the business. To address this, she plans to leverage government loans (KUR) for further expansion, particularly in premium packaging and new product lines, like palm oil diamonds. Additionally, the business has grown by hiring employees to help manage operations, ensuring smoother production and service delivery.

Table 1. Internal Factor Evaluation Matrix

Key Internal Factors	Weight	Rating	Average
Strength			
High work motivation.	0.093	4.6	0.427
Quality Products.	0.101	5	0.505
Conceptualizing the alms program.	0.097	4.8	0.464
Mastering the field of service to consumers.	0.097	4.8	0.464
Applying the principles of Islamic business ethics.	0.101	5	0.504
Have a Halal certificate.	0.101	5	0.504
Product Innovation	0.101	5	0.504
Sub Total	0.69	34.2	3.373
Debilitation			
Limited Capital.	0.072	3.6	0.261
The product is not yet well-known in the community	0.044	2.2	0.097
Challenges in time and resource management for new product development.	0.064	3.2	0.206
Limited human resources.	0.052	2.6	0.136
Fierce competition between other food competitors.	0.076	3.8	0.291
Sub Total	0.31	15.4	0.992
Total	1	49.6	0.366

Source: (Author's analysis, 2025)

Although the business development strategy employed by RnD Snack has proven effective, challenges remain, particularly with limited capital and the need for a stronger market presence. Social media and delivery services have helped, but further investment in marketing and product differentiation is necessary as competition intensifies. Furthermore, leveraging external financial support, such as government grants and loans, will be crucial in scaling operations and improving product offerings. By continuing to integrate Islamic business ethics, such as honesty, transparency, and social responsibility, into its operations, RnD Snack sustains consumer trust. It aligns with broader ethical values, creating a strong foundation for long-term success.

2. Factors That Affect Business Development Strategy with an Islamic Business Ethics Approach in Increasing Business Income

a. Internal Factor Evaluation Matrix

Environmental factors aim to assess the condition of the strategy of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)(Vásquez et al., 2021) RnD Snacak through the strength and weakness level by calculating the rating value and weight obtained based on the questionnaire results.

Table 2. External Factor Evaluation Matrix

Key Internal Factors	Weight	Rating	Rata-rata
Opportunities			
Growing demand for healthy and halal food products in local and national markets.	0.093	4	0.373
Increased consumer awareness of business ethics.	0.103	4.4	0.452
Government programs to support SMEs and small business development.	0.107	4.6	0.494
Leveraging digital platforms for online product marketing and sales.	0.117	5	0.584
Opportunities to establish partnerships with larger distributors or retailers.	0.107	4.6	0.494
Sub Total	0.528	22.6	2.399
Threat			
There is an emergence of many competitors in the food industry and those that offer similar products.	0.098	4.2	0.412
Fluctuations in the price of raw materials can affect the selling price of products.	0.103	4.4	0.452
Changes in government policies that can affect SME operations.	0.098	4.2	0.412
Instability in raw material prices can affect production costs.	0.084	3.6	0.302
Rapid trends and changes in consumer preferences can affect the demand for new products.	0.089	3.8	0.337
Sub Total	0.472	20.2	1.916
Total	1	42.8	4.31

Source: (Author's analysis, 2025)

Based on the results of Table 1, the value of the strength factor was obtained, showing the highest average of 0.505, whereas the RnD Snack Labuhanbatu Selatan business has quality products. In the next position, a value of 0.504 was obtained by applying Islamic business ethics principles, halal certificates, and product innovation, where it can be interpreted that some of these factors are in strategic conditions that can be used properly. Regarding the weakness factor, the fierce competition between other food competitors shows a value of 0.291 where capital is limited, and there are challenges in time and resource management for developing new products.

b. External Factor Evaluation Matrix)

The External Environment Analysis aims to assess the condition of the RnD Snack Labuhanbatu Selatan business strategy through the level of opportunity and threat by calculating the rating value and weights obtained based on the questionnaire results.

Based on table 2 above shows that the average value of opportunity and threat factors in Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) RnD Snack Labuahanbatu Selatan is 0.584 and 0.452 where if opportunities and threats are known, business actors can determine the right strategy by taking advantage of opportunities to reduce threats.

Based on the diagram analysis, the coordinate points obtained are at the position (x,y) = (2.38; 0.83), which indicates that RnD Snack is located in quadrant I. This position reflects a favourable condition, where the company has the power to be leveraged to respond optimally to the available opportunities. Therefore, the most appropriate strategy for this situation is an aggressive growth strategy (Growth-Oriented Strategy), which aims to expand and develop the business progressively.

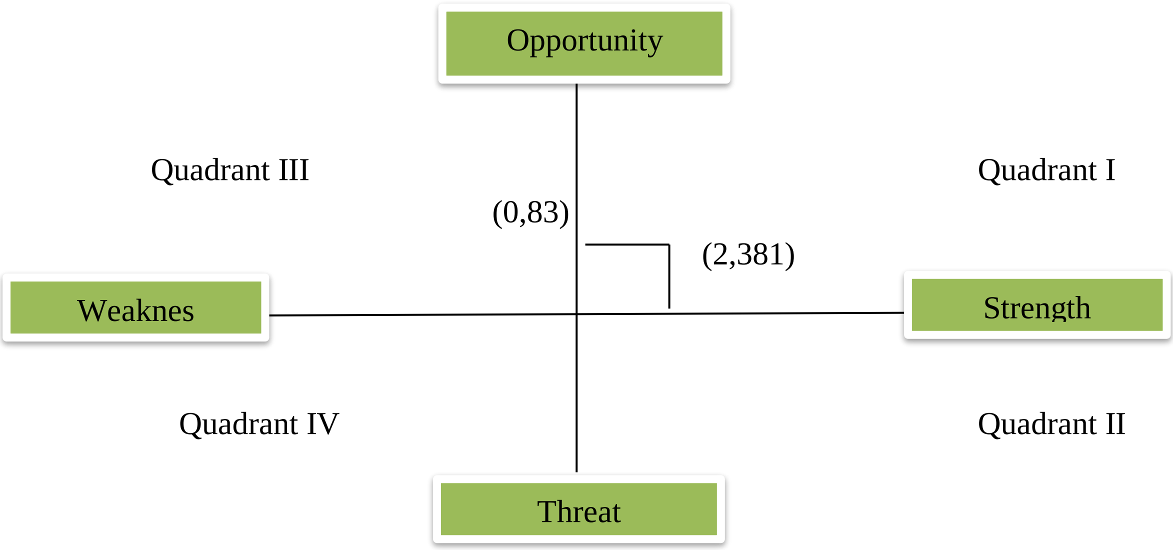

Figure 3. SWOT Analysis Diagram of Internal and External Data Processing Results in RnD Snack

c. Determination of Alternative Development Strategies

In calculating the IFE and EFE matrix tables, the highest strength and threat factor (S-O) value was obtained, which was 5. Based on Internal and External Environmental Analysis Factors to assess the condition of the strategy of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) RnD Snack through the level of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats to evaluate revenue strategies following Islamic business ethics such as(Sa’diyah & Oktafia, 2021):

Using the power of high-quality products and halal certificates to target the ever-growing healthy and halal food market in the local and national markets.

a. Highlighting Islamic business ethics principles to attract consumers who are increasingly aware of business ethics.
b. Utilizing product innovation to meet consumers' demands is more concerned about health and halal.

Table 3. SWOT Matrix

IFAS / EFAS	**Strength** 1. High work motivation. 2. Quality Products. 3. Conceptualizing the alms program. 4. Mastering the field of service to consumers 5. Applying the principles of Islamic business ethics. 6. Have a Halal certificate. 7. Product Innovation	**Weakness** 1. Limited Capital. 2. The product is not yet well-known in the community 3. Challenges in time and resource management for new product development. 4. Limited human resources 5. Fierce competition between other food competitors.
Opportunity 1. Growth in demand for healthy and halal food products in local and national markets. 2. Increased consumer awareness of business ethics 3. Government programs to support MSMEs and small business development. 4. Utilize digital platforms for online marketing and product sales. 5. Opportunities to establish partnerships with larger distributors or retailers.	**S-O Strategy** 1. Using the power of high-quality products and halal certificates to target the ever-growing healthy and halal food market in the local and national markets. 2. Highlighting Islamic business ethics principles to attract consumers who are increasingly aware of business ethics. 3. Utilizing product innovation to meet consumers' demands is more concerned about health and halal. 4. Utilize alms programs as part of marketing strategies to enhance the company's positive image and attract consumers who value social and humanitarian values. 5. Using the power of digital marketing to capitalize on online market growth opportunities. 6. Establish strategic relationships with larger distributors or retailers to expand product reach to a wider market.	**W-O Strategy** 1. Although capital is limited, companies can use government programs that support MSMEs in obtaining low-interest grants or loans to increase production and marketing capacity. 2. Companies can capitalize on the growing demand for healthy and halal food products through digital marketing to address products not yet well-known in the community. 3. New product development can be addressed by utilizing effective project management technology. 4. To face stiff competition, companies can use increased consumer awareness of business ethics to differentiate products in the market. By promoting Islamic business ethics and halal certification, companies can attract consumers who are more concerned with ethical and social aspects in choosing products. 5. Facing stiff competition can be overcome by establishing partnerships with large distributors or retailers. 6. Companies can focus on developing new products that align with the growing trends in healthy and halal food to increase competitiveness in fierce competition.
Threat 1. There is an emergence of many competitors in the food industry and those that offer similar products. 2. Instability in raw material prices that can affect production costs 3. Changes in government policies can affect the operations of MSMEs. 4. Fluctuations in the price of raw materials can affect the selling price of products. 5. Rapid changes in trends and consumer preferences can affect product demand.	**S-T Strategy** 1. Facing threats from many competitors in the food industry, the company can highlight its product quality and halal certification excellence. 2. Using the strength in product innovation to confront the threat of changing trends and rapid consumer preferences. 3. Using power in service to consumers to face the threat of fierce competition.	**W-T Strategy** 1. Conduct intensive promotion through various marketing channels to increase public awareness of your products. 2. Hold regular training to improve employee skills, especially in production and marketing. 3. Copying strategic partnerships with other businesses to support each other in facing competition.

Source: (author's processing, 2025)

c. Utilize alms programs as part of marketing strategies to enhance the company's positive image and attract consumers who value social and humanitarian values.
d. Using the power of digital marketing to capitalize on online market growth opportunities.
e. Establish strategic relationships with larger distributors or retailers to expand product reach to a wider market.

3. Islamic Business Ethics in Strategy Development

Applying Islamic business ethics plays a central role in shaping the business development strategies of RnD Snack, particularly in promoting social responsibility, transparency, and fairness. These ethical principles, such as honesty, fairness, and halal certification, help RnD Snack foster customer trust and expand its market base. By integrating Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, such as alms programs, the company can further enhance its image and attract consumers who value social and ethical considerations in their purchasing decisions. However, while these values provide a strong foundation, the company faces internal and external challenges, such as limited capital and increasing competition, which need more strategic attention to capitalize on these ethical advantages fully(D'Cruz et al., 2022).

Despite the positive impact of CSR initiatives on the company's image, RnD Snack must commit more significantly to these programs in a structured manner to truly stand out in the market. Expanding CSR efforts, such as partnering with larger social organizations or incorporating sustainability into the supply chain, could significantly boost the company's market position(Harahap et al., 2023). Without stronger implementation of these programs, the company may struggle to capture the attention of an increasingly discerning consumer base despite the strong ethical framework that drives its business operations.

Moreover, while Islamic business ethics provide a solid moral foundation for decision-making, the main challenge for RnD Snack is ensuring that these principles are fully integrated into all operational aspects, including human resource management and product development. For example, the company's human resource and capital limitations must be addressed more effectively to implement these ethical principles fully(Jatmiko et al., 2024). To achieve this, RnD Snack should take advantage of opportunities like government programs and partnerships with large distributors to accelerate product development and market expansion, all while maintaining the ethical values that the company is built upon.

E. DISCUSSION

Business Development Strategy with an Islamic Business Ethics Approach in Increasing Business Income: RnD Snack South Labuhanbatu

The business development strategy of RnD Snack Labuhanbatu Selatan is strongly influenced by Islamic Business Ethics (IBE), aiming to balance worldly profits with blessings and goodness for the ummah(Zaki et al., 2022). Islamic business ethics emphasizes the moral principles that guide business actions and decisions, ensuring that they are not solely focused on financial profit but also consider the social, environmental, and spiritual impacts of business practices(D'Cruz et al., 2022). As Syed Nawab Haidar Naqvi highlights, four key ethical principles form the foundation for a Muslim's business activities: Unity**,** Balance**,** Free Will**,** and Responsibility(Islam & Wahab, 2021).

1. Unity:

One of the primary ethical principles practiced by RnD Snack is the principle of Unity (Tawhid). Based on interviews with the business owner, RnD Snack integrates religious activities into its daily operations, such as allocating specific times for employees to perform prayers and engage in religious activities. Additionally, the company has established a piggy bank for infaq (charity), organized programs for zakat (almsgiving), and conceptualized various alms programs. These actions reflect a deep commitment to maintaining a strong relationship with Allah SWT and ensuring that the business operates not just for profit but in alignment with Islamic values that benefit the community(Stilwell, 2023). This approach fosters a work environment that values spiritual fulfillment alongside professional success.

2. Balance or Justice (Equilibrium):

The Balance or Justice principle is another core element of Islamic Business Ethics applied by RnD Snack. The company ensures that employees are compensated fairly and that salaries are paid on time without delay. Employee satisfaction is high, as there are no complaints about wage payments, highlighting the company's commitment to fair treatment and justice in its internal practices. Furthermore, RnD Snack maintains a strong ethical stance in its customer service, where transparency and honesty in product quality are paramount. This balance between fairness to employees and honesty with customers helps cultivate trust and loyalty, essential for business sustainability(Biagioli, 2019). Justice, in the Islamic context, extends beyond financial transactions to encompass fairness in all dealings, including how employees and customers are treated.

3. Free Will:

The ethical principle of Free Will (Ikhtiyar) is demonstrated by RnD Snack through its commitment to ensuring that all products are halal and certified by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI). By maintaining the halal status of its products, RnD Snack respects consumers' freedom to choose ethically produced goods without fear of violating religious principles. The company's adherence to Islamic dietary laws reflects the business's responsibility to offer products that align with the values and beliefs of its customer base, giving consumers the free will to make choices that are consistent with their religious convictions(Gamble, 2021). This focus on halal certification strengthens the business's ethical foundation and increases its appeal among Muslim consumers, who value businesses that respect their religious needs.

4. Responsibility:

The final principle, Responsibility (Amanah), is deeply embedded in RnD Snack's operations. This principle is reflected in the company's dedication to fulfilling its obligations to both employees and customers. The company ensures that employees receive their wages on time and are treated with respect, fostering a sense of trust and loyalty. Additionally, RnD Snack demonstrates its responsibility to customers by actively addressing any complaints and finding solutions to ensure customer satisfaction. This commitment to responsibility is not only a moral duty but also a strategic approach to building long-term relationships with customers and employees(Wirba, 2024). As highlighted by Trevino, corporate responsibility in Islam extends beyond mere compliance with laws; it involves a moral obligation to uphold fairness, transparency, and the welfare of the community.

The application of Islamic Business Ethics in MSME development, as demonstrated by RnD Snack, provides valuable insights into how small businesses can succeed by adhering to ethical principles(Abramovich & Vasiliu, 2023). This approach aligns with the growing consumer demand for businesses that are socially responsible and transparent in their operations. As noted by horen, there is an increasing consumer preference for businesses that incorporate ethical practices into their operations, which can significantly enhance brand loyalty and consumer trust. By integrating Islamic Business Ethics, MSMEs not only align their business practices with the ethical values of their target market but also create a positive impact on society(van Norren, 2020). This can lead to increased customer retention, better employee morale, and long-term business sustainability.

Furthermore, Islamic Business Ethics encourages MSMEs to prioritize social good alongside profitability, ensuring that business operations contribute to the welfare of the community(Aldo et al., 2022). As Aman explains, ethical business practices rooted in Islamic values can create a business environment that promotes justice, fairness, and transparency, all of which are essential for fostering long-term relationships with customers and employees(Aman, 2019).

Islamic Ethical Foundations in Business: Normative and Practical Perspectives

Islamic Business Ethics (IBE) is derived from the core teachings of Islam, integrating spiritual and material aspects of life. Business activities, therefore, are not viewed solely as profit-oriented endeavors but as acts of devotion to Allah SWT and as means to uphold social responsibility and moral integrity. The normative foundations of IBE are rooted in the Qur'an, the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), and the principles of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh muʿāmalāt*), which provide comprehensive guidance for ethical economic conduct.

1. Qur'anic and Prophetic Foundations of Business Ethics

   Islamic business ethics emphasize values such as honesty (*ṣidq*), justice (*ʿadl*), trustworthiness (*amānah*), and the prohibition of fraud (*gharar*) and deception (*tadlīs*). These values are grounded in clear textual sources. For instance, Allah SWT states:

   "O you who believe! Do not consume one another's wealth unjustly but only [in lawful] business by mutual consent." (Qur'an, Surah An-Nisa [4]: 29)

   This verse establishes the imperative of fairness and mutual agreement in all economic transactions. Additionally, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) emphasized ethical business conduct in the following hadith:

   "The truthful and trustworthy merchant will be with the prophets, the truthful, and the martyrs."(HR.Tirmidhi, No. 1209)

   This hadith elevates the ethical merchant to a highly esteemed moral rank, underscoring the spiritual merit of conducting business in a principled and honest manner.

2. Operationalizing Islamic Values in RnD Snack's Business Practices

   In this study, the application of Islamic ethical principles by RnD Snack demonstrates how small businesses can operationalize religious values in everyday activities. The four key ethical principles outlined by Syed Nawab Haidar Naqvi, Tawhid (Unity), Justice (ʿAdl), Free Will (Ikhtiyar), and Trust (Amānah), resonate with the broader objectives of Islamic law (*maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*), which seek to protect religion, life, intellect, wealth, and lineage.

For example, the implementation of *zakat*, *infaq*, and *ṣadaqah* at RnD Snack reflects not only legal compliance with Islamic obligations but also the embodiment of *takaful ijtimāʿi* (social solidarity). These practices reinforce distributive justice as emphasized in:

"Take, [O Muhammad], from their wealth a charity by which you purify them and cause them increase..." (Qur'an, Surah At-Tawbah [9]: 103)

Moreover, justice in wage payment and fair employee treatment are grounded in the Qur'anic and Prophetic ethos. Timely compensation and respectful labor relations exemplify the principle of *ʿadl*, in accordance with the prophetic tradition:

"Give the worker his wages before his sweat dries." (HR. Ibn Majah, No. 2443)

These ethical commitments form a crucial part of the internal governance of RnD Snack, contributing to employee loyalty, workplace harmony, and a values-based organizational culture.

3. Ethical Business as a Pathway to Sustainability

Integrating Islamic values into business practices positions ethics not only as a religious imperative but also as a strategic advantage. IBE encourages accountability not only to consumers and regulators but also to God, society, and the environment. It promotes long-term thinking rooted in the Islamic value of *maṣlaḥah* (public interest), which is central to the objectives of *sharīʿah*.

By adhering to Islamic ethical norms, RnD Snack aligns its business operations with the expectations of a morally conscious Muslim consumer base. This alignment enhances trust, brand loyalty, and social credibility. As such, Islamic Business Ethics becomes a framework for achieving both worldly success and spiritual fulfillment, allowing MSMEs like RnD Snack to thrive ethically and sustainably in a competitive market.

F. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significant role that Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play in Indonesia's economy, particularly through the successful application of Islamic Business Ethics (IBE**)** in business strategies. The case of RnD Snack Labuhanbatu Selatan demonstrates how integrating ethical principles such as honesty**,** justice**,** and social responsibility has not only helped the company increase revenue but also expand its market reach despite competitive challenges. This research contributes to the literature by emphasizing the intersection of Islamic Business Ethics and business strategy, providing a novel perspective on how MSMEs can thrive by balancing financial success with ethical business practices. The findings suggest that MSMEs that incorporate Islamic Business Ethics into their operations can achieve long-term sustainability and create positive social impacts, which is a valuable contribution to academic knowledge in this area.

However, the study has limitations, primarily due to the use of a single case study, which may not fully represent the broader MSME sector in Indonesia. Future research could explore a larger sample of MSMEs across various regions and industries to validate the findings and provide a more comprehensive understanding of how Islamic Business Ethics impacts business growth. Additionally, research could investigate the role of Islamic finance in supporting MSMEs that adopt ethical business practices. For practitioners, this study offers actionable recommendations to prioritize ethical principles in business strategies, innovate products, and leverage digital marketing to enhance customer loyalty and trust. Policymakers can support this by creating an enabling environment for MSMEs that adopt ethical business practices, ensuring their growth and contribution to both economic and social development.

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