

E-WALLET PREFERENCES AND IMPACT ON ISLAMIC BANKING INNOVATION AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract

The rapid development of digital payment technology has increased the use of e-wallets among various groups, including Islamic economics students. This study aims to examine the effects of attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral **control** on e-wallet payment preferences among students of the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business (FEBI), UIN Sumatera Utara, using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). A quantitative approach was employed, involving 97 respondents selected through purposive sampling. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression. The results indicate that attitude has a positive and significant effect on e-wallet preferences, while subjective norm and perceived behavioral control do not have significant effects. The model explains 35.6% of the variance in e-wallet preferences. These findings suggest that students' digital payment preferences are influenced more by their personal evaluations of e-wallet usage than by social influences or perceived control. This study contributes to the TPB literature in the context of Islamic economics students by highlighting the dominant role of attitude in shaping e-wallet preferences. Practically, the findings provide insights for Islamic banks in developing digital services that are more aligned with users' needs and expectations.

Keywords: Theory of Planned Behavior, E-Wallet, Digital Payment Preferences, Islamic Economics Students, Islamic Banking.

INTRODUCTION

The development of financial technology (fintech) has driven a paradigm shift in Indonesian transaction behavior toward a digital ecosystem that is instant and integrated. One of the most prominent phenomena in this transformation is the dominance of e-wallet use over other payment methods in everyday transactions. The volume of electronic money transactions, dominated by e-wallets, has surged to 2.1 billion transactions, far outpacing the growth of mobile banking transactions, which tend to be more stable (Bank Indonesia, 2023). This finding is reinforced by a national (Populix, 2023), which revealed that 87% of e-wallet users use them for micro-retail payments such as food, beverages, and online transportation, while mobile banking remains more synonymous with larger-value transactions, such as interbank transfers and bill payments.

This preference is not solely driven by functional aspects, but also by user experience. E-wallets are simpler, more interactive, and enriched with gamification, cashback, and discount features. This combination of factors creates a pattern of instant gratification that encourages habit formation in transaction decision-making. From a behavioral economics perspective, this condition aligns with the nudge concept, where convenience, instant incentives, and choice architecture indirectly direct user behavior without awareness (Sunstein, 2008).

This phenomenon of e-wallet dominance is not only reflected in national data but is also evident in the daily practices of students, including those at the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business (FEBI) at UIN North Sumatra. In the field, e-wallets have become the primary payment system (default payment system) for students in various routine transactions, from paying for food in the cafeteria, online transportation, purchasing phone credit and data packages, to microtransactions at merchants around campus. E-wallet use in these activities is generally no longer based on deep rational considerations, but has become an automatic, repetitive behavior that is difficult to replace (Anggraini et al., 2025).

This situation presents a crucial paradox for Islamic banking. On the one hand, students from the Faculty of Economics and Business (FEBI) at UIN North Sumatra represent a potential segment with relatively strong Islamic financial literacy and affiliation with Islamic values. Normatively, this group is expected to be the primary user base for Islamic financial services, including Islamic mobile banking. However, empirical reality shows that their transaction preferences are more tied to conventional e-wallets that are value-neutral or do not even explicitly adopt Islamic principles. This phenomenon indicates a gap between normative beliefs (what people believe) and actual behavior (what people actually do), a classic issue in consumer behavior studies and behavioral economics.

From an institutional perspective, Islamic banking possesses a strong value proposition, such as the principle of being free from interest, fairness, and a commitment to ethics. However, in practice, these normative advantages have not yet fully translated into behavioral advantages in the digital realm. Islamic banking digital innovations still tend to focus on basic administrative functions and are adaptive or follow-the-line, rather than innovative and disruptive (Badawi & Pancabudi, 2025). As a result, Islamic mobile banking has not yet been able to match the appeal of e-wallets in meeting the need for fast, flexible, and user-experience-oriented daily microtransactions.

This gap becomes even more apparent when reviewing previous literature. Most previous studies have focused on adoption intentions for Islamic mobile banking in isolation (Nurul Istiqamah Hamka, Fitriani Latief, 2022, Paradisha et al., 2025, Harahap et al., 2019), without an in-depth examination of the process of habit formation in e-wallet use, which has become the mainstream transaction behavior of the younger generation. Furthermore, the approaches used are generally rational-instrumental, while dimensions of behavioral economics and cognitive psychology, such as instant gratification, loss aversion, and default bias, are relatively rarely integrated. Yet, these factors are the core of e-wallet appeal and explain why user preferences are difficult to shift.

Based on this phenomenon, this study critically formulates the main problem: what are the e-wallet payment preferences of FEBI UIN North Sumatra students, and what implications does this have for the strategies and forms of disruptive innovation that Islamic banks need to adopt to not only catch up but also lead the digital market. In other words, this study seeks not only to map preferences but also to understand the underlying causal structure.

To address the research problem, this study uses the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) as the primary theoretical framework. TPB was chosen because it explains how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence individual preferences for behavior, including the use of digital payment technology. Based on the TPB framework, this study develops hypotheses regarding the influence of these three constructs on e-wallet payment preferences among FEBI students at UIN Sumatera Utara.

With this approach, this research is expected to bridge the gap between digital consumer behavior studies and institutional innovation strategies in the Islamic finance industry. The research's implications extend beyond the academic realm and provide strategic direction for Islamic banking in formulating innovations that are more contextual, collaborative, and oriented toward user habit formation. Students' preference for e-wallets is not positioned merely as a threat, but rather as an important signal for redesigning the digital transformation of Islamic banking to make it more relevant, competitive, and sustainable in the future.

METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method. It is explanatory in nature, aiming to explain the relationship and influence between attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control on e-wallet payment preferences among college students. The analytical framework of this study refers to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which emphasizes that preferences and behavioral intentions are shaped by psychological and social factors, not solely by actual behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

According to Sugiyono (2018), a population is a generalized area consisting of objects or subjects possessing certain qualities and characteristics determined by the researcher to be studied and then conclusions drawn. The population in this study was all undergraduate students (S1) in the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business (FEBI) at UIN North Sumatra, totaling 3,441 students. However, not all FEBI students are active e-wallet users. Therefore, the effective population of this study was limited to students who have experience or exposure to e-wallet use. The researcher set a margin of error of 10% ($e = 0.10$). The use of a larger than usual margin of error (5%) also takes into account the limitations of time, resources, and the generally varying levels of student response to questionnaires. This approach aligns with the opinion of (Nurdin & Si, 2019), which states that a 10% margin of error can be used in research with a large population and exploratory scope, as long as the researcher provides clear methodological justification.

The Slovin formula used is as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N e^2}$$

with the following information:

(n) = sample size,

(N) = population size, and

(e) = margin of error.

Based on the data obtained, the sample size calculation is carried out as follows:

$$n = \frac{3.441}{1 + 3.441 (0,10)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3.441}{1 + 3.441 (0,01)}$$

$$n = \frac{3.441}{1 + 34,41}$$

$$n = \frac{3.441}{35,41} = 97,17$$

Based on the results of the calculation, the sample size was 97.17 respondents, which was then rounded up to 97 respondents. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, with the following criteria:

- (1) active undergraduate students of FEBI UIN North Sumatra, and
- (2) have used an e-wallet at least once.

To ensure respondent suitability, this study used a screening question at the beginning of the questionnaire, so that respondents who had never used an e-wallet were not included in the analysis.

This study uses two types of data, namely: Primary data, which was obtained through the distribution of structured questionnaires to respondents online. The research instrument was compiled based on variable indicators in the Theory of Planned Behavior and measured using five-point Likert scale. Each indicator is measured using a Likert scale of 1–5, with the following information: 1 = Strongly Disagree (STS), 2 = Disagree (TS), 3 = Neutral (N), 4 = Agree (S), 5 = Strongly Agree (SS). Then secondary data, obtained from scientific journals, textbooks, official reports of Bank Indonesia, and other publications relevant to e-wallets, digital consumer behavior, and Islamic banking innovation.

Table 1. Operational Definition of Variables

Variables	Operational Definition	Indicator	Source	Scale
Payment Preferences Using <i>E-Wallet</i> (Y)	A relatively strong and consistent psychological tendency to choose e-wallet as the primary payment method compared to other payment methods in everyday transactions.	Y1 E-wallet is the main choice for payments	Lichtenstein & Slovic, 2006	Likert 1–5
		Y2 Tendency to choose e-wallet over other payment methods		
		Y3 Likelihood of using e-wallet for future transactions		
Attitudes towards	Students' positive or	X1.1 E-wallet makes	Fishbein &	Likert 1–5

E-Wallet Use (Attitude – X1)	negative evaluation of transactions easier and faster e-wallet use based on perceived benefits	X1.2 Using e-wallet feels fun and modern X1.3 E-wallet provides economic benefits (promo/cashback)	Ajzen, 2010	
Subjective Norm (X2)	Students' perceptions of social pressure or environmental influences that encourage e-wallet use	X2.1 Close friends recommend or use e-wallets X2.2 Most of my peers use e-wallet X2.3 Using e-wallets is considered normal for students today	Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010	Likert 1–5
Behavior Control Perceived Behavioral Control – X3	Students' perceptions regarding the ease or difficulty of using e-wallets, including the availability of resources and personal abilities	X3.1 E-wallet is easy to use and understand X3.2 Easy to top up and find merchants X3.3 Promos and cashback are easy to get X3.4 Confidently overcome technical obstacles when using e-wallet	Ajzen, 1991 & Venkatesh et al., 2012	Likert 1–5

Source: Data Processed by Author (2026)

Variable Framework

Dependent Variable (Y): Payment Preferences using E-Wallet, defined as a strong and consistent tendency to choose e-wallet as the primary payment method for everyday transactions).

Independent Variables (X) based on TPB: X1: Attitude, X2: Subjective Norm, X3: Perceived Behavioral Control.

Research Hypothesis

H1: Attitude has a positive and significant effect on payment preferences using E-Wallet.

The more positive students' evaluation of the benefits of using e-wallets (practical, entertaining, profitable), the stronger their preference to make it their primary choice (Ajzen, 1991).

H2: Subjective Norm has a positive and significant effect on Payment Preferences using E-Wallet.

The stronger the students' perception that their social environment (peers, digital trends) supports and uses e-wallets, the higher their preference to follow them (Badawi & Pancabudi, 2025)

H3: Perceived Behavioral Control has a positive and significant effect on Payment Preferences using E-Wallet.

The easier and cheaper (due to promotions) students feel it is to use e-wallets (top-up, find merchants, get cashback), the stronger their preference will be due to the lack of barriers (Slade, 2015)

H4: Attitude, Subjective Norm, and Perceived Behavioral Control (Perceived Behavioral Control) have a positive and significant effect simultaneously on Payment Preferences using E-Wallet. The more positive students' evaluation of the benefits of e-wallets, the stronger the social support they feel, and the higher the perception of ease and control in using them, the stronger their preference for making e-wallets their primary choice for transactions.

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The data analysis process was conducted quantitatively using IBM SPSS Statistics version 27.0 software. Although the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is often analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the regression approach with IBM SPSS Statistics 27.0 software was chosen because the purpose of this study focuses on testing the direct influence between constructs, not on developing a new theoretical model or evaluating the measurement model simultaneously.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Validity and Reliability Test

Validity Test

Table 2. Validity Test Results

Variables	Questio n Points	R-value calculation	R Table Value	Sta tus
X1 – Attitude	X1.1	0.849	0.2359	Val id
	X1.2	0.842	0.2359	Val id
	X1.3	0.886	0.2359	Val id
X2 – Subjective Norm	X2.1	0.925	0.2359	Val id
	X2.2	0.902	0.2359	Val id
	X2.3	0.917	0.2359	Val id
X3– Perceived Behavioral Control (Perceived Behavioral Control)	X3.1	0.855	0.2359	Val id
	X3.2	0.807	0.2359	Val id
	X3.3	0.821	0.2359	Val id
	X3.4	0.851	0.2359	Valid
Y – Payment Preference Via E-Wallet	Y1	0.916	0.2359	Valid
	Y2	0.912	0.2359	Valid
	Y3	0.864	0.2359	Valid
				Valid

Source: Data processed using IBM SPSS Statisticts 27.0 (2026)

According to the validity test results, each statement item in each variable has an estimated r value higher than the table r of 0.2359. Due to the accurate representation of the measured structure, all indicators are considered valid. This indicates that each statement item in the survey meets the requirements for validity and feasibility.

Reliability Test

Table 3. Reliability Test Results

Variables	Reliability Coefficient	Cronbach's Alpha Value	Status
X1 – Attitude	3	0.822	Reliable
X2 – Subjective Norm	3	0.901	Reliable
X3 – Perceived Behavioral Control (<i>Perceived Behavioral Control</i>)	4	0.852	Reliable
Y – Payment Preference Via E-Wallet	3	0.880	Reliable

Source: Data processed using IBM SPSS Statistics 27.0 (2026)

The results of the reliability test show that all variables have a Cronbach's Alpha value above the minimum limit of 0.75, namely 0.822 for the variable X1 – Attitude), 0.901 for X2 – Subjective Norms), 0.852 for X3 – Perceived Behavioral Control, and 0.880 for Y – E-Wallet Payment Preference. According to Ghazali (2021), a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.75 indicates that the research instrument has a high level of internal consistency. This indicates that each question item within the same variable receives stable and consistent responses from respondents, demonstrating the reliability of this research tool.

Classical Assumption Test

Normality Test

Table 4. Normality Test Results

		Unstandardized Residual
N		97
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	,0000000
	Standard Deviation	1.94831538
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	,085
	Positive	,074
	Negative	-,085
Test Statistics		,085
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) ^c		,077

Source: Author's processing (2025)

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality yielded a significance value of 0.077. The residual data were normally distributed as this value was within the model's acceptance limits (0.05).

Multicollinearity Test

Table 5. Multicollinearity Test Results

		Collinearity Statistics	
Model		Tolerance	VIF
1	X1	,597	1,676
	X2	,693	1,444
	Z	,548	1,826

Source: Author's processing (2025)

According to the multicollinearity test, each variable has a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value between 1.676 and 1.826. Furthermore, the Tolerance value is greater than 0.1, indicating that there is no multicollinearity between the independent variables.

Heteroscedasticity Test

Table 6. Results Heteroscedasticity Test

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients			
		B	Error Std.	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2,394	1,040		2,303	,023
	X1	-,013	,084	-,020	-,152	,879
	X2	,007	,078	,011	,090	,928
	X3	-,045	,068	-,093	-,665	,508

Source: Author's processing (2025)

There is no indication of heteroscedasticity in the regression model, according to the heteroscedasticity test using the Glejser test, because all significant values (X1 = 0.7879; X2 = 0.928; X3 = 0.508) are greater than 0.05.

Multiple Linear Regression Test

Table 7. Linear Regression Analysis

Model	Regression Coefficient	Sig.
Constant	2,683	,055
X1 – Attitude	,541	,001
X2 – Subjective Norm	-,124	,368

X3= Perceived Behavioral Control,222,074
Control (Perceived Behavioral Control)

Source: Author's processing (2025)

The following regression equation is obtained from the SPSS calculation shown in the table:

$$Y = 2,683 + 0,541X_1 - 0,124X_2 + 0,222X_3$$

Description: Y = Payment Preference Via E-Wallet

X₁= Attitude

X₂= Subjective Norm

X₃ = Perceived Behavioral Control

The constant is 2.683, which shows that if all three independent variables (attitude, subjective norm, and behavioral control) are zero, the predicted e-wallet preference score is 2.683 points. A significance value of 0.055 ($p > 0.05$) indicates that this constant is not statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, but still provides a baseline in the predictive model.

Attitude Variable (X₁), has a positive and highly significant effect on e-wallet preference, with a regression coefficient of 0.541 ($t = 3.508$; $p = 0.001$). Each one-point increase in the positive attitude score toward e-wallets increases preference by 0.541 points. The standardized beta coefficient of 0.462 places attitude as the most dominant predictor, explaining a relative contribution of 46.2% to the variation in preference. This means that the more positive students' evaluations of the benefits and experiences of using e-wallets, the stronger their preference for making them their primary payment method.

Subjective Norm Variable (X₂), showed a negative effect with a coefficient of -0.124, although it was not statistically significant ($t = -0.905$; $p = 0.368$). The negative beta coefficient of -0.112 indicates that social pressure or norms encouraging the use of alternative financial services (such as Islamic mobile banking) actually slightly reduced preference for e-wallets. While not significant, the direction of this negative relationship is interesting because it aligns with the initial hypothesis that religious or social norms supporting Islamic services can create tension with practical preferences for conventional e-wallets.

Perceived Behavioral Control Variable (X₃), has a positive effect with a coefficient of 0.222, but is on the verge of significance with a p-value of 0.074 (slightly above 0.05). The beta coefficient of 0.253 indicates a relative contribution of 25.3%, placing it as the second strongest predictor after attitude. These results indicate that perceived ease of access, availability of promotions, and e-

wallet integration in daily life tend to increase preference, although the effects are not yet fully statistically significant in this model.

Hypothesis Testing

Partial Effect Test (T-Test)

Table 9. Results of Partial Effect Test (T-Test)

Variables	t count	Sig.	Information
X1 – Attitude	3,508	,001	Significant
X2 – Subjective Norm	-,905	,368	Not Significant
X3– Perceived Behavioral Control (<i>Perceived Behavioral Control</i>)	1,810	,074	Not Significant

Source: Author's processing (2025)

The following is the basis for the T-test decision: If (Sig.) < 0.05 or the calculated t value > t table, then there is a significant partial influence on the dependent variable. If (Sig.) > 0.05 or t count < t table, then there is a partial insignificant influence on the dependent variable.

H1 is accepted. Attitude has a positive and significant effect on payment preferences using e-wallets. Based on the t-test, the Attitude variable (X₁) has a t-value of 3.508 with a significance of 0.001 ($p < 0.05$). A positive regression coefficient of 0.541 and a standardized beta of 0.462 indicate that each one-unit increase in attitude will increase e-wallet preference by 0.541 units, with a relative contribution of 46.2%.

H2 is rejected. There is not enough statistical evidence to state that subjective norms have a significant effect on e-wallet preferences. The t-test results show that the Subjective Norm variable (X₂) has a t-value of -0.905 with a significance of 0.368 ($p > 0.05$). The negative regression coefficient of -0.124 and the standardized beta of -0.112 indicate a relationship direction that is inconsistent with the hypothesis. Since the significance value exceeds 0.05.

H3 is rejected; perceived behavioral control does not have a statistically significant effect on e-wallet preference. Behavioral Control Variable (X₃) obtained a t-test value of 1.810 with a significance level of 0.074 ($p > 0.05$). Although the positive regression coefficient of 0.222 and the standardized beta of 0.253 indicate the expected direction of the relationship, the significance value is above 0.05.

Simultaneous Effect Test (F Test)**Table 8. Results of the Simultaneous Effect Test (F Test)**

Model	Sum Of	df	Mean	F	Sig.
	Squares		Square		
1 Regression	245,692	3	81,897	17,145	,000b
Residual	444,246	93	4,777		
Total	689,938	96			

Source: Author's processing (2025)

The simultaneous test produced a calculated F value = 17.145 > 2.70 with Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05. These results indicate that simultaneously, all three independent variables (Attitude, Subjective Norm, and Behavioral Control) significantly influence the preference for payment using e-wallets. However, it should be noted that of the three predictors, only Attitude is partially significant based on the t-test, while Subjective Norm and Behavioral Control do not show significant effects individually.

Coefficient of Determination Test (R Square)**Table 10. Results of the Determination Coefficient Test (R Square)**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	,597a	,356	,335	2,18560

Source: Author's processing (2025)

If a variable's R² value approaches 1, it is said to have excellent ability to explain variation in the dependent variable. If the R² value approaches 0, it is said to be inadequate in explaining variation in the dependent variable. The regression model consists of Attitude (X₁), Subjective Norm (X₂), and Behavioral Control (X₃) is able to explain 35.6% of the variation in E-Wallet Payment Preferences with a multiple correlation level of 0.597. Adjusted R² A 33.5% R² indicates that the model is quite robust, although there is room for additional predictor variables to improve the model's explanatory power. The standard error of estimate of 2.186 indicates an acceptable level of predictive accuracy in the context of this study. The regression model is suitable for predicting e-wallet preferences, with an explanatory contribution of 35.6% (R² = 0.356), while the remaining 64.4% is explained by factors outside the model.

Relevance of Results to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) Framework

The results of the SPSS analysis show that of the three behavioral determinants in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), namely attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control, only attitude (X₁) had a positive and significant effect on e-wallet preference among FEBI UIN

North Sumatra students. This finding partially supports the TPB, but also reveals its limitations in a digital context, where affective and personal factors appear more dominant than social pressure or perceived control.

The dominant attitude (X1) in this study received strong confirmation from the study of (Siregar & Syahbudi, 2025), who specifically studied FEBI students at UIN North Sumatra. They proved that perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude toward using, and behavioral intention, which strongly overlap with the attitude construct in the TPB, have a significant influence both partially and simultaneously on students' financial decisions in using e-money, debit cards, and paylater. Thus, the dominant attitude in this study is not an anomalous phenomenon, but rather a behavioral pattern that has been empirically tested in the same population. Furthermore, (Tamima et al., 2024) also proved that the benefits of using e-wallets have a positive and significant effect on payment interest in online transactions among students, with a model contribution reaching 54.8%. This finding strengthens the argument that the benefit construct that forms a positive attitude is a very stable and consistent determinant in the student segment in Indonesia, including at UIN North Sumatra.

In contrast, subjective norms (X2) is not only statistically insignificant but also show a negative coefficient direction. This finding contradicts (Teo et al., 2020), who found a significant influence of social norms on e-wallet adoption in Malaysia. To explain this anomaly, (Nasution, 2020) research provides an important perspective. His study of the probability of digital payments among FEBI UINSU students shows that students in urban Medan have been intensively exposed to the digital payment ecosystem, even reaching FOR (frontier, outermost, and remote) areas. This saturation condition causes the social legitimacy function of subjective norms from both peers and religious institutions to be replaced by the confirmation function of personal experience. When a technology has become the default in everyday life, students no longer need social validation to use it; they simply refer to accumulated positive experiences.

Meanwhile, perceived behavioral control (X3) shows a positive direction but is not statistically significant ($p = 0.074$), only at the threshold of significance. This finding is not entirely in line with (Viswanath Venkatesh, Susan A. Brown, 2015) who positioned perceived ease of use as a key factor in technology adoption. The most plausible theoretical explanation is that ease of access, availability of promotions, and a user-friendly interface have become minimal standards (hygiene factors) in the e-wallet industry in Indonesia, no longer differentiating factors. (Wahyu Sahara Ramadhana Manurung, Nur Ahmadi Bi Rahmani, 2022) made an important contribution by proving that ease of use is more appropriately positioned as a moderating variable, rather than a direct independent variable, in the decision to use e-wallets among FEBI UINSU students. In

his study, ease of use strengthened the relationship between reward provision and platform credibility with the decision to use e-wallets. This finding opens a new perspective that ease of use (X_3) no longer plays a primary role as a predictor of e-wallet preference, but rather has shifted to a reinforcing factor that strengthens the relationship between other variables (such as attitudes, rewards, credibility) and e-wallet preference. This shift occurs because technology has matured, and convenience has become a minimum standard that no longer differentiates.

Implications in the Context of Islamic Banking

From the perspective of Diffusion of Innovation (Rogers, 2003), the findings of this study indicate that e-wallets have successfully achieved a very high level of relative advantage and compatibility in the eyes of FEBI UINSU students. The relative advantage of e-wallets is no longer solely functional (faster than cash), but has shifted to experiential aspects: pleasant experiences, personalized services, and seamless integration with various e-commerce platforms and physical merchants. Meanwhile, e-wallet compatibility with students' digital lifestyles has also reached an optimal point where e-wallets are no longer just a tool, but part of their identity and routine. This condition contrasts with Islamic mobile banking, which is still considered less compatible with the daily microtransaction habits that are fast, flexible, and oriented towards instant rewards.

The expectation of affordable, fast, and easily connected financial services, with personal connections to various activities, is a demand that modern financial service providers must respond to (Nasution, 2020). E-wallets have met this demand very well, while Islamic mobile banking still focuses on basic administrative functions and fails to create the personal connection young users expect. Within the DoI framework, this gap indicates that e-wallets have reached the late majority, or even laggard, phase, where adoption is nearly universal and usage decisions have crystallized into habits. In contrast, Islamic mobile banking remains in the early adopter phase, with a supply-driven approach that offers products based on what is available, rather than what users need. This results in a discontinuity gap: users have quickly embraced e-wallets, while Islamic banking is still developing strategies at the starting point.

The fact that the TPB model only explains 35.6% of the variation in e-wallet preferences ($R^2 = 0.356$) is an important signal that many factors beyond the rational-instrumental framework are at work. (Verplanken & Orbell, 2022) critically note that a major weakness of the TPB is its neglect of the role of automaticity in repetitive behavior. The e-wallet preferences of FEBI UINSU students are no longer formed through conscious deliberation with each transaction; they have become automatic responses triggered by context. Factors such as habit strength, affective commitment, and perceived risk, which were not measured in this study, are strongly suspected

of playing a significant role in explaining the remaining 64.4% of unexplained variation in preferences. (Siregar & Syahbudi, 2025) emphasized that in the Industrial Revolution 4.0 era, financial institutions, including Islamic banking, must understand that students' perceptions of usability, convenience, attitudes, and intentions are key factors in shaping their transaction decisions. The implication is that innovation strategies can no longer be imitative (copying e-wallet features), but must be differentiated based on unique added value. (Tamima et al., 2024) provide concrete direction: digital financial service providers must continuously improve application benefits and security aspects given the rise in cybercrime. For Islamic banking, this is a strategic gap. Takaful (Islamic insurance)-based security features that provide protection against digital transaction losses can be a relative advantage not available in conventional e-wallets. Furthermore, the integration of applicable Islamic values, such as transaction notifications that display profit-sharing percentages, or round-up savings features that automatically invest excess spending money in productive Islamic instruments, can create a new compatibility between religious values and digital experiences.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that attitude is the most influential factor in e-wallet payment preferences among FEBI UIN Sumatera Utara students. Attitude was the only variable shown to have a positive and significant effect, while subjective norms and perceived behavioral control did not show a significant effect. These results indicate that e-wallet usage preferences are more influenced by students' personal evaluations of e-wallet use than by social influences or perceived control over their use. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) model used in this study was able to explain 35.6% of the variation in e-wallet preferences. These findings indicate that there are still other factors outside the model that have the potential to influence e-wallet usage preferences and need to be explored in further research. These factors may include aspects not yet measured in this study, such as perceived benefits, usage habits, level of trust, perceived risk, and the characteristics of digital payment services.

These findings challenge three fundamental, long-held assumptions. First, the assumption that Islamic financial literacy automatically leads to a preference for Islamic products is proven incorrect. Faculty of Economics and Business (FEBI) students continue to choose conventional e-wallets not because they disregard religious values, but because they offer a valuable experience that Islamic mobile banking cannot provide in the same format and speed. Second, the assumption that subjective norms, including socio-religious pressure, effectively shape behavior is also disproven. The negative direction of the relationship indicates potential psychological resistance: the stronger the pressure to use Islamic services, the less preference for e-wallets. Third, the assumption that ease of access and economic incentives are differentiating factors must now be revised. Behavioral control has transformed into a hygiene factor; its presence no longer increases preference, but its absence creates a disincentive.

The strategic implications for Islamic banking are fundamental. Sharia compliance is not a ticket to victory, but rather an entry point. It is a minimal prerequisite that must be met, but it is not sufficient to win over users. Future innovation strategies must evolve radically: from mere Sharia compliance to Sharia impact; from a substitution approach that attempts to replace e-wallets to an integration approach that becomes an integral part of the existing digital ecosystem; from normative-instructive communication to collaborative experiences relevant to everyday life; and from a product orientation as a transaction tool to product design that forms meaningful new habits.

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