

Traders Perception and Behavior in Weighing (in Terms of Q.S. Al-Muthaffin)

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Abstract

This article examines traders perceptions and behaviors when it comes to weighing merchandise. The importance of this research stems from the fact that many traders still cheat their scales today. Cheating on the scales appears to be a common practice in trading because it is the result of classical economic thinking, namely taking as much profit as possible. At this level, the author examines the perceptions and behavior of traders in the Pusat pasar Medan when it comes to weighing their goods. The author uses surah al-Muthaffin as a reference to describe the perceptions and behavior of traders according to Islamic standards in order to determine the main idea. Surah al-Muthaffin was chosen as a reference because there are values in Islamic trading that are related to ethics and social values. This research employs a qualitative approach with a phenomenological approach. In this article, data collection techniques such as interviews and observations are used to generate raw data, which is then processed using data analysis techniques to ensure validity. The perceptions and behaviors formed in Surah al-Muthaffin regarding weighing merchandise are actually quite well understood, however, perceptions are not fixed, so there are a variety of factors that can damage these perceptions. In reality, Pusat Pasar traders understand and adhere to trading ethics, though there are some traders who disregard the ethics, particularly when weighing.

Keywords: Perception, Behavior, Weighing

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1. INTRODUCTION

Property has become an inherent component of human life, by acquiring wealth the humans being can meet his basic, secondary and tertiary needs. Humans can acquire property in a variety of ways, including: inheritance, grant, trade or business, etc (Hendi, 2005: 67). Islam recommends one method of acquiring wealth, namely trading (Alwi, 2018: 72). Trading is one of the flexible ways to obtain assets, due to the goodness that comes from two ways, from financial and *muamalah*, as stated in *al-hadith* al-Bukhari no. 1973 and Muslim no. 1532. However, wealth can be described as a “double-edged sword” as it can facilitate humans worship, on the other hand wealth can breed greed and callousness.

Indeed, with the majority of teenagers prioritizing tertiary needs, it puts pressure on their parents to alter their perception, namely that business is a business that primarily seeks to maximize profit

(Saifullah, 2011: 128). This is not a new perception, it is consistent with the mindset of classical economic law, which limits capital to a minimum and maximize profit. It's unsurprising that businessman who adopt this mindset disregard ethics when conducting business, even more so when those businessman are traders who willing to tamper with the scales. Business ethic is a term that refers to the standards of behavior that dictate how a merchant should conduct himself when serving his customers. In other words, business ethics refers to moral values that guide a business decision making (Emmanuel, 2014: 84).

In essence, merchants who defraud their customers scales can be compared to thieves and harassers, as they violate the rights of the others. Alqur'an is extremely well versed in this subject, and thus the behavior of traders who defraud on the scales should be sufficient to awaken them. Allah sent Q.S. al-Muthaffin down as a warning sign for traders who

rig the scales, the warning can be described in terms of how Allah's wrath directed toward traders who rig the scales and what awaits them on the day of judgement.

According to the explanation above, researcher can raise several question that become the formulation of the problem in this study, such as: *first*, what is the underlying perceptioun and behavior of Pusat Pasar Medan traders when it comes to weighing?; *second*, do the Pusat Pasar Medan traders adhere to the concept of fair and honest weighing as described in the Q.S. al-Muthaffin?.

2. THEORITICAL REVIEW

2.1. Perception Theory

Perception is an important psychological aspect for humans because it reacts to the presence of various aspects and symptoms around it. Perception of a very broad understanding, both internal and external. Various experts have provided different definitions of perception, which in theory have the same meaning. Perception, according to the Big Indonesian Dictionary, is an immediate response (acceptance) to something. The process by which someone learns something through his senses (Suheri, 2018).

2.2. Behavior Theory

Purwanto, as quoted by Zakiyah and Bintang Wirawan, defines behavior as "all visible or invisible human actions or actions that are based on or not based on them," which includes "how to talk, how to do things, and how to react to everything that comes from outside and from within"(Wardatul: 2019, 13).

The theory of behavior is based on the assumption that people are rational, and that before deciding whether or not to take action, they will use existing information in a systematic manner and consider the consequences of action/decision (Pasaribu dan Budi: 2021).

2.3. Theory of Reasoned Action

The theory of behavior is based on the assumption that people are rational, and that before deciding whether or not to take action, they will use existing information in a systematic manner and consider the consequences of action/decision (Pasaribu dan Budi: 2021).

2.4. Theory of Planned Behavior

In 1967, Ajzen and Fishbein proposed the "Theory of Reasoned Action," which translates as "theory of reasoned action." Along Ajzen updated this theory to become a behavioral theory planned (theory of planned behavior) in 1991. The Theory of Planned Behavior is a theory that explains the connection between belief and behavior. According to this theory, individual behavioral intentions are formed by an attitude, subjective norm, and environment (Nuri dan Hisbullah: 2021).

3. METHODS

This is qualitative research with a phenomenological orientation, this type of research is more concerned with comprehending, exploring and interpreting phenomena in the situation being studied (Mahmud, 2011). The researcher sampled using the standart case sampling method, which entails selecting subjects who the researcher believes can adequately represent the group of phenomena being studied, the sampled subjects are vegetable, meat and fruit traders. The instrument used to collect data, namely observation and interviews. The researcher employs data analysis techniques to asceratin the meaning of the research, including data collection, data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing (Miles, 2007). The researchers used the techniques of credibility, dependability and objectivity to ensure the validity of the research data.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Result

From the results of interviews and observations conducted with three Pusat Pasar Medan traders who became the key informants, as well as three buyers from key informant and five traders as a triangulation of the data provided by the key informant, from Monday to Thursday at 08.00 A.M to 05.00 P.M. Researcher recognize how traders perceptions and behaviors in weighing. The interview results are presented in tabular form to make it easier for readers to read and understand how traders perceive and behave when weighing.

Table 1. Summary of Interview Results Subjects I-III

Revealed Variable	Subject I	Subject II	Subject III
Name	Y	RA	SA
Age	38 y.o.	33 y.o.	41 y.o.
Gender	Female	Male	Female

Revealed Variable		Subject I	Subject II	Subject III
Origin		Central Java, Cilacap	North Sumatera, Toba	East Java, Madura
Occupation		Vegetable Trader	Meat Trader	Fruit Trader
Work Experience		7 Years	15 Years	26 Years
Perception in Weighing	Basic comprehension about religious knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subject has a solid comprehension of basic religious knowledge, which she studied in school. - Subject relies on her child who attend a boarding school to improve her comprehension of basic religious knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Because subject's a public school graduate, he has a poor comprehension of basic religious knowledge. According to subject, the basic religious that he studied in school were insufficient. - To improve his comprehension on religious knowledge, subject does a variety of things, such as: asking his neighbors, searching in the internet, and borrowing books from the nearest library. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subject has a poor comprehension of religious knowledge because she is a graduate of a public school and hers parents taught her only a few basic religious knowledge. - Many things are done by subject to improve her comprehension of basic religious knowledge, such as: studying it through video lectures and searching the internet for information about religious issues that the subject is unfamiliar with.
	Comprehension about Scale cheating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subject's well-versed in the Prophet Muhammad's Islamic business ethics. - Subject understands that cheating the scales is a dishonorable act. - Subject do not identify the meaning of cheating the scales in the Q.S. al-Muthaffifin. - Subjects are aware of the impact that created by traders who cheating the scales. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subject only knows a little about the Prophet Muhammad Islamic business ethics. However, subject showed interest in it and showed desire to learn more about the Prophet Muhammad Islamic business ethics. - Subject understands that cheating the scales is an act that Allah SWT. strongly condemn. - Subject only knows the meaning of the prohibition against cheating the scales in Q.S. al-Muthaffifin. However, based on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subject only know a few fundamentals of the Prophet Muhammad Islamic business ethics, such as not lying and not taking multiple profits. - Subject recognizes that tampering with the scales is a very sinful act that harms many parties, particularly the buyer. - Subject is unaware about the meaning of the prohibition on cheating the scales in Q.S. al-Muthaffifin. Despite the fact that subject had no idea about the prohibition

Revealed Variable		Subject I	Subject II	Subject III
			<p>subject's statement, subject felt he gain more knowledge about the meaning Q.S. al-Muthaffin when researcher explained that the meaning of Q.S. al-Muthaffin can be applied in all existing aspects, not just the economic aspect.</p> <p>- Subject's well aware of the consequences of trader who tamper with the scales, as well these consequences can affect the market ecosystem.</p>	<p>concept in Q.S. al-Muthaffin, the concept of trade that adopted by subject already refers to the fundamentals of islamic business ethics as taught by the prophet Muhammad.</p> <p>- Subject's well aware of the consequences of traders who tamper with the scales, and how these consequences can harm both the market reputation and the mercants reputation.</p>
	Evaluation against scale cheating	<p>- In the subject's assessment of the trader who cheated the scales, the subject was acutely aware about the difficult of resisting the temptation to increase profits by cheating the scales, however, subject was unable to provide an assesment of the merchant who cheated the scales because the subject did not consider it worthy of assessment. Subject on the other hand, thought that this was very unfortunate because buyers were a source of sustenance for these traders, without a buyer there would be no such thing as a trader.</p> <p>- In terms of the impact caused by fraudulent traders in Pusat Pasar Medan, subject</p>	<p>- In terms of the subject's assesment of the merchant who cheated the scales, subject demonstrated antipathy toward the merchant who cheated the buyer's scales, which according to the buyer's subject was a source of income for the merchant, and the subject described the trader who cheated the buyer's scale as "a pet biting his master's hand".</p> <p>- Regarding the impact of fraudulent traders in Pusat Pasar Medan, subject explained that the impact would spread to the market reputation is one way how buyers view the majority of traders, which will not only</p>	<p>- Regarding subject's assessment of the merchant who cheated the scales, the subject expressed antipathy toward the merchant who cheated his buyer's scales, claiming that the trader who cheated the buyer's scales was unworthy of being a trader and would harm the self-image of traders in the Pusat Pasar Medan. In her presentation, subject was proud of himself, claiming that she has never deepened her religious knowledge but understands how Islamic business ethics work.</p> <p>- In terms of the impact caused by fraudulent traders in</p>

Revealed Variable		Subject I	Subject II	Subject III
		<p>explains how Pusat Pasar Medan becomes one of the factors that shape the subject's social and economic life, and how if one day the reputation of Pusat Pasar Medan that has been well built for decades is successfully tainted with the actions of traders who cheat the scales, and then gradually the market will experience a decline in buyers due to reduced buyer confidence.</p> <p>- When it comes to fighting weighing fraud, subject strongly agrees that the prohibition on rigging the scales should be applied to traders at Pusat Pasar Medan.</p>	<p>harm the fraudulent traders, but also honest traders and know nothing about it.</p> <p>- The problems mentioned above make subject strongly agree that there are rules in place to prevent cheating on the scales. With the implementation of this rule, the market that buyers have envisioned will be realized, and the benefits will extend not only to buyers, but also to traders and the Pusat Pasar Medan.</p>	<p>the Pusat Pasar Medan, subject explained that the impact would have a significant impact on the market's reputation, if the market's reputation suffered a significant decline, buyers would be hesitant to shop at the Pusat Pasar Medan center, reducing income for Pusat Pasar Medan traders.</p> <p>- The problems described above made subject believe that the rules prohibiting cheating on the scales are critical. According to the subject, Pusat Pasar Medan can do the bare minimum to implement this by posting a banner or brochure on the wall prohibiting scale cheating.</p>
Behavior in Weighing	Weighing method	<p>- According to subject, subject admitted that she had cheated the buyer's scales; this was due to economic factors that forced subject to meet their daily needs. However, the subject is aware of her mistake and confesses to the buyers who are the subject of cheating. According to subject, the response from buyers who become victims of the subject is an interesting thing for researchers to observe,</p>	<p>- Subject admitted in his presentation that he intended to cheat the buyer's scales, but this was not carried out. Because subject recalls the words of subject's trading role model, none other than the subject's mother, that is never lie to the buyer, because the sin will be billed later in the afterlife.</p> <p>- Regarding the issue of whether subject is fair or not in the way</p>	<p>- According to subject, subject never had the slightest intention of cheating the buyer's scales. Subject explained that the main factor that prevented her from cheating on the scales was her family, subject did not want his family to feel disappointed with the behavior of her took other peoples rights.</p> <p>- In response to the question of whether</p>

Revealed Variable		Subject I	Subject II	Subject III
		<p>because some of the buyers who become victims of the subject become regular customers of the subject.</p> <p>- Regarding the issue of whether subject is fair or not in terms of weighing, subject cannot provide an assessment, according to subject who has the right to judge whether it is fair or not is the buyer, but subject also provides information that the majority of buyers of the subject feel comfortable when shopping with the subject, and this is based on the opinion of buyers, who believe subject's fair and honest traders in weighing.</p>	<p>of weighing, the subject cannot give an assessment, but according to the subject if the method of weighing is measured in terms of Islamic business ethics, subject has made every effort to comply with these ethics, several methods are used by the subject so that buyers feel that he is being treated fairly and honestly such as by weighing in front of the buyer and allowing the buyer to weigh himself if the buyer asks.</p>	<p>subject weighs fairly or not, subject stated that based on the buyers response, subject felt that the weighing method was fair and correct, thing that subject did to persuade the buyer that the weighing method was correct was to show the scale indicator needle beginning at zero before weighing.</p>

Table 2. Summary of Interview Results for Triangulation from Trader Perspective (Subject I-III)

Revealed Variable		Subject I	Subject II	Subject III
Name		KY	S	LRS
Age		44 y.o.	27 y.o.	41 y.o.
Gender		Female	Female	Female
Occupation		Vegetable Trader	Vegetable Trader	Meat Trader
Relation with key informant		Y	Y	RA
Perspective to key informant	Key informant characteristic	<p>- According to subject, Mrs. Y is a friendly person, Mrs. Y also always offers the rest of her unsold goods to other vegetable traders. In his explanation, subject also said that Mrs. Y was a very emotional person, Mrs. Y also easy to feel empathy and sympathy</p>	<p>- According to the subject, Mrs. Y is a diligent and persistent trader. Mrs. Y also always gives her unsold goods to subject and always offers herself to go home together.</p>	<p>- According to subject, subject stated that Mr. RA was a good trader, honest and had high empathy for his buyers, subject also said that Mr. RA had reprimanded a trader who cheated on his buyer's scales, not only reprimanding him but Mr. RA also advised the trader about the</p>

Revealed Variable		Subject I	Subject II	Subject III
		for the buyer and the surrounding merchants.		buyer is the main source of income for traders.
	Key informant weighing method	- Subject stated in that Mrs. Y was a strong business rival because Mrs. Y was always able to entice buyers to shop with her. The subject also stated that when weighing, Mrs. Y always demonstrated how she weighing to the buyer.	- Subject stated, that Mrs. Y was the main center in the rivalry between the vegetable traders. The subject considered that the interaction that occurred between Mrs. Y and her buyer had a very calm and friendly atmosphere, Mrs. Y also did not hesitate to show the buyer how to weigh it.	- Subject stated, that Mr. RA was never considered a strong competitor in the surrounding environment because Mr. RA frequently chose to close his shop earlier than other traders. Subject also stated that when weighing, Mr. RA frequently allows the buyer to weigh it himself, and that when Mr. RA weighs, he always weighs it in front of the buyer.

Table 3. Summary of Interview Results for Triangulation from Trader Perspective (Subject IV-V)

Revealed Variable		Subject IV	Subjek V
Name		MRI	NR
Age		34 y.o.	38 y.o.
Gender		Male	Female
Occupation		Meat Trader	Fruit Trader
Relation with key informant		RA	SA
Perspective to key informant	Key informant characteristic	- Subject described Mr. RA as a good trader who was honest and had a lot of empathy for his buyers.	- According to subject, subject describes Mrs. SA as a person who is trusted by her buyers, who always listens to her buyers complaints, and always honest when it comes to weighing.
	Key informant weighing method	- Subject confirmed that Mr. RA was not a strong rival in his environment. However, subject saw Mr. RA as a rival, not in trade, but in becoming a better person. The subject also stated that Mr. RA always chatted with the buyers, did not hesitate to give them bonuses, and always allowed them to weigh their own purchases.	- Regarding market rivalry, the subject said that the rivalry owned by fruit traders still cannot be assessed, because some of the old fruit traders have moved from the Pusat Pasar Medan, and there are only four fruit traders left, including Mrs. SA. The rivalry between the four of them is centered on Mrs. SA, who is already an old player and has experience as well as traders who have accumulated since Mrs. SA became a traveling fruit trader. Subject also explained that Mrs. SA always showed the indicator needle on her scales to her buyers

Table 4. Summary of Interview Results for Triangulation from Buyer Perspective (Subject I-III)

Revealed Variable		Subject I	Subject II	Subject III
Name		SS	HSB	DAH
Key informant buyer		Y	RA	SA
Perspective to key informant	Information about key informant	- According to subject, Mrs. Y is a fairly active trader. This argument is strengthened by the observation of researcher who witnessed the way of trading, Mrs. Y, who always called out to passing market visitors. However, subject assumes that Mrs. Y biggest disadvantage is labor, because she trades alone and there are sometimes many buyers who want to transact with her, making Mrs. Y not focus on serving her buyers, but according to subject, Mrs. Y does not hesitate to apologize if the buyer felt they were not served by her. The subject also stated that Mrs. Y was a fair and honest trader who did not hesitate to allow the buyer to weigh himself.	- Subject describe Mr. RA as trader who is passionate about interacting with his buyers and has his own charisma in selling. Mr. RA's interactions with his buyers are not only business interactions, but also friendships. According to subject, Mr. RA did not hesitate to demonstrate how he weighed and explained the condition of his merchandise. According to the subject, Mr. RA is a fair and honest trader, and his honesty is one of the qualities that make buyers feel at ease when doing business with him.	- Subject stated that Mrs. SA is a friendly and honest trader in trading, this is also why the subject continues shopping despite Mrs. SA moving her store three times. The subject also confirmed Mrs. SA actions, which always showed the needle on the scale indicator beginning at zero. Apart from Mrs. SA friendly and honest treatment, the goods that offered by Mrs. SA is always fresh, which makes the subject feel at ease when transacting with Mrs. SA.

4.2. Discussion

According to the Theory of Reasoned Action, perceptions received from both the individual family environment and the individual work environment influence an individual behavior (Ajzen, 1985: 12). The emergence of a perception is based on three processes: the first is subliminal, which means it is a subconscious stimulus that accumulates based on the individual senses of situations and conditions in their environment; the second is comprehension, which means the subject's understanding of his subliminal stimulus related to situations and conditions in his environment; and the third is interpretation, which is the individual's ability to assess the subject's assessment.

This theory explains why some traders can cheat the buyer scales while others cannot. The perception

of cheating in weighing can be related to traders behavior in cheating the scales in order to increase profits. Although the initial stimulated perception of the trader is the perception of being honest in trading and not cheating the buyers scales, the researcher can assume that perception is not completely fixed, that there are several things that can influence the perception that has been stimulated from the beginning, and that negative perceptions can beat positive perceptions. Positive and negative perceptions cannot be separated because without negative perceptions, there is no positive perception, and vice versa. However, as Muslims we are required to maintain positive thoughts in a variety of situations, including trading, worship, and socializing.

This refers to the theory of "Good Intention Brings Good Will," which states that intention

(perception) is the movement of the heart toward what it considers to be in accordance with the goal, either to obtain benefits or to prevent evil, and that if one's intentions are good, the resulting actions will be good. On the other hand, if someone's intentions are bad, the resulting actions will be bad (Fishbein and Yzer, 2003: 168). Subject perception and behavior demonstrate that this theory is correct, and the relationship between perception and behavior cannot be reversed, if perception is poor behavior is poor, and vice versa. Even though some subjects in the explanation above have a religious background, but still cheat on the buyer's scales, it can be concluded that perceptions can accumulate from the subject's childhood, and perceptions can change over time, which initially had positive perceptions can change into negative, and this is proven by the subject's reason for cheating on the buyer's scales due to economic factors experienced by his family.

Based on this, the researcher can conclude that the perception and behavior of Pusat Pasar Medan traders can change, and that negative perceptions can outnumber positive perceptions and vice versa, and that this returns to the traders. There are several things that the subjects did to suppress these negative perceptions, including recalling why they became traders and remembering the impact they would get if they carried out these negative perceptions, so that at this time the subjects could suppress their negative perceptions and return maintain their positive perception that is still behaving honestly and fairly towards buyers, and this triggers their positive behavior, namely not cheating their buyers scales.

In Q.S. al-Muthaffifin, Allah SWT. said:

وَيْلٌ لِّلْمُطَفِّفِينَ ﴿١﴾ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَكْتَالُوا عَلَى النَّاسِ يَسْتَوْفُونَ ﴿٢﴾
وَإِذَا كَالُوهُمْ أَوْ وَزَنُوهُمْ يُخْسِرُونَ ﴿٣﴾

Mean: "as Woe Unto the scimpers: Those who, when they take by measure from mankind, exact the full, and who, when they measure Unto them or weigh for them, diminish.". (Q.S. al-Muthaffifin: 1-3).

The meaning of that verse explain the threat to those who engage in fraudulent behavior, always seeking an excess in the scales and measures. This verse clearly states that the behavior of ath-Thathfif's means taking a small portion of the actual scale, which causes harm to the victim. Does not include elements

of exploitation and mutual harm that cause others to suffer losses, as

stated in the Qur'an:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلْ ءُمُورَ الْكٰٔمِ بَيْنَكُمْ ۚ مَرْبِ الْبَاطِلِ ؕ إِلَّآ أَن تَكُوْنَ تِجَارَةً عَن تَرَاضٍ مِّنكُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ

كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيْمًا ﴿٢٩﴾

Mean: "O Ye who believe! devour not your substance among yourselves unlawfully, but let it be a trading among you by mutual agreement. And slay not yourselves, verily Allah is unto you ever Merciful". (Q.S. al-Nisa: 29).

If the verses above are examined, the researcher can assume that the Pusat Pasar Medan trader that researcher selects as the research subject has been weighed honestly and fairly. Although some of the subjects did not fully comprehend the meaning implied in Q.S. al-Muthaffifin, they are aware that if they cheat the scales of their buyers that a heavy price awaits them in the hereafter. This is why traders who are being subjects of researcher always prioritize the comfort and satisfaction of their buyers over themselves and their profits, they believe that if they fulfill these aspects sufficiently good will come to them, both financially and peace in their mind.

5. CONCLUSION

The perception of cheating in weighing can be related to traders' behavior in cheating the scales in order to increase profits. Although the initial stimulated perception of the trader is the perception of being honest in trading and not cheating the buyers scales, the researcher can assume that perception is not completely fixed, that there are several things that can influence the perception that has been stimulated from the beginning, and that negative perceptions can beat positive perceptions. This refers to Nawawi's theory of "Good intent, bring good will," which states that the intention (perception) is the movement of the heart toward what it considers to be in accordance with the goal, either to obtain benefits or to prevent evil, and that if someone's intentions are good their actions will be good, on the other hand, if someone's intentions are bad the resulting action will be bad as well. Subjects perception and behavior demonstrate that this theory is correct, and the relationship between perception and behavior cannot be reversed, if perception is poor behavior is poor, and vice versa. Even though some

subjects in the explanation above have a religious background, but still cheat on the buyers scales, it can be concluded that perceptions can accumulate from the subjects childhood, and perceptions can change over time, which initially had positive perceptions can change into negative, and this is proven by the subjects reason for cheating on the buyer's scales due to economic factors experienced by his family. Based on this, the researcher concludes that the perception and behavior of Pusat Pasar Medan traders based on the accumulated experience and teachings they have received since childhood, whether through the family, school, or work environment, and the concept that underpins their desire to become a trader, whether through their own desires or the influence of the figures they serve as role models.

Pusat Pasar Medan traders who were chosen as research subjects by researchers have considered them honestly and fairly. Although some of the subjects did not fully comprehend the meaning implied in Q.S. al-Muthaffifn, they are aware that if they cheat the scales of their buyers that a heavy price awaits them in the hereafter. This is why traders who are being subjects of researcher always prioritize the comfort and satisfaction of their buyers over themselves and their profits, they believe that if they fulfill these aspects sufficiently good will come to them, both financially and peace in their mind.

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