



CONTRACT TRANSPARENCY, SHARIA COMPLIANCE, AND BUSINESS SUPPORT AS DRIVERS OF MICRO-ENTREPRENEUR SATISFACTION IN INDONESIAN ISLAMIC BANKING

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<p>Info Article</p> <p>Received : 10 Maret 2026</p> <p>Revised : 07 April 2026</p> <p>Accepted : 01 Mei 2026</p> <p>Publication : 30 Mei 2026</p> <hr/> <p>Keywords: <i>Business Assistance, Sharia Compliance, Micro Entrepreneur Satisfaction, Contract Transparency.</i></p> <p>Kata Kunci: Bantuan Bisnis, Kepatuhan Syariah, Kepuasan Pengusaha Mikro, Transparansi Kontrak</p> <hr/> <p>Licensed Under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License</p> 	<p>Abstract: <i>This study aims to analyze the impact of integrating contract transparency, authentic Sharia compliance, and business assistance programs on the satisfaction levels of micro-entrepreneurs in the Indonesian Sharia banking sector. Utilizing a deep thematic library research method, this analysis synthesizes empirical data from banking performance reports and literature to evaluate the effectiveness of services for the micro-sector. The research results indicate that contract transparency significantly reduces information asymmetry, while Sharia compliance acts as an ethical filter that builds spiritual loyalty. Business assistance programs, particularly those integrating Islamic leadership values, are proven to be catalysts for scaling up micro-enterprises. The synergy of these three factors, supported by fintech and blockchain innovations, creates a sustainable financial inclusion model. The implications of this study emphasize the importance for Sharia financial institutions to shift from being mere capital providers to strategic partners in developing an inclusive and equitable national halal ecosystem.</i></p> <p>Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh integrasi transparansi kontrak, kepatuhan syariah autentik, dan program bantuan bisnis terhadap tingkat kepuasan pengusaha mikro di sektor perbankan syariah Indonesia. Menggunakan metode penelitian pustaka tematik mendalam, analisis ini menyintesis data empiris dari laporan kinerja perbankan serta literatur untuk mengevaluasi efektivitas layanan bagi sektor mikro. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa transparansi kontrak secara signifikan mengurangi <i>asimetri</i> informasi, sementara kepatuhan syariah bertindak sebagai filter etis yang membangun loyalitas spiritual. Program bantuan bisnis, terutama yang mengintegrasikan nilai kepemimpinan Islam, terbukti menjadi katalisator bagi peningkatan skala usaha pengusaha mikro. Sinergi ketiga faktor ini, didukung oleh inovasi teknologi keuangan (<i>fintech</i>) dan <i>blockchain</i>, menciptakan model inklusi keuangan yang berkelanjutan. Implikasi dari studi ini menekankan pentingnya bagi lembaga keuangan syariah untuk beralih dari sekadar penyedia modal menuju mitra strategis dalam pengembangan ekosistem halal nasional yang inklusif dan berkeadilan</p>
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INTRODUCTION

The Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector plays a crucial role as the backbone of national economic stability in Indonesia, considering its contribution to economic resilience (Rokhlinasari et al., 2025). This social fact underscores the importance of the role of financial institutions as intermediaries in providing liquidity that is not only affordable but also in line with the moral values of the Muslim majority society. However, amidst this economic dominance, micro-entrepreneurs are often faced with structural challenges in the form of limited access to formal capital and low financial literacy which hinders them from moving up a class (Al-Melahi, 2026). This condition demands a transformation in Islamic banking services so that they do not only focus on short-term profitability, but also on broader socio-economic empowerment through instruments that are transparent and in accordance with divine principles (Hamidi et al., 2024). Therefore, the success of the Islamic banking sector in satisfying the micro segment depends heavily on its ability to present unique value that differentiates it from the conventional system through the integration of pure Islamic business ethics.

Empirically, the performance of Islamic banking in Indonesia shows a solid and resilient growth trend, as seen in the achievements of Bank Syariah Indonesia (BSI), which recorded MSME financing of IDR 51.78 trillion by November 2025 (Putri & Sarmigi, 2025; Yusfiarto et al., 2025). Data from the Financial Services Authority (OJK) also supports this fact by showing that the market share of Islamic banking continues to increase, reaching 7.72% with total assets reaching IDR 980.30 trillion in early 2025 (Dasopang, 2025). However, there is a paradox where financial inclusion is still relatively low compared to national banking penetration, which is partly due to complaints from micro-entrepreneurs about access remaining difficult amidst global economic uncertainty (Said & Muhammadun, 2024). Industry projections for 2026 even predict that the growth of Islamic bank financing will accelerate to nearly 12% annually, but this achievement is highly dependent on the effectiveness of pro-people policies such as Islamic KUR and ongoing assistance (Odat & Al-Aqrabawi, 2025). This empirical reality shows that even though banks' financial capacity is getting stronger, micro-customer satisfaction still requires deeper intervention in the aspects of transparency and real operational support.

Previous research has explored various dimensions of service quality, but not many have holistically linked contract transparency and business assistance with sharia compliance as a unified model of satisfaction (Dzikrayah & Nugroho, 2023). As the first relevant study, Choiruddin et al. (2025) emphasized that financial literacy and fintech

innovation within Islamic economic law are key determinants of the sustainable performance of MSMEs in Indonesia and Malaysia. Second, research by Suhartanto et al. (2026) revealed that brand experience powered by artificial intelligence (AI) and perceived sharia compliance strongly predict satisfaction and brand preference in Islamic digital banking. Third, Kurniawati (2021) identified that the compliance and responsiveness dimensions in the CARTER model have the most significant influence on customer loyalty in Indonesian Islamic banking. Fourth, a study by Islam & Ahmad (2022) proposed an integrated microfinance model that combines *mudharabah* and *musharakah* for poverty alleviation through a sustainable livelihood approach. Fifth, Sholahuddin et al. (2024) found that business coaching aligned with Islamic values significantly increased small business satisfaction in the post-pandemic era.

The novelty of this paper lies in its thematic synthesis, combining technical factors such as digital-based contract transparency with spiritual factors such as Islamic ethical guidance within a single analytical framework. Most current literature tends to separate operational banking studies from sociological studies of customer diversity, thus failing to capture the full dynamics of micro-entrepreneurs' needs. This research fills this gap by exploring the mediating role of business growth and the moderating role of religiosity in strengthening the impact of banking services on customer satisfaction. It provides an overview of how blockchain technology and smart contracts can revolutionize contract transparency in Islamic banking (El Amri et al., 2020; Jyothi & Supriya, 2023; Suakanto et al., 2025). Through this approach, this research offers a fresh perspective on "spiritual contentment" as a metric of satisfaction beyond mere material economic benefits among Indonesian micro-entrepreneurs.

The main argument of this study is that micro-entrepreneur satisfaction cannot be achieved solely through the provision of financial capital, but must be supported by legal certainty through contract transparency and moral assurance through Sharia compliance (Sholahuddin et al., 2024). When Islamic banks are able to present clear contracts without hidden fees, micro-entrepreneurs feel they have a fair bargaining position, which in turn reduces skepticism towards formal institutions. Furthermore, business assistance programs that include management training and spiritual guidance act as added value, transforming transactional relationships into strategic partnerships. Without the synergy of these three pillars, Islamic banking will be perceived as merely a conventional alternative labeled as religious without providing substantial empowerment impact. Therefore, the integration of contractual clarity, Sharia integrity, and support for business

growth is an absolute prerequisite for creating a sustainable and inclusive microfinance ecosystem in Indonesia.

METHOD

This research method is descriptive thematic, using an in-depth literature review focused on synthesizing literature and secondary data from official reports from Indonesian financial authorities. Data were collected from various primary sources, such as the Indonesian Sharia Financial Development Report (LPKSI), annual reports of Bank Syariah Indonesia, and articles. The research scope encompasses the dynamics of national Islamic banking, with an emphasis on the micro segment, which represents the most vulnerable customer population yet is vital to the people's economy. This thematic analysis allows researchers to capture the complex phenomenon of customer satisfaction through a multidimensional lens encompassing economic, social, and religious aspects (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

This in-depth literature review method was chosen to fill the research gap, which is often partial and limited to a specific geographic region (Thomas, 2021). In-depth literature-based research can synthesize diverse empirical findings to build a more comprehensive and general theoretical model. Furthermore, with the rapid development of financial technology and banking regulations in Indonesia between 2024 and 2026, a synthesis of the latest data is necessary to provide relevant and targeted policy recommendations (Faizi et al., 2025). This method is also highly effective for exploring abstract concepts such as "business blessings" and "spiritual satisfaction," which are difficult to measure using simple quantitative questionnaires but are widely discussed in Islamic economics literature. Through data triangulation, the validity and reliability of the conclusions drawn can be scientifically justified.

This research was conducted through the stages of identification, selection, extraction, and thematic synthesis. The initial stage involved searching for keywords relevant to the topics of transparency and Sharia compliance. Next, data extraction was conducted to identify key findings regarding micro-entrepreneurs' contract preferences, the effectiveness of business mentoring, and the moderating role of religiosity. The extracted results were then categorized into major themes, which were analyzed to ensure a logical flow of argumentation. Finally, conclusions were drawn that integrate theoretical aspects with empirical evidence to generate actionable recommendations for Sharia banking practitioners in Indonesia.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Contract Transparency and Reduction of Information Asymmetry

Data analysis shows that contract transparency is a key foundation that directly influences the level of trust and validity of the relationship between Islamic banks and micro-entrepreneurs. Clear communication of contract terms, proper execution of promises, and full disclosure of all costs and profit sharing have been shown to significantly reduce information asymmetry (Putri & Sarmigi, 2025). This is particularly crucial for micro-entrepreneurs, who often have limited legal understanding, where contract clarity acts as a legal protection tool that prevents future disputes (Mun'im et al., 2025). Empirical data from various studies reveal that customers who understand the details of their contracts tend to demonstrate more active participation in follow-up financing programs because they feel they are being treated fairly and transparently (Rosula et al., 2024). Transparency is not merely an administrative matter, but an ethical signal that strengthens the credibility of Islamic banks in the eyes of grassroots communities.

Table 1. Comparison of Integrated Islamic Microfinance Service Models

Integrated Microfinance Model	Key Features	Results for Micro Entrepreneurs
Taysir Mudārabah Model	Multiple contracts, Takaful	Easy access to capital, debt reduction.
Bankziska Model	al-Qardul Hasan without interest	Empowerment, free from loan sharks.
Productive Waqf Model	Religious social funds	Capital without burden for micro businesses.
Digital Integration	Blockchain, AI, Fintech	Transparency, operational efficiency.

Sources: (Al-Melahi, 2026; Islam & Ahmad, 2022; Junaidi, 2025).

Micro-entrepreneurs' preference for contract types is also significantly influenced by the ease of understanding and transparency of the payment structure. Studies show that the majority of micro-entrepreneurs prefer *murabahah* contracts (fixed-margin sales contracts) over the more complex profit-sharing model (*mudarabah/musharakah*) (El Amri et al., 2020). The primary reason is the simplicity of installment calculations, which provides certainty for their small businesses' volatile cash flow. Although the profit-sharing model is philosophically closer to the spirit of Sharia law, its operationalization, which requires accurate financial record-keeping, often presents a barrier for micro-entrepreneurs unfamiliar with formal bookkeeping (Islam & Ahmad, 2022). Therefore,

simplifying contract language and using visual illustrations in conveying product information are key factors in customer satisfaction, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of their rights and obligations.

The Role of Fintech and Blockchain in Contract Transparency

Digital innovation has become an accelerator for increasing contract transparency through the use of blockchain technology and smart contracts. The use of digital dashboards in mobile banking applications allows micro-entrepreneurs to monitor their financing status in real time, which in turn reduces the risk of corruption and human error (Jyothi & Supriya, 2023). Blockchain provides a permanent and immutable transaction record, guaranteeing higher data security for customers who are starting to shift to digital services (Aisah et al., 2025). However, the effectiveness of this digital innovation is highly dependent on customers' digital literacy levels, requiring banks to provide ongoing education to ensure the technology truly delivers the immediate benefits of transparency (Putri & Sarmigi, 2025). The synergy between manual legal clarity and digital system efficiency represents the future of contract transparency, revolutionizing satisfaction standards in the national Islamic banking industry.

Authentic Sharia Compliance and Customer Trust

Authentic Sharia compliance, not merely symbolic or a marketing label, is a key differentiator that builds spiritual trust among Indonesian micro-entrepreneurs (Suhartanto et al., 2026). Analysis of customer behavior shows that perceptions of a bank's sincerity in implementing Islamic principles significantly influence brand preference and long-term loyalty (Mochlasin et al., 2023). Practices that are completely free from *riba*, *gharar*, and *maysir* are effective in reducing customer skepticism and lowering customer churn rates to conventional banks. Deeply religious micro-entrepreneurs view banking transactions as an act of worship, thus demanding higher compliance standards than simply satisfying functional service quality (Abror et al., 2022). Thus, Sharia integrity serves as an unrivaled competitive advantage for other financial institutions in winning the hearts of the Muslim community.

The religiosity of individual micro-entrepreneurs has been found to be a highly consistent moderating variable in strengthening the relationship between Sharia compliance and satisfaction (Abror et al., 2020). Customers with strong religious ties tend to be more tolerant of slightly higher administrative fees as long as they are

confident that their funds are managed in a halal manner (Abror et al., 2022). Conversely, banks perceived as simply using the "Sharia" label without strict oversight from the Sharia Supervisory Board (SSB) often face a profound crisis of trust among their core customers (Trisanty & Sugiarto, 2025). Therefore, the presence of religious authority figures in conducting digital Sharia audits and validating new products is a crucial normative signal (Suhartanto et al., 2020). Satisfaction in this context goes beyond material aspects, encompassing a sense of peace (*thuma'ninah*) from conducting economic activities in accordance with the guidance of pure Islamic law.

Furthermore, Sharia compliance synergizes with other service quality dimensions such as reliability and empathy to create a superior customer experience (Purnama et al., 2025). Feelings of security from interest exploitation and assurance that the bank will act fairly in difficult situations provide significant psychological comfort for micro-entrepreneurs. Sharia compliance acts as a symbolic resource that enhances customers' perceptions of the product's value, making it more meaningful than a simple loan contract. Data shows that customer satisfaction derived from religious aspects is more resilient to economic shocks than satisfaction based solely on financial gain (Abror et al., 2022). Islamic banking strategies that integrate Islamic leadership values into customer service have been proven to create loyal and participatory customer communities.

Business Assistance Programs and Micro-Enterprise Development

Business assistance programs provided by Islamic banking, such as capital provision, management training, and strategic mentoring, have a significant positive impact on the business performance of micro-entrepreneurs (Febriani et al., 2026). The timely provision of working capital directly increases customers' income and economic well-being, while mentoring enhances their human resource competency (Hakimi et al., 2024). In Indonesia, the BSI UMKM Center initiative has become a successful model in assisting micro-entrepreneurs in obtaining halal certification and accessing global markets (Rosula et al., 2024). This assistance is highly effective in motivating an entrepreneurial spirit and increasing business resilience against increasingly fierce market competition. Micro-entrepreneur satisfaction increases when they perceive that Islamic bank act not merely as lenders but as growth partners concerned with the sustainability of their businesses.

Business growth resulting from bank assistance acts as a key mediator linking bank support to overall customer satisfaction (Fararah & Al-Swidi, 2014). As micro-

entrepreneurs' incomes increase and their business practices become more sustainable, they report significantly higher levels of satisfaction with bank services (Widiastuti et al., 2021). This pathway to improved well-being includes entrepreneurs' ability to better manage their finances thanks to the financial literacy provided during the mentoring period (Febriani et al., 2026). Improved client entrepreneurship also reduces the risk of problem financing for banks, creating a mutually beneficial growth cycle. Therefore, business assistance must be designed comprehensively, encompassing technical aspects of production and digital marketing strategies to ensure maximum impact for small entrepreneurs.

A unique aspect of business assistance in Islamic banking is the integration of spiritual guidance and Islamic leadership into its training programs (Karim et al., 2025). Leadership based on Islamic values strengthens ethical behavior and entrepreneurs' resilience in facing business challenges, particularly for women and marginalized groups (Febriani et al., 2026). The integration of non-economic elements such as social justice and honesty into the business training curriculum has been shown to increase customer satisfaction at a deeper level. This moral guidance helps micro-entrepreneurs remain steadfast in Sharia principles despite economic pressures, thus creating a community of resilient and virtuous Muslim entrepreneurs. Ultimately, holistic business assistance, combining financial, technical, and spiritual support, is key for Islamic banking to improve the lives of micro-entrepreneurs in a sustainable and equitable manner.

Discussion

Meaning of the Findings in Islamic Microfinance Services

A collective analysis of the literature and empirical data confirms that contract transparency, authentic Sharia compliance, and business assistance are three inseparable pillars in shaping micro-entrepreneur satisfaction (Fararah & Al-Swidi, 2014). Transparency acts as a prerequisite for trust by reducing perceived risk for customers, while Sharia compliance provides moral assurance highly valued in religious societies (Mochlasin et al., 2023). Business assistance acts as a driving force for growth, transforming banking relationships from mere transactions to strategic partnerships. The most significant finding is the synergistic effect, where maximum satisfaction is achieved only when these three factors are combined in an integrated service model supported by digital technology (Choiruddin et al., 2025). This synergy enables Islamic banking not

only to survive in a competitive market but also to become a leader in quality national financial inclusion.

The Role of Sociocultural Context in Trust Building

In Indonesia's sociocultural landscape, steeped in mutual cooperation and religiosity, the role of Islamic banking extends beyond conventional financial intermediation (Yarmanti et al., 2025). Micro-entrepreneurs in Indonesia often define business success not solely through wealth accumulation, but through the concept of "blessings" obtained through lawful and transparent means (Yusfiarto et al., 2025). This cultural context explains why business assistance programs that incorporate spiritual guidance are more well-received than purely business training devoid of ethical values (Febriani et al., 2026). Furthermore, the high reliance on community leaders or kyai (Islamic scholars) for the validation of financial products suggests that Islamic banks must build strong social legitimacy through demonstrated operational transparency (Suhartanto et al., 2026). Therefore, Islamic banking services must be designed to align with Indonesia's modern Muslim identity while remaining steadfast in upholding moral traditions and social justice.

Interpretation through Stewardship Theory

Assessing research findings through the lens of Stewardship Theory reveals that customer satisfaction is an indicator of a bank's success in fulfilling its public mandate (Aslam et al., 2022). When banks provide transparent contracts and genuine business assistance, they are practicing the servant leadership model, which is at the heart of Islamic economic ethics. From the perspective of Expectancy-Confirmation Theory, confirmation of authentic Sharia values acts as a key determinant in maintaining micro-customer loyalty amidst the onslaught of competing products (Suhartanto et al., 2020). This interpretation suggests that for micro-entrepreneurs, Islamic banks are not merely service providers, but rather institutions that help them simultaneously fulfill their spiritual and economic aspirations (Oliver, 1999). CARTER Theory has also proven highly relevant, where the compliance dimension serves as a primary filter for customers in evaluating all other aspects of service quality (Othman et al., 2024).

Implications for Sustainable and Inclusive Halal Ecosystems

The scientific insights generated from this study highlight the need for a paradigm shift from "Transactional Sharia Banking" to "Value-Based Integrated Sharia

Microfinance" (Choiruddin et al., 2025). The scientific implications emphasize that future customer satisfaction metrics must integrate subjective well-being and ethical compliance indicators alongside traditional financial indicators (Suhartanto et al., 2026). This research also provides new insights into the role of blockchain technology as a modern tool to realize the ancient principle of transparency in *muamalah* more efficiently and accountably (Said & Muhammadun, 2024). Theoretically, this study enriches the Islamic marketing management literature by introducing the concept of "spiritual intelligent service design" that combines the sophistication of AI with sensitivity to faith values (Suhartanto et al., 2026). This understanding is crucial for developing a sharia economics education curriculum that is more applicable and responsive to the challenges of the digital economy era.

Compared with studies in other countries such as Malaysia or Pakistan, Islamic banking in Indonesia has unique characteristics in terms of the depth of business assistance and mentoring at the grassroots level. In Malaysia, regulatory standardization has made contract transparency well-established, leading to a greater focus of research on sukuk product innovation and capital markets (Al-Melahi, 2026). Meanwhile, in Pakistan, research often highlights significant challenges to financial inclusion due to low levels of public trust in the banking system in general (Fararah & Al-Swidi, 2014). In Indonesia, the presence of Bank Syariah Indonesia as a single, strong entity provides greater opportunities for the creation of a unified and massive business assistance ecosystem for millions of MSMEs (Rokhlinasari et al., 2025). This comparison demonstrates that Indonesia's financial inclusion model, based on the integration of commercial funds and social funds (ZISWAF), has the potential to become a global benchmark for microeconomic empowerment.

Practical Recommendations for Digital Integration

As an actionable step, Islamic banks in Indonesia must immediately integrate blockchain-based real-time transparency features into all their microfinance products to build absolute trust. Bank managers are recommended to redesign their business assistance curricula to focus not only on financial technicalities but also on strengthening spiritual leadership that builds customer mental resilience. Regulators need to harmonize policies that require banks to allocate a certain portion of their profits to a non-profit MSME mentoring fund (*al-Qardul Hasan*). Furthermore, accelerating digital and sharia literacy for micro-entrepreneurs must be a national agenda, a collaborative effort between

banks, the government, and educational institutions. These recommendations aim to ensure that the rapid growth of Islamic banking assets is truly translated into welfare directly felt by the lower classes.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the satisfaction of microentrepreneurs in Indonesian Islamic banking is determined by a harmonious synergy between contract transparency that ensures fairness, sharia compliance that provides spiritual peace, and business assistance that promotes economic sustainability. Transparency isn't just about data disclosure; it's a tool to empower customers to make informed business decisions independently. Authentic sharia compliance acts as an anchor of trust that prevents dissatisfaction due to skepticism of formal institutions. Meanwhile, comprehensive business assistance transforms the bank's role from a mere creditor to a true growth partner that cares about increasing the capacity of customers' human resources. The integration of the three pillars, supported by the acceleration of digitalization, is the main key to achieving Islamic financial inclusion which has a systemic impact on reducing poverty rates and strengthening national economic resilience.

The limitations of this study lie in the reliance on secondary literature data and the lack of longitudinal data on the long-term impact of spiritual-based business assistance on the growth of client wealth. Most of the studies analyzed are also still fragmented regionally, so generalizations for all regions of Indonesia that have high cultural diversity require caution. The suggestion for further research is to conduct a quantitative empirical study with a structural equation model (SEM) that tests these three pillars simultaneously in various economic clusters in Indonesia. In addition, the exploration of the effectiveness of "Bullion Bank" or Islamic gold banks in helping the accumulation of micro-entrepreneurs' assets is a very promising new research area. This research's contribution practically provides guidance for Islamic banking management to enhance institutional legitimacy through ethical and customer-focused services. Theoretically, this study strengthens the concept of stewardship-based governance as a paradigm for the future of the global Islamic economy.

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