

THE ATTITUDE OF MERCHANTS TOWARDS RIBA AND FATWA ON INTEREST OF CONVENTIONAL BANK IN LANGSA ACEH

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ABSTRACT – This research aims to analyze and examine the level of knowledge possessed by the merchants in the traditional market of Langsa on the concept of riba, the reasons (factors) the merchants transact with the conventional bank, and the attitude of merchants on fatwa given by the National Sharia Board of the Indonesian Ulema Council (DSN-MUI). The research population is an unknown population that consists of all market traders in Langsa City and the sample selected is 117 respondents. This research implements a non-probability sampling technique with purposive sampling as the method. The result shows that majority of the respondents has a profound understanding on the haram concept of interest (riba) and the role of DSN-MUI as the obligated council in setting the fatwa, which needs to be followed, yet the respondents do not mind interacting with the conventional banks in terms of getting business financing. They believe that riba (usury) is forbidden, yet they do not mind borrowing some amount of funds or saving their money in conventional banks, which implemented the interest-based system. More than 31 respondents (26,5%) perceive that interest is not the same as riba, and 50 respondents (42,7%) say that conventional bank is very helpful in promoting business. A more aggressive role is needed from the Sharia banks to reach all layers of society and educate as well as promote sharia-based banking products, especially financing products.

Keywords: Merchants, Riba, Sharia Banking, Fatwa MUI

ABSTRAK – Perilaku Pedagang terhadap Riba dan Fatwa Bunga Bank Konvensional di Langsa Aceh. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dan menguji tingkat pengetahuan yang dimiliki oleh para pedagang di pasar tradisional Langsa terhadap konsep riba, alasan (faktor) mereka melakukan transaksi dengan bank konvensional, dan sikap para pedagang terhadap fatwa yang dikeluarkan oleh Dewan Syariah Nasional Majelis Ulama Indonesia (DSN-MUI). Sebanyak 117 responden telah dipilih sebagai sampel dari seluruh pedagang di Kota Langsa sebagai populasi yang tidak diketahui jumlahnya. Pengambilan sampel menerapkan teknik non probability sampling dengan metode purposive sampling. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa mayoritas responden memiliki pemahaman yang mendalam tentang konsep riba dan peran DSN-MUI sebagai dewan yang wajib menetapkan dan mengeluarkan fatwa dan perlu diikuti oleh masyarakat. Meskipun demikian responden tidak keberatan berinteraksi dengan bank konvensional dalam hal mendapatkan pembiayaan bisnis. Mereka percaya bahwa riba dilarang, namun mereka tidak keberatan meminjam sejumlah dana atau menyimpan uang mereka di bank konvensional, yang menerapkan sistem berbasis bunga. Lebih dari 31 responden (26,5%) merasa bahwa bunga tidak sama dengan riba, dan 50 responden (42,7%) mengatakan bahwa bank konvensional sangat membantu dalam mempromosikan bisnis. Peran yang lebih agresif diperlukan dari bank-bank Syariah untuk menjangkau semua lapisan masyarakat dan mengedukasi serta mempromosikan produk-produk perbankan berbasis syariah, terutama produk-produk pembiayaan.

Kata Kunci: Pedagang, Riba, Perbankan Syariah, Fatwa MUI.

INTRODUCTION

Most muslims still look cynical regarding Sharia banking and Sharia financial institutions, arguing that the difference between Islamic banks and conventional banks is only on the term of "interest" and "profit sharing". This is the most common opinion found in the wider community. People only know that Sharia banks are interest-free, but they have limited understanding about the mechanism of "profit sharing" (Mu'Allim, 2003; Ibrahim & Arifin, 2016). Some people think that Sharia banks are not able to provide certainty of income as the interest of conventional banks did. Meanwhile, the merchants think that it is more difficult to apply loan at Sharia banks compared to conventional one. Misunderstanding of Sharia banking and other Sharia financial institutions shows the uneven dissemination of information on Sharia banking and other Sharia financial institutions. Many people do not understand completely what Sharia financial institutions is, the system used, the types of products, and what the advantages of Sharia financial institutions are when compared to conventional financial institutions (Mirawati, 2011). Although the government has passed Law No. 21 of 2008 concerning Shariah Banking, it does not attract the public to become customers of Islamic banking (Khalidin, 2012).

Muslims believe that *riba* is forbidden in Islam, which is part of economic activities that have emerged since the jahiliyah era until now. The theme of *riba* (usury) has always been an issue that has dominated the study of Islamic economics. The prohibition of *riba* as one of the main pillars of the Islamic economy aims to create a system that supports the investment climate. The implications of prohibiting *riba* in the real sector, among others, can encourage investment optimization, prevent the accumulation of assets in a group of people, prevent inflation and increase productivity as well as encourage the creation of fair economic activity. The presence of the Islamic economy in the midst of society is to create economic justice and income distribution towards the achievement of people's welfare. Riba is strongly opposed or prohibited by Islamic teachings described in the Qur'an which means "Those who devour *riba* shall not rise except as one whom Satan has driven by his touch to insanity. That is because they say: 'Buying and selling is like *riba* whereas Allah has permitted buying and selling and has forbidden *riba* ...'" (Surah Al-Baqarah verse 275). Broadly speaking, the hallmark of Islamic banking is its prohibition of the interest (*riba*) on money capital. Islamic banking strives for a just, fair and balanced society as envisioned by the Islamic economics. Hence, the many prohibitions (e.g. *riba*, *gharar*, *maisir*, ect.) are given to provide an equitable



platform to protect the interests and benefits of all parties involved in market transactions and to promote social harmony (Dusuki & Abdullah, 2011; Ibrahim, 2015).

Nevertheless, the fact that in the province of Aceh which is predominantly Muslim, the community is still "loyal" in dealing with conventional banks to solve various economic problems such as lack of venture capital, purchase luxury goods such as cars and motorbikes, housing, as well as electronic goods. This fact is supported by the data submitted by Yason Taufik Akbar (Serambinews, 2019) from Aceh Representative of Bank Indonesia which stated that until 2019 there are 60% of Acehnese bank accounts are still belong to conventional Banks. Unfortunately, at the same time Bank Aceh has been converting from conventional banks to Sharia banks since 2016 supposed to be the first alternative for Achenese to open or access any financial support. Whereas the people of Aceh are known as adherents of Islamic fanatics and even the province of Aceh has been designated as a foyer of Mecca since the seventh century AD. Even the people of Aceh always fight for the implementation of Sharia law in all aspects of life including the economy and finances. Interesting phenomenon occurs in the people of Aceh, they believed that *riba* was forbidden, yet they felt no objection to take loan or save money at conventional banks.

However, Allah does not like anyone who remains in disbelief and sins. "Indeed, the greater the *riba*, the less *infaq* (alms); the smaller the *riba*, the greater the *infaq*. In a society where *riba* has become so rampant, the level of *infaq* will be small. Conversely, if the practice of *riba* is eliminated from the economy, *infaq* will flourish (Al-Arif & Amalia, 2010). In relation to the conventional banking operational system that uses interest in each of its banking product, according to the opinion of the scholars consisting of Muhammadiyah Tarjih Assembly, Bahsul Nahdhatul Ulama, Islamic Conference Organization Session (OIC), Egyptian State Mufti, Consul for World Islamic Studies and Fatwa (Islamic legal pronouncement) from other institutions such as the Muslim League of the World and the Head of the Da'wah Center, Counseling, Study, and Fatwa of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which stated that interest in banking is included in the form of *riba* and unlawful. In addition to forbidding bank interest, the *ijtima* ruling 'Ulama Fatwa Commission in Indonesia also imposed illicit law with banks that use the interest system (conventional banks) where the area already has Sharia financial institutions.



Limited public knowledge of Sharia banks gives rise to false perceptions and results in low public decisions to choose Sharia banks. This not only impeded the expansion of the Sharia bank market but also inhibited the spread of universal values. For this reason, a consistent socialization must be carried out, supported by a strong commitment from all human resources of Sharia banks to implement sharia principles in all banking practices (Sadhana, 2012). However, the Indonesian government has given great attention to Islamic banking with the passing of Law No. 21 of 2008 concerning Sharia Banking, but based on the results of research conducted by Khalidin (2012) has no effect on increasing third party funds and public participation in Sharia banking and also the level of financing provided by Sharia banking as an intermediary function, has not changed after the enactment of the Banking Act The Sharia. Specifically, in Langsa, Dayyan (2016) had mentioned that the majority of traders understood the products of Sharia financial institutions. However, profit orientation and the level of convenience offered by conventional financial institutions are still higher compared to Sharia financial institutions which cause many traders resistances to become customers of Sharia banking (Ibrahim & Fitria, 2012). However, the people of Langsa really hope that all conventional banks become sharia in accordance with Islamic teachings adopted by the community. They are very enthusiastic if all banks operating in Aceh are based on sharia. However, Sharia banks have many shortcomings in terms of facilities so as the public continue using conventional banks as an alternative (Kismawadi & Al Muddatstsir, 2018; Ibrahim & Kamri, 2017).

This phenomenon raises an interesting gap for further study to reveal marchants' understanding of *riba* and their willingness to take a fund with the interest-based system at conventional banks. Therefore this study aims to (1) analyze the level of knowledge of Langsa's merchants about *riba* in Islam, (2) analyze the factors that influence the merchants tend to use conventional bank services compared to Sharia bank services, and(3) analyze the attitude of them towards the fatwas in relation to the conventional bank and sharia bank. The novelty of the research is the understanding of the behavior of Muslim traders towards *riba* and the Islamic scholars' fatwa relating to Sharia banking in Indonesia, especially in Aceh. In the future, it is hoped the stakeholders can take various policies to empower Muslim traders with the Shariah financial system. Also, the researchers can continue their studies on how sharia banks can convince traders to become sharia-based bank customers.



LITERATURE REVIEW

How bad *riba* and how great the sin is, the verses and hadith below suffice to answer it. The sinner is not just the culprit, but even who paid for it, the writer and also the witness. The Holy Prophet mentioned that the smallest sin of *riba* was the same as the sin of a man who commits adultery with his biological mother. Both the Qur'an and the Hadith curse *riba* with the strongest curse. According to the Koran which is generally translated as *riba* or interest, national wealth decreases while *zakat* increases it. Collecting usury in the Qur'an's view is tantamount to declaring war against Allah and His Messenger (Chaudhry, 2012). In the Qur'an, *riba* is mentioned eight times in four different surahs, namely once in verse 39 of surah Ar-Rûm, once in verse 161 of Surah An-Nisâ', once in verse 130 of surah Âli' Imran, three times in verse 275 Surah Al-Baqarah, once in verse 276 Surah Al-Baqarah, and once in verse 278 Surah Al-Baqarah (Syarif, 2011).

The production factors include land, labor, organization and capital. Capital is an asset used to help the next distribution of assets. Without the availability of sufficient capital, it is almost impossible to develop business as targeted. To achieve the desired target this system can justify any kind of method without thinking whether the system adopted is beneficial or detrimental to other parties. The application of the interest system, for example, is an example of a capitalist system to continue to develop the capital owned regardless of whether the borrower loses or not. What important for capital owner is the returned should accordance with the amount of excess interest that has been set plus the principal loan (whether the business is successful or failed).

Therefore, in financial services to increase business capital, a profit-sharing method must be shared based on the principle of profit sharing and loss. According to this system, business capital will continue to be saved without harming any party. To increase capital in a country, people should continue to try to increase their income, save money and manage the spending income well. There should be a sense of security for the public in getting assets easily without *riba*. Interest is prohibited in Islam and society is not allowed to earn money or provide capital with interest or *riba* element in it.

Riba which literally means additional, fertile, growing, and flowering shows that *riba* is fertile and adds wealth to the human side as the word of God in QS Ar-Rum verse 39. Technically, *riba* refers to the payment of interest to be paid



by the borrower in addition to the principal return as a condition of the loan or the extension of the due date. In this sense, according to Chapra (2000), the terminology of *riba* is divided into two categories, namely *riba nasiah* and *riba fadl*. *Riba nasiah* means to delay, suspend, or wait, which refers to the time given by the creditor to the person who own the debt plus interest based on the length of time. In short, any additional to the principal loan either fixed or changing, or gift giving or a form of service received as a condition of borrowing. As the Prophet forbade his ummah from taking gifts, services, or even the smallest sign as a condition of the loan. Ash-Shiddieqy (2000) in the An-Nuur of Qur'anic exegesis defines *riba* as a treasure taken from someone with no balance (compensation) and is also not justified by *syara'*. Including in *riba* is a profit that exceeds the loan principal limit.

Ar-Razi defines five reasons why *riba* was prohibited in Islam as quoted by Latifa & Lewis (2004) namely;

1. *Riba* is nothing but the deprivation of the rights of others without any balances of value, even though the Prophet's hadith states that one's property is forbidden to others as blood is bloody. Rebuttal arises saying that, *halal* usury for creditors as a reward for the use of money and profits obtained by the debtor of the money. If this money is in the hands of a creditor, he will make a profit by investing it in one business. But keep in mind that profits in business are uncertain, so the amount of excess obtained by creditors in lieu of uncertainty is a crime committed against the debtor.
2. *Riba* is prohibited because it prevents people from participating in active professions. A rich person, if he earns income from *riba*, will depend on this easy way to make money and eliminate thoughts of hard work or earn money from trading or crafts, thus hampering human progress and prosperity.
3. The *riba* agreement creates a strained relationship between human beings. If *riba* is forbidden there will be no difficulty in lending and returning what has been borrowed, but if it is halted then people, to fulfill their desires, will borrow even at very high interest rates which cause disunity and disagreement and disarm the community from prosperity.
4. The *riba* agreement is a tool used by the rich to be able to take advantage of capital and this is *haram* and is against justice and equality. Consequently, the rich will be richer and the poor will be poorer.



5. Forbidden *riba* is stated in the Qur'an and humans do not have to know the reason. We need to avoid it since it's unclean even though we don't know the reason.

There are three different opinion related to bank interest in Islamic law: first, the group that forbids bank interest, they argue that bank interest (interest rate) includes usury and is clearly prohibited as stated in the Qur'an and as-Sunnah. Second, groups that justify bank interest, they assume that bank interest is in a state of emergency, double interest is prohibited. Third, groups who are still doubtful because there is no measurement in the Qur'an or as-Sunnah (Suhendi, 2002). According to Swartz (2009) there is an ambivalence on the concept of usury (*riba*) and interest, among Muslim scholars: One group argued that not all forms of interest is *riba* (usury), where as the another groupsaid that usury (*riba*) covers all forms of interest and not only “excessive” interest. He asserts that interest is moderate and *riba* exorbitant and oppressive. However, during the last or four decades, after a period of proacted debates, Muslim scholars have reached a fair degree of agreement regarding *riba*. The point of agreement is that *riba* signifies the stipulated excess over and above the principal of loan required to be paid. Regardless of whether the stipulated excess over the principal is negligible or substantial, the loan spent on consumption or is devoted to profit-yielding ventures, every stipulated excess over principal is *riba*, and it is prohibited (Khan, 2004).

The prohibition of *riba* is understood as relating to the exploitation of the economically disadvantaged in the community by the relatively affluent. This element of exploitation may or may not exist in modern bank interest. However, the evolution of the concept of *riba* to interest cannot be separated from the development of financial institutions. To find out whether bank interest is identical to *riba*, the bank's activities must be understood first. Banks deal with its customers on the basis of debt, whether lending money to customers or customers who deposit their money in the bank. That is the core activity of banks, although there are other activities such as services, investments, and so on. By understanding the activities of banks, it can be concluded that bank interest is forbidden. Albeit some scholars allow bank interest in the case of *dharurat* or needs that can not be avoided. Emergency conditions allow something unclean to be done.

Nowadays the general position that interest is *riba*. Interest is prohibited in Islam because it is seen as an unjustified means of profit and wealth creation,



since the exchange of an equivalent for a higher non-equivalent does not require the creditor to hold market and systematic risk, as the loan are collateralized and secured by a third-party guarantee. The creditor provides practically no value-added services to the debtor. This is a common feature in most fixed-income instruments. By doing so, economic justice is at risk and the ensuing concentration of wealth in the hands of a few people can threaten social welfare and stability (Rosly, 2010)

For this reason, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), which is a forum for deliberation of ulama, *zu'ama*, and Muslim scholars and an umbrella for all Indonesian Muslims try to solve and answer every social religious problem arises and faced by the community. They have won the trust full, both from the community and from the government. Session of *ijtima 'ulama* of the MUI fatwa commission was the MUI Fatwa Commission, which on December 16, 2003 decided to forbid bank interest (Amin, 2017). The working mechanism of the fatwa commission in determining the prohibition of bank interest are: firstly, it has been seen from the prohibition of *riba* itself as clearly stated in the Qur'an and Sunnah, namely surah al-Baqarah: 278, an-Nisa ': 160, ali-Imran: 130, ar -Rum: 39. Secondly, the meaning of *riba* itself is only based on *nasi'ah* or *riba jahiliyah*. The criteria for bank interest practice is said to be *riba* if between two parties in the debt receivable there is a chance that the debtor (debtor) will pay interest (additional), calculated from the payment due date that has been promised and so on. The amount of the additional loan in line with the addition of time, regardless of the amount the small interest rate and without also considering the objective of using the credit, whether productive or consumptive.

After conducting a thorough and comprehensive discussion and taking into account the opinions and views developed, the meeting established the MUI fatwa decision on illicit bank interest. The commission's decision on illicit bank interest reported to the Leadership Council and published to disseminate to the public. MUI made a decision that bank interest is haram, because interest has an element of *riba*, while *riba* is illegal. Apart from the additional interest required in advance and the amount remains. Bank interest is worse than *riba jahiliyah*. Because *riba jahiliyah* is only charged extra when the borrower is unable to return the loan when due date comes. Meanwhile, bank interest has been subject to additional loan direct since the transaction occurred.



The following is the result of the decision of Ijtima 'Ulama of the Indonesian Fatwa Commission concerning the Bank's Fatwa on December 14-16, 2003, as follows:

1. Definition of Riba and Interest is an additional (*ziyadah*) without compensation that occurs due to a delay in payment or exchange of two similar goods promised earlier. Interest is money paid as compensation for loan money calculated from the principal without considering the results of the principal and calculating or fixed fixed in advance.
2. Bank interest is haram, because bank interest is identical to *riba* which is forbidden in the Qur'an.
3. Trading with conventional financial institutions
 - a) Areas with existing sharia bank offices or networks, transactions with conventional banks are not permitted.
 - b) Areas where there is no Sharia bank office or network, transactions in conventional banks are permitted based on the principle of emergency.

Fatwa is an important case that has many advantages related to solving problems faced by someone *mustaftî*. The law resulted through fatwa is considered as *fardlu kifâyah*. Therefore, all possible fatwa mistakes must be avoided (Susanto, 2016). According to Iswanto (2016), in the formulation of its fatwa, MUI DSN is quite strict in the use of various instruments of the formulation of Islamic law, especially in the field of muamalah. The process of formulating fatwas related to trading (muamalah) usually uses 2 (two) theories:

1. The theory of separating halal from the haram (*tafriq al-halal min al-haram*)

This theory states that basically money is not a substance that is illegitimate (*'ainiyyah*) but it becomes illegitimate or halal based on how to get it (*kasbiyyah*). Therefore, the effort that must be done is to separate the illegitimate money obtained from the illegal way. This is done as long as the money / assets can be identified as halal and haram. Examples of the application of this theory in Islamic financial studies are the ability to open sharia units in sharia banks, and the permissibility of sharia mutual fund products where the investment returns obtained must be ensured clean of illicit elements first.



2. Review theory (*i'adah al-nazar*)

This theory is done by reconsidering the opinions of scholars who have been considered weak. However, it can be used again because of the new benefit. An example of the application of this theory is permissible to appoint a representative in a lease transaction. All this time the prohibition applies because there is a concern that the representative is strongly suspected of making a lie detrimental to the owner. If the owner gives a clear tariff on the assets to be leased to his representative, then they agree to the tariff. Then, he himself acts as the renter of the goods, the 'legal *illat* is considered lost and becomes permissible.

Therefore, the DSN fatwa has very significant role to guide shariah banking in Indonesia. According to Hardi (2019), within last ten years Sharia banking has referred to the National Sharia Council (DSN) fatwa before issuing a service product. The DSN MUI fatwa is a guideline for Islamic banking in Indonesia in order to maintain sharia compliance with the principles established by Islamic law. The number of fatwas that have been ratified by DSN-MUI until 2017 amounted to more than 109 fatwas related to banking operations and Islamic financial institutions (Al-Hakim, 2013). DSN-MUI sharia economic fatwa today not only binds practitioners of Islamic economic institutions, but also the Indonesian Islamic community, even for Islamic economic actors the position of the fatwa is binding especially since the fatwas have now been translated through Bank Indonesia Regulations (PBI) (Umam, 2012).

The number of studies related to perception of public whether on the bank side or society's side had been done by the number of researchers. Among other, Mu'allim (2003) showed that people's trust for Sharia Banking has been still relatively low. It shown by the moslem participation on investment and capital movement. His study urgently required for sharia banking to improve its profesionality, in order to arise its image. In the future, it is hopefully able to spread wider merciful benefit. Mirawati (2011) claims that one's lack of awareness of the responsibility for the laws that have been established by the Sharia causes someone to perceive the MUI fatwa on the interest of konvensional banks is just a mere discourse. Futhermore, Mardian (2015) looked at the level of sharia compliance in sharia financial institutions. His study concluded that various limitations, especially resources, cause the enforcement of sharia compliance not yet running optimally. He suggests all parties including the community must continue to support the development of



the Islamic economy with a high level of sharia compliance in the future. The study by Dayyan (2016) shows the people in Langsa not yet fully trust the operational of Islamic banks in this 14 years since the islamic banks established. They think the difference between Islamic banks and conventional banks is only on the term used only. Therefore, this paper discusses the attitude of merchants in Langsa toward riba and conventional bank.

RESEARCH METHOD

This is a qualitative research that uses a descriptive approach. According to Cooper and Schindler a descriptive study is a study that focus on trying to figure out answers to the questions who, what, when, where, and how (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). This study tries to define a subject through creating a profile of problems, events or people, collect data as well as create of a distribution of frequency the researcher observes characteristic or a single event (research variables), or to relate interactions of two or more variables. Data processing utilising descriptive statistics analysis procedure in order to figure out the picture or description of a event as clearly as possible without having any treatment on the researched object. This step started by undertaken questionnaire tabulation (Sugiono, 2004).

Survey data is a primary data obtained from questionnaire distribution toward merchants (respondents). Non probability sampling technique with purposive sampling as the method is implemented on this research. The criteria of sampling is based on the criteria defined beforehand by the researcher which is Langsa merchants that become a customer for both conventional and sharia banks as well as have ever taken a financing support for its business.

The research population is unknown population which consist of all market traders in Langsa market. Therefore, questionnaires distribution was carried out randomly aimed at market traders (accidental) as well as consideration on the time schedule limitation started on 4 November until 10 November 2019. From the distribution of questionnaires during that time period, 117 respondents who were willing to fill out and fulfill the criteria for purposive random sampling were obtained.

Merchants who are willing to fill out the research questionnaire consist of various kinds of traders, such as fruit and vegetable traders, grocery and wholesale traders, fish and meat traders, spices traders, noodle makers, tailors, household equipment traders and barbers / shavers.



The research questionnaire was designed using a 5-point Likert scale. The questionnaire consisted of 36 questions / statements divided into four parts. The first part is the respondent's personal data including gender, age, education, amount of savings and the amount of credit from banks. The second part contains questions / statements about the traders' view of riba. The third part contains statements / questions about traders' view of the conventional banks. While the fourth part contains the views and understanding of traders of the DSN-MUI fatwas.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Langsa has the largest traditional market located next to the Grand Mosque of Darul Falah. Traditional merchants who sell at Langsa market, the majority of the native inhabitants of the city of Langsa are from the original Aceh tribe. The merchants in Langsa City are referred to all traders who sell merchandise for the basic needs of the community starting from dawn until dusk. This means that trading activities are only carried out in one place and in a certain time. Merchants used as respondents consisted of a variety of traders, such as fruit and vegetable traders, grocery and wholesale traders, fish and meat traders, spices traders, noodle makers, tailors, household equipment traders and barber / barbers.

From the results of the distribution of questionnaires obtained, researcher found out that the Langsa's merchants always looking for an access for loan fund to increase its business capacity. The solutions available commonly taken by the merchants are obtaining financing or capital from conventional and sharia banking. However, many merchants choose to take a financing from conventional banks due to the ease of applying for financing support. An explanation relating the reasons that merchants applying for loan fund at conventional banks will be explained in the next sub-chapter.

Respondent Characteristics

From the data presented in Table 4.1, it is known that the number of male respondents in total was 69 respondents with percentage of 59%, while female respondents in total was 48 respondents with percentage of 41%. Then the age distribution of the majority of respondents in this study was at the age of 25-29 years (as much as 25.6%) and 20-24 years (as much as 19.7%). While the educational level of the majority of respondents was the high school level (as



many as 52.1%), Juniou high school was 17.9%, bachelor 12.8%, elementary school 12.8 % and uneducated 5.1 %.

Table 4.1 Respondents' Demography

Gender		Age		Education	
Male	69 (59.0%)	< 20 y	16 (13.7%)	Uneducated	6 (5.1%)
		20-24 y	23 (19.7%)	Elementery	14 (12.0%)
		25-29 y	30 (25.6%)	Juniour High	21 (17.9%)
Female	48 (41.0%)	30-34 y	10 (8.5%)	Senior High	61 (52.1%)
		35-39 y	14 (12.0%)	Bachelor	15 (12.8%)
		>60 y	24 (20.5)		

In Table 4.2 below presented on the results of the distribution of questionnaires related to the amount of savings and the amount of financing (credit) of the Langsa's marchants. From the data shown in the table, it is known that the majority of marchants which is 47 respondents (40.2 %) have savings less than IDR2,000,000,27 respondents (23.1%) have savings in IDR2,100,000 – IDR5,000,000,23 respondents (19.7%) have savings in IDR5,100,000 – IDR10,000,000,11 respondents (9.4%) have savings in IDR 10,100,000 – IDR 15,000,000, and only 9 respondents have saving more than IDR15,000,00.

Table 4.2 Total Savings and Financing of Merchants in Langsa (in IDR Thousand)

Total Savings		Total Financings	
<IDR2,000	47 (40.2%)	<IDR 20,000	47 (40.2%)
IDR 2,100 – IDR 5,000	27 (23.1%)	IDR20,100,000 – IDR 50,000	34 (29.1%)
IDR 5,100 – IDR 10,000	23 (19.7%)	IDR50,100,000 – IDR100,000	21 (17.9%)
IDR 10,100 – IDR 15,000	11 (9.4%)	IDR100,100 – IDR150,000	9 (7.7%)
>IDR 15,000	9 (7.7%)	>IDR 150,000	6 (5.1%)

Meanwhile for the percentage according to amount of loan taken by the merchants was 40.2% who take financing less than IDR 20,000,000, 34 respondents (40.2%) take financing support between IDR20.100.000 – IDR50.000.000, 21 repondents (17.9%) take between IDR50.100.000 – IDR100.000.000, 9 respondents (7.7%) take between IDR100.100.000 – IDR150.000.000, and the rest 6 respondents (5.1%) take more than IDR150.000.000.

This phenomenon of the data presented is interesting because the majority of marchants have a much larger amount of loan than the amount of saving. The researcher suspects that respondents feel taboo to mention the amount of the



real savings, so that there is a tendency for respondents to cover up (secretly) by just checking in the first column of the questionnaire (<IDR 2,000,000).

The View of Langsa's Merchants Against Riba

As a country with the largest quantity of Muslim population in the world, banking institutions in Indonesia are challenged to be able to operate a banking system based on sharia principal. Until now, the emerged of sharia banking is very rapid in terms of the number of businesses, offices, collection and financing, and the variety of products. Even in Aceh Province, there were the first regional banks to convert from conventional banks to sharia in 2016, the Aceh Syariah Regional Development Bank. Surely this has become good news in an effort to advance Islamic banking in Indonesia.

Sharia banking began in Indonesia since 1992. It is alongside conventional banking began to operate simultaneously by running what is known in Indonesia as the dual banking system. Conventional banking which applies interest runs side by side with Sharia banking which based on profit sharing system. This policy structure is a realistic optional the present "mindset" in the community is also the same. As revealed in this study, marchants are already understand what interest (riba) is. They also have an attitude of hate related to the practice of interest in conventional banks.

Table 4.3 Market Traders' View on *Riba*

Questions					
Trader Understanding About <i>Riba</i>		Traders' Opinions on <i>Riba</i>		Trader Concerns on <i>Riba</i>	
Not understand	3 (2.6%)	Really hate it	51 (43.6%)	Does not matter	3(2.6%)
Lack of understanding	15(12.8%)	Hate it	19 (16.2%)	Careless	6(5.1%)
I understand a little	11(9.4%)	Can be	39 (33.3%)	Rather care	15(12.8%)
Understand	58(49.6%)	No problem	7 (6%)	Care	33(28.2%)
Very understanding	30(25.6%)	Extremely no problem	1 (0.9%)	Very care	60(51.3%)
<i>Mean</i>	3.8	<i>Mean</i>	2.0	<i>Mean</i>	4.2
<i>Median</i>	4.0	<i>Median</i>	2.0	<i>Median</i>	5.0
<i>Modus</i>	4.0	<i>Modus</i>	1.0	<i>Modus</i>	5.0

From the results, it was revealed that the understanding of marchants towards riba as shown in Table 4.3. In Table 4.3, it is known that the understanding of marchants towards *riba* is very good. As much as 49.6% respondents answered the "understand" response to the questionnaire question "how do you understand *riba*?". As for the question "what do you think about *riba*?" Also



received a majority response "very hate" from marchants or as much as 43.6%. Then for the question "how much do you care about *riba*?" Also get the majority response "very caring" as much as 51.3%. From the frequency statistics obtained through the questionnaire, it can be concluded that the understanding of marchants towards *riba* and the attitude of traders towards *riba* has shown a good understanding.

Based on this result become the challenge for sharia banking to improve and socialize that their system is free from *riba*. According to Imaniyati (2009) the challenge for sharia banking must be responded with the spirit to improve the quality of sharia banking. This is both related to Human Resources (Bank owners, controlling shareholders, employees) and sharia banking products. Because sharia banking products must comply with the assembly fatwa Ulema to be used nationally or internationally.

Merchants View on the Conventional Bank

The phenomenon revealed was regarding the views of marchants about conventional banking which runs interest-based banking operations or called ribawi banks. In Table 4.4. showed that as many as 6% (strongly disagree) and 27.4% (disagree). They felt the existence of conventional banks did not help the traders at all. In contrast, there are 2.6% (strongly agree) and 26.5% (agree) respond to the existence of conventional banks is very helpful for market traders. While the majority of them are doubt (37.6%). This is an interesting finding when marchants are doubt about the benefits of conventional banks directly in their trading.

The next question in the questionnaire states "I think conventional banks have an interest system that is not the same as *riba*". For this question the majority of market traders answered with a "hesitant" response of 40.2% and answered with a "disagree" response of 23.9%. This indicates that the Langsa City marchants already knew about the prohibition of *riba* practices in conventional banks.

However, market traders have various reasons (factors) to continue to prefer to interact with conventional banks compared to sharia banks. Among them argued that interest is not the same as *riba* (26.5%), the services offered by conventional banks are friendly and comfortable (15.4%), the location of bank office that is close to a place of residence/business (6%), it is very helpful in promoting business (42.7%), and other reasons 9.4% said other reasons.



Table 4.4 Merchants View on the Conventional Bank

Questions					
The existence of Conventional Bank is very helpful for traders		Interest system is not the same as the riba system		Consideration of opening an account / financing at conventional bank	
Strongly disagree	7(6%)	Strongly disagree	18(15.4%)	Interest is not the same as riba	31(26.5%)
Disagree	32(27.4%)	Disagree	28(23.9%)	Friendly and comfortable service	18(15.4%)
Doubt/hesitant	44(37.6%)	Doubt/hesitant	47(40.2%)	The office is close to home / work place	7(6%)
Agree	31(26.5%)	Agree	21(17.9%)	Very helpful in advancing the business	50(42.7%)
Strongly Agree	3(2.6%)	Strongly Agree	3(2.6%)	Others	11(9.4%)
<i>Mean</i>	2.9	<i>Mean</i>	2.6	<i>Mean</i>	2.9
<i>Median</i>	3.0	<i>Median</i>	3.0	<i>Median</i>	4.0
<i>Modus</i>	3.0	<i>Modus</i>	3.0	<i>Modus</i>	4.0

From the results it was revealed that the merchants continued to make accounts in conventional banks and continued to take financing support in conventional banks. This is based on Table 4.4 where the majority of traders' responses (42.7%) stated that opening an account/applying for loan fund at conventional banks is a solution to help traders in advancing business. This thing happen due to the conventional banks offered more simple process and procedure for financial support compared to sharia banks. This finding certainly surprised researchers, that traders still consider conventional banks as an easy solution in applying for loans. An in-depth evaluation from various competent parties is needed in order to find the solution so that the process and procedure for financing application in Sharia banks can be facilitated, and people's perceptions can change by itself.

Marchants' Assessment on DSN-MUI

The data collected through a questionnaire on the merchants traders informed that the traders have a very good understanding of the existence of DSN-MUI. This is known in Table 4.5, where the majority of traders answered the response "agreed" to the statement in the questionnaire relating to the DSN-MUI. Furthermore, this study also wants to find out the assessment of the merchants on the fatwa issued by DSN-MUI. In Table 4.6 it can be seen that the majority of traders already understand that the DSN-MUI issues a fatwa that is binding and must be followed by Muslims. This is proven from the acquisition of the majority of respondents who answered "agree". The interesting thing is that



respondents gave almost the same response to the reversed statement "I never knew about the DSN fatwa", which answered "agree (24.8%), doubt (23.9%), and disagree (22.2%) ". This phenomenon may occur because market traders do not follow (lack of information) what types of fatwas have been issued by DSN-MUI related to Indonesian sharia financial institutions.

Table 4.5 Traders' Assessment on DSN-MUI

Questions/ Statements	Answers/ Responces (%)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Doubt/ hesitant	Agree	StronglyAgree
DSN MUI is an agency that is competent to make fatwas	4.3	0	14.5	54.7	26.5
DSN MUI consists of scholars who must be followed	0	4.3	17.1	64.1	14.5
DSN MUI always directs the community towards good	0	0.9	17.1	56.4	25.6
DSN MUI is responsible for the people	0	5.1	19.7	53.0	22.2
Muslims are bound by the MUI fatwa	0	6.0	17.9	62.4	13.7
<i>Mean</i>	3.9	3.8	4.0	3.9	3.8
<i>Median</i>	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
<i>Modus</i>	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0

Eventhough, on the prationers side DSN-MUI fatwa lacks a significant influence on the development of Indonesian sharia bank products and services. This is because the launch of the fatwa was issued only in response to the products of sharia banks which had already run first as demands of the Law related to Shariah Compliance. Then the position of the fatwa does not innovate by itself to provide law before the launch of Islamic bank products and services (Hardi, 2019). This is not suprising why the Muslim marchants in Langsa is not aware about the DSN fatwa.

Table 4.6 Traders' Assessment of DSN-MUI Fatwa

Questions/ Statements	Answers/ Responces (%)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Doubt/ hesitant	Agree	StronglyAgree
The DSN fatwa has the power to guide Muslims	0	1.7	17.1	62.4	18.8
All DSN fatwas must be followed by Muslims	0	10.3	24.8	47.9	17.1
Not all DSN fatwas must be followed	9.4	25.6	30.8	23.9	10.3
I must obey the DSN fatwa	0	7.7	25.6	51.3	15.4



I never knew about the DSN fatwa	21.4	22.2	23.9	24.8	7.7
<i>Mean</i>	3.9	3.7	3.0	3.7	2.7
<i>Median</i>	4.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	3.0
<i>Modus</i>	4.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0

Evaluation of DSN-MUI Fatwa Regarding Bank Interest and Haram with Conventional Banks

In Table 4.7 it appears that traders have doubts in responding to the statement "I can maintain the sanctity of property from the element of usury (doubtful, 34.2%) and I do not need to obey the Fatwa should not engage in a conventional bank (doubtful, 49 , 6%), and I am obliged to follow the MUI Fatwa on conventional bank haram (doubtful, 47.0%) and I am sure that the fatwa is not mandatory (doubtful, 30.8%) ". This phenomenon is an interesting finding because traders are very confident in the prohibition of bank interest and are very confident in the role of DSN as a competent fatwa maker in which every fatwa issued by DSN-MUI is binding and must be followed.

Table 4.7 Evaluation of DSN-MUI Fatwa Regarding Bank Interest and Haram with Conventional Banks

Questions/ Statements	Answers/ Responces (%)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Doubt/ Hesitant	Agree	Strongly Agree
I know that MUI has forbidden bank interest	5.1	4.3	14.5	56.4	20.5
I do not need to obey the Fatwa prohibiting bank interest	10.3	39.3	19.7	19.7	11.1
I am obliged to follow the MUI Fatwa concerning the prohibition of bank interest	6.8	15.4	15.4	43.6	18.8
I am sure that the illegitimate fatwa on bank interest is correct from MUI	0	2.6	18.8	59.0	19.7
I can maintain the sanctity of property from usury	0.9	1.7	34.2	30.8	32.5
I know that the MUI has forbidden conventional banks	4.3	4.3	27.4	51.3	12.8
I do not need to obey the Fatwa and may not engage in a conventional bank	9.4	17.1	49.6	14.5	9.4
I am obliged to follow the MUI Fatwa on the prohibition of conventional banks	4.3	5.1	47.0	29.1	14.5



I am sure that a haram fatwa is not required to be followed	5.1	21.4	30.8	23.9	18.8
I can maintain the sanctity of property from usury	0	1.7	29.9	41.9	26.5
<i>Mean</i>	3.8	2.8	3.5	3.9	3.9
<i>Median</i>	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
<i>Modus</i>	4.0	2.0	4.0	4.0	3.0

Assessment after Financing from Conventional Bank

In this study, the questionnaire provides questions related to the assessment of Langsa marchants after getting loan from conventional banks. The results of the questionnaire can be seen in Table 4.8, where respondents feel "happy" after getting loan from conventional banks. The majority of respondents responded "agree" to the statement of the questionnaire that implements the assessment after obtaining financing from the conventional bank, showed by the existence of a comfortable feeling of worship (37.6%), respondents can meet health needs (46.2%), respondents can meet the needs education (47.9%), respondents can meet family needs (37.6%).

Table 4.8 Assessment After Obtaining Finacing from Conventional Bank

Questions/ Statements	Answers/ Responces (%)				
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Doubt/ hesitant	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel comfortable in practicing worship (Hifz al-Dien)	5.1	4.3	33.3	37.6	19.7
I can meet my health needs (Hifz al-Nafs)	0.9	6.0	27.4	46.2	19.7
I can fulfill my educational needs (Hifz al-‘Aqal)	0.9	6.0	26.5	47.9	18.8
I can meet family needs (Hifz al-Nasl)	3.4	3.4	32.5	37.6	23.1
I can maintain the sanctity of property from <i>riba</i> (Hifz al-Maal)	3.4	0.9	38.5	35.0	22.2
<i>Mean</i>	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7
<i>Median</i>	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
<i>Modus</i>	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.0

The respondent answered the last statement of the questionnaire which "I can maintain the sanctity of property from *riba*". It has been revealed that the response of the majority of marchants are skeptical about the sanctity of their assets originating from conventional bank loans that contain elements of *riba*.



This is proved by the results of the response "doubtful (38.5%)". This indicates an inner rejection in respondents as merchants who consciously feel guilty because they still benefiting from financing obtained from conventional banks. Or the another reason is because of rational trader as stated by Waluyo (2016) that the rational societies who are not ready to use the principles of sharia purely contribute to the incomplete fulfillment of sharia principles within sharia banking. This also confirms to previous research that the traders in Langsa which prefer to profit orientation than shariah principle which is less profit. Other reasons are conventional bank offer more convenience level compared to Sharia financial institutions (Dayyan, 2016).

Some people might think that even the sharia bank does not fully obey the fatwa of DSN MUI as Tahmid research in Bandar Lampung stated (2019). He concluded that the MUI DSN fatwa has not been fully implemented in the activities carried out by the Bandar Lampung BPRS, for example *murābahah* financing. Especially in the case of ordered goods that are not yet fully owned by the bank, the percentage of profit margins determined unilaterally by the banks, and early repayment deductions in the *murābahah* contract. Hence, it would not be sufficient that MUI simply declare interest-based system that is practiced by conventional banks are *riba*, the shariah bank and all stakeholders hand in hand must do everything possible in motivating people to practice business with interest free based system. So that the larger objective of sharia banking could be obtained that is the objective of Shariah (Dusuki & Abdullah, 2011). All in all, shariah banks have to incorporate both profit and social responsibility into their objective to ensure spiritual well-being at the inner core of human consciousness, and justice and fair play at all levels of human interaction.

The attitude paradigms give a quite interesting nuance as it describes the knowledge, attitudes, perceptions, and behavior (actions) of the community in addressing the dual banking system policy in Indonesia, specifically in Aceh Province. Further research is needed to dig deeper explaining the phenomena revealed from this study. The big question that arises for further research is that why merchants who know the forbidden of interest (*riba*) practiced in conventional banks, still willing to deal with conventional banks for getting business financing support and why merchants still have doubts about the sanctity of their assets.



CONCLUSIONS

This study reveals that the understanding of Langsa merchants regarding *riba*, conventional banks, fatwas and the role of DSN-MUI. In term of *riba*, merchants in Langsa are very well-versed and understand about *riba* and how *riba* is strictly forbidden in Islam. They belief about *riba* practices must be avoided, however this belief are not in line with the actions / behaviors of marchants shown by the number of financing taken in conventional banks. The reason for marchants is that in order to find solutions to improve or extend their business through adding capital by applying financial support at conventional banks. Some of them still assume that bank interest is not the same as usury.

Discussing on the factors that make traders tend to prefer conventional banks over Sharia banks in solving financial problems is that it is merely a perceived of convenience obtained from conventional banks compared to Sharia banks, for example in applying for financing. While the attitude of the majority of marchants in Langsa towards the DSN-MUI fatwa in relation to the conventional bank was well understood by respondents, and that the MUI fatwa regarding the prohibition of the practice of bank interest (*riba*) was also understood by respondents. They also believe that if the ulama (DSN-MUI) has adopted a fatwa, the fatwa is binding and must be obeyed.

Here is some implication of the research:

1. High level of awareness from market merchants regarding the understanding of *riba* which clearly defined as *haram* and has consequences of sin from Allah SWT and condemned from Rasulullah SAW is needed. For this reason, the role of the government, scholars, lecturers, academics, who understand *riba* is very necessary in making merchants aware of leaving *riba* including interest based of financing. By the ratification of Aceh Qanun No. 11, the year of 2018 on Islamic Financial Institutions (LKS) on December 31st2018. It is hoped that by the conversion of all conventional financial institutions into sharia in Aceh, the practice of *riba* can also be reduced and the community becomes more aware of leaving interest-based system which is consider as *riba*.
2. From the phenomena revealed in the research, a more aggressive role is needed from the Sharia banks to reach all layers of society. They have to deliver correct information as well as promote sharia-based banking products, especially financing products. Education and promotion can be



done by putting up posters and distributing many brochures on various pro-merchant banking products, and the notification of the financing application process and profit-sharing system. Since the merchants are a profession that is very close to the need for sources of capital both to open new businesses as well as to develop business. It is unfortunate if the merchants still think that it is difficult to get financing at Sharia banks because of their ignorance of the real process.

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