

# The Effect Of Religiosity And Boycott Decisions On Brand Loyalty Of Pro-Israel Products

Sugeng Nugroho Hadi\*, Khadijah Syafira Adyani

Departement of Sharia Bussines Management, STEI Hamfara Yogyakarta, Indonesia

\*Corresponding Author(s) Email: [sugeng.en.ha@gmail.com](mailto:sugeng.en.ha@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

The boycott action against pro-Israel products is widely voiced by Muslim consumers as a form of concern for Muslims in Gaza, Palestine, who have been unjustly massacred for years, triggering genocide by the Israeli Zionists. This study aims to determine the influence of religiosity and brand loyalty on the action of Muslim boycott decisions against pro-Israel products. From this objective, a research question can be developed, "Does the religiosity and brand loyalty of Muslims affect the decision to boycott pro-Israel products?" With the hope that the decision to boycott pro-Israel product loyalty will have an effect on business (economic) losses for Israel and its allies. This study is a quantitative study with an associative descriptive approach. The sample design used 100 respondents, namely Muslim consumers who have or frequently use pro-Israel products. The sampling technique used is non-probabilty purposive sampling. Data analysis uses multiple linear regression. The results of the study answer the research questions that partially, (i) Religiosity has a significant effect on the decision to boycott; and (ii) Brand Loyalty also has a significant effect on the decision to boycott. Meanwhile, simultaneously, (iii) Religiosity and Brand Loyalty have a significant influence on the decision to boycott pro-Israel products. The multiple regression model is shown by the equation  $Y = 16.854 + 0.207X_1 + 0.248X_2$  with a determination of 27.7%. This means that the high value of boycotting pro-Israel products indicates that this movement or action is seen as effective for fanatical Muslims. However, the number of Muslims who are less or not fanatical about their beliefs (Islam) is still quite large. So it can be stated that the boycott action is only effective for or when Muslims are fanatical about their teachings (Islam).

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## 1. Indtroduction

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been a long-standing one, spanning the entire history of Israel itself. Since its inception, Palestinian territories have been ambitious for control and ownership. One by one, Palestinian territories have been annexed, until the Palestinian people have been pushed to the outskirts of their homeland, namely the Gaza Strip. Israel's ambition to fully control Palestine, driven by its military might, has eliminated the option of an independent Palestinian homeland, not an independent land overseas, as Israel and its cronies have offered. Therefore, for Palestine, the war with Israel, fought 24/7 throughout history, is

a holy war, in addition to defending Al-Qudsi, Al-Aqsa Mosque, the ancestral mosque of the Palestinian people and Muslims worldwide.

In this war, Israel is assisted by the American and NATO forces, armed with all their sophisticated weaponry and with all the hypocrisy of political diplomacy. Therefore, Israel feels the upper hand and believes it has won everything, so the Israeli army is indiscriminately seeking to immediately eliminate the mujahideen and Palestinian civilians. This has opened the world's eyes to the fact that Israel, through its military units, has committed genocide against the Palestinian people. Therefore, the Islamic world and other global populations sympathetic to Palestine immediately called for a boycott of pro-Israel products to balance the war with a trade (economic) war to address the genocide. Data shows that Starbucks, one of the pro-Israel products, saw its stock value drop from \$103 to \$73 between November and April 2024 (Investing.com, 2024).

Some other pro-Israel products include: Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, McDonald's, Intel, Cisco Systems, Ahava, Sabra, Zara, Adidas, and others. These products have penetrated all Islamic countries, and some populations have even developed loyalty to these pro-Israeli brands. Their contribution to the Israeli-Palestinian war is donating their business profits—in quotation marks—to Israel's struggle to commit genocide against Palestine. Therefore, a trade war by boycotting pro-Israel products is effective in stopping genocide and/or physical war which must be ended immediately and provide genuine independence for Palestine.

In Indonesia, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) issued Fatwa Number 83 of 2023 concerning the Law on Supporting Palestinian Fighters. The fatwa states that supporting the Palestinian independence struggle against Israeli aggression is obligatory, but supporting Israeli aggression against Palestinians is forbidden. The fatwa does not specifically mention the products to be boycotted, but the public is already familiar with pro-Israel products already on the market and may decide to boycott them.

Boycotting falls within the discipline of consumer behavior. A boycott means a conspiracy to cooperate (in trade, dialogue, participation, etc.). A boycott is the process or act of boycotting something. A boycott, also known as "cancel culture," is the act or practice of rejecting the opinions or actions of a group as morally and socially unacceptable. Essentially, a boycott is a form of rejection or complaint by one party against another party for inappropriate behavior, expressed in the form of rejection. The internationally recognized Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement has grown rapidly since 2005 and has motivated Muslim communities in various countries to boycott Israeli brands and those of companies deemed to support Israel (BDS Movement, 2016). Muslims in Indonesia have also supported this movement by popularizing the boycott movement and campaigning for it through news portals, blogs, and other media. One Indonesian online media group supporting the boycott movement stated that Indonesian Muslim consumers should view the boycott of pro-Israel products as an act identified as "religious" because it is part of the struggle against oppression (Hidayatullah, 2014).

Religiousness has been identified as a factor that can lead someone to boycott pro-Israel products. A person's religiosity or religiosity is a value that can be seen and measured in every activity (Nashori, Mucharam, & Ru'iyah, 2002). Religiosity is a condition and belief within a person that can motivate them to act and behave according to the teachings of their religion or faith. Religiosity can influence a person's life, decisions, and consumption (Fam, Waller, & Erdogan, 2004). Muslim religiosity is related to faith and/or religious fanaticism.

Boycotts among Muslim consumers are closely related to religious reasons (fanaticism). One of the triggers for boycott movements by religious communities is the misuse of religious symbols (Anderson, 2012). Boycotts have now become a primary weapon for consumers. If boycotts occur, companies will suffer significant losses. Worse still, they can lead to bankruptcy, and the impact of product boycotts also affects consumer brand loyalty.

Brand loyalty is a deep commitment to purchasing a selected product or service in the future through repeated purchases of the same brand or brand group, even though behavior may change due to situational influences or marketing efforts. A positive image can lead consumers to prefer a particular brand when making purchases. Brand loyalty is a crucial concept in marketing strategy because it serves as a benchmark for consumer attachment to a brand and can indicate whether a customer is likely to switch to a competitor, especially if the price or other features change. Therefore, the existence of loyal consumers to a brand is crucial for the smooth operation of a company (Aaker D., 2009).

Indonesia is the country with the largest Muslim population in the world. Religion in Indonesia plays a vital role in social life and influences aspects of life, including the economy. The large number of Indonesian Muslims and the regulations implemented by Muslim individuals have shaped a community lifestyle that is imbued with religious values. High religiosity is a crucial factor in shaping the attitudes and behavior of Muslim consumers, such as the decision to boycott a product affiliated with Israel out of concern for their fellow believers in Palestine. Amidst the ongoing boycott of pro-Israel products, its impact on Indonesian Muslim consumers, who are loyal to pro-Israel brands and products not affiliated with Israel, will be evident.

This study aims to determine the effect of religiosity and Muslim brand loyalty to pro-Israel products on the boycott of pro-Israel products. The relationship between religiosity, brand loyalty, and product boycotts is based on the following research findings. First, the relationship between religiosity and product boycotts. Research by Muhammad Khoiruman and Ambar Wariati (2023), which focused on the McDonald's boycott, found a positive effect of religiosity on the McDonald's boycott. Second, the relationship between brand loyalty and product boycotts is demonstrated by research by Farhan Mirza, Sarfraz Ashraf, and Hafiz Badar Jahangir (2020) on "The Impact of Religiously Motivated Consumer Boycotts on Product Judgment, Brand Image, and Loyalty," which found that product boycotts had no significant effect on brand image and loyalty. Third, the relationship between religiosity, brand loyalty, and product boycotts is based on the research of Rouza Fakriza and Ridwan Nurdin (2019) on "The Influence of Religiosity on Boycotts with Brand Loyalty as a Moderating Variable at KFC Banda Aceh," which found that religiosity had a positive and significant effect on boycotts; brand loyalty had a negative and insignificant effect on product boycotts. The conclusion is that religiosity, brand loyalty, and product boycotts have a significant effect.

Product boycotts are anticlimaxes or contradict consumer loyalty. Consumer loyalty is defined as a consumer's voluntary decision to continue patronizing a particular company over a long period of time (Lovelock & Wright, 2007). Therefore, it is necessary to explore the voluntary discontinuation of short-term or long-term patronage of pro-Israel products. Muslim religiosity or fanaticism is a variable worth considering. If group fanaticism can be exploited and breaks consumer loyalty, then a boycott is inevitable. Consumer loyalty is a valuable asset for companies, so boycotts also face resistance from these companies. However, this study does not analyze the forms of resistance from pro-Israel product companies. Instead, this

study will conduct a quantitative analysis of the effects of religiosity on boycotts, brand loyalty on boycotts, and religiosity and brand loyalty on boycotts of pro-Israel products. The results of the analysis will be in the form of numbers that quantify the associations between variables as a contribution to this study.

## 2. Literature Review

Religiosity is a behavior or understanding that arises based on faith or belief in a religion. Religiosity indicates the extent of knowledge, the extent of belief, the level of implementation of worship, and the depth of appreciation of a religion. In Islam, religiosity is closely related to belief in sharia values, which are always equated with religion. A person's religiosity is a value that can be seen and measured in every person's activities (Nashori, Mucharam, & Ru'iyah, 2002). Religiosity is a condition and belief that exists within a person and can motivate them to act and behave according to the teachings of their religion or belief. Religiosity can influence a person's life, decisions, and consumption (Fam, Waller, & Erdogan, 2004).

The boycott movement among Muslim consumers is closely linked to religious reasons. One of the triggers for the boycott movement by religious communities is the misuse of religious symbols (Anderson, 2012). Boycotts have now become a primary weapon for consumers. If a boycott occurs, companies will suffer significant losses. Worse still, it can lead to bankruptcy, and the impact of product boycotts also affects consumer brand loyalty.

Brand loyalty is a deep commitment to purchasing a selected product or service in the future through repeated purchases of the same brand or brand group, although behavior can change due to circumstances or marketing efforts. A positive image can lead consumers to prefer a particular brand when making purchases. Brand loyalty is a crucial concept in marketing strategy because it serves as a benchmark for consumer attachment to a brand and can indicate whether a customer is likely to switch to a competitor, especially if the price or other features change. Therefore, the existence of loyal consumers to a brand is crucial for the sustainability of a company and its smooth operation (Aaker D., 2009).

From the research framework as shown in Figure 1 under, several hypotheses can be developed. A hypothesis is a weak assumption and still needs to be proven true. The hypothesis can be accepted or rejected, accepted if the coefficient significance value is less than 0.05; and rejected if the variable coefficient significance value is more than 0.05. The framework of this study is as follows:

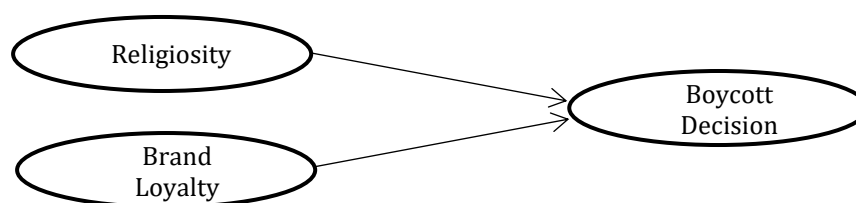


Figure 1. Research Framework

It is suspected, in this study (H1<sub>1</sub>) "There is a positive and significant influence between religiosity and the decision to boycott pro-Israel products" and (H1<sub>2</sub>) "There is a positive and significant influence between brand loyalty and the decision to boycott pro-Israel products".

### 3. Research Methods

This research was conducted over six months, with one month for planning, three months for data collection, and two months for report writing. It took place between mid-October 2023 and mid-March 2024. The research location was Yogyakarta, within pockets of fanatical Muslim communities.

The research design used a quantitative descriptive associative approach. A qualitative approach was chosen because this research was based on quantitative data. The questionnaire used a 4-point Likert scale, so all answers were numeric: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) agree, and (4) strongly agree. The numerical responses were then processed using the SPSS 25 multiple regression statistical program. The associative approach was chosen because this study would measure the level of influence between the variables used. The descriptive approach was chosen because this study would translate the research results into statistical figures and provide a more qualitative explanation.

The research data was then entered and sorted using Excel to obtain an accurate total of data per number of questionnaires per number of respondents. Afterward, the research data quality was tested using validity and responsiveness tests, followed by classical assumption tests, and finally, multiple regression tests.

The data collection method employed questionnaires distributed at several locations using a non-probability purposive sampling technique, ensuring the sample was representative of the entire Muslim consumer population who had purchased or consumed pro-Israel products that were boycotted. The sample size was calculated using the Lemeshow formula as cited in Riduwan and Akdon (2010) with a 5% confidence level, a maximum estimate of 0.5, and a sampling error of 10%. The sample size was 96.04, which was then rounded up to 100 respondents. The use of 100 samples was based on the relatively large community size and the lack of supporting data. Therefore, the Lemeshow formula calculation yielded a minimum sample size of 96 respondents, which was rounded up to 100 respondents in this study.

The questionnaire per variable is compiled based on the indicators or dimensions of the variable definition as follows:

Table 1. Operational Variable Definition

| Variable                    | Definicion                                                                                                                      | Dimension/Indicator                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Religiosity (X1)</b>     | Religiosity is a form of supernatural belief that is valuable when internalized in everyday life. (Glock & Stark, 1968)         | 1. Faith or belief (ideology)<br>2. Worship or religious practice (ritualistic)<br>3. Ihsan (experiential)<br>4. Religious knowledge (intellectual)<br>5. Consequences or practice |
| <b>Brand Loyalty (X2)</b>   | Brand loyalty is a measure of consumer loyalty to a brand. (Rangkuti, 2004)                                                     | 1. Repeated product use<br>2. Product advantages<br>3. Product information<br>4. Product recommendations                                                                           |
| <b>Boycott decision (Y)</b> | A boycott decision is a collective refusal to make a purchase, or threatening to do so. (Hansen, Heermann, W, & Wolfgang, 2002) | 1. Making changes<br>2. Self-improvement<br>3. Counterarguments                                                                                                                    |

## **4. Result**

### **4.1. Instrumen Test**

Instrument testing, namely the Validity Test, was conducted using the Pearson bivariate correlation program on a number of instruments (questionnaires). The results of 15 questionnaires for the religiosity variable, 10 questionnaires for the brand loyalty variable, and 10 questionnaires for the decision to boycott pro-Israel brands showed that 35 of the questionnaires had a value greater than 0.2, indicating that all questionnaires were significant and all instruments were valid.

Similarly, for the reliability test, the 35 questionnaire items divided into three variables had a value greater than 0.7. The reliability for the religiosity variable was 0.928, for the brand loyalty variable 0.854, and for the decision to boycott pro-Israel products 0.874, indicating high reliability.

### **4.2. Classical Assumption Test**

Data normality was tested using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and the Monte Carlo test. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test had a significance level of 0.200 and the Monte Carlo test had a significance level of 0.300, both greater than 0.05, indicating normality.

Furthermore, the collinearity test showed a tolerance value of 0.716045, which is less than 1, and a VIF value of 1.39656, which is less than 5. This indicates that there is no multicollinearity or resonance between the two independent variables.

The skeletal stability test was conducted using the Glejser test and obtained significance levels greater than 0.05; for the religiosity variable, it was 0.588 and for the brand loyalty variable, it was 0.159. This indicates that there is no accumulation of residuals in one location (homokedasticity).

The linearity test for the religiosity and brand loyalty variables on the decision to boycott pro-Israel products was 0.090 for the religiosity variable and 0.139 for the brand loyalty variable. With deviations from linearity values greater than 0.05 (0.090 and 0.139), both independent variables are linearly related to the decision to boycott pro-Israel products.

Thus, the classical assumptions must satisfy a certain constant, and all do, making this data suitable for processing using multiple linear regression.

### **4.3. Model Testing**

Model testing was conducted using ANOVA or the F-test to examine the relationship between variables. This study obtained an F-value of 14.827 with a significance level of 0.001, indicating that the association model was considered sound.

The determination test ensures that the independent variables in the model can explain a significant portion of their influence on the dependent variable. In this study, the coefficient of determination was 27.7%. Therefore, this model is still open to additional or modified research variables for future research.

### **4.4. Hypothesis Testing**

The hypothesis testing was based on the results of the t-test data processing on the religiosity and brand loyalty variables, as shown in the following table:

Table 2. Model Coefficiency

| Model                                   |               | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t     | Sig.  |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
|                                         |               | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |       |       |
| 1                                       | (Constant)    | 16.854                      | 4.693      |                           | 3.591 | <,001 |
|                                         | Religiosity   | .207                        | .075       | .293                      | 2.777 | .007  |
|                                         | Brand Loyalty | .248                        | .106       | .247                      | 2.337 | .022  |
| a. Dependent Variable: Boycott Decision |               |                             |            |                           |       |       |

As the values in the table above, the results of the t-test for the religiosity variable on the boycott decision (t) are 2.777 or a significance of 0.007 and for the religiosity variable on the boycott decision (t) are 2.337 or a significance of 0.022. The significance value of the two relationships is less than 0.05, meaning that the assumption "There is a positive and significant influence between religiosity on the decision to boycott pro-Israel products" and the assumption "There is a positive and significant influence between brand loyalty on the decision to boycott pro-Israel products" is proven to be real (significant).

#### 4.5. Multiple Linear Regression Test

Regression testing belongs to the parametric statistical group, so it produces parameters after the test is conducted. These parameters are in the form of a regression equation:  $Y = a + bX$  for simple regression, and  $Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2$  for multiple regression with two independent variables. Therefore, the parameters for this regression are  $Y = 16.854 + 0.207X_1 + 0.248X_2$ . This means that the decision to boycott pro-Israel products (Y) will have a value of 16.854 when  $X_1$  (Religiosity) and  $X_2$  (Brand Loyalty) are zero (0).

Meanwhile, the decision to boycott pro-Israel products will continue to increase according to the coefficients of  $X_1$  and  $X_2$ . If  $X_1$  and  $X_2$  are equal to one unit, Y will increase by  $(0.207 + 0.248) = 0.455$ , or 19.409 units. If  $X_1$  and  $X_2$  have a value of 10 units, there will be an increase in Y of  $(2.07+2.48)$  or 24.104, and so on.

#### 5. Discussion

The characteristics of the respondents used as samples in this study are quite unique. Data were collected using a Google Form. In terms of gender, 93% were women and 7% were men. To say that the respondents were the power of mothers would be impossible, as the majority of them were still students (81%). They resided in Yogyakarta (20%), Jakarta (13%), Central Java (10%), West Java (17%), East Java (13%), Sumatra (12%), Kalimantan (4%), and other (10%). Meanwhile, descriptive tests of the questionnaire ranges revealed an average score of 450 for the religiosity variable, or very high, 416 for the brand loyalty variable, and 433 for the decision to boycott pro-Israel products. The variable descriptions represent respondents' assessments of each questionnaire item. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the questionnaire used was quite robust.

Starting from Gibson's (2010) statement that religiosity is the internalization of religious values within a person. The location of this internalization is related to mental and linguistic beliefs regarding the teachings of a religion. This belief is manifested in daily actions and deeds. Gibson's (2010) statement is in line with the results of this study, namely that the religiosity variable (X1) influences the decision variable to boycott pro-Israel products (Y). In this case, the research sample is fanatical Muslims. The word fanatic represents the statement "beliefs manifested in daily actions and deeds." This group is a group of Muslims whose souls have been gilded by religious actions, especially regarding actions to defend Palestine, they will defend to the death, even daring to die.

The data from this research states that the results of the hypothesis test (t-test) obtained a significance value of the religiosity variable (X1) of  $0.001 < 0.05$  with a t-count value of  $2.777 > t \text{ table } 1.664$ . These values can be interpreted as "there is a positive influence between the religiosity variable (X1) on the decision to boycott pro-Israel products (Y)". So it can be concluded that the influence of the religiosity of fanatical Muslims has a positive and significant influence on the decision to boycott pro-Israel products (Y). In the five dimensions of Glock & Stark as quoted by Mucharam & Nashori (2002), the results of this study recommend the Consequence Dimension or the sixth dimension, namely "the behavior of someone who faithfully carries out His commands and abandons His prohibitions".

The results of this study align with and reinforce those of Fakriza & Nurdin (2019) and Khoiruman & Wariati (2023), which found that religiosity has a positive and significant influence on boycott decisions. The relationship between the two variables is nearly strong (0.533) and positive, meaning that the higher a person's religiosity, the higher the likelihood of boycotting pro-Israel products. Therefore, it can be concluded that individuals with high levels of religiosity are more likely to boycott pro-Israel products out of concern for their fellow Muslims in Palestine.

The results of further research, related to the influence of the brand loyalty variable (X2) on the decision to boycott pro-Israel products (Y) can be seen from the results of the t-test which shows that the significance value of the brand loyalty variable is  $0.022 < 0.05$ . This can be interpreted that the brand loyalty variable (X2) has a significant influence on the decision variable to boycott pro-Israel products (Y). Then it is known that the regression coefficient value or t-count is  $2.337 > t \text{ table } 1.664$  which means there is a positive influence between the brand loyalty variable (X2) on the boycott decision variable (Y). So it can be concluded that the brand loyalty variable (X2) has a positive and significant influence on the decision variable to boycott pro-Israel products (Y).

Theoretically, brand loyalty is a measure of customer commitment to a brand. This measure can indicate whether consumers are likely to switch to another brand, especially if there is a change in brand, either in terms of price or other features. Various approaches can be used to measure brand loyalty, including behavioral measurements, cost measurements, switching, satisfaction measurements, brand love measurements, and involvement measurements (Sugiarto, Durianto, & Sitinjak, 2004). Therefore, according to this theory, consumer loyalty to a brand can change depending on the conditions. Sympathy for Palestine could lead to antipathy towards pro-Israel products, which is a condition that causes the loss of brand loyalty of (fanatical) Muslims to pro-Israel products.

The results of this study align with those of Utama, Simon, Nurlaela, & Arsyad (2023), who found that brand loyalty has a positive and significant influence on boycott decisions. This means that the higher a person's level of brand loyalty—anti-climatic—the higher the level of a person's boycott decision towards a brand. Therefore, it can be said that the decision to boycott pro-Israel products has a positive impact on brand loyalty towards non-boycotted products. Fanatical Muslim consumers ultimately decided to switch to non-Israeli brands or locally made products. And that is a huge loss, because loyal consumers are an invaluable asset. According to Griffin (2010, p. 31), brand loyalty is a more reliable measure for predicting sales and financial growth.

Finally, this study also produces parameters or regression equations as follows,  $Y = 16.854 + 0.207X_1 + 0.248X_2$ ; that the constant value for the decision to boycott pro-Israel products is quite high, namely 16.654. From a theoretical perspective, Stephen F. Ross states that the term boycott has a broad meaning that includes different cooperative actions to refuse business with another party. Likewise, *St. Paul Fire & Marine Insurance Co. v. Barry* (1978), states a boycott as "a method carried out by one party to put pressure on a party with a dispute by restraining or pressuring another person to provide support or services to the person being targeted." Some boycotts are aimed at competitors to drive competitors out of the market so that the boycotters can control the business. However, the boycott should not be directed against competitors of co-conspirators (Ross, 1993). This means that the high boycott rate for pro-Israel products suggests that this movement or action is seen as effective among fanatical Muslims. However, there are still quite a large number of Muslims who are less fanatical about their faith (Islam). Therefore, it can be argued that boycotts are only effective for or when Muslims are fanatical about their teachings (Islam).

## **6. Conclusion**

The hypothesis of a partial influence of religiosity and brand loyalty on the decision to boycott pro-Israel products was confirmed, meaning that two hypotheses were (i) "There is a significant influence between religiosity and the decision to boycott pro-Israel products among fanatical Muslim communities" and (ii) "There is a significant influence between brand loyalty and the decision to boycott pro-Israel products among fanatical Muslim communities." This means that the hypothesis was confirmed or accepted, with a significance value lower than the standard significance value.

The hypothesis of a simultaneous influence of religiosity and brand loyalty on the decision to boycott pro-Israel products was also confirmed by the hypothesis test, which accepted the positive hypothesis: There is a simultaneous influence between religiosity and brand loyalty on the decision to boycott pro-Israel products.

This means that both individually and together, the two variables, religiosity and brand loyalty toward pro-Israel products, have a strong (significant) influence on boycotting pro-Israel products. Of course, this must receive a positive response from Israel and its allies, because this action is an economic action that will slowly but surely bankrupt the country.

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