EASE AND RISK PERCEPTION: INTEREST IN USING SHARIA DIGITAL PAYMENTS, AND THE USERS' ATTITUDE CONSEQUENCES

Fitriani Latief^{1*}, Suriyanti², Asbi Amin³, Amir Mahmud², Ahmad Firman¹, Dirwan¹

¹Institut Teknologi dan Bisnis Nobel Indonesia, Indonesia ²Universitas Muslim Indonesia, Indonesia ³Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Makassar Bongaya, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT: This study explores the unique role of Sharia compliance in shaping user behavior toward digital payment systems, focusing on the Islamic digital-payment platform. It aims to examine how perceived convenience, and perceived risk influence attitudes and interests in adopting Sharia-compliant digital payments. Using a quantitative approach, the research targets the users of LinkAja Sharia, Indonesia, employing purposive judgment sampling resulting in 150 response rates. Data were analyzed through Structural Equation Modeling Partial Least Square (PLS- SEM). The findings indicate that perceived convenience and perceived risk significantly and positively affect both attitudes and interest. Moreover, attitudes mediate the relationship between these perceptions and interest. The study underscores how aligning financial technology with Islamic principles adds trust and appeal, offering valuable insights for developers aiming to integrate ethical and religious values into fintech innovations for Muslim markets, and global endeavors.

Keywords: Convenience; Perception; Perceived Risk; Interest; Attitude; Islamic Digital Payment

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INTRODUCTION

Innovation in the financial sector is commonly referred to as financial technology, or fintech. Unlike traditional banking services, fintech represents a modern business model designed to meet the needs of the general public. In Indonesia, fintech products are accessible to all, and the widespread adoption of digital payments is one of its key benefits. Fintech is a blend of technical and financial capabilities, focusing on innovations that leverage modern technology to improve financial services (Lim et al., 2019). This technology enhances the efficiency and transparency of financial transactions, making it easier for individuals to manage their finances (Daily Social, 2021). Fintech companies offer convenient services that do not require users to have a traditional bank account. Financial products emerge more accessible to everyone, regardless of their financial background, and fintech has facilitated smoother transactions and had a positive impact on people's lives (Lai & Liew, 2021; Wang & Chen, 2016).

Interest in using electronic money has a positive impact on transforming transaction patterns, as evidenced by changes in the types of transaction instruments used (Hossain & Zhou, 2018; Munyon et al., 2019). To drive the growth of cashless transactions, the use of electronic money serves as a viable alternative. Digital transaction systems, such as e-money, e-wallets, and other similar platforms, have gained significant popularity in Indonesia.

While electronic wallets and electronic money both serve as transaction tools, they differ primarily in their storage media. Electronic money typically uses a chip embedded in a card, such as Brizzi BRI, Mandiri E-Money, Flazz BCA, or Tap Cash BNI, which stores funds in a physical format. In contrast, electronic wallets store funds on servers and require an internet connection for use, with platforms like OVO, Gopay, Dana, LinkAja, and ShopeePay providing easy access to users (see Figure 1). These digital payment methods continue to expand their market share, offering convenience and driving the adoption of cashless transactions.



LinkAja, a digital payment provider in Indonesia, was established through the merger of several state-owned banks, including BNI, BRI, Mandiri, and BTN. This provider specifically caters to Islamic finance inclusion, offering halal transactions for online shopping, payments, and the distribution of Zakat, Infaq, Alms, Waqf (ZISWAF), and other religious social funds (Abror et al., 2022). Despite technological advancements, not all new technologies are readily accepted by the public. As such, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is applied in this context to assess the perceived functionality and expected use of digital payments. TAM predicts the reception of information technology, considering external factors that may influence technology adoption, such as ease of use and perceived benefits (Indriyani et al., 2022).

Perceived risk, which refers to the potential loss consumers might face when making decisions under uncertainty, plays a significant role in shaping the use of digital payment technologies (Aggarwal & Rahul, 2018). This risk influences user attitudes, forming either acceptance or rejection of the technology (Davis, 1980). Researchers have modified TAM to include perceived risk as a factor affecting attitudes and interests in technology adoption, with studies reporting differing findings (Ali, 2016; Aprilia & Amalia, 2022). Other studies also explore perceived risk (Jiaxin Zhang et al., 2019; Weber & Milliman, 1997), with some showing negative effects (Siregar & Syahrizal, 2024). Additionally, the impact of ease of use on attitude has been reported in various studies (Venkatesh, 2000), although some studies have found contrary results (Badir & Andjarwati, 2020). This study aims to address the overlooked topic of how perceived convenience and risk influence the interest in using Sharia-compliant digital payments, specifically investigating how Islamic applications moderate the relationship between ease of use, risk perception, user interests, and attitudes.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study follows the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to explain the factors that affect the adoption of sharia digital payment technology. In TAM, perceived ease of use is one of the main constructs that plays an important role in shaping attitudes and interests (behavioral intention) to use technology (Davis, 1980). This study emphasizes that the ease of using sharia digital payment services can increase the positive perception of the technology, and how it forms the construction of psychological attitudes and interests.

In addition, this study expands TAM by including risk perception as a relevant external variable in the context of sharia-based digital financial services. Risk perceptions, such as security risks, privacy, and compliance with sharia principles (Mustafa et al., 2013), can moderate or influence the relationship between convenience and user attitudes or interests (Lai & Liew, 2021). Thus, this study not only tests the validity of TAM but also enriches this theoretical framework by adding a risk perspective in the unique context of sharia, making a significant theoretical contribution to the understanding of the acceptance of Islamic values-based technology (Albaity & Rahman, 2019; El-Bassiouny, 2011; Zakiah & Al-Aidaros, 2017). Convenience use refers to trust user in use system without difficulty (Bendary & Al-Sahouly, 2018)with positive findings from

previous studies (Multhazam et al., 2021) (Hawari & Harahap, 2023) (Oktaviana et al., 2023) for the hypothesis construction.

H1: Perceived convenience affects the interest in using Islamic (sharia) digital payments.

Risk captures the perception of consumers to uncertainty and consequences in their activities (Muis et al., 2021)It emerges as a transaction is accomplished ((Prasetyani & Wahyuningsih, 2019)The use of digital wallet is critically influenced by this decision ((Fathurrahman & Rukiyat, 2022).

Recent studies have explored the influence of perceived risk on user behavior in adopting cashless transaction systems, revealing differing perspectives, e.g., perceived risk exerts a positive and significant influence on individuals' interest in adopting the Quick Response Code Indonesian Standard (QRIS) as a tool for facilitating a cashless society (Rastini & Respati, 2021). This suggests that users may view QRIS as a secure and reliable platform that outweighs potential concerns. Conversely, Pratiwi et al (2017) reported that perceived risk negatively and significantly impacts the interest in using non-cash transactions via electronic wallet applications (e-wallets). This outcome highlights that heightened concerns about security or transaction reliability might deter users from adopting such platforms (Lai & Liew, 2021). These contrasting findings underline the role of perceived risk in shaping consumer behavior and form the foundation for the hypothesis.

H2: The perceived risk affects the interest in using the Sharia Digital Payments.

The ease of use refers to the simplicity and accessibility of a system or technology, making it feasible for individuals and small businesses to adopt it effectively. A well-designed system is intended to simplify processes rather than complicate them, enabling users to perform their tasks more efficiently compared to manual methods (Jiaxin et al., 2019). Lai & Liew (2021) found that the perceived convenience of use has a significant positive impact on the interest in using e-wallets (Abdul-Halim et al., 2021; Daragmeh et al., 2021). However, other studies indicate that perceived convenience does not significantly influence the interest in adopting specific e-wallet platforms, such as OVO (Indriyani et al., 2022). These mixed findings provide the basis for hypothesis proposal.

H3: The perceived convenience affects the attitude of using Sharia Digital Payment.

Risk is often perceived as the uncertainty associated with the outcomes of a decision, which significantly influences customers' interest in using mobile banking (Weber & Milliman, 1997). High perceived risk implies that customers may worry about potential threats or challenges associated with mobile banking, which can stem from both system-related and user-related issues (Giovanis et al, 2012). System-related risks often involve problems with internet connectivity or signal disruptions, which can hinder transactions (Eling et al., 2022). On the other hand, user-related risks include scenarios such as losing the mobile device used for transactions (Farivar et al., 2017).

Research findings on the relationship between perceived risk and technology adoption vary. For instance, Indriyani et al. (2022) demonstrated that perceived risk influences the use of internet banking. However, this finding reminds the importance of security for its adverse effect with perceive risk (Johnson et al., 2018). A key issue connecting technology and perceived risk is security (Khalilzadeh et al., 2017), as instances of fraud often undermine consumers' trust and willingness to rely fully on online financial transactions (Elmasry, 2016), as hypothesized.

H3: Perceived risk affects the attitudes using sharia digital payment. H4: Perceived risk affects the attitudes of using the sharia digital payment.

Attitude represents an individual's tendency to act or respond to a specific stimulus or object, shaped by personal beliefs, emotions, and prior experiences (Falahati, 2011; Kashif et al., 2018). Globally, attitudes are widely recognized as a crucial factor influencing consumer behavior, particularly in the adoption of new technologies. Albaity & Rahman (2021) found that consumer attitudes positively and significantly impact behavioral intentions, emphasizing that a favorable perception of a product or system enhances the likelihood of its adoption. Similarly, Jia et al. (2013) highlighted that attitudes play a significant role in driving interest in e-wallet payment systems, indicating that perceptions of convenience, security, and ease of use can motivate adoption. *H5: Attitude affects the interest in Using Sharia Digital Payment*

Perceived convenience of use reflects the belief that a technology or system is easy to use and free from complications, simplifying tasks compared to traditional methods. Systems are fundamentally designed to enhance efficiency and ease human activities. This perception plays a critical role in shaping user interest (Yang, 2021), particularly when mediated by attitudes (Aprilia & Amalia, 2022). Research by Mahmud (2022) shows that perceived convenience positively and significantly impacts the intention to use, with attitude acting as a mediating variable. Similarly, study confirms this relationship (Birkinshaw et al., 2018), highlighting the importance of convenience in fostering positive attitudes that drive user adoption for hypothesis construction.

H6: Attitudes mediate the perceived convenience, and the interest sharia digital payment

Risk is often interpreted as the potential consequence or uncertainty that arises when making a decision to use a particular technology or system, with the possibility of a loss (Parmitasari et al., 2022). This includes concerns individuals have about the reliability and outcomes of using a specific system (Eling et al., 2022; Slovic et al., 1982). Delener (1990) argue that perceived risk and user attitudes are negatively related, which also extends to the level of interest in using the technology (Khayer & Bao, 2019). However, a study found that user attitude does not mediate the relationship between perceived risk and user interest (Davis, 1986), thus for this hypothesis formulation as also compiled in Figure 1.

H7: Attitudes mediate the perceived risk, and interest of using sharia digital payment



Figure 1. Conceptual Model Proposition

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quantitative approach, focusing on users of LinkAja Sharia Digital Payment in Makassar City, Indonesia. The research uses purposive sampling with a judgment sampling technique to select participants. The minimum sample size is determined by multiplying the number of questions by ten, resulting in a minimum of 150 samples for the study, as there are 15 questions in the questionnaire (Hair et al., 2014). Data collection was conducted by distributing questionnaires to direct customers of the merchant (See Table 1 for the employed scales). The study incorporates one endogenous (dependent) variable, namely interest in use (Y), two exogenous (independent) variable, attitude (Z). The data analysis method used is Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS).

Table 1. Measurement Items					
Constructs	Code	Items / Constructs	Sources		
Convenience (X1)	 C1 C2 C3 C4 	 The system is clear and easy to understand Doesn't require much effort Easy to use Easy to operate as desired 	(Nguyen et al., 2020).		
Risk perception (X2)	 RP1 R P2 RP3	 In the form of certain risks Loss Thought that is Risky 	(Slovic et al., 2013)		
Attitude (Z)	 A1 A2 A3	CognitiveAffectiveConative	(Dharmawan & Vidyasari, 2021)		
Interest (Y)	IU1IU2IU3IU4	Desire to useAlways try UsingContinue in the future	(Nguyen et al., 2020).		

This study applied Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to analyze the relationships between perceived convenience, perceived risk, attitudes, and user interest in using Sharia-compliant digital

payment systems. PLS-SEM is suitable for this study due to its ability to handle complex models with multiple constructs and indicators, particularly when the data is non-normally distributed or when sample sizes are limited. The analysis consisted of evaluating the measurement model (outer model) for validity and reliability, followed by the structural model (inner model) to assess the hypothesized relationships among variables.

The measurement model was assessed for convergent and discriminant validity, with Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values expected to exceed 0.50 for convergent validity. Reliability was evaluated using Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha, with acceptable values above 0.70 and 0.60, respectively. The structural model evaluation focused on path coefficients, and R-squared (R²) values. Expected results include significant path coefficients (p-value < 0.05), for R² values above 0.10. These expectations align with established research in the field of digital payment systems and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM).

RESULTS

This section presents the findings from the data analysis conducted to examine the relationships between perceived convenience, perceived risk, attitudes, and user interest in using Sharia-compliant digital payment systems. The results are derived from the responses collected through the survey distributed among LinkAja users in Makassar City, Indonesia, and the analysis utilizes Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) to explore these relationships. The demographic profile of the respondents is outlined in Table 2.

	Table 2. Characteristics of Res	pondents	
Variable	Measurement	Ν	%
Gender	Male	67	44.67%
	Female	83	55.33%
Age	<21 years	38	25.33%
0	21-30 years	64	42.67%
	31-40 years	22	14.67%
	41-50 years	18	12%
	>50 years	8	5.33%
Education	Senior High School	32	21.33%
	Vocational (D3)	18	12%
	Graduate (S1)	88	58.67%
	Master (S2)	12	8%
0 D .	1 2221		

Source: Data processed, 2024

Before proceeding with the structural model analysis, it is essential to assess the validity and reliability of the measurement model to ensure the robustness of the results as in Table 3. The validity of the constructs was assessed through convergent validity and discriminant validity, while reliability was evaluated using composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. Based on the table above, the outer model or the correlation between the constructs and variables shows that the loading factor is above 0.70, and the AVE is securing a higher score than 0.5.

This indicates that the constructs of ease, perceived risk, attitudes, and interest in using LinkAja Sharia Digital Payment meet the validity criteria.

Variable	Instrument	Loading	AVE	Results
	X1.1	0.806		Valid
Convenience (X1)	X1.2	0.720	0.559	Valid
	X1.3	0.801	0.559	Valid
	X1.4	0.705		Valid
$\mathbf{P}_{\mathrm{expanding}}$ $\mathbf{P}_{\mathrm{exp}}(\mathbf{X}_{2})$	X2.1	0.758		Valid
Perception Risk (X2)	X2.2	0.740	0 5 4 0	Valid
	X2.3	0.827	0.560	Valid
	X2.4	0.773		Valid
	Z1.1	0.778		Valid
Attitude (Z)	Z1.2	0.817	0.594	Valid
	Z1.3	0.739		Valid
Interest (V1)	Y1.1	0.787		Valid
Interest (Y1)	Y1.2	0.715	0 (14	Valid
	Y1.3	0.873	0.614	Valid
	Y1.4	0.767		Valid

Source: Adapted Smartpls 4 Output, 2024

Table 4.	Composite F	Reliability and	Cronbach alpha

	1 2	1	
Variable	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Results
Convenience (X1)	0.761	0.788	Reliable
Perception Risk (X2)	0.738	0.761	Reliable
Attitude (Z)	0.798	0.772	Reliable
Interest (Y)	0.818	0.800	Reliable
Source: Adapted Smarth	ls 4 Output 2024		

Source: Adapted Smartpls 4 Output, 2024

The results of composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha for the constructs of ease, perceived risk, attitudes, and interest in using LinkAja Sharia Digital Payment all show values above 0.70. This indicates that all instrument variables are reliable and meet the accepted threshold for internal consistency. This finding opens the path for inner model analysis, as presented in Table 5 for the R² report. Figure 2 is displaying the model output.



Figure 2. Path output Source: Smartpls 4 Output, 2024 The results of PLS data processing in Figure 2 above are summarized in the Table 5 for the hypothesis testing.

Table 5. R-Square Test				
Construct	R Square	Adj. R Square		
Attitude (Z)	0.592	0.567		
Interests (Y)	0.497	0.476		

Source: Adapted Smartpls 4 Output, 2024.

Table 6. Hypothesis Test Results					
Relationship	Effect size	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value	Decision	
Convenience→Interest	0.222	2.518	0.010	H1 Accepted	
Perceived risk \rightarrow Interest	0.624	5.702	0,000	H2 Accepted	
Convenience→attitude	0.138	2.523	0.018	H3 Accepted	
Perceived risk \rightarrow attitude	0.269	3.347	0,000	H4 Accepted	
Attitude→Interest	0.147	2.967	0.008	H5 Accepted	
Convenience→attitude→Interest	0.222	2.400	0.024	H6 Accepted	
Perceived risk \rightarrow attitude \rightarrow Interest	0.139	3.610	0.000	H7 Accepted	

Source: Adapted Smartpls 4 Output, 2024

DISCUSSION

The research reveals that convenience has a significant and positive impact on users' interest in adopting LinkAja Sharia Digital Payment. The simpler and more user-friendly the platform, the more likely users are to engage with it (Badir & Andjarwati, 2020; Venkatesh, 2000). As convenience reduces complexity and saves time, users are increasingly drawn to using the platform. This finding is consistent with studies, which also highlight the positive effect of ease of use on user interest (Indriyani MS et al., 2022; Rastini & Respati, 2021). However, presented contrasting results, indicating that ease of use does not always have a significant impact on user interest (Giovanis et al, 2012). Overall, convenience encourages users to explore more features and functionalities (Lai & Liew, 2021), enhancing their engagement with the platform and pushing a positive attitude towards digital banking (Gurbaxani & Dunkle, 2019; Hojnik et al., 2023; Schwitter et al., 2022; Tapscott, 1999).

Additionally, perceived risk significantly influences users' interest in using LinkAja Sharia Digital Payment. When users perceive a technology as high-risk, they are less likely to engage with it (Tai et al., 2021). Conversely, a lower perceived risk increases user confidence, driving higher adoption. This aligns with studies which show that perceived risk positively influences user interest (Delener, 1990; Weber & Milliman, 1997). However, Indriyani MS et al. (2022) found that perceived risk negatively affects interest. Perceived risk also affects user attitudes, as higher perceived risks lead to caution, while lower perceived risks foster positive engagement (Hepola et al., 2020). Studies reinforce these findings, demonstrating that perceived risk can either positively or negatively influence users' attitudes towards adopting new technologies (Han et al., 2021; Liao et al., 2009; Tavitiyaman et al., 2020). Moreover, users' attitudes towards LinkAja Sharia Digital Payment are critical in determining their intention to use the platform, as more positive attitudes result in higher adoption rates. These results highlight the importance of reducing perceived risks and

improving convenience to foster greater user interest and engagement with digital payment systems (Sahi et al., 2021; Sumathy & KP, 2017).

The findings align with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1980), which suggests that perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness are critical factors in technology adoption. Convenience, as a key element of ease of use, enhances the perceived usefulness of LinkAja Sharia Digital Payment. When users find the platform simple to navigate, their interest in using it increases (Mikalef & Pateli, 2017; Tai et al., 2021). This relationship between convenience and interest supports the core components of TAM. Similarly, perceived risk affects users' perception of usefulness, influencing their willingness to adopt the platform.

From a managerial perspective, these findings highlight the need to prioritize convenience in the design of digital payment platforms (Lai & Liew, 2021). A simplification of the user experience can enhance user interest and adoption (Han et al., 2021; Zhou, 2011). Additionally, reducing perceived risks through transparent policies and security features can further increase trust and engagement. Managers should focus on user-friendly design and risk management to attract and retain customers (Kang et al., 2014; Lee & Kim, 2020). Ensuring a smooth and secure experience will be essential in long-term adoption and growth.

FURTHER STUDY

This study highlights key factors influencing the adoption of LinkAja Sharia Digital Payment, emphasizing the importance of convenience and perceived risk. Convenience plays a central role in increasing users' intention to adopt the platform, as an easy-to-use system fosters greater user interest and confidence. Perceived risk, on the other hand, significantly affects users' decisions, with a low-risk perception boosting adoption. Both factors shape users' attitudes, with convenience promoting a positive attitude and reducing hesitation, while perceived risks can create concerns that may hinder adoption. These attitudes directly influence users' intention to use the platform, as individuals with positive attitudes are more likely to embrace the system.

The findings of this research have broader implications, both nationally and internationally. At the national level, the study provides valuable insights into consumer behavior towards sharia-compliant financial technologies, supporting the growth of Islamic finance and enhancing financial inclusion in Muslim-majority populations. Policymakers and financial institutions can use these insights to design digital payment systems that prioritize ease of use while mitigating risks, ensuring alignment with sharia principles. Internationally, the study contributes to the global discourse on Islamic fintech, showing how cultural and religious values shape technology adoption. The findings offer practical implications for multinational financial entities seeking to expand into sharia-compliant markets, fostering innovation and collaboration in Islamic digital finance.

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