

# An Introduction to Strategic Islamic Marketing



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**Abstract** This chapter discuss the Islamic marketing concept and its four distinct stages that form a logical sequence before Islamic marketing could attain the thought leadership position it is capable of. These stages are Islamic Marketing 1.0 (IM 1.0), awareness; Islamic Marketing 2.0 (IM 2.0), Islamization of existing theory; Islamic Marketing 3.0 (IM 3.0), theory making; and Islamic Marketing 4.0 (IM 4.0), thought leadership.

## 1 Introduction

Islamic marketing, a new member in the social sciences arena, has gained significant momentum in the decade 2010–2020 (Alserhan, 2010). In this short chapter, we will try to explain its current and possible stages of development over the foreseeable future. Although we will not be setting time frames for each of these stages, we can confidently say that stage one has been mostly completed and that Islamic marketing thought currently resides in the second stage which is related to the Islamization of traditional marketing theories. Moving into stage three where an independent body of Islamic marketing theories begins to evolve and stage four where Islamic

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marketing theories are seen as an alternative theory realm will take some time to emerge. Although for stages three and four no time frame could be predicted, it is still reasonable to say it will happen within the decade 2020–2030 (Alserhan, 2011).

## 2 Islamic Marketing Stages

In the following section, the progress made so far in Islamic marketing will be reviewed. Generally speaking, there are four distinct stages that form a logical sequence before Islamic marketing could attain the thought leadership position it is capable of. These stages are (Fig. 1) as follows:

Islamic Marketing 1.0 (IM 1.0)—awareness

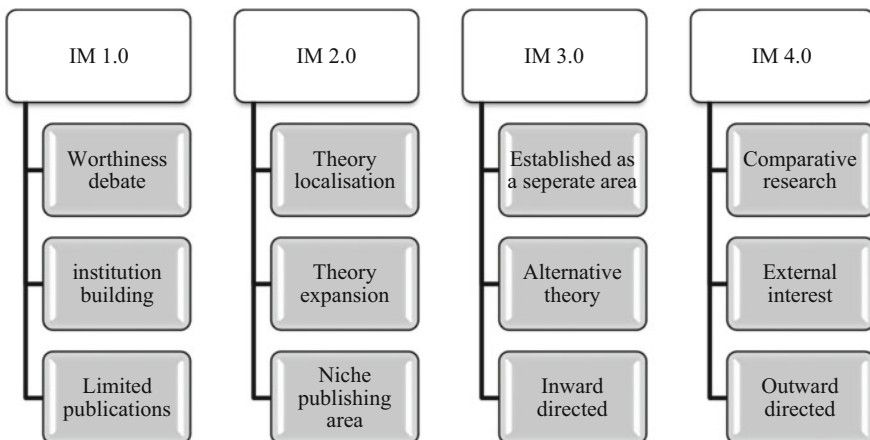
Islamic Marketing 2.0 (IM 2.0)—Islamization of existing theory

Islamic Marketing 3.0 (IM 3.0)—theory making

Islamic Marketing 4.0 (IM 4.0)—thought leadership

### 2.1 Islamic Marketing 1.0 (IM 1.0): Awareness

In this stage the terms Islamic marketing and Islamic branding came to existence. Starting from the year 2007, if you google these terms, you will get some results including work done in the United Arab Emirates University and also by the Said Business School at Oxford University. Both institutions started working on the topic almost simultaneously albeit independently without any prior knowledge of each other's work. Soon after that a journal by the name of *Journal of Islamic Marketing*



**Fig. 1** Development stages in Islamic marketing thought

was established by Emerald Publishing; a conference was organized by Said Business School followed shortly by another conference by the University of Malaya. The field got a huge boost with the launch of the successful annual Global Islamic Marketing Conference in 2011 organized by the International Islamic Marketing Association (IIMA). In 2015 another journal was launched by Inderscience by the same founder of the first journal with Emerald. During the same year, another journal specializing in Islamic marketing was launched in Arabic by IIMA. Several books were also published and continue to be published starting from the year 2011. Some of these books have more than one edition.

These efforts played a crucial role in creating a wide spread awareness within the academic community resulting in the acceptance of the field as a legitimate area of inquiry. A number of papers addressing various areas in the field were published. These papers addressed issues related to Muslim consumers' behavior, the Islamic marketing mix, Islamic branding, Islamic promotions and advertising, Halal products, the Halal value chain, and other closely related issues.

It is important to note that the new Islamic marketing-related journals, books, and conferences were in part a response to the difficulty in publishing in mainstream journals, where editors were reluctant to acknowledge the worthiness of the field as an area of scientific inquiry. However, a quick survey of the number of articles published in mainstream journals addressing areas of Islamic marketing reveals a massive surge during the decade 2010–2020, which could be attributed at least in part the level of awareness created by the Islamic marketing books, journals, and conferences.

## ***2.2 Islamic Marketing 2.0 (IM 2.0): Islamization of Existing Theory***

At this stage, although the new generation of researchers will not have to endure the agony of trying to publish as the first generation did, they will also not experience the joy that was associated with introducing Islamic marketing to the world for the first time. Their contributions to Islamic marketing theory will revolve around traditional theory expansion to incorporate Islamic concepts or some type of theory localization where established traditional theories are modified to fit the needs and culture of the Muslim consumers.

The field at this stage, although established, remains an area of niche publishing. Many of the researchers who write and publish here are capitalizing on the publishing possibility in a new attractive area. The extent of the writings at this stage will revolve around adopting/adapting current theory. Many of the papers in this area are basically copying research models used in published papers and using the same independent/dependent variables but within a Muslim consumer context. Other studies might add moderators or mediators to the model. This stage could be seen

as outward directed since researchers rely on external resources, i.e., knowledge not created with an Islamic faith in mind.

### **2.3 Islamic Marketing 3.0 (IM 3.0): Theory Making**

At this stage, a new generation of researchers who didn't witness the rise of Islamic marketing and didn't have to demonstrate its worthiness to the world will rise. To them, Islamic marketing is as real as other social sciences. Writing and publishing in the field became the normal thing to do. The field has passed a hard scientific scrutiny and prejudice, whether religious or cultural, and has been discredited. No criticisms will be made since the field has already been established and accepted within the scientific community. At this stage, the logical thing that researchers will do is engage in Islamic theory development in the same way they would in traditional marketing. They are highly skilled researchers with deep knowledge of the Islamic faith. Their contributions will be independent of traditional theory as it will be more inward directed. They will rely more on traditional Islamic thought, while incorporating sound research methods to create a new theory realm that is faith-based.

### **2.4 Islamic Marketing 4.0 (IM 4.0): Thought Leadership**

IM 4.0 is the final stage of the development of the field of Islamic marketing. At this stage, a body of alternative theory has been developed, tested, and proven within an Islamic context. As a result researchers and institutions from outside of the Islamic world will take notice. They will be interested in testing Islamic marketing theories within their respective countries or cultures, and comparative studies will be carried out, furthering the faith-based/traditional marketing debate and advancing the field of marketing in its entirety.

## **References**

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