


# Integration of knowledge sharing and training transfer to enhance sales promotion girls' performance for Islamic products: A qualitative study

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## ABSTRAK

### Introduction

In today's competitive marketing environment, knowledge sharing and effective training transfer have become essential strategies for enhancing employee performance. This study investigates how these two mechanisms influence the performance of Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs) for Unilever's Islamic product lines in Kendari City, Indonesia.

### Objectives

The research aims to examine the roles of knowledge collecting and knowledge donating, as well as the transfer of training outcomes, in strengthening SPG communication and sales skills.

### Method

Using a qualitative-descriptive approach, data were collected through 25 in-depth structured interviews, participant observations, and document reviews involving selected SPG participants and supervisors. Thematic analysis was conducted manually using the interactive model, encompassing data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

### Results

The findings reveal that formal knowledge collecting—mainly through structured training sessions—improves understanding of personal selling concepts and Unilever's Islamic products. Informal knowledge sharing, including peer discussions, enhances practical skills but still faces challenges in conceptual depth. The study also finds that

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knowledge donating, although beneficial, is hindered by time constraints, uneven knowledge levels, and limited organizational recognition. Additionally, the transfer of training—delivered by Unilever’s internal supervisors and brand-specific trainers—is significantly influenced by hands-on field practice, collaborative coworker support, and motivational incentives, especially recognition from management for successfully applying training content.

### Implications

These findings highlight the importance of integrating formal and informal knowledge-sharing mechanisms with practical training transfer strategies. The study implies that companies should provide applied learning opportunities and structured appreciation programs to foster a more collaborative and adaptive work environment that supports SPG performance.

### Originality/Novelty

This research offers novel insights into how knowledge dynamics and training transfer operate within the marketing of Islamic (halal-certified) products in an emerging economy. Specifically, it contributes to the limited literature on frontline personnel development—such as Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs)—by highlighting how value-driven knowledge sharing and Sharia-aligned training practices enhance communication and sales effectiveness. This contextualized contribution bridges gaps in Islamic marketing literature, where most studies focus on consumer behavior or branding, rather than internal HRD mechanisms supporting faith-based marketing implementation.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the context of competitive Islamic product markets, frontline promotional workers play a vital role in ensuring brand integrity, customer trust, and sales effectiveness. Among these, Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs) serve as the face of the brand in retail environments, requiring both technical product knowledge and communication competence aligned with Islamic values. However, ensuring consistently high performance among SPGs remains a challenge in many emerging economies. Performance, as defined by Adamy (2016), encompasses the effectiveness and efficiency with which tasks are completed in accordance with organizational expectations—making it a critical outcome of human resource development interventions. This study focuses on understanding how internal organizational mechanisms—particularly knowledge sharing and training transfer—can enhance SPG

performance in promoting halal-certified products. Through this lens, we examine the relevance of HRD strategies in supporting Islamic marketing personnel at PT Unilever in Kendari City, Indonesia.

Among the most common HRD interventions is training, which equips employees with new knowledge, improved skills, and a deeper understanding of work procedures (Mizrak & Caylan, 2023; Noe et al., 2019). However, another critical and often underestimated method is knowledge sharing. In organizational settings, knowledge sharing refers to the informal or structured exchange of experience and insights among employees—through discussions, presentations, mentoring, or collaborative practices (Choudhary & Sarikwal, 2017; Suppiah & Sandhu, 2011). This process plays a crucial role in supporting continuous learning and adapting to operational challenges.

Research by Marjani et al. (2019) and Wang et al. (2016) demonstrates that knowledge sharing fosters innovation, strengthens problem-solving capabilities, and enhances adaptability, particularly in environments where agility and creativity are essential. This aligns with Sawan (2021), who found that knowledge sharing improves individual and collective performance by promoting collaboration and building a stronger understanding of tasks. Despite these benefits, knowledge sharing remains difficult to institutionalize, often hindered by weak commitment, low motivation, and inadequate organizational support (Baharun et al., 2021).

In addition to knowledge sharing, training transfer—the effective application of acquired knowledge and skills in the actual workplace—is equally critical in influencing performance. Scholars such as Razak & Zahidi (2024), Gautam & Basnet (2021), and Schoeb et al. (2021) have emphasized that training yields real benefits only when employees apply what they have learned. However, this process is influenced by multiple factors, including training design, supervisory support, organizational culture, and individual attitudes (Al-Mottahar & Pangil, 2021; Wang et al., 2022). In the context of Islamic product marketing, poorly designed or inconsistently delivered training programs—especially those that overlook the religious and ethical dimensions of the product—may fail to engage frontline personnel such as Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs). The absence of structured follow-up, field mentoring, and feedback loops further limits the transfer of training into practical performance improvements (Kodwani & Prashar, 2021; Yang et al., 2020).

The role of knowledge sharing and training transfer becomes even more critical in the context of marketing Islamic products, such as halal-certified cosmetics, food, beverages, and personal care products. Islamic products are governed not only by quality and safety standards but also by ethical and religious values based on Sharia principles. The halal industry has grown significantly in recent years, with global Muslim consumers increasingly demanding transparency, ethical sourcing, and spiritual alignment in the goods and services they consume (Aminah, 2023; Nurhayati & Hendar, 2019). This shift requires not only product compliance but also competent and value-aligned personnel to communicate the essence of Islamic values effectively to consumers.



In this regard, Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs), who serve as the frontline in product marketing and consumer interaction, play a pivotal role. Their understanding of the Islamic product attributes, including halal certification, ethical ingredients, and spiritual benefits, must be supported by continuous knowledge development and experiential learning. Recent studies by Faisal et al. (2024) highlight that knowledge of halal principles among frontline staff significantly enhances consumer trust and purchase intention. Therefore, effective training and knowledge-sharing practices tailored to Islamic values are necessary to empower SPGs to represent not just the brand but also the spiritual integrity of the products they promote.

This study is positioned to address a critical research gap regarding the intersection of HRD practices—particularly knowledge sharing and training transfer—and their influence on employee performance in the Islamic product sector. Previous studies have primarily focused on general employee training and knowledge dissemination across conventional industries (Indah et al., 2017; Harwaty et al., 2019), with limited empirical evidence on how these mechanisms operate in faith-based marketing environments. Specifically, research examining frontline promotional personnel, such as Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs), within Islamic product campaigns remains scarce, despite their critical role in conveying religious values and brand credibility to consumers (Faisal et al., 2024; Nurhayati & Hendar, 2019).

This research explores the case of Sales Promotion Girls (SPG) at PT Unilever in Kendari City, focusing on Islamic personal care products marketed under the halal concept. Initial field interviews indicated challenges related to low employee awareness of the importance of halal product knowledge, minimal understanding of Sharia compliance, and weak mechanisms for knowledge sharing within teams. Moreover, the lack of structured incentives and continuous mentorship programs contributes to the underperformance of SPGs in delivering consistent brand communication aligned with Islamic values.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of human resource development (HRD) theory by integrating faith-driven knowledge sharing and Sharia-based performance indicators into employee competency frameworks. Practically, it offers actionable recommendations for companies in the halal product sector to design knowledge-sharing and training-transfer models that are both performance-oriented and ethically compliant. Using a qualitative-descriptive approach, the study explores three core aspects: (1) how SPGs acquire and donate knowledge related to Islamic product promotion, (2) how training transfer is implemented and influenced by workplace conditions, and (3) what contextual barriers and enabling factors shape these HRD processes. These insights are derived from in-depth interviews, field observations, and document reviews involving frontline promotional personnel at PT Unilever in Kendari City.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee performance is a critical determinant of organizational competitiveness and sustainability, especially in sectors characterized by high consumer interaction such as retail and fast-moving consumer goods. According to Adamy (2016), performance involves the degree to which employees fulfill assigned tasks effectively and efficiently. This view is reinforced by Noe et al. (2019), who associate employee performance with both technical competence and behavioral adaptability. In the Islamic product sector, this includes the ability to communicate ethical and religious product attributes credibly and convincingly.

To support such performance outcomes, human resource development (HRD) interventions have become increasingly vital. Among these, employee training is regarded as a foundational approach to equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, and behaviors required for competent job execution. Noe et al. (2019) emphasize that effective training enhances both immediate task performance and long-term adaptability. However, research suggests that formal training alone is often insufficient to ensure sustained performance improvements, particularly in roles that require high interpersonal engagement and value-based communication, such as those involved in marketing Islamic products.

While formal employee training remains the most widely used HRD strategy, it often falls short in sustaining performance improvement—especially in roles requiring interpersonal engagement and value alignment. A complementary HRD strategy that addresses this shortfall is knowledge sharing, which involves the exchange of ideas, insights, and tacit knowledge through informal or structured interactions such as peer mentoring, collaborative work, and group discussions (Suppiah & Sandhu, 2011; Choudhary & Sarikwal, 2017). This process supports continuous learning and enhances contextual awareness—elements critical for employees marketing Islamic products, who must internalize and articulate complex halal attributes, including ethical sourcing, Sharia compliance, and spiritual value propositions (Arifin et al., 2022). Studies by Wang et al. (2016) and Kathiravelu et al. (2014) underscore that effective knowledge sharing contributes to innovation, team cohesion, and organizational agility. Yet, in many organizational environments, this practice remains underutilized due to limited incentives, lack of trust, and weak communication structures (Baharun et al., 2021; Hendrawan et al., 2020).

Closely related to knowledge development is the concept of training transfer—the extent to which knowledge and skills acquired through training are effectively applied on the job (Gautam & Basnet, 2021; Tabiu et al., 2020). In the Islamic product sector, training transfer is particularly relevant because frontline personnel are expected to act as both brand representatives and cultural communicators. Factors influencing successful transfer include training design, supervisory support, alignment with job tasks, and the presence of follow-up mechanisms (Wang et al., 2022; Al-Mottahar & Pangil, 2021). Effective transfer of training can enhance job satisfaction, improve communication with consumers, and reinforce the brand's Islamic identity (Hashish &



Bajbeir, 2022; Pham et al., 2023). In contrast, the absence of contextual relevance or managerial reinforcement may result in disengaged personnel and inconsistent messaging, especially in roles involving the promotion of faith-based products (Pilbeam & Karanikas, 2023; Yang et al., 2020). This aligns with Baldwin and Ford's (1988) Transfer of Training Theory, which posits that post-training application is contingent upon environmental support, task alignment, and motivation to transfer. In faith-driven organizational contexts, these factors are further shaped by the alignment between training content and religious values internalized by employees.

Although both knowledge sharing and training transfer have been widely examined in general HRD literature, their combined impact—especially within the unique framework of Islamic product marketing—remains underexplored. Most existing studies analyze these variables in isolation and overlook the interactive dynamics that may emerge when they are integrated within a faith-informed organizational culture (Harwaty et al., 2019; Indah et al., 2017). Furthermore, empirical studies rarely address how these HRD mechanisms align with religiously grounded consumer expectations or contribute to the internalization of Sharia principles among employees.

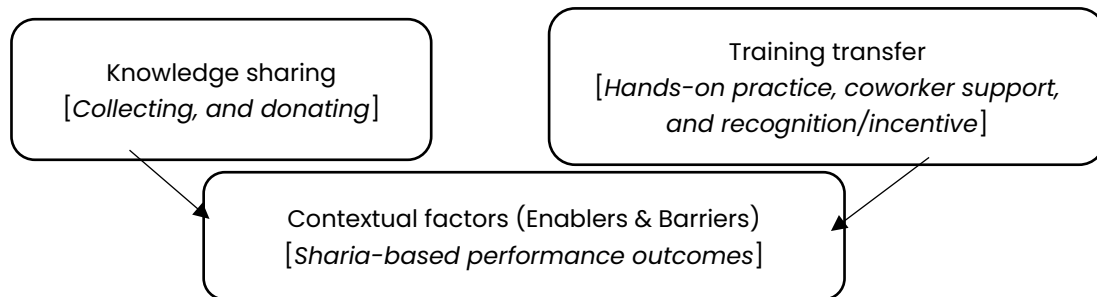
To address the identified gaps in the literature, this study examines the context-specific dynamics of HRD practices in Islamic product marketing. Specifically, it focuses on Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs) at PT Unilever in Kendari City, who are responsible for promoting halal personal care products to a predominantly Muslim consumer base. Initial field observations—conducted prior to formal data collection—indicate several key challenges: low awareness of halal certification standards, weak peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, and minimal post-training follow-up. These challenges are further compounded by a lack of structured incentives and limited managerial emphasis on religious knowledge dissemination. Such conditions present a critical opportunity to explore how integrated HRD approaches—combining knowledge sharing and training transfer—can be tailored to improve employee performance in alignment with Islamic product values and consumer trust imperatives.

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) guiding this study maps the relationship between knowledge sharing practices (both collecting and donating), transfer of training mechanisms (including workplace application, support, and motivation), and contextual factors that act as either enablers or barriers. These three domains converge to influence employee performance outcomes in the Islamic product sector, which are framed not only by technical effectiveness but also by adherence to Sharia-based ethical standards. This framework serves as an interpretive lens for data analysis, consistent with the study's qualitative-descriptive orientation.



**Figure 1**

*Qualitative Conceptual Framework*



Source: Authors' analysis.

## METHOD

This study was conducted in Kendari City, Indonesia, with a specific focus on selected retail outlets and supermarkets that serve as official distribution points for Unilever's halal-certified consumer products. The research setting was chosen purposively to ensure contextual relevance to the study's core focus: exploring how knowledge sharing and training transfer influence the performance of Sales Promotion Girls (SPG) promoting Islamic (halal) product lines in dynamic retail environments.

A qualitative-descriptive approach was employed to investigate the nuanced and socially embedded practices of training application and informal knowledge exchange. As explained by Hasddin et al. (2022), qualitative research emphasizes the authenticity of individual and collective experiences, aiming to produce a comprehensive and grounded interpretation of complex social phenomena. This approach was deemed appropriate to capture the lived experiences of SPGs in navigating performance expectations, training interventions, and collaborative behaviors, especially in relation to the Islamic product segment—a domain often underexplored in existing performance literature.

This study offers a contextual and theoretical contribution by situating knowledge sharing and training transfer within the real-world operational environment of SPGs engaged in promoting Islamic product variants. While prior studies such as Indah et al. (2017) and Harwaty et al. (2019) relied on quantitative data to measure performance outcomes, this study adopts a process-oriented perspective to explore the informal mechanisms that support or hinder productivity among frontline promotion workers. The research is aligned with recent qualitative inquiries into human resource practices and organizational learning in Indonesia (e.g., Sari & Rizqi, 2023; Ramdiani et al., 2023; Muhamad et al., 2023).

Informants were selected through purposive sampling based on their active roles in Unilever's promotional and learning processes. The sample included 25 individuals: 22 SPGs, one area Supervisor, one SPG Coordinator, and one Beauty Advisor. All participants were directly involved in promotional activities and were knowledgeable about internal training systems and peer learning practices. Detailed information regarding the classification of informants is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1***Classification of research informants*

Informant Type			N	Description
Sales	Promotion	Girls	22	Frontline staff promoting Islamic products in retail outlets (SPGs)
Area Supervisor			1	Oversees SPG performance and coordinates training implementation
SPG Coordinator			1	Manages scheduling, monitors peer learning, and handles logistics
Beauty Advisor			1	Provides technical product knowledge and supports product training

Source: Primary data. Authors' analysis.

To gather comprehensive and triangulated data, three main techniques were applied:

1. **In-depth Structured Interviews:** Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured thematic guide developed from the literature review and aligned with the research objectives. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions designed to explore SPGs' perceptions of training quality, motivation to implement learning, and the nature of knowledge sharing within their teams. All interviews were conducted face-to-face at a nearby retail location or break area during SPGs' off-hours, ensuring minimal disruption to work routines. Each session lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes, and verbal consent was obtained prior to conducting the interviews.
2. **Participant Observation:** Direct observation was conducted during promotional activities in-store, focusing on how SPGs implement learned knowledge and engage in real-time knowledge exchange with colleagues. Special attention was paid to how values and messages related to Islamic product lines were conveyed.
3. **Document Review:** Internal training materials, sales tracking sheets, peer mentoring logs, and performance reports were analyzed to validate and enrich insights gathered through interviews and observation.

To ensure research rigor and trustworthiness, the following strategies were employed: a) **Data Triangulation:** Cross-verification was performed by comparing data from interviews, observations, documents, and relevant findings from prior literature to identify converging themes and validate empirical insights; b) **Member Checking:** Key findings were confirmed with selected informants to ensure accuracy and authenticity; and c) **Peer Debriefing:** Analytical interpretations were reviewed with fellow researchers to reduce bias and enhance interpretative credibility.

Data were analyzed following the Miles & Huberman (1994) interactive model consisting of three interlinked stages: a) **Data Reduction:** Transcripts and field notes were coded and summarized to identify themes relevant to performance, knowledge sharing, and training transfer; b) **Data Display:** Thematic insights were organized into



visual and narrative formats, including matrices and tables to highlight patterns; and c) Conclusion Drawing and Verification: Findings were interpreted in light of the conceptual framework to explain the interrelationships between organizational learning practices and employee performance outcomes in the context of halal product promotion.

While qualitative by design, the findings offer analytical generalizability for retail-based organizations and HR practitioners seeking to improve promotional workforce performance through integrative learning strategies. The study is particularly relevant in contexts where religiously aligned products require not only technical sales competence but also value-driven communication, making the transfer of training and tacit knowledge even more critical. Thematic coding and categorization were performed manually without the use of software such as NVivo or MaxQDA, allowing the researchers to engage deeply with the data and maintain contextual accuracy.

## RESULTS

The implications of knowledge sharing among Sales Promotion Girls (SPG) of PT Unilever in Kendari City—particularly in the context of promoting Islamic (halal) products—are presented through two core dimensions: knowledge collecting and knowledge donating. These dimensions are essential not only for improving performance but also for maintaining compliance with Islamic values in product presentation, marketing ethics, and communication behavior.

### Knowledge Sharing in the Context of Islamic Product Promotion

The study revealed that successful Muslim fashion businesses in Yogyakarta prioritize product development strategies that respond to market demands while aligning with Islamic principles. Customization and innovation were central to these efforts. For example, businesses like Gamis Amika and Dafh Hijab demonstrated a strong understanding of consumer preferences, tailoring their designs to meet the needs of different demographics.

#### Knowledge Collecting

Knowledge collecting refers to the SPG's efforts to gather accurate, relevant, and Sharia-compliant knowledge related to the products they promote. This includes both technical knowledge—such as product ingredients and halal certification—and non-technical knowledge, including ethical sales techniques aligned with Islamic principles.

Based on interview data, two main patterns of knowledge collection were identified:

##### 1. Informal and Value-Oriented Knowledge Interaction

Informal knowledge collecting was often conducted through routine social interactions and mutual learning between colleagues and supervisors. For instance, SY (28 years old) stated:

"If I want to gain knowledge about work, both technical and non-technical to support my performance as an SPG, I usually discuss with other SPGs. We also often



communicate and coordinate about obstacles or how to approach consumers, including how to explain halal products correctly." (Interview with SY, 2023).

This statement demonstrates that SPGs acquire knowledge in a collegial, trust-based environment that supports Islamic values such as *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and *amanah* (trust).

## 2. Semi-Formal Knowledge Documentation with Halal Emphasis

Some SPGs implement more structured methods, such as recording information from training sessions and consulting directly with supervisors regarding specific halal product knowledge. M (25 years old) said:

"In training activities, Beauty Advisors usually record all the materials, including explanations about the composition of halal products and their certificates. That really helps me when explaining to consumers who do pay attention to the halalness of products." (Interview with M, 2023).

Here, knowledge collection includes religious and product content, ensuring the accuracy of promotional messages conveyed to Muslim consumers, in line with the principle of *tabligh* (honest communication).

## 3. Proactively Seeking Ethical and Technical Guidance

Another informant emphasized their initiative in seeking knowledge from their superiors, especially when the halal status of a product is a concern for consumers. H (27 years old) noted:

"If I have questions from consumers about the halalness of a product or its ingredients, I immediately consult my supervisor or read the training materials that have been recorded." (Interview with H, 2023).

This reflects the responsibility of SPGs to ensure that knowledge of halal *tayyiban* products is conveyed accurately—an important element in increasing the trust of Muslim consumers.

## 4. Sharing Practical Experience in Navigating Diverse Consumer Attitudes

SPGs often face diverse customer concerns regarding halal issues, which require not only knowledge but also *adab* (ethics in interactions). F (29 years old) emphasized:

"I often ask my friends for tips on how to explain products to consumers who are critical about halal. Sometimes I also learn from direct experience, so I don't say the wrong thing." (Interview with F, 2023).

This experiential learning illustrates how *adab al-mu'amalah* (ethics in business interactions) shapes knowledge gathering in the context of Islamic marketing.

The findings indicate that SPGs utilize two primary approaches to collect and internalize knowledge that supports the marketing of Islamic products:

- a. Non-formal: Ongoing peer discussions, supervisor consultation, and experiential exchanges grounded in trust and ethical interaction. These exchanges include clarification on halal principles, customer concerns, and marketing ethics.
- b. Semi-formal: Structured training and documentation of halal product attributes, marketing techniques, and internal Unilever policy updates, which SPGs compile in ledgers for daily use. These processes are aligned with Islamic values such as transparency (shiddiq) and responsibility (amanah).

Both patterns reflect not only knowledge acquisition but also the internalization of Islamic business ethics. These principles guide the SPGs' conduct and communication, thereby reinforcing a trust-based relationship with Muslim consumers. The knowledge sharing processes encompass both formal and informal elements deeply rooted in Islamic values.

The formal knowledge sharing process within the knowledge gathering dimension begins with selecting a relevant topic. At this stage, the supervisor and SPGs collaboratively identify a topic that aligns with field challenges or market demands, particularly those related to halal products and Islamic business principles. Once the topic is established, the next step involves preparing sharing materials such as presentations, videos, or written documents, which are systematically structured to ensure participants can easily understand the content.

Before the sharing session commences, the supervisor provides an overview of the session's context, including its purpose and the benefits participants may gain. This introduction is crucial for helping participants appreciate the material's importance, while also embedding Islamic values such as honesty (shiddiq) and responsibility (amanah) throughout the learning process.

During the session, the supervisor begins with a self-introduction followed by a concise explanation of the selected topic to provide foundational understanding. The supervisor actively facilitates the discussion to keep it focused and productive. After the discussion concludes, feedback is offered to clarify any remaining uncertainties and reinforce participants' comprehension.

As a final step, the supervisor conducts evaluation and follow-up activities aimed at deepening participants' understanding and ensuring the knowledge shared can be effectively applied in their daily work. This approach emphasizes that formal knowledge sharing is a structured, purposeful, and sustainable learning process grounded in Islamic ethical values.

In contrast, informal knowledge sharing among Unilever SPGs in Kendari City starts with identifying knowledge needs through direct discussions or data analysis to determine the most relevant information. Once these needs are clear, an appropriate platform—such as WhatsApp groups or online forums—is selected to facilitate practical and accessible knowledge exchange. This informal process reflects Islamic principles of mutual consultation (shura) and cooperation (ta'awun), fostering a supportive and trust-based environment for continuous knowledge sharing.



### **Knowledge Donating**

Knowledge donating is a key concept within knowledge sharing activities, referring to the voluntary and conscious act of individuals or groups sharing their knowledge or information to increase its usefulness for others. In organizational settings, knowledge donating reflects employees' willingness to share expertise without expecting financial rewards or formal recognition. This process is crucial in fostering a collaborative culture where knowledge and skills develop collectively, particularly in specialized fields such as Islamic product marketing.

In the context of this study, knowledge sharing encompasses the ability of individuals or groups involved—specifically Unilever Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs) in Kendari City—to effectively communicate both technical and non-technical information related to their work. This includes conveying knowledge on halal product attributes, personal selling strategies, and Islamic business ethics, which are essential for successfully marketing Islamic products.

Interviews with the Unilever SPG coordinator in Kendari revealed that formal and semi-formal knowledge sharing sessions are conducted monthly, totaling twelve sessions annually. These sessions are led by SPG supervisors or designated trainers from specific brand categories who possess deep expertise. According to the coordinator:

"At the initial stage, we conduct formal and semi-formal knowledge sharing once a month, facilitated by supervisors or specialized trainers who are experts in their fields. The material presented is clear and detailed, significantly enhancing SPGs' insights and skills in implementing effective personal selling strategies, especially for Unilever's halal-certified products." (Interview, 2023).

Meanwhile, informal knowledge sharing takes place more flexibly among SPGs, colleagues, and supervisors. Although employees generally communicate well in informal settings, gaps remain in fully understanding the ideal personal selling concepts and detailed product knowledge. Informal exchanges tend to be spontaneous, focusing on current challenges or sharing the latest performance information.

Several SPGs shared their experiences regarding informal knowledge exchange. NF (24 years old) stated:

"We regularly share knowledge with colleagues about ideas, experiences, and selling techniques. Everyone shares according to their comfort level, maintaining ongoing communication and coordination. Often, we seek advice on handling diverse customer personalities or clarifying unclear work reports." (Interview with NF, 2023).

However, some SPGs acknowledged challenges in knowledge sharing skills. H (27 years old) explained:

"Our skills in sharing knowledge are still limited. Many employees struggle to fully grasp the ideal personal selling approach and product details, and some are slow to

respond to requests for advice because they focus on meeting sales targets." (Interview with H, 2023)

SY (28 years old) also observed:

"There is a clear gap in both technical and non-technical knowledge among employees, which limits their ability to share work-related experiences, ideas, and contextual information. Nonetheless, we often communicate during problem-solving at partner outlets or performance discussions." (Interview with SY, 2023).

Further observations revealed hesitation among some SPGs to share knowledge, especially between senior and junior employees. This reluctance often stems from a perceived lack of recognition or incentives for active knowledge contributors. F (29 years old) voiced this concern:

"Why should I bother sharing knowledge? Each SPG has individual sales targets, and failure to meet them leads to reprimands from superiors. Moreover, the company does not reward those who actively share knowledge." (Interview with F, 2023).

These findings indicate that despite ongoing communication efforts, knowledge sharing among Unilever SPGs in Kendari remains suboptimal. The main barriers include knowledge gaps, heavy individual workloads, and insufficient company recognition, which collectively hinder effective knowledge donation and collaborative learning, especially in the context of marketing Islamic products that require both technical understanding and adherence to Islamic ethical principles.

### **Transfer of Training**

The concept of transfer of training refers to the process by which individuals apply the skills, knowledge, and attitudes acquired during training to their work environment. In this study, transfer of training specifically relates to the ability of the Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs) team at PT. Unilever in Kendari City to implement both technical and non-technical training materials to enhance their field performance.

During an interview, NF (24 years old), an SPG informant, emphasized the usefulness of the training materials in understanding the technical aspects of her role. However, she highlighted that the effective application of these materials depends largely on consistent practice in the field:

"The material presented during the training was very comprehensive, especially regarding how to highlight product benefits and interact with customers. However, if it is not applied in real situations, it is easy to forget. That is why I always try to apply the tips I learned during the training when serving buyers in the store." (Interview with NF, 2023).

Similarly, H (27 years old), another SPG, noted that while training is important, the practical application of techniques can be challenging due to the pressure of meeting sales targets:



"Training is important, but sometimes the techniques taught are difficult to apply when the work environment is busy or stressful. We often adapt to the situation. However, when I have free time, I like to review the training materials, especially tips for communicating better with buyers." (Interview with H, 2023).

SY (28 years old) further emphasized the role of cooperation and communication among colleagues in successfully implementing training materials:

"After the training session, I often discuss the materials with my colleagues so that we can remind each other. Sometimes we forget some parts of the materials, so sharing is very important to ensure that we remember and apply them effectively." (Interview with SY, 2023).

On the other hand, F (29 years old) identified a lack of appreciation or recognition for employees who effectively apply training knowledge as a significant barrier to motivation:

"We try our best to implement the training materials, but when no one acknowledges our efforts, some of my colleagues lose their motivation to apply what they have learned." (Interview with F, 2023).

The importance of field practice was also emphasized by R (32 years old), a Supervisor, who pointed out that those who consistently apply what they learn develop their sales techniques more rapidly:

"We always encourage SPGs to practice what they learn in training as soon as possible. Usually, those who consistently apply the material develop effective sales techniques faster. However, without regular practice, the knowledge gained during training is easily forgotten." (Interview with R, 2023).

Likewise, A (30 years old), an SPG Coordinator, acknowledged that the pressure to meet sales targets can sometimes hinder the optimal transfer of training into practice:

"We realize that workplace conditions can make it difficult for SPGs to apply everything they learn in training. The pressure to meet sales targets often forces them to prioritize immediate results. Therefore, we consistently remind them to apply training strategies as much as possible." (Interview with A, 2023).

Finally, M (28 years old), a Beauty Advisor, highlighted that collaboration and open communication with colleagues significantly support the effective implementation of training:

"After the training, I usually discuss with colleagues to exchange experiences. This is very helpful because sometimes we forget some parts of the material, but by sharing, we become more prepared and more confident when interacting with buyers." (Interview with M, 2023).

Overall, the findings suggest that while the training programs provide valuable knowledge, the successful transfer of this training into daily work practices depends on



regular field application, peer collaboration, and organizational support such as recognition and manageable workload pressures. These factors are critical for ensuring that SPGs can effectively apply both technical and interpersonal skills to promote Unilever's products in Kendari City.

## DISCUSSION

### Knowledge Sharing with Sales Promotion Girl (SPG)

Based on information from the coordinator and supervisor informants, both formal and informal knowledge sharing practices positively impact the performance of PT Unilever's Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs) in Kendari City. These practices help narrow the knowledge gap among SPGs and facilitate mutual learning. However, the extent of these positive outcomes largely depends on how effectively SPGs can collect, internalize, and apply relevant work-related knowledge in alignment with Islamic product values.

Empirical observations in this study demonstrate that structured knowledge-sharing sessions—such as formal trainings and company-organized seminars—serve as critical mechanisms for facilitating access to reliable and systematically organized information. These sessions improve not only SPGs' understanding of product attributes and ethical sales approaches but also reinforce key Islamic values such as honesty (*shiddiq*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), and service excellence. This supports earlier research by Fauzi et al. (2025) and Memah et al. (2017), which found that formalized knowledge delivery strengthens procedural clarity and enhances technical proficiency.

In contrast, informal knowledge-sharing activities provide distinct advantages, particularly in their ability to generate tacit, experience-based insights through spontaneous interactions. SPGs frequently rely on peer discussions and real-time exchanges to navigate consumer concerns, refine sales language, and solve practical problems—especially in high-pressure retail settings. These findings resonate with Khaerana and Mangiwa (2021), who argue that informal exchanges offer flexible, context-sensitive learning. However, this study extends their findings by situating informal sharing within a faith-based ethical framework, where values such as *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation) and *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) shape the trust and solidarity required for collaborative learning.

Regarding knowledge donation, formal knowledge sharing initiatives improve SPGs' ability to communicate information clearly, systematically, and comprehensively. Enhanced communication skills drive productivity and strengthen overall team performance. This aligns with Meitiana et al. (2020), who emphasized that collaborative knowledge environments enhance clarity and application of job strategies. Yet, this study contributes new insights by revealing that the absence of recognition and uneven knowledge levels often hinders willingness to donate knowledge—an aspect underexplored in previous studies.

Knowledge sharing is widely recognized as a key factor in improving employee performance (Memah et al., 2017; Aristanto, 2017; Erwina & Mira, 2019; Nurcahyo &



Wikaningrum, 2020; Sunarta et al., 2020; Fauzi et al., 2025). In a dynamic and constantly evolving work environment, this practice is essential for enabling the exchange of valuable information, skills, and experiences relevant to employees' roles.

The findings of this study align with Meitiana et al. (2020), emphasizing that knowledge sharing significantly enhances knowledge acquisition efforts. This practice not only strengthens employees' understanding of key concepts but also supports the practical implementation of effective work strategies. Essentially, knowledge sharing creates a work environment that encourages exchanging proven methods and innovative ideas, ultimately promoting more efficient and productive work practices.

Structured activities such as company-sponsored training and seminars play a vital role in expanding employees' access to organized and systematic knowledge. Through these initiatives, employees better understand work standards, product benefits, customer engagement tactics, and effective sales techniques. When well designed, these programs help employees absorb material efficiently, making it easier to apply newly acquired knowledge in daily tasks.

In addition to formal activities, informal knowledge sharing is equally important. As Khaerana & Mangiwa (2021) note, informal exchanges—such as spontaneous discussions, casual conversations, or impromptu problem-solving sessions—provide valuable insights grounded in real-world experience. These interactions prove especially useful when employees face unexpected challenges that require quick decisions and practical solutions.

Informal knowledge sharing not only broadens employees' practical understanding but also fosters stronger interpersonal relationships in the workplace. This creates a collaborative and supportive environment that enhances motivation, boosts self-confidence, and ultimately drives improved performance.

The successful implementation of formal and informal knowledge sharing hinges on fostering a conducive organizational culture. Companies that actively promote knowledge sharing tend to cultivate innovative and adaptive work environments. To maximize benefits, organizations should provide high-quality formal training while creating opportunities for informal knowledge exchange among employees.

By integrating structured knowledge sharing programs with informal interactions, companies like PT Unilever in Kendari City can enhance knowledge transfer, accelerate skills development, and achieve sustainable improvements in employee performance. This approach is in line with Islamic values emphasizing *ilm* (knowledge), *amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar* (encouraging good and preventing wrongdoing), and *ikhlas* (sincerity) in work, aiming for blessings and shared prosperity.

### **Transfer of Training to Sales Promotion Girl (SPG) in the Context of Islamic Product Marketing**

The findings of this study indicate that the transfer of training among Unilever SPGs in Kendari City, particularly in the context of promoting Islamic products, is significantly influenced by three key factors. First, hands-on practice in the field plays a crucial role in deepening the understanding of training materials related to Islamic product values,

features, and ethical marketing principles. This direct engagement helps SPGs internalize not only the technical aspects of product knowledge but also the spiritual and cultural sensitivities important in Islamic consumer contexts.

Second, strong collaboration and peer support among SPGs greatly enhance retention and application of training content. Through continuous dialogue and sharing of experiences, SPGs are able to better grasp the unique needs of Muslim customers, such as halal certification, Islamic etiquettes in sales, and trust-building practices. This cooperative learning environment fosters a collective competence that aligns with the Islamic principles of mutual help (ta'awun) and knowledge sharing.

Third, motivational factors including recognition and rewards tailored to highlight both performance and adherence to Islamic ethical standards encourage SPGs to apply their training effectively. Appreciation for their commitment to honest and responsible promotion of Islamic products boosts morale and dedication, thereby facilitating optimal transfer of training outcomes.

These results align with previous studies ([Razak et al., 2024](#); [Pham et al., 2023](#)) showing that employees who successfully apply training knowledge improve their skills, productivity, and job performance while reducing errors. Furthermore, [Mdhlalose \(2022\)](#) underscores that organizations prioritizing effective training transfer gain competitive advantage, which is particularly relevant in the growing Islamic consumer market.

Research by [Khosro & Akaraborworn \(2022\)](#) further supports that successful training transfer enhances employees' adaptability in dynamic environments. In this study's context, SPGs who internalize Islamic product knowledge and training outcomes report higher job satisfaction, positively impacting retention and reducing turnover costs ([Bhat et al., 2022](#); [Kraai & Mashau, 2020](#); [Salamon & Blume, 2021](#)).

Based on these insights, companies are encouraged to improve post-training evaluation by motivating SPGs to apply Islamic product knowledge through practical simulations, group discussions, and guided coaching that reflect real-world Islamic market scenarios. Additionally, structured recognition programs that emphasize both sales achievement and commitment to Islamic ethical marketing can further boost motivation and effective training transfer. This approach is consistent with research highlighting that a supportive work environment and continuous recognition of employee achievements are critical to successful training application ([Razak et al., 2024](#); [Sarfriz et al., 2021](#); [Gautam & Basnet, 2021](#)). By integrating Islamic values with structured training and motivational systems, organizations like PT Unilever in Kendari City can strengthen the capacity of their SPGs to deliver both competitive and ethically aligned services in the Islamic product sector.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that knowledge sharing activities significantly contribute to enhancing the performance of Unilever Sales Promotion Girls (SPGs) in Kendari City through two main dimensions: knowledge collecting and knowledge donating. In the dimension of knowledge collecting, formal knowledge sharing activities—such as



monthly training sessions led by supervisors or specialized trainers—effectively deliver training materials in a systematic and structured manner. These formal activities help SPGs improve their understanding of personal selling concepts and comprehensive knowledge of Unilever’s products, including the unique aspects of Islamic products and ethical marketing principles.

Conversely, informal knowledge sharing, such as spontaneous discussions among SPGs, enriches practical understanding, especially regarding real-world customer interactions. However, comprehension of the ideal personal selling concepts and Islamic product values still shows room for improvement in these informal settings. In the knowledge donating dimension, voluntary sharing of information among employees offers significant benefits for enhancing skills and task understanding. Despite this, several challenges remain, including knowledge gaps, individual workload constraints, and limited company recognition for active knowledge sharers.

Additionally, the transfer of training results to Unilever SPGs is influenced by three key factors. First, direct practice in the field is essential for solidifying understanding of training content, especially in applying Islamic product knowledge and ethical selling practices. Second, effective collaboration and mutual support among colleagues facilitate the successful application of training outcomes. Third, employee motivation, particularly through recognition and rewards for those who successfully implement training content, plays a crucial role in ensuring optimal training transfer.

### **Research Implications**

The findings imply that knowledge sharing positively impacts SPGs’ communication and sales skills, which ultimately enhances sales performance and productivity. To optimize these outcomes, companies are encouraged to improve training quality by incorporating more practical and contextually relevant approaches such as simulations, group discussions, and direct field coaching tailored to Islamic product marketing. Furthermore, implementing structured and meaningful appreciation programs for employees who actively share knowledge and successfully apply training outcomes can increase motivation and foster a culture of continuous learning. By effectively combining formal and informal knowledge sharing mechanisms, organizations can cultivate a collaborative, innovative, and adaptive work environment that supports sustainable performance improvement aligned with Islamic values.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study has several limitations to consider for future research. First, the research is limited to Unilever SPGs in Kendari City, and findings may not be generalizable to other regions or industries, where cultural and organizational differences could yield different results. Second, while the study identifies key factors influencing knowledge sharing and training transfer, it does not deeply explore psychological and social variables such as intrinsic motivation, leadership styles, and group dynamics, which may affect the effectiveness of these processes. Third, the qualitative approach focused on interviews

and observations limits the ability to quantitatively measure the effectiveness of knowledge sharing and its direct impact on individual and organizational performance.

### Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should consider expanding the study scope to include diverse geographic areas and industry sectors to gain broader insights into knowledge sharing and training transfer practices. Incorporating quantitative methods to measure the direct contribution of knowledge sharing to employee performance using specific indicators is recommended. Additionally, deeper exploration of psychological, social, and organizational culture factors—such as employee motivation, leadership influence, and team dynamics—can enrich understanding of the conditions that facilitate successful knowledge transfer.

By broadening the scope and methodological diversity, future studies can provide more comprehensive and actionable insights for companies aiming to develop effective knowledge sharing strategies and enhance job training effectiveness, particularly within the context of Islamic product marketing.

### Author Contributions

Conceptualization	M., I.H., H.B., A.M., E.Y., A., & D.M.	Resources	M., I.H., H.B., A.M., E.Y., A., & D.M.
Data curation	M., I.H., H.B., A.M., E.Y., A., & D.M.	Software	M., I.H., H.B., A.M., E.Y., A., & D.M.
Formal analysis	M., I.H., H.B., A.M., E.Y., A., & D.M.	Supervision	M., I.H., H.B., A.M., E.Y., A., & D.M.
Funding acquisition	M., I.H., H.B., A.M., E.Y., A., & D.M.	Validation	M., I.H., H.B., A.M., E.Y., A., & D.M.
Investigation	M., I.H., H.B., A.M., E.Y., A., & D.M.	Visualization	M., I.H., H.B., A.M., E.Y., A., & D.M.
Methodology	M., I.H., H.B., A.M., E.Y., A., & D.M.	Writing – original draft	M., I.H., H.B., A.M., E.Y., A., & D.M.
Project administration	M., I.H., H.B., A.M., E.Y., A., & D.M.	Writing – review & editing	M., I.H., H.B., A.M., E.Y., A., & D.M.

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The study was approved by Program Studi Manajemen (S2), Universitas Muhammadiyah Kendari, Kota Kendari, Indonesia.

### Informed Consent Statement

Informed consent was obtained before respondents filled out the questionnaire for this study.

### Data Availability Statement

The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author.



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## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

## Declaration of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

During the preparation of this work, the authors used ChatGPT, DeepL, Grammarly, and PaperPal to translate from Bahasa Indonesia into American English and improve the clarity of the language and readability of the article. After using these tools, the authors reviewed and edited the content as needed and took full responsibility for the content of the published article.

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