



# Imam's Endorsement for Metaverse Technology: A way to change Customer Satisfaction towards Metaverse Usage

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## Abstract

The implementation of any technology, product, or service is consistently overseen and regulated by the Islamic board in Islamic banking industry. Similarly, the adoption and integration of Metaverse technology must also be subject to the guidance and enforcement of the Islamic board. With the endorsement of Islamic board, the endorsement of Imam is also important for the general public. However, Imam's endorsement for metaverse technology was not explored by the previous studies. Therefore, this study examined the role of Imam's endorsement in shaping the consumer behavior and customer satisfaction towards the use of metaverse technology. A questionnaire was developed for data collection and distributed among the customers of Islamic banking. Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed for data analysis. It is observed that Imam's endorsement has vital importance for the promotion of metaverse technology usage to satisfy the customers through the promotion of trust and image development. These results can help the management of Islamic banking industry to encourage the Imam's endorsement for the implementation of metaverse technology.

## Introduction

Since its independence 73 years ago, Pakistan has seen substantial changes to its banking sector, which is essential to a thriving economy. After Pakistan gained its independence on August 14, 1947, banking operations could begin. Pakistan's banking system has relied heavily on the private sector, which owns around 80% of banking assets. Pakistan is home to both an Islamic banking system and a more traditional financial system (Basheer et al., 2015; Muharam, 2012). Banks that operate in accordance with Islamic law and the Shariah board are said to practice Islamic banking (Muharam, 2012). Instead of seeking to maximize earnings on financial assets by whatever means possible, the major objective of Islamic banking is to offer Riba-free (interest-free) goods and services (Sari, Bahari, & Hamat, 2016).

The concept of value pertains to the degree of worthiness of a service in relation to its corresponding price, while quality pertains to the extent to which the service meets the requirements of the consumer. Satisfaction, on the other hand, refers to the extent to which the wants and needs of the consumer are fulfilled by the business (Adapa & Roy, 2017; Hammouda & Junoh, 2019; Hsu, 2019; Hume & Sullivan Mort, 2010; Mohammed & Rashid, 2018). The banking industry, being founded on trust, places significant emphasis on customer satisfaction. The satisfaction of customers is a metric that can be utilized to gauge the worth of a banking framework, and contemporary studies have revealed that it may also shed light on the framework's influence on a firm's financial

performance. In the realm of banking, there exists a positive correlation between customer satisfaction and financial performance (Loveman, 1998; Minta & Stephen, 2017; Na'ami & Gholampoor, 2017), whereby institutions with higher levels of customer satisfaction demonstrate superior earnings compared to those with lower levels of customer satisfaction.

In order to thrive in today's cutthroat banking sector, every bank must prioritize customer satisfaction and the development of marketing tactics aimed at drawing in a growing number of clients (Ahmed et al., 2017; De Leon, Atienza, & Susilo, 2020). The purpose of this research is to identify the discrepancy between consumers' actual and predicted levels of satisfaction with their banking experiences while using metaverse technology. The utilization intention of Islamic banking has been observed to be positively and significantly influenced by factors such as the reputation of the bank, the performance of Islamic banking, and adherence to religious beliefs, values, lifestyle trends, and banking conduct (Mahdzan, Zainudin, & Au, 2017; Shaikh et al., 2020). The propensity of clients to employ Islamic banks is impacted by their assessments of risk and intricacy. The results indicate a deficiency in information among consumers in Pakistan. This research endeavor has the potential to assist scholars and professionals in devising tactics that effectively draw in fresh clientele. The present research, which is among the pioneering studies of its kind in Pakistan, utilizes Roger's diffusion of innovation theory to decode the inclinations of consumers towards transitioning to Islamic banking. The financial system of a nation is essential to its

growth and prosperity.

Islam adheres to the Shariah principles of finance. To achieve the aims of the Islamic economy, Islamic banking functions only in conformity with Islamic law and regulations (Sari et al., 2016), however, it requires the implementation of metaverse technology. Islamic banking and conventional banking in Pakistan compete for consumers by providing a wide variety of products other than those based on interest. A riba-free and equity-based economy is necessary to realize the benefits of the Islamic financial system and ensure the survival of humanity, according to the literature (Adzimatunur & Gloriman Manalu, 2021; Shaikh et al., 2020). Due to its increasing assets, investments, and deposits, Islamic banking is attracting more attention than conventional banking at the moment. Few studies have examined how customers rate the offerings of Islamic financial institutions, however, metaverse is not studied in relation to the customer satisfaction. To differentiate itself from the competition and keep customers coming back, banks must provide high-quality service. Better service led to greater customer satisfaction, which in turn led to less loss of customers over time. Imam's approval for use of metaverse technology plays an important role in changing customer behavior towards Islamic banking products and increasing customer satisfaction. Therefore, this study examined the role of Imam's endorsement in shaping the consumer behavior and customer satisfaction towards the use of metaverse technology.

### Literature Review

Consumer-oriented product through metaverse technology and service offerings frequently underline the significance of customer positive behavior towards metaverse use to the success of various organizations. However, the aforementioned scholars ignored empirical research on trust, religious convictions, and Islamic banks' attitudes on financial transactions (Kahf, 2007). Furthermore, the present Covid-19 outbreak raises certain worries about the expansion of Islamic banks. For example, the items given by Islamic banks are established on buy-and-sell contracts and alliances. It is vital for Islamic banks to explore how customer happiness and religious convictions are reflected in trust and positive behavior towards metaverse use. To fill these knowledge gaps, the current study assessed consumers' positive behavior towards metaverse use to Islamic banks based on their degrees of satisfaction, religious responsibilities, trust, and general attitude towards doing business with Islamic financial institutions. To that aim, the current study sought to investigate how elements such as customer happiness, viewpoint, trust, and religious duty all influence patronage of Islamic banks. The domain of Islamic finance has experienced substantial expansion and garnered global acknowledgement in recent times. The increasing demand for ethical financial options has led to the rise in the popularity of Islamic banking solution (Izhara & Asutay, 2010).

### Customer Satisfaction Towards Metaverse Technology Usage

In an attempt to increase customer satisfaction and positive behavior towards metaverse use, many banks are making strides to better the excellence of the services and products they provide. This allows them to achieve their desired outcome. Loyal customers are more valuable to banks than one-time customers. Customers who have been banking with the same institution for two or more years are more valuable to the bank than those who have been with the same institution for a year or less. This is why long-standing customers often have larger balances than fresh ones.

The majority of customers prefer to interact with tellers or other bank workers in person (Agolla, Makara, & Monametsi, 2018; Farouk et al., 2016). Their survey found that 87% of customers still use the cashier, 83% still use the ATM, and just three percent still utilize online banking. This survey suggests that in order to compete successfully, banks need to hire a management team with a high level of expertise and professionalism. This is due to the fact that attracting and retaining clients requires constant one-on-one interaction. Literature investigated the level of familiarity Singaporeans have with the different services as well as products accessible by Islamic banks in a study released in 1997. They reasoned that the customer probably doesn't even realize they have Islamic banks services.

Most of Islamic bank customers are satisfied with Islamic banks' services (Amin & Isa, 2008). Many customers of Islamic banks have complained about the astronomical fees charged for various services. Religious considerations, rather than financial ones, drove the decision to use an Islamic financial institution. Most consumers are aware of the standard services provided by Islamic banks, but few understand the complexities of the Islamic financial system (Doraisamy, Shanmugam, & Raman, 2011). However, the satisfaction related to the metaverse technology implementation is most important to investigate.

### The Role of The Imam's Approval in Changing Customer Behavior Towards Islamic Banking Products

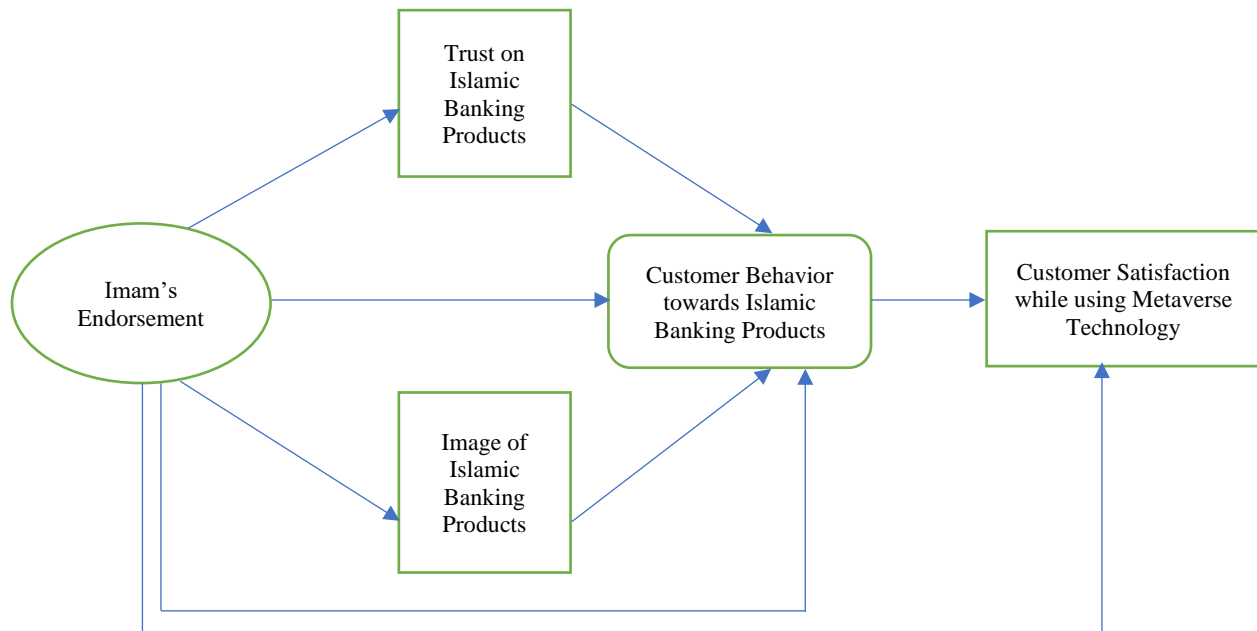
Imam holds a position of high esteem and confidence within the Muslim identity due to their religious expertise and dependability. Islamic financial products receive significant influence when supported by them. Imam being the spiritual leaders of the Islamic faith, possess a profound understanding of the doctrine and principles of the religion. Customers can be assured that the products they acquire from Islamic financial institutions have been duly certified to comply with the assumptions of Sharia law (Amin & Isa, 2008; Basheer et al., 2015; Hoque, Hashim, & Azmi, 2018).

Islamic banking products and use of metaverse are designed in compliance with Islamic principles that promote fairness, transparency, and integrity in financial transactions. Islamic banking is considered a feasible substitute for conventional banking due to the support of the Imams (Muharam, 2012). The Imam's possess the significant conviction within their

individual communities, thereby permitting community members to exert a considerable impact on the cultural conventions and customs. It has the ability to increase Islamic banking (Hussain, Shahmoradi, & Turk, 2016).

Concentrating on these research gaps is of utmost worth for both the scholars as well as the Islamic banking industry. This research try has the potential to address the existing knowledge gaps by requiring

empirical evidence, thereby attractive comprehension of effect of imam endorsement on consumer behavior as well as contentment while using metaverse. The exploitation of evidence-based perceptions has possibility to exert influence on marketing the strategies, product development, as well as customer engagement interests within Islamic banking industry (Anouze, Alamro, & Awwad, 2019). Figure 2 draw attention to the structure of the study.



**Figure 1:** Model of the Study showing Imam's Endorsement a way to change Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products and Customer Satisfaction.

### Customer Satisfaction and Through Metaverse Technology in Islamic Banking

The metaverse technology has great importance in banking (Basheer et al., 2015; De Leon et al., 2020; Irawati et al., 2019; Shaikh et al., 2020). Similar to conventional banks, Islamic financial institutions endeavor to cater to the varied banking needs of their clientele. The primary differentiation between the two banking systems lies in the fact that Islamic banking is governed by Islamic principles and doctrines as outlined in Shariah, which is Islamic law (Zouari & Abdelhedi, 2021).

The importance of banking through metaverse technology is likely to rise as the economy develops. Banks, and Islamic banks in particular, face stiff competition (Ahmed, Rasheed, & Talha, 2019; Joseph, McClure, & Joseph, 1999), meaning they must constantly evaluate their goods in light of clients' ever-evolving expectations for the quality of services they provide. Islamic banks, like their more mainstream counterparts, are committed to providing a full range of banking services to their clients. The main difference between conventional banking and Islamic banking is that the latter is based on Islamic law (Shariah), which is based on Islamic beliefs and teachings.

Optimizing customer service departments may increase client retention, bring in more revenue, and open up new markets for firms. Numerous research has examined the connection

between through metaverse technology and customer satisfaction in Islamic banking, and although some have utilized modified versions of the quality. They agreed on four quality standards: demonstrated, interpersonal skill, electronic banking, and compassion. They did, however, emphasize that just two dimensions—empathy and human skills—were relevant in determining consumer happiness. Al-Tamimi and Al-Amiri (2003) investigated through metaverse technology trends across Islamic banks in the United Arab Emirates. Amin and Isa (2008) investigated the connection between customers' perceptions of through metaverse technology and their level of satisfaction with Islamic banks in Malaysia. They included what they called "compliance" as a new element under "through metaverse technology" because of Islamic banking's tenets. The study's authors draw a connection between customer happiness and the quality of Islamic banks' service offerings and propose that the six criteria should become the standard for Islamic banking through metaverse technology (Daniel & Berinyuy, 2010).

Also, credit should be given where credit is due, and deserve a lot of credit for inventing new things (Compliance, Assurance, Reliability, Tangibles, Empathy, and Responsiveness), an innovative way for measuring through metaverse technology in Islamic banks (Khamis & AbRashid, 2018). A new set of through metaverse technology criteria was

developed to account for Islamic banking sector aspects using the five dimensions suggested by [Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry \(1988\)](#), [Parasuraman, Berry and Zeithaml \(1991\)](#), and [Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry \(1985\)](#). To describe the Islamic bank's ability to comply with Islamic law and conduct business in accordance with Islamic banking principles, a sixth dimension, "compliance with Islamic law," must be added to the current five-dimensional notion ([Abdullrahim, 2010](#)). The problem stems mainly from the fact that the study's sample was restricted to clients of a single financial institution. [Ali et al. \(2009\)](#) as well as [Janahi and Al Mubarak \(2017\)](#), are only two examples of later researchers who choose to test the applicability in a wide range of Islamic banks across a number of countries ([Abdullrahim, 2010](#)).

### Role of Imam in Islamic Banking

Due to the competence to have an impact on the consumer behavior and satisfaction, function of imams in the Islamic banking has drawn a most significant academic attention. It has valuable potential to enhance the banking in relation to the Islamic values. Islamic banking is constructed on the Sharia principles, which spotlight moral and ethical considerations in business dealings ([Alwi, Parmitasari, & Syariati, 2021](#)). Imams are controlling individuals who have power to influence cultural norms and attitudes regarding Islamic finance. In the society, Imam has major respected due to his Islamic knowledge. Imams have the power to raise the knowledge of and foster promising impressions of advantages of Islamic banking via their sermons, lectures, and teachings. Thus, the contribution of Imam is very critical in Pakistan. Their support reaffirms how compatible Islamic banking products are with moral principles, which may in turn affect consumer preferences and choices ([Alwi et al., 2021](#)).

Number of other studies have looked at how consumer behavior ([Asiegbu, Powei, & Iruka, 2012](#); [Buerke et al., 2017](#); [Cronin Jr, Brady, & Hult, 2000](#); [Han, 2021](#); [Wee et al., 2014](#)) in the viewpoint of the Islamic banking is impacted by Imams' support. On the other hand, several variables affect efficacy of Imams' endorsement in the Islamic banking industry. The Imam's competence as well as reputation are key factors in

deciding how they will impact consumer behavior. Imam has great in the development of behavior of the consumer. Imams who are well-versed in the Islamic banking and finance are more likely to be regarded as reliable sources of information. The endorsement's compatibility with the different religious ideals and other principles also plays the crucial part ([Kahf, 2007](#); [Mahdzan et al., 2017](#); [Shaikh et al., 2020](#)).

### Methodology

The current study is based on customer satisfaction for metaverse usage of different banks in Pakistan. This study collected data from different branches in different cities of each bank. Therefore, this study got the average number of customers of each bank and multiply it by total branches of its bank, finally distributed the questionnaire to 400 customers of these banks. 222 valid responses were used for data analysis. The survey instrument was put through extensive validation testing to verify its validity and reliability. The survey's accuracy, clarity, and thoroughness were evaluated by a panel of experts drawn from academia and the business world. Their input was used to make any required changes to the survey to improve its quality and better capture the study goals.

### Operationalization

#### Trust

Trust is a multifaceted and dynamic term ([Flavián, Guinalú, & Torres, 2005](#)). In the context of Islamic banking, trust is described as a moral requirement of every personal in the discharge of his or her societal duties. Trust is highly valued in Islam, and being trustworthy is regarded as a mandatory personality quality ([Mirakhor & Zaidi, 2007](#)). Thus, the philosophical measurement of trust in the Islamic banking arrangement can be viewed as a sign of reliability, honesty, equity, equivalence among human beings, and ethical values that are recognized to recover the business association between banks as well as customers. Likewise, ethics and adherence to Islamic principles (Shariah) are highly valued and maintained as foundations in Islamic governance. Scale items are given in [Table 1](#).

**Table 1:** Scale Items of Trust.

<b>Trust on Islamic Banking Products</b>	1	"Islamic banks are truly concerned with Islamic principles.
	2	I believe that deposits in Islamic banks are safe.
	3	I believe the products and services offered are based on Islamic Shariah."

### Image

Image is a mindset that considers a set of product attributes. Image, from the perspective of a business, is the set of relationships that come to thinking when clients hear the name of a company ([Flavián, Torres, & Guinalú, 2004](#); [Nguyen & Leclerc, 2011](#)). [Kennedy \(1977\)](#) defined image as having two primary elements: functional as well as emotional. The functional element refers to physical measurements that can be easily defined and quantified, whereas the emotional element

refers to psychological components shown through individual capabilities and attitudes toward the firm. Most studies believe that image is the outcome of a procedure; hence, corporate image is the outcome of an cumulative process in which clients compare and contrast the many features of organizations. Image is considered as a filter in terms of a customer's sense of quality, according to [Kang and James \(2004\)](#). Scale items are given in [Table 2](#).

**Table 2:** Scale items of Image.

<b>Image of Islamic Banking Products</b>	1	“Islamic banks have competent and efficient staff reputation.
	2	Islamic banks image is good.
	3	Islamic banks offer attractive products and services.”

**Customer Satisfaction**

Oliver (1997) defined customer satisfaction as the complete fulfillment of the client's expectations of the products and services. Customers are satisfied if the perceived performance meets or exceeds their expectations of services. They are unsatisfied if it does not. Consumers establish expectations of product performance before to purchase, according to this hypothesis. These expectancies are formed from previous experience with the services, other marketing incentives, and the consumer's existing attitudes and assurance. To operationalize satisfaction, the literature has adopted two approaches. The first considers consumer happiness to be a transactional judgment (Manyanga, 2022). This viewpoint

refers to customers' reactions to a specific product or service experience (Mary Jo & Amy, 1994). The opposite operationalization considers consumer happiness and discontent to be cumulative. This viewpoint is formed as a result of satisfied and dissatisfied experiences with a product or service over time (Zeithaml, Berry, & Parasuraman, 1993). Customer satisfaction is defined in this study as an overall customer appraisal of satisfaction and unhappiness with service contacts with the bank over time (Fornell et al., 1996; Manyanga, 2022). Levesque and McDougall (1996) stated that the bank's ease and effectiveness were two crucial aspects that were likely to induce a customer's overall satisfaction levels. Scale items are given in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Scale Items of Customer Satisfaction in Metaverse Use.

<b>Customer Satisfaction</b>	1	“I am satisfied with employee's response and prompt services through metaverse technology.
	2	I am satisfied with financial services advice through metaverse technology.
	3	I am satisfied with products and services provided by my bank through metaverse technology.”

**Customer Behavior**

Customer behavior relates to how people cooperate with products along with services, involving their outcomes, behaviors, and inclinations. It considers factors such as opinions, loyalty, and expenditure habits. Previous studies also highlighted that customer behavior denotes to how people

engage with products or services (Keh & Xie, 2009; Rather et al., 2019; Sürücü et al., 2019; Wall & Berry, 2007; Yi, Nataraajan, & Gong, 2011; Zeelenberg & Pieters, 2004). Additionally, scale items of customer behavior are reported in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Scale Items of Customer Behavior.

<b>Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products</b>	1	“Understanding Islamic values and the existence of religious learning in the family.
	2	Influence of religious communities.
	3	References and motivations from religious friends or co-workers.
	4	Upholding Islamic values as a cultured person.
	5	The belief that Islamic banks bring prosperity to society.
	6	The belief that Islamic banks are fairer than other financial institutions.
	7	The belief that Islamic banks are free from forbidden things, such as usury, Gharar and Maysir.
	8	Moving to an Islamic bank is a process to become a more obedient Muslim.
	9	The learning process to become someone more religious.
	10	The relevance of Islamic bank products and services to consumer needs.
	11	A lifestyle based on Islamic principles.
	12	Islamic banking products, and services that reflect personality as a Muslim.
	13	Age factor that makes a person more religious.
	14	Product and services of Islamic banks according to economic circumstances.
	15	Islamic bank required for work reasons such as payment of salaries.”

**Imam Endorsement**

A religious leader in Islam is referred to as an imam. It is widely used by Muslims to refer a mosque supervisor who is in charge of the worship service and is often regarded as a reliable source of religious instruction among Muslims. Adherent Muslims always seek the advice of Imams when they have

issues regarding whether or not a product or service is Shariah-compliant. In this regard, the approval of imams is crucial, since their approvals of Shariah conformity with the product or service have a great impact on Muslims' recognition of them. The scale items are given in Table 5.

**Table 5:** Scale Items of Imam Endorsement.

<b>Imam Endorsement</b>	1	The acceptance of the provided financial facilities is influenced by the Imam's opinion.
	2	Before I select any banking facilities, I need the Imam's approval.
	3	The support of the Imam for financing facilities gives me confidence that the product was developed in accordance with Shariah.
	4	I require confirmation from the imam regarding the Shariah features in the financial facilities.



## Findings

PLS is used for data analysis because it is very effective and beneficial for assessing data such as standard deviation, correlation, and coefficients. Furthermore, the PLS technique was used to

estimate loadings, path coefficients, and significant levels, followed by bootstrapping procedures. The measurement model was evaluated using the PLS algorithm (Ali & Kim, 2015; Cheah et al., 2018; Fattah & Setyadi, 2019; Ringle, Sarstedt, & Straub, 2012). Data statistics are reported in Table 6.

**Table 6:** Data Statistics.

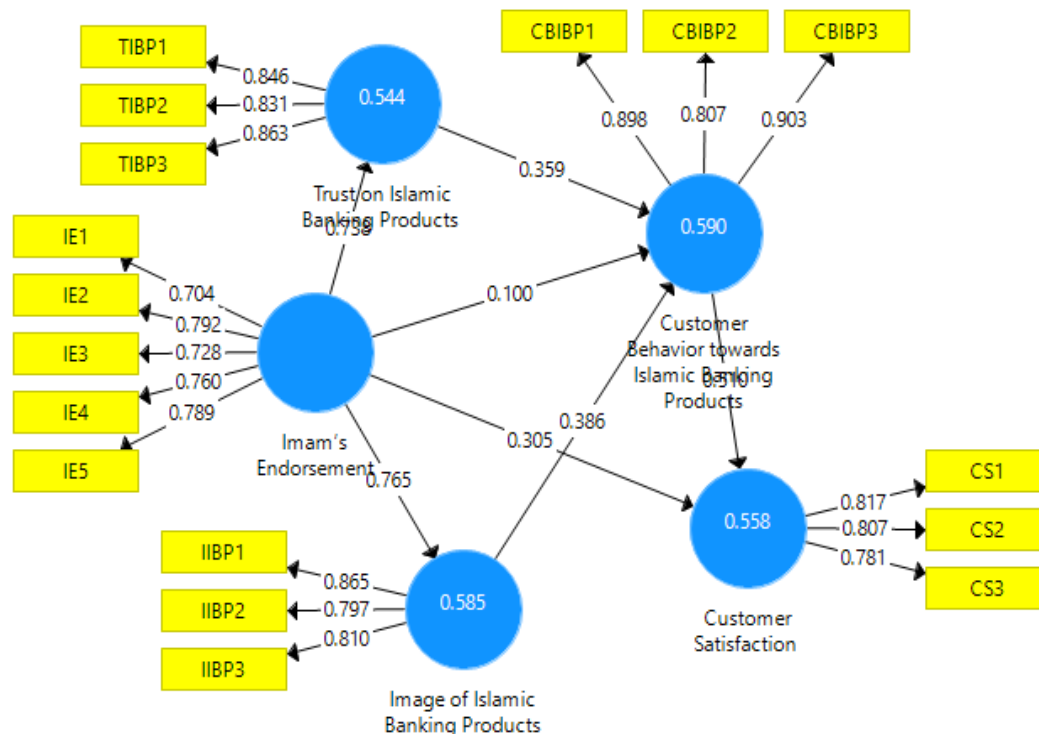
	No.	Missing	Mean	Median	Min	Max	Standard Deviation	Excess Kurtosis	Skewness
IE1	1	0	2.039	2	1	5	0.957	0.607	0.958
IE2	2	0	2.094	2	1	5	1.228	0.346	1.144
IE3	3	0	1.878	2	1	5	0.935	0.876	1.111
IE4	4	0	1.828	2	1	5	0.9	1.122	1.133
IE5	5	0	2.133	2	1	5	1.19	0.627	1.176
TIBP1	6	0	2.094	2	1	5	1.129	0.781	1.168
TIBP2	7	0	1.85	2	1	5	0.969	2.847	1.637
TIBP3	8	0	1.883	2	1	5	1.018	1.426	1.32
IIBP1	9	0	2.033	2	1	5	0.994	1.675	1.268
IIBP2	10	0	2.017	2	1	5	1.147	0.937	1.28
IIBP3	11	0	2.156	2	1	5	1.29	0.237	1.146
CBIBP1	12	0	2.022	2	1	5	1.159	0.509	1.121
CBIBP2	13	0	1.95	2	1	5	1.071	0.758	1.139
CBIBP3	14	0	2.022	2	1	5	1.054	1.156	1.248
CS1	15	0	1.9	2	1	5	0.978	1.351	1.28
CS2	16	0	2.094	2	1	5	1.104	0.559	1.085
CS3	17	0	1.933	2	1	5	1.093	0.627	1.188

**Note:** EI = Emam Endorsement; CS = Customer Satisfaction; CBIBP = Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products; TIBP = Trust on Islamic Banking Products; IIBP = Image of Islamic Banking Products

## Results of Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model was tested, and convergent validity was measured using loadings, average variance extracted (AVE), and composite reliability (CR). Figure 2 depicts the measurement

model. Table 7 shows that the majority of the factor loadings surpassed the suggested value of 0.60 for all items, and all of the composite reliability (CR) values were greater than the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2016).



**Figure 2:** PLS Measurement Model.

**Note:** EI = Emam Endorsement; CS = Customer Satisfaction; CBIBP = Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products; TIBP = Trust on Islamic Banking Products; IIBP = Image of Islamic Banking Products

**Table 7:** Factor Loadings.

	Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products	Customer Satisfaction	Image of Islamic Banking Products	Imam's Endorsement	Trust on Islamic Banking Products
CBIBP1	0.898				
CBIBP2	0.807				
CBIBP3	0.903				
CS1		0.817			
CS2		0.807			
CS3		0.781			
IE1				0.704	
IE2				0.792	
IE3				0.728	
IE4				0.76	
IE5				0.789	
IIBP1			0.865		
IIBP2			0.797		
IIBP3			0.81		
TIBP1					0.846
TIBP2					0.831
TIBP3					0.863

Note: EI = Emam Endorsement; CS = Customer Satisfaction; CBIBP = Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products; TIBP = Trust on Islamic Banking Products; IIBP = Image of Islamic Banking Products

Reliability of variables was examined through CR and alpha. The values of CR and alpha given in Table 8 highlighted that all values are above 0.7. The values above 0.7 confirmed the reliability of all variables. Furthermore, AVE was used to examine the convergent validity. The AVE values should be higher than 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010; Hair Jr, Howard, & Nitzl, 2020; Shair et al., 2021). All values of AVE in Table 8 are higher than 0.5 which confirmed the convergent validity which

was used to check the correlation among the scale items of each variable (Alarcón, Sánchez, & De Olavide, 2015; Anis et al., 2020; Cheah et al., 2018; Cowin et al., 2008). Additionally, discriminant validity was used to examine the correlation of scale items of different variables (Alarcón et al., 2015; Hafkesbrink, 2021; Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). It is shown in Table 9 by using Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations (HTMT).

**Table 8:** Alpha, CR and AVE.

	Alpha	rho_A	CR	AVE
Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products	0.839	0.843	0.904	0.758
Customer Satisfaction	0.723	0.727	0.843	0.642
Image of Islamic Banking Products	0.764	0.764	0.864	0.68
Imam's Endorsement	0.812	0.816	0.869	0.571
Trust on Islamic Banking Products	0.803	0.803	0.884	0.717

**Table 9:** Discriminant Validity.

	Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products	Customer Satisfaction	Image of Islamic Banking Products	Imam's Endorsement	Trust on Islamic Banking Products
Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products					
Customer Satisfaction	0.811				
Image of Islamic Banking Products	0.882	0.841			
Imam's Endorsement	0.79	0.832	0.81		
Trust on Islamic Banking Products	0.848	0.76	0.876	0.708	

### The PLS-SEM Results (The Structural Model)

Following the evaluation of the measurement model (see Figure 3), the PLS-SEM was performed. The relevance of the model was determined using path coefficients, t-values, and standard errors. Using Smart PLS 3, the bootstrapping method was utilized to test the hypotheses for the main and indirect effects. According to results, customer behavior towards Islamic banking products -> customer satisfaction is significant (B=0.51, T=4.262). Image of Islamic Banking Products -> Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products is significant (B=0.386, T=3.273). Imam's Endorsement -> Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products is not

significant (B=0.1, T=0.886). Imam's Endorsement -> Customer Satisfaction is significant (B=0.305, T=2.523). Imam's Endorsement -> Image of Islamic Banking Products is significant (B=0.765 T=16.973). Imam's Endorsement -> Trust on Islamic Banking Products is significant (B=0.738, T=14.233). Trust on Islamic Banking Products -> Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products is significant (B=0.359, T=4.015). These results are reported in Table 10. All the indirect effects are reported in Table 11 which are significant, except one indirect effect (Imam's Endorsement -> Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products -> Customer Satisfaction).

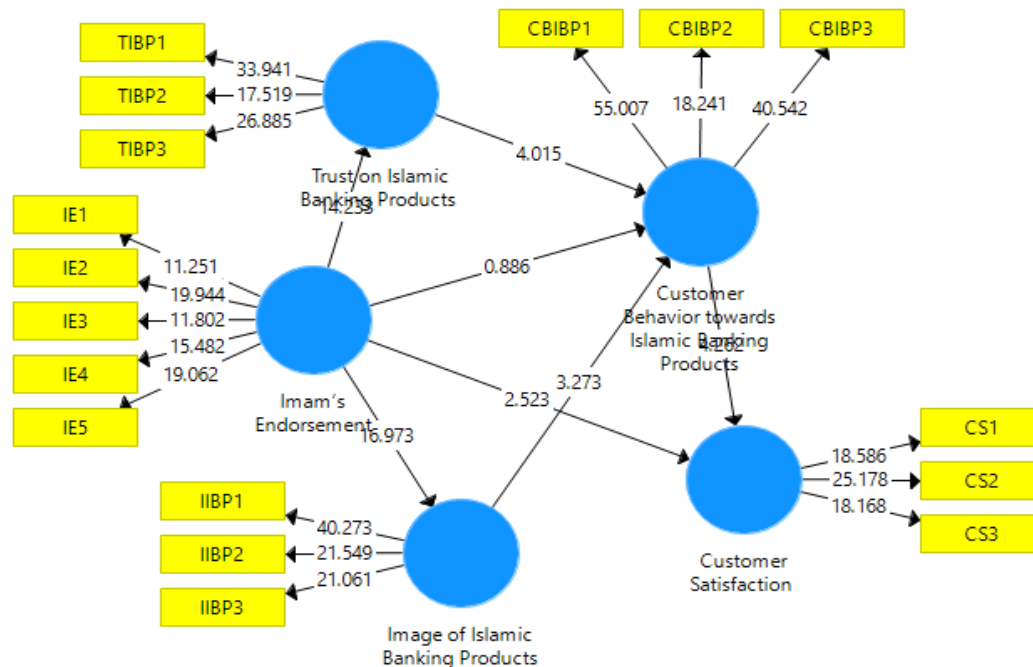


Figure 3: PLS Structural Model.

**Note:** EI = Emam Endorsement: CS = Customer Satisfaction: CBIBP = Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products: TIBP = Trust on Islamic Banking Products: IIBP = Image of Islamic Banking Products

Table 10: Direct Effect.

	Beta	Mean	SD	T Statistics	P Values
Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products -> Customer Satisfaction	0.51	0.497	0.12	4.262	0
Image of Islamic Banking Products -> Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products	0.386	0.405	0.118	3.273	0.001
Imam's Endorsement -> Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products	0.1	0.081	0.112	0.886	0.376
Imam's Endorsement -> Customer Satisfaction	0.305	0.314	0.121	2.523	0.012
Imam's Endorsement -> Image of Islamic Banking Products	0.765	0.768	0.045	16.973	0
Imam's Endorsement -> Trust on Islamic Banking Products	0.738	0.736	0.052	14.233	0
Trust on Islamic Banking Products -> Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products	0.359	0.358	0.089	4.015	0

Table 11: Indirect Effect.

	Beta	Mean	SD	T Statistics	P Values
Imam's Endorsement -> Image of Islamic Banking Products -> Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products	0.295	0.312	0.096	3.089	0.002
Imam's Endorsement -> Trust on Islamic Banking Products -> Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products	0.135	0.128	0.038	3.584	0
Imam's Endorsement -> Trust on Islamic Banking Products -> Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products	0.265	0.264	0.072	3.694	0
Trust on Islamic Banking Products -> Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products -> Customer Satisfaction	0.183	0.173	0.049	3.761	0
Image of Islamic Banking Products -> Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products -> Customer Satisfaction	0.197	0.209	0.092	2.15	0.032
Imam's Endorsement -> Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products -> Customer Satisfaction	0.051	0.035	0.055	0.924	0.356
Imam's Endorsement -> Image of Islamic Banking Products -> Customer Behavior towards Islamic Banking Products -> Customer Satisfaction	0.151	0.16	0.071	2.128	0.034

## Discussion and Conclusion

This study examined the role of Imam's endorsement in shaping the consumer behavior and customer satisfaction towards the use of metaverse technology. Previous research has attempted to identify key factors of consumer satisfaction (Cadotte, Woodruff, & Jenkins, 1987; Celuch & Robinson, 2016; El-Adly & Eid, 2016; Ong, Nguyen, & Syed Alwi,

2017; Park et al., 2019; Popp & Woratschek, 2017; Saputra & Margaretha, 2020; Zarei, Asgarnezhad Nuri, & Noroozi, 2019). However, previous studies have been done in a variety of methods, such as categorizing consumers into smaller groups based on age or the amount of time a client interacts with their bank in a month. The conclusions and findings of such research are thought to have the same consequence, emphasizing the significance of customer happiness. Previous



study on the role of religious motivation in Islamic banking has shown it to be insignificant (Ali et al., 2018; Kahf, 2007; Mahdzan et al., 2017; Shaikh et al., 2020; Wulandari et al., 2016). Some study, however, has connected religious responsibility to individual actions and outlooks. The literature has contradictory conclusions about the influence of religious devotion on positive behavior towards metaverse use, and there has been little investigation into this link. Despite the fact that religious responsibility is widely recognized as a substantial effect on customer attitude and behavior in general, few studies have looked at it as a positive behavior towards metaverse use predictor in Islamic banking. Furthermore, most of the current literature on customer positive behavior towards metaverse use in Islamic financial institutions focuses on quality and customer satisfaction as predictors of client positive behavior towards metaverse use. Furthermore, past research does not explain or highlight which underlying elements are thought to be the most significant, or why one component may have a greater influence on customer satisfaction than another (Adapa & Roy, 2017; Cheng et al., 2017; Hammouda & Junoh, 2019; Hsu, 2019; Iacobucci, Grayson, & Ostrom, 1994; Mohammed & Rashid, 2018; Zeelenberg & Pieters, 2004). Earlier studies focused on regular banks in various nations, which are regarded to have a different business strategy than cooperative banks and how the organization interacts with its consumers (Anouze et al., 2019).

The Imam's recommendation has greater weight when it is regarded as reliable and informed. The support becomes more convincing while using metaverse technology and real when it is in line with Islamic teachings. Its impact is further promoted by the endorsement's availability, consistency, and the Imam's social power in the region (Islahi & Ausaf, 2010). The credibility as well as expertise of the imam, the endorsement's constancy with Islamic principles, its accessibility and frequency, and imam's social influence within community are all factors that affect how effective an imam's endorsement in Islamic banking works. Islamic banking organizations may adjust client behavior toward their products along with maximize the authority of Imam's support by being aware of these groups (Islahi & Ausaf, 2010).

The agreement between Imam's support and Islamic beliefs is another fundamental consideration. Customers evaluate how well the endorsement adheres to Islamic principles. It has the greater impact on the client behavior toward Islamic banking products when the endorsement is perceived as more genuine and aligned with Islamic values and practices. The availability and consistency of the Imam's approval also contribute greatly to its effectiveness. According to research, frequent contact with the Imam and exposure to their endorsement help to shape consumer behavior. Customers are more likely to be convinced to use Islamic banking products if they often hear the Imam's support and have constant access to them (Ahmed et al., 2019;

Din et al., 2019; Hoque et al., 2018). This study proved that imam has positive role in customer satisfaction while using metaverse technology. Imam endorsement effect positively on trust and image of bank shape the customer behavior leading to customer satisfaction while using metaverse technology.

### Managerial Implications

There are significant implications for both practitioners and academics about the role of Imams in Islamic banking. Islamic banking organizations may get advantage from the impact of Imams by working with them to create educational programs, public awareness campaigns, and neighborhood gatherings. They may strengthen consumer understanding, trust, and involvement in Islamic banking by doing this. In conclusion, imams have a crucial role in Islamic banking in influencing client behavior and advancing the client contentment. Given their position of authority and trust within the Muslim population, their endorsement is a convincing instrument for the influencing people's financial choices. The development as well as consumer adoption of Islamic banking products may be aided by an understanding of and exploitation of the role of Imams in Pakistan.

### Future Directions

This study has few future directions for the researchers which are based on the limitations of the study. Future research should investigate the precise procedures by which imams' endorsements influence consumer behavior, as well as methods to maximize their involvement in promoting Islamic banking products. Imam endorsement for metaverse use and benefits should be further explored by using qualitative study. Because the interviews can provide better identification of the phenomenon. Additionally, this study only selected the banking industry, future study should consider all other financial institutions because metaverse technology is introducing in various other financial institutions plus banking sector. Future studies may further add to the understanding of the impact of the Imam's endorsement in the world of Islamic banking and improve client satisfaction by recognizing these constraints and building on the knowledge acquired.

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### CRediT Authorship Contribution Statement

Hafiz Muhammad Shakir Siddique: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Funding acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Resources, Software, Supervision, Validation, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

### Declaration of Competing Interest

The author affirms that there are no financial or non-financial interests influencing this study.

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I affirm that this work did not receive funding from any external parties.

## Ethical Statement

The study complied with ethical standards, and no ethical approval was sought since no human biological samples were involved.

## Data Availability Statement

Data related to this study can be obtained from the corresponding author through a reasonable request.

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