

Toward the Understanding of Religious Orientation and Market Mavenism: Establishing a Correlation Relationship

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ABSTRACT: This study argues that religious orientation may have a firm association with market mavenism. A positive association between religious orientation (Intrinsic & Extrinsic) and a market maven was hypothesized. A revision religious Scale of the Worldwide- I-E (Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989) was used to measure the variables of religiosity, and Feick and Price's (1987) 6-item scale was used to measure the extent of market mavenism. The Pearson product moment coefficient of correlation was calculated to assess the relationship between religiosity and being a market maven. The results revealed a significant positive relationship between intrinsic religious orientation and being a market maven. Results attested that there is a significant relationship between extrinsic religious orientation with positive direction (social and personal) and being a market maven. The main contribution of this study is that, to the best of the writer's understanding, this is the first study to explore the relationship between religiosity and market maven.

Keywords: Intrinsic-extrinsic, religious orientation, market, mavenism.

1 Introduction

A number of consumers have an inclination to be more involved in the marketplace than others. Consumers obtain information about different types of products, brands, places for shopping, and other features of the market, and perhaps involve in product-related dialogues with other consumers to share their information (Goldsmith et al., 2003). Feick and Price (1987) identify market mavens as those customers who like to spend their time shopping, making purchases, and talking to others. Market mavens are an important consumer segment due

to the impact these consumers may have on other consumers via example and word-of-mouth (WOM) commentary (Williams & Slama, 1995; Barnes & Pressey, 2012).

Consumers as trustworthy and powerful influencers in marketplace communications is well-documented (Feick & Price, 1987; Laughlin & MacDonald, 2010). Market mavens use a wide-ranging of information sources about the marketplace via consumer reports and direct mail (Williams & Slama, 1995; Kim et al., 2011). This inspiring group likes to window shopping more than others, hence is apt to be

more involved in the market by planning shopping trips and vigil to advertised promotions (Grassl & Harris, 2010). Market mavens are not only helpful providers of information to other consumers but are also “smarter” shoppers (Barnes & Pressey, 2012). In addition, market mavens are more innovative and tend to shop for and purchase new products relatively sooner than other consumers (Goldsmith et al., 2003; Slama , & Williams, 2015). Since market mavens vigorously pursue market-related information, they acquire more information about new product offerings earlier than other consumers (Walsh & Elsner, 2012).

Market mavens have been investigated in terms of different features, such as “innovativeness,” which has been discussed extensively in the marketing literature. Similarly, “opinion leaders” have received significant attention in marketing research (e.g., Laughlin & MacDonald, 2010). Furthermore, market mavens have been studied in the context of distinct cultural systems (e.g., Chelminski & Coulter, 2002). However, little studies have considered religious orientation in relation to market mavens. Hirschman (1984) suggested two reasons for this. First, religion may be too sensitive a subject for investigation and second, religious influence is ambiguous. Nonetheless, religion is a major component of certain cultures, and interest in religion is increasing due to today’s emphasis on moral values in business and the continuing growth in globalization.

As mentioned above, no previous research has considered the effects of religion and religiosity orientation on the market mavenism phenomenon, which was taken as the point of departure for the current research. This study develops a relationship among two different variables: religiosity orientation and market mavenism and broadens the context of the study of market mavens by incorporating religiosity into the overall understanding of market mavenism.

Muslim consumers were selected as the subjects of the research hypotheses for several reasons. First, in Islam, communication between people should be polite, kind, and honest. The Prophet Muhammad said, “God likes that when someone does something, it must be done perfectly well”. One of Islam’s early leaders, Ali Ibn Abi Talib stated “the best discourse is expressive, great, brief, and interesting” . Muslim mavens should be more conscious than others about products that are unclear regarding whether they are permitted to consume them. Market mavens are generally more attentive in ensuring accuracy when disseminating information about the marketplace (Beekun & Badawi, 2005).

This study examines the possible relationship between religious orientation among Muslim consumers and market mavenism. This study builds on the current body of market mavens literature in numerous ways. First, in the development of a theoretical basis from which to examine the relationships among two variables: religious orientation and market mavenism. In particular, this study offers awareness into the market maven concept to better understand the psychological underpinning of this inspiring group. Second, alongside with the substantial data that shows the high effect of religious values on consumer behavior (e.g., McDaniel & Burnett, 1990; Essoo & Dibb, 2004), this study extends the context of the study of market mavenism by incorporating religious orientation into the phenomenon. Third, this study offers a specific and focused assessment of the relationships of market mavens and the degree of their religious orientation.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. First, it presents a review of the literature on marketing papers related to the inclusive subject of religiosity and religious orientation (e.g., articles that incorporated words like religiosity, devoutness, faithfulness, Muslim, etc.), and market mavenism. Then, the

hypotheses of a relationship between religious orientation and market mavenism is developed. Next, a correlational study is presented. The paper concludes with a discussion of the

theoretical and practical implementation of this study, and gives suggestions for prospect research.

Table 1: Summary of Empirical Papers Concerning Religiosity and Consumer Behavior

Classification	Consumer Outcomes	Papers
<u>Materialism:</u> The significance a consumer attaches to word-wide brand.	Materialism, assets as a status symbol, brand awareness, fashion awareness, brand reliance	Cleveland & Chang, 2009; Lindridge, 2005; Loroz, 2006; Minton et al., 2016; Essoo & Dibb, 2004.
	Attitude and intention toward luxurious brands	Arli et al., 2016
	Materialism as a bases for value conflicts	Veer & Shankar, 2011
	Awareness consumption	Stillman et al., 2012
<u>Intolerance:</u> Lack of inclination to accept views, beliefs, or behavior that is different from one's own.	Religious hostility/boycott	Abosag & Farah 2014; Ahmed et al., 2013.
	Negative response toward argumentative advertising	Farah & El Samad, 2014; Putrevu & Swimberghek, 2013. Cyril DeRun et al., 2010.
<u>Consumer ethics:</u> The moral values and ethics that guide behavior of entities / groups as they gain, use, and dispose of goods and services.	Assessment and response to businesses with conflicting religious & moral values	Leak et al., 2015; Swimberghe et al., 2011.
	Consumers' ethical beliefs	Arli, 2017; Vitell et al., 2007.
	Ethical consumer behavior	Schneider et al., 2011
<u>Risk aversion</u> Tendency or attitude toward risk	Risk aversion/ perceived	Blau, 2017.
	Acceptance of novel products, new product adoption	Essoo & Dibb, 2004; Shabbir, 2010.
	Changing behavior/constancy in brand and store liking	Choi, 2010; Choi et al., 2013.
<u>Attitude toward religious products:</u> Evaluative judgments concerning those products and services which contain religious associations	Attitude concerning religious compliant about certain products or services	Abou-Youssef et al., 2015; Siala, 2013.
	Prefer halal products	Jamal & Sharifuddin, 2015; Mohd Suki & Abang Salleh, 2016.
<u>Economic shopping:</u> Behavior that highly considers prices	Religious symbols concept in advertisements	Taylor et al., 2010
	Price awareness	Mokhlis, 2009.
	Buying goods on sale, favoring stores with low price	Sood & Nasu, 1995
	Low importance of credit availability	Essoo & Dibb, 2004
	Low impulsive Purchasing	Essoo & Dibb, 2004; Mokhlis, 2009

Literature Review

Various experimental studies related to religiosity and consumer behavior were identified and indexed into the appropriate categories. Table 1 presents the details of each of the classifications, their definitions, the related outcomes, and the source article(s). For example, studies on exposed consumption, brand awareness, fashion awareness, attitude toward luxurious brands, and so on, were combined to form the first classification. The second group dealt with studies that involve religious hostility, boycotts, contentious advertisements, emotional consequences, and undesirable response to firms that support conflicting religious values (Agarwala, Mishra & Singh, 2019).

Devoutly religious consumers search for all the information related to products of interest before consumption to avoid transgressing their religious values or norms. These consumers are then willing to share such information with others to promote the entire community's consumption awareness. Understanding religious orientation is the key to understanding why religious shoppers have a greater rational for products that have direct associations with religious values, how they deal with such products, and what roles they may play to raise consumption consciousness in their community.

Religious Orientation

In the literature, psychology and sociology researchers have struggled to find a widely accepted theory or definition of religion (Hanafy & Sallam, 1988). Researchers have presented three descriptions of the term "religion": 1) a supernatural supremacy to which persons must return, 2) a feeling existing in the people who comprehend such a power, and 3) the ritual acts carried out in respect of that power (Moreira-Almeida & Koenig, 2006). McDaniel and Burnett (1990) define religion as comprehensive set of beliefs, ideas, and actions that are shared by certain group of people, which affects the course of human and natural

events, it is recognized to be real and exist but cannot be empirically confirmed. Moreira-Almeida and Koenig (2006) state that religion is an organized form of beliefs, practices, rituals, and symbols designed to simplify intimacy with the sacred or transcendent (God, higher power, or ultimate truth).

Religiosity has been theorized as a unidimensional construct with a place of worship (e.g., mosque), with frequency of attendance being the primary measure (El-Menouar, 2014). This unitary measure may be straightforward at the cost of validity; nonetheless, it has remained a generally accepted measure within the literature (Schwartz & Huismans, 1995). Numerous researchers argue that regular use does not make such a unidimensional assessment an adequate research tradition. Dependence on religious attendance as the only measure of religiosity may be deceptive and may lead to improper conclusions. The one-dimensional view of the nature of religion implied in the theory leads to one of the main concerns related to the difficulty of matching increased attendance at worship in congregation with greater religious orientation (El-Menouar, 2014). A person may go to prayers in congregation for many reasons, for example, to avoid social loneliness, as a devotional habit, to satisfy their social group, or to gain prestige to exert control over others. Therefore, we cannot infer a high degree of religiosity merely from attendance (El-Menouar, 2014).

The realization of the multidimensionality of religiosity necessitates further understanding of its diverse forms. Psychometric studies have led to the development of a plethora of scales to measure a range of religious phenomena, including attitudes, principles, and values. The scope of religiosity has been examined, such as intrinsic (religion as a finale objective), extrinsic (religion as a system or modality), and quest (religion as a exploration) (Wong, 2007).

Scholars measuring religiosity in consumer research tend to define it using either the construct of a “means to reach self-centered ends” or as an “end in itself.” Most studies use Allport and Ross’ (1967) intrinsic-extrinsic Religious Orientation Scale (ROS). The ROS has shown considerable reliability and usability for marketing and consumer studies and investigations (Essoo & Dibb, 2004). However, the ROS was intended for use with Christian or Judeo-Christian people. Therefore, the scale may not be an appropriate tool for measuring the degree of religiosity for persons of other faiths. Nonetheless, the ROS scale has been used to measure religiosity among Muslim and Hindu subjects in a south Asian country (Essoo & Dibb, 2004). Genia (1996) evaluated the ROS scale and argued that the factors determining the frequency of worship attendance must be dropped as they reveal a deep problem in the scale, both theoretically and in terms of methodology. For example, when measuring Islamic religiosity, only men appear to worship frequently “according to the unidimensional measurement of religiosity” since they are obliged to attend worship in congregation five times a day at the mosque. The intrinsic items also lack internal consistency and have questionable value for religions other than Christian (Genia, 1996; Rice, 1999). Gorsuch and McPherson (1989) measured intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity using a revised scale of religious orientation, which omitted the factor of regularity of worship attendance. The 14-item revised ROS scale intends to measure the degree to which participants are eager to be religious, based on internal and external factors.

Market Mavenism

Feick and Price (1987) defined market mavens as persons who acquire information about numerous types of products, retailers, and other features of markets, and who engage in conversations with other consumers and respond to their requests for market

information. Mavens usually initiate discussions about market information, attempting to share their awareness of the market with others. Wiedmann, Walsh and Mitchell (2001) stated that market mavens are judgmental-leaders who maintain a steady overall awareness of market-related information and are willing to disseminate this information. The activity of market influencers who have knowledge in a diverse range of markets appears to be vigorous; market mavens interact with other consumers in virtual environments as well as face-to-face settings.

Studies by Higie, Feick and Price (1987) and Abratt, Nel and Nezer (1995) revealed that market mavens talk about related-retail information more than other consumers. Different studies have found that market mavens perceive information that is product-related as a crucial information far more than information that is related to stores (Wilson, 2006). Furthermore, market mavens have a higher rate of media consumption (Slama, & Williams, 1990; Kiani & Laroche, 2019). Market mavens play a major role for retailers (e.g., active and effective circulation of information) and consumers by clarifying the most important information from the overabundance of existing product and market information (Walsh et al., 2004).

Kiani and Laroche (2019) investigated the role of personal traits such as self-esteem and vulnerability to normative interpersonal influence in the context of social media in terms of the frequencies of recommendations. They theorize that market mavens with lower self-esteem are more likely to engage in less frequent recommendations and their lower self-esteem negatively affects their use of social media platforms as their mode of choice.

Cleveland and Bartikowski (2018) took culture as a means to further explore the phenomenon of market mavens. Vertical vs. horizontal measurements of individualism–collectivism was utilized, however, results showed that

individualism–collectivism has a strong effect on mavenism indirectly through identification with world-wide consumer culture.

Personal traits of maven can be endorsed through high self-esteem, confidence, self-efficacy, and personal control. However, gender, culture, and religiosity may act as moderators. Females and males have diverse stimuli, however, the context becomes crucial in evaluating how to communicate with mavens due to dissimilarities in the effects of individuals' different backgrounds based on their culture and religious beliefs (Kiani et al., 2016).

Additionally, Mamman et al. (2016) stated that to ease the risk of failure of new products, Islamic banks must investigate and incorporate the concept of market mavens in their marketing tactics.

Hypotheses Development

Market mavens comprehend advertising and marketing tricks (Feick & Price, 1987). These concepts of “marketing tricks and advertisement artifices” are considered to be an anti-religion; religiously-oriented people not only discount these types of advertising due to perceived trickery, but they may also fight it publicly. Of twenty-two countries with large Middle Eastern markets that were surveyed, the only country where respondents were anti-advertising was Egypt, (Feick & Price, 1987). The reason given for this response is the rise of religious radicalism.

Religion is, without a doubt, a fundamental element of social behavior and has been investigated from different perspectives (Alavi & Leidner, 2001). In reviewing many studies that tested different influences on the formation of a community's values, habits, attitudes, and behaviors, religion was found to be among the most important elements in terms of creating the values, habits, attitudes, and behaviors of any community. Petersen and Roy (1985) argued that religion provides a sense of purpose

for people to be here. It helps people feel that life is comprehensible and interpretable.

Motivation for being religious may include being intrinsically motivated for worship and other religious activities (intrinsic motivation), to gain personal peace and comfort (extrinsic personal), to gain social approval and acceptance (extrinsic social), and to gain moral guidance for behaviors (extrinsic morality) (Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989).

Wilkes et al. (1986) claim that religious orientation is connected with the consumer's life. The authors assumed that religiosity is a valid consumer paradigm because it is linked with lifestyle such as opinion leadership, risk prevention, credit consumption, and life approval. They suggested that highly religious oriented people are more likely to be opinion and attitude developing leaders.

Religion as an imperative element of every single culture plays a significant role in impacting consumer behavior by its values, norms, rules of purchasing. Devoted followers of religions are usually conservative to accept novel products in their societies (Mansori, 2012). The acceptance of products or services by consumers is highly affected by how the products or service can fit in with our cultures' values and perhaps conform our norms, values and behavioral patterns (Mansori, 2012). Therefore, in order to recognize that such products or services are religiously endorsed, religious market maven or experts (early adopter) may conform the nature, development and use of novel products by disseminating and balancing norms, customs, prohibitions and standards of conduct, with the use of these products.

The argument is that, products that are permitted to consume based on a religion's bylaw must be firstly conformed with the religion's norms, customs and prohibitions. Thus, one of the many ways that can help us identify the permissibility of consuming these products is through experts and market maven

who might be religious devotee. Therefore, hypotheses are formulated as follow:

Hypothesis 1: *A positive correlation between the level of intrinsic religious orientation and the degree of market maven.*

Hypothesis 2-a: *A positive correlation between the level of extrinsic religious (social) religious orientation and the degree of market maven.*

Hypothesis 2-b: *A positive correlation between the level of extrinsic religious (personal) religious orientation and the degree of market maven.*

Methodology

Correctional design was used to test the research hypotheses. Researches show that measuring religiosity has many facets. The accessible measures range from simple, unidimensional measures to complicated, multidimensional measures (Wilkes et al., 1986). Consumer behavior studies often associate place of worship (e.g., mosque) with attending religious rituals. In contrast, Glock and Stark (1965) combined principles, capabilities, practices, and knowledge in their measure. In studying religiosity and intrinsic religious orientation (IRO), Donahue (1985) suggested that “intrinsic religiousness works as a decent and appropriate measure of religious orientation, different from religious belief, mosque membership, and liberal-conservative theological orientation” (p. 415).

This study used a revised version of the Worldwide I-E scale (Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989). A 5-point Likert-type scale with picks ranging from (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) was used. A higher score indicates a higher religious orientation in the specific category, that is, intrinsic or extrinsic.

280 volunteer university students participated in this research; the purpose for using students to conduct this study was for two reasons: First is to reduce any other potential affects that might create what so- called noise in the data, such as age differences, level of education, and

level of income. A second reason in choosing students as subject pool is their availability, and the logistics of their participation. Students are constantly available and willing to participate in studies. In contrast, recruiting non-students to participate in any studies' activities is often difficult and more costly. Data was completely collected via an anonymous survey (no names or other identifying information was included). Online survey using (QUALTRICS) program was prepared starting with the consent of participation form. 221 completed the measurements sufficiently. 70 percent of the subjects were male (N = 154) and 30 percent were female (N = 67). The average age of the participants was 19.2 years, with ages ranging from 18 to 21.1 and a standard deviation of 2.9. A total of 12 percent of the sample (N = 23) were married, and 77 percent (N = 198) were single.

A revised intrinsic/extrinsic religious orientation (I/E-R) scale comprising 14 questions was utilized and a typical 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) was utilized to measure the responses. Single scores were totaled and categorized into two scores according to their external and internal spirituality (Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989). The scale has three inversely worded questions intended to measure the intrinsic dimension. Eight questions were used to measure intrinsic religiousness and three were used to measure each one of the extrinsic aspects of religiousness (Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989). Higher numeric scores on the measurement scale indicate higher levels of a particular religious' orientation.

The intrinsic dimension has a high reliability value with a Cronbach's α of 0.82; the extrinsic personal aspect was 0.69, while Cronbach's α for the extrinsic social aspect was 0.77. Therefore, summing up the overall extrinsic dimensions gives us a decent reliability score with a Cronbach's α of 0.73. The scale's validity is also maintained in many studies,

where intrinsic orientation expresses religion as a main motivation, and people with high extrinsic religiosity hold neutral attitudes

toward different aspects of religion (Tiliopoulos et al., 2007).

Table 2: Principles Component Analysis I/E-R Questionnaire after Orthogonal Rotation

	Item	Intrinsic	Extrinsic Social	Extrinsic Personal
I/E-R1	I like to read more about my religion.	0.712		
I/E-R4	It is vital to me to have some time in private thinking and prayer.	0.782		
I/E-R5	I always have a strong sense of God's existence.	0.751		
I/E-R6	Generally I pray to increase relief and protection.	0.706		
I/E-R7	I try strongly to spend my life according to my religious beliefs.	0.676		
I/E-R9	Prayer is for harmony and joy.	0.701		
I/E-R2	I go to Masjid because it is a good way for me to make associates.		0.775	
I/E-R11	I go to Masjid frequently to have some times with my associates.		0.842	
I/E-R12	My whole idea of life is mainly constructed on my religion.		0.498	
I/E-R13	I go to Masjid mostly because I like to see people I know.		0.776	
I/E-R3	My belief is peripheral as long as I am a good person.			0.695
I/E-R8	What religion gives me most is a relief in times of anxiety and sorrow.			0.647
I/E-R10	While I am religious, I do not allow it influence my daily life.			0.693
I/E-R14	Even though I believe in my religion, various other things are more important for me in life.			0.721
Eigenvalues		3.628	2.751	1.810
% of variance		24.948	18.128	14.215
Cronbach's α		0.721	0.704	0.689

Analysis information: Determinant = 0.013, Barlett's test: $\chi^2(91) = 1996.072$, $p = 0.00$, Kaiser-Myer-Olkin = 0.831, residuals of $\geq 0.05 = 49\%$, mean communality = 0.55.

The new 6-item market maven scale (Feick & Price, 1987) was utilized in this study. The scale measures overall marketplace awareness and tendency to circulate information. By using a 5-point Likert-type scale with endpoints of strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (5), Market maven was measured. For example, participants were asked to rate questions such as “If someone asked where to get the best price on several types of products, I could tell them where to shop” and “I like introducing my friends to new brands and products.” The scores were summed up and the participants were categorized accordingly. A factor analysis indicates that the market maven scale is among

the factors explaining 57.219 percent of the total variance with Cronbach’s α of 0.70.

Study Results

The results of the study were verified through statistical analysis, which covered the descriptive analysis and correlational breakdown. Table 4 presents simple descriptive measures of the sub-scales (questions 1 and 5 have been reversed) as well as their correlations. Based on the information in Table 4, both high intrinsic religiosity and high extrinsic religiosity (social and personal) are positively correlated with being a market maven.

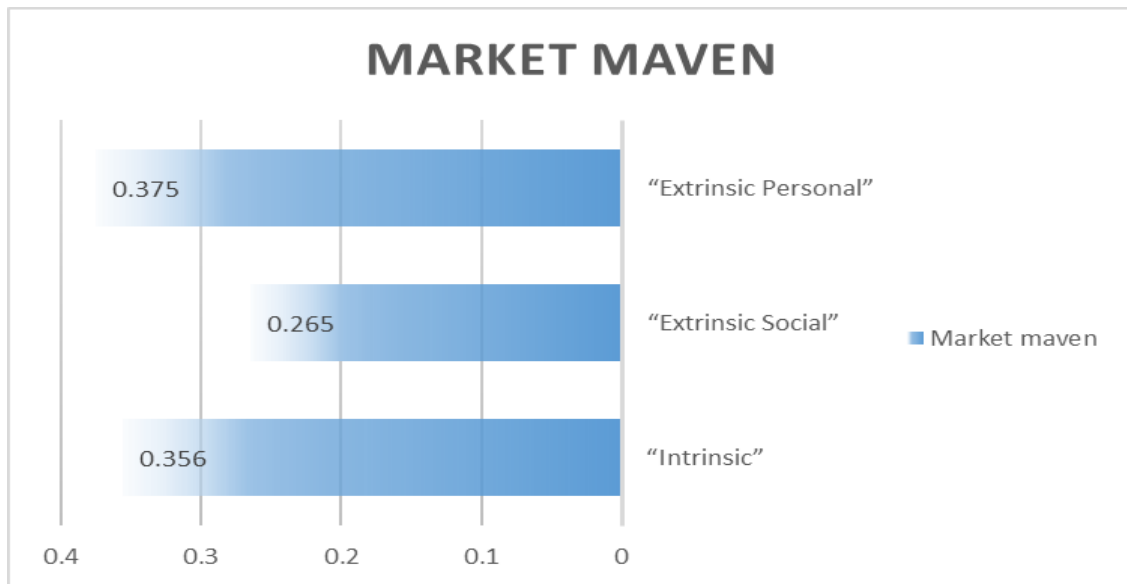
Table 3: Descriptive Measures of I/E-R Questionnaire Three Subscale & Market Maven Scale

Factor	Number of Items	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Intrinsic	6	18.34	5.49	6	30
Extrinsic Social	4	6.18	2.64	4	20
Extrinsic Personal	4	13.0	3.24	4	20
Market maven	6	9.57	2.87	6	30

Table 4: Correlation I/E-R Scale’s and Market Maven.

	Market maven	Intrinsic	Extrinsic Social	Extrinsic Personal
Market maven	1	0.356*	0.265*	0.375*
Intrinsic	0.356*	1		
Extrinsic Social	0.265*	0.363*	1	
Extrinsic Personal	0.375*	0.138*	0.036	1

Figure 1: Religious Orientation vs. Market Maven



The results in Tables 3 and 4 revealed a significant positive association between intrinsic orientation and market maven level ($r = .356$, $p = .026$); as intrinsic religiosity level increases, market maven status also increases. Similarly, the results showed that extrinsic religiosity was positively associated with being a market maven, indicating that the greater the extrinsic social religiosity, the greater the possibility of being a market maven ($r = .265$, $p = .035$). In addition, the greater the extrinsic personal score, the greater the possibility of being a market maven ($r = -.375$, $p = .000$). This finding supports both hypotheses. Figure 1 clarifies the correlation relationship of market mavenism and various aspects of religious orientation.

Discussion, implications, and future research

The results of this study can be stated as follow:

- 1- Through using a preliminary approach to explore the relationship between religious orientation and market mavenism, the researcher was able to establish correlational relationship.
- 2- The findings revealed a positive association relation between intrinsic/extrinsic religiosity orientation and being a market maven.

- 3- The findings are consistent with previous studies that highlight the fact that religious orientation has an effect on many marketing variables and factors.
- 4- Since this type of association never been explored, performing an experiment study is not preferable at this stage. A correlation study was used to expose a potential preliminary association between religious orientation and market mavenism.

Indeed, the results did establish a reasonable association between these two variables (religious orientation and market maven), which opens a new stream of research in this arena. As a result, stronger and more direct results can be obtained by conducting analysis of the causal relationships and perhaps including moderator/mediator factors that may play major roles in advancing our understanding of these concepts.

Through identifying the underpinning mechanism of market mavens, the current research contributes to our basic understanding of religious devotion and the market maven concept. Scholars have previously attempted to understand market mavens using different variables to understand the motivations and factors that may play a role in encouraging a

person to become a market maven. Market mavens are keen to obtain information and be the knower about products and their functions irrespective of purchasing them. Markets involve attitudes and thoughts that are based on diverse understandings, values, and beliefs. This study has extended previous research efforts by addressing the impact of some of the behavioral reinforcements that are based on religiosity on the market maven.

Many studies have shown the differences in the relationships between these aspects in terms of religion, sex, age, interests, class, spending and purchasing habits, and so on. Consumer segmentation categorizes people into numerous clusters that have certain collective similarities. Decent consumer segmentation may help companies to reach out to their target markets more effectively and economically (Chelminski & Coulter, 2002)

People who feel intrinsically religious are willing to gather information on certain products and share it with others. The findings imply that Muslim market mavens in Western countries such as the United States should be eager to search intently for products that are halal certified and share this knowledge with their minority Muslim group. Studying Muslim market mavens as influential segments for WOM is therefore a promising research avenue. Understanding religious market mavens as influential groups will help companies develop comprehensive marketing strategies to target consumers. We need to understand religious market mavens' characteristics and motives in different societies. We also need to know their demographic variables, interests, spending and purchasing habits, and how they may affect market and consumption patterns.

Market mavens are vigorous in disseminating information about the general marketplace via WOM to other consumers; thus, market mavens are very important consumers to target (Elliott & Warfield, 1993; Drumwright & Kamal, 2016). Market managers should understand

what values drive market mavens. For example, market managers should emphasize religious values such as honesty, fairness, and modesty (Metcalf, 2008), and avoid values that contradict them, such as desirability and need for uniqueness, to target market mavens who are religiously oriented. Thus, this study offers insights for firms seeking to take full advantage of the effectiveness of market mavens in supporting their marketing efforts and targets.

Moreover, religiosity can be used as a basis for segmentation of customer groups. The segments may be based on a variety of different levels of religiosity, from less (focusing on uniqueness and individuality) to more religiously-oriented people (emphasizing ideals and collectivist values). Based on the results of this study, we have a better understanding of the motivations of religiously-oriented consumers for being involved in the marketplace, which should allow firms to efficiently communicate with their target markets, and modify marketing communications and efforts to target consumers based on their current needs and according to their values and norms.

Some other research avenues exist for better understanding the religious psychology of market mavens. Identifying other factors, such as self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-identification, may play a role in this relationship and perhaps open new paths of research.

The limitation of this paper is using students as a subject pool. Undergraduate college students is a very specific group of people. The current study investigated the relationship between the level of religious orientation and the degree of being market maven on a sample population of students at a university in Middle East. Therefore, students are usually between 18- to 22-year-old share other qualities, such as a specific socioeconomic background, hobbies, life style, life interests..etc. As result, it is not valid to generalize the results of this paper

using only students' sample from such specific location. Fellow researchers are urged to further investigate other groups using different research methodologies to validate the generalizability of this paper.

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نحو فهم أشمل للعلاقة الإرتباطية بين التوجه الديني و الخبرة السوقية

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المستخلص: تناقش هذه الدراسة التوجهات الدينية ومدى ارتباطها بالخبرة السوقية. أفترض الباحث في هذه الدراسة بأن هناك ارتباط إيجابي بين التوجه الديني (الجوهري والخارجي) للفرد وبين خبرته السوقية. تم استخدام مقياس I-E المعدل لقياس التوجهات الدينية للباحثين (قورسوشو و مكفيرسون عام ١٩٨٧). و تم إستخدام مقياس الباحثين (فبيك و برايس، ١٩٨٩) المكون وذلك لقياس مدى وجود الخبرة التسويقية لدى مجتمع الدراسة و المكون من ستة عناصر. تم بعد ذلك حساب معامل الارتباط اللحظي بيرسون لتقييم العلاقة بين التوجهات الدينية و الخبرة السوقية . حيث كشفت النتائج عن علاقة إيجابية بين التوجه الديني الجوهري والخبرة السوقية. أظهرت النتائج أيضا أن هناك علاقة معنوية بين التوجه الديني الخارجي بكلا مستوييه (الاجتماعي والشخصي) و الخبرة السوقية. ساهمت هذه الدراسة في تأسيس العلاقة بين المتغيرين (التوجهات الدينية) و (الخبرة السوقية) وفتح طريق بحثي جديد للعديد من الدراسات التي يمكن معها قراءة هذين المتغيرين من عدة جوانب بحثية أخرى و إضافة متغيرات محتملة تؤثر بشكل مباشر أو غير مباشر في هذه العلاقة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: توجه ديني ، سوق ، خبرة.