

PURCHASE INTENTION OF HALAL FOOD AMONG THE YOUNG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine young Malaysian university students' purchase intention towards halal food. The study also extends to measure the level of awareness, understanding of the purchase intention, the solidity of religious belief and commitment recognition, and the last thing is the perception of halal certification towards halal foods. The design of this research is survey research that uses four variables and a quantitative survey was used to gather data to test the hypothesis and also explained the relationship and the underlying influence of these variables. The statistical programme, SPSS, was used to analyze and interpret the results. The study revealed that Universities' young students are very conscious about Halal purchase intention. There are three variables out of four (religiosity, self-identity, and halal certificate) that are affected by its dependent variable. The paper concludes that firms or organizations must comply with the Islamic point of view. Especially the business organization those who are targeting the Muslim population. Among the total 1.8 Billion Muslim population majority is adult age. Therefore, Halal products must be labelled accordingly as it may affect the purchase intention of each individual especially the new generation.

Keywords: Purchase Intention, Halal Food, Young University Students, Malaysia.

Introduction

Every major religion attaches symbolic meanings to food and drinks by having rules to regulate their consumption, and it sometimes include religious rituals. This is the reason why certain religions forbid the consumption of certain food completely or restrict them at certain specific time (Aliman and Othman, 2007). This will definitely affect their purchase intention as it affects their consumption in certain items. Chaudry (2001) supported this idea as his previous studies revealed that Muslims have to adhere to their religious requirements in relation to food consumption. In Islam, there are two terms that denote Islamic prohibitions and restrictions on food, which are 'Haram' which means unlawful or prohibited and 'Halal' which means lawful or permitted. The word 'Halal' is derived from the word 'Halla' which stands for lawful, legal, legitimate and permitted for Muslims (Jallad, 2008). In reality, Halal is one of the important aspects of spiritual needs for the Muslim consumers which plays a significant role in their life by guiding them to purchase and consume the Halal product (Alserhan, 2010).

Literature Review

Halal Concept

"Halal" food/products, the way halal foods are prepared and processed, helps the consumers to have healthy lifestyle. It is not only conformed to Islamic law but also good for human consumption because of its freshness and cleanliness. However, in Malaysia, not all "Halal" food can be acknowledged as "Halal" unless they are recognized by "Halal food certifications" or "Halal food clerics" because of the possibility of

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must adhere to the Islamic principles on the consumption of food and ingredients which is permissible by Islamic law. (Mba & Programme, n.d.)The most universal and prominent societies that can strongly influence one's behavior, decision, values and attitudes is the religion and that is why religious commitment is an important and cultural factor. In the Quran, Surah Al Baqarah also states,

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطَوَاتِ
السَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُبِينٌ

O you mankind! Eat of what is on earth, Lawful and good; and do not follow the footsteps of the devil, for he is to you an avowed enemy. (Al Baqarah:168)

Islam is not just the religion but it is a way of life. It guides all human beings how to live, how to eat, how to survive and how to struggle in life as the way of life for all. Thus, Islam also mention on the eating style; lawful and unlawful under the title of halal and haram. In the verse of Surah Baqarah, it is mentioned that we are allowed to eat what is lawful and we, human being are created just to worship Allah (swt) and thus, we have to obey what He mentions in the Quran in order to be good Muslim and Muslimah.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَاشْكُرُوا لِلَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ عَلَيْهِ قَانِدِينَ ﴿١٧٢﴾

O you, who have believed, eat from the good things which We have provided for you and be grateful to Allah if it is [indeed] Him that you worship.(Al Baqarah :172)

- ## Self- Identity

Golnaz and Zainalabidin (2011) proposed in the research that there is a positive relationship between perception and actual buying behavior. Moreover, Malaysian consumers' understanding is based on their perceptions criteria; trust, quality and price of the food and those things can lead to the purchase decision. Thus, the self-identity, attitude, perceptions and behaviors are very important in choosing and purchasing halal foods. Consumers must have knowledge on the underlying benefits of purchasing and consuming foods in terms of safety, health assurance, cleanliness, and environmental issues. (Teng, 2013)

Purchase Intention

It is undeniable that intentions change over time. Thus it is important to measure them carefully to ensure accurate prediction of behavior (Padgett, 2009). Understanding what influence consumers in term of their purchasing intention in buying Halal

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product will result in better meeting of needs and expectation. An Islamic economist cited by Hasan (2005) states that a believer should spend his wealth in moderation and not be miser or extravagant according to the verses of the Quran:

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَنْفَقُوا لَمْ يُسْرِفُوا وَلَمْ يَقْتُرُوا وَكَانَ بَيْنَ ذَلِكَ قَوَامًا

And [they are] those who, when they spend, do so not excessively or sparingly but are ever, between that, [justly] moderate. (Al-Furqan:67)

Halal Food Certification

Halal food certification refers to the steps where the food processes are examined such as slaughtering, included ingredients, processing, testing and storage (Badrudin et al., 2012). Halal logo and certification is a vital endorsement in assuring that the foods are accurately halal, clean and safe. (Ambali & Bakar, 2013). (Teng, 2013) investigated that consumers want to purchase halal labeled food because of their social status and influences by the references group such as peers, family members, friends, and householders. As a result, marketers try to come out with halal certified products in order to penetrate the Muslim consumer markets such as Malaysian markets and they ensure halal regulations in their product manufacture in order to obtain the halal logo (Nayeem, 2018). Ambali and Bakar stated that Halal certification is a major key consumption for Muslim consumers who are living in a multicultural community of various religions because they have a wide range of selection for products and services and some are somehow uncertain. (Ambali & Bakar, 2013)

Malaysian Halal Industry Development

Malaysian government is strongly committed in developing halal industry as the country is targeting to achieve its vision as being a global halal hub (Badrudin et al., 2012). Malaysia is the only country in the world whereby the government provides full support in promoting the Halal Certification process on products and also services. Halal certification bodies in other ASEAN and neighboring countries are still developed by each individual jurisdiction or by the non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In Malaysia, there are two organizations that the government gives support for halal recognition and certification. Those are,

1. Department of Islamic development Malaysia (JAKIM)
2. Jabatan Agama Islam Negeri and Majlis Agama Islam Negeri (State Department of Islamic and State Islamic Council)

Halal Certification provides the declaration and assurance to all Muslim consumers because it fulfills the Shari'ah law, which is a must for all

Muslims. The concept of halalanthoyyiban, as all Halal certification applicants must comply with Shari'ah requirements. Therefore, the products that are certified Halal by JAKIM are guaranteed to be Halal products which are safe to consume or use. Halal certification issued by JAKIM is recognized worldwide. (Badrudin et al., 2012)

The Malaysian certification processes and the Malaysian Halal Standards have been developed because of its receiving extensive recognition for maintaining quality in the field of Halal-compliance. Consequently, the Malaysia Halal Logo is acknowledged and well-accepted by worldwide. Malaysian Government is active in recognizing the importance of Halal and thus, it has established mechanisms to implement and secure the Muslim consumers in confirming products, food producers and slaughterhouses for the protection and safety of consumers of Halal products. In 1982, the Malaysian Government have established "Committee on Evaluation of Food, Drinks and Goods utilized by Muslims" which now known as the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM). The main objective of that Committee was to check, instill and declare Halal status amongst food manufacturers, suppliers, channel distributors and traders and they are the responsible bodies for the issuance of Halal certificates and provide guidelines on the appointment of foreign Islamic association as Halal Certification Body for Products to be distributed from Malaysia. Additionally, 'Halal Food: Production, Preparation, Handling and Storage – General Guidelines (MS 1500:2004)' was launched in 2004. MS 1500:2004 includes agreement with international standards of Good Manufacturing Practices and Good Hygiene Practices and the practical guidelines for the food industry on the processing of Halal food based on quality, cleanliness and safety concerns and those are served as the basic obligation for food products and businesses in Malaysia.

According to the Third Industrial Master Plan 2006-2020 (IMP3), the local food processing industry will be extended and expanded with the objective of renovating Malaysia into a regional Halal food production and distribution hub. Thus, the government's objective is to make Malaysia the global Halal hub for production and trade in Halal goods and services. Moreover, the strategic plans have been set for the improvement, development and the promotion of Malaysia as the global Halal hub.

Hypothesis Development

Different hypothesis has been developed after going through past studies and the data collection stage. The different hypothesis are religious

commitment, self – identity, purchase intention, halal certification. Based on the review of the literature, research objectives and the model, the following hypotheses were developed:

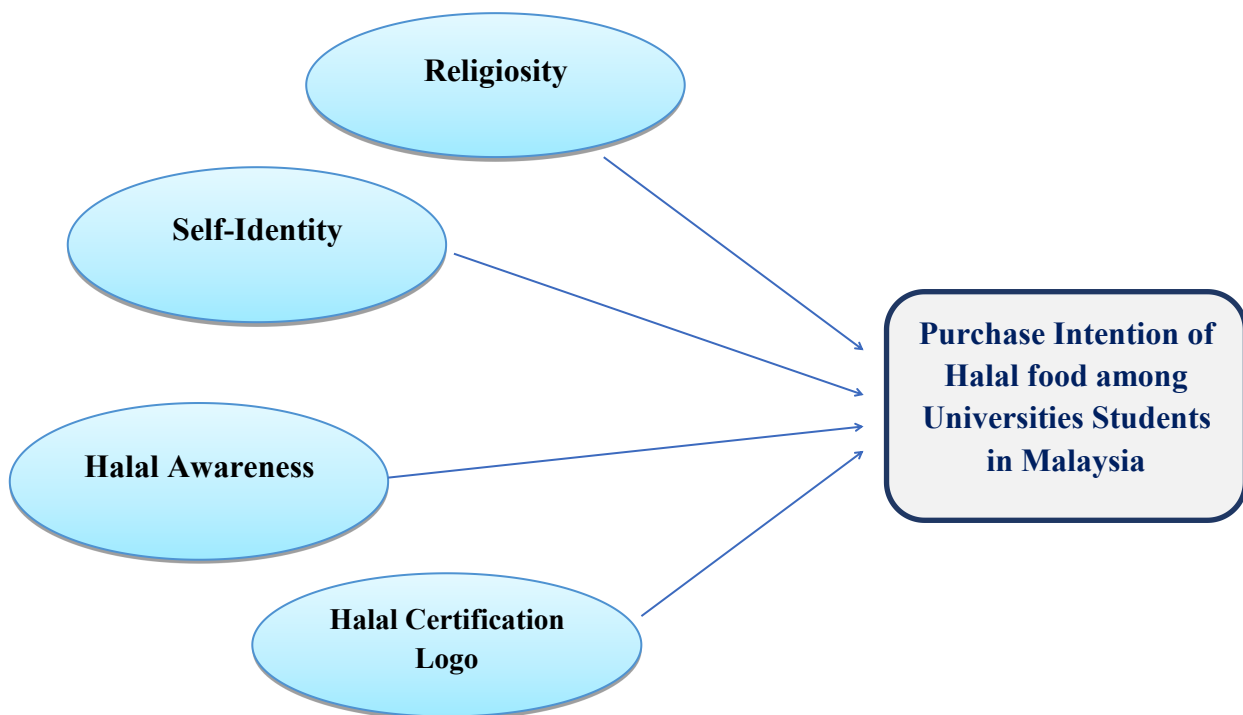
H1. Religiosity will be positively related to the intention to choose Halal products.

H2. Attitude based self-identity towards Halal products will positively influence intention to choose Halal products.

H3. Halal certified foods will positively influence the intention to choose Halal products.

H4. Knowledge of Halal food awareness will positively influence the intention to choose Halal products.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Research Methodology

Research Design

The general purpose of the study was identifying the purchase intention of Malaysian Muslim consumer's toward halal food. The design of this research is survey research that uses four variables. This study is a quantitative study and Cooper and Emory (1995) stated that the explainable study used to test the hypothesis and also explain the relationship and the underlying influence of these variables.

Data Collection Method and Instruments

This research used questionnaires as the methods for data collection. Basically, questionnaire has being used to measure the variables of interest. Several questions have been adapted and modified by previous study to search the answer for respondents' background and understanding of

halal concepts in Malaysia. The questionnaire contains six main sections: 1) demographic 2) religiosity 3) Halal Awareness 4) Self-identity 5) Halal certification 6) Purchase intention. A total 75 respondents were randomly selected from different universities in Malaysia. Survey questionnaires were distributed online to the Malaysian students who are currently studying in Malaysia universities and the questionnaires are filled up by online through Google document.

Sample Determination

This research is meant for a mini research and thus, the range of sample size should be from 75 – 200 and 125 samples were taken so that it will not be too small size nor too big and also the best sample size which can give the recommendable findings and can help to get the clear analysis. The sample size of this research is chosen to be 75 respondents. Those respondents are chosen from different parts

of Malaysia who are studying in different universities of Malaysia. The respondents are at the undergraduate level and from various backgrounds of studies. The age ranges of the respondents are from 18-25, which includes both male and female.

Data Measurement Scale (Nominal, Ordinal or Likert Scale)

The questionnaire used the five-point Likert scale of 1 to 5 (1 representing strongly agree and 5 strongly not agree) to measure the consumers purchase intention of halal food. . Based on the understandings from previous studies, questionnaire was adapted for the religiosity and halal certification (zainaleet al; 2008). However, as for the halal awareness, self-identity, and purchase intention the questionnaire was adapted and modified (Ardyanti,2010, Faryal and Kamran, 2011.) to collect information. In addition, consumers' demographic and social-economic backgrounds were also collected.

Analyzing Procedure

SPSS analysis was used to run the raw data in order to proceed with data analysis. Both descriptive and factor analysis was used to analyzed the information collected from the questionnaire. Descriptive analysis was used to analyzed respondents' demographic and social-economic, however the factor analysis is being used as a statistical technique which the objective to indicate the underlying factors that might have impact on consumer purchase intention on halal food. In addition, reliability analysis and Annova (degree of relationship) analysis also was done for this research in order to proceed with data analysis.

Results and Discussion (Descriptive and Test Hypothesis)

Descriptive Analysis

Out of 75 respondents there were 21 male respondents and 54 females. Among the respondents up to 25 to 29 years of old were 5.3%, followed by 20 to 24 years old were 94.7%. The respondents are commonly single with 97.3% and only 1.3% is married. Among the respondents are in bachelor program under various universities in Malaysia. Overall out of 75 respondents 32% of the respondents from International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), 12% were from University Utara Malaysia (UUM), 10% were from University Putra Malaysia (UPM) and rest of them from different universities.

Table 1: Table Demographic

Items	Frequency	Percentage
AGE:		
20-24(years)	71	94.7%
25-29(years)	4	5.3%
30-35(years)	0	0.0%
36 and above	0	0.0%
GENDER:		
Male	21	28%
Female	54	72%
MARITAL SATTUS:		
Single	73	97.3%
Married	1	1.3%
UNIVERSITY:		
IIUM	24	32.0%
UKM	5	6.7%
USM	7	9.3%
UMS	5	6.7%
UITM	7	9.3%
USIM	3	4.0%
UPM	8	10.7%
UUM	9	12.0%
Others :	7	9.3%

Reliability Analysis

By applying SPSS 20.0 version, this may make the researchers to examine the internal consistency of the data for analysis. The reliability analysis is the most commonly used statistics which is called Cronbach's coefficient alpha. From the table 2 below, The Reliability Statistics, is .872, which simply means that our measuring is very reliable.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.872	.896	25

Factor Analysis

By smearing Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and The Kaiser–Mayer–Olkin Measure of sampling adequacy, this can help us to perform factor analysis. All items according to the questionnaires were factor using varimax rotation, and 0.5 is the cut off-point for factor analysis. In table 3, the KMO and Barlett's test is .846. Meaning the result is adequate as it is more than 0.5 Barlett's Test of Sphericity 0.000.

Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.846
Bartlett's Test of Approx. Chi-Sphericity	1000.569
df	210
Sig.	.000

Degree of Relationship

The proposed model (Figure 1) consists of one exogenous variable (Purchase Intention of Halal

food among Universities Students in Malaysia) and four endogenous variables

(religiosity, self-identity, halal awareness and halal certification). In our research, the value is .839. To express as percentage, this means that 83.9% of model explains the purchase intention of Halal food. However, to understand more about statistical significance of this result, it is necessary to look at the ANOVA Table 4. This tests the null hypothesis that multiple R in the population equals 0. The model in this mini thesis research reaches statistical significance (sig. = .000; this really means $p < .0005$)

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.839 ^a	.704	.692	.630

a. Predictors: (Constant), FAC3_3, FAC2_3, FAC1_3

Table 5: ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	67.106	3	22.369	56.369	.000 ^a
	Residual	28.174	71	.397		
	Total	95.280	74			

a. Predictors: (Constant), FAC3_3, FAC2_3, FAC1_3

b. Dependent Variable: EQ3

Table 6: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.360	.073		32.445	.000
	FAC1_3	.008	.073	.007	.103	.918
	FAC2_3	.167	.073	.147	2.276	.026
	FAC3_3	.938	.073	.826	12.803	.000

a. Dependent Variable: EQ3

From the result of the table 6 labeled as Coefficients, the two values are given in Collinearity Statistics: Tolerance and VIF. The tolerance is an indicator of how much of the variability of the specified independent is not explained by the other independent variables in the model and is calculated using formula $1 - R^2$ for each variable. If this value is very small (less than .10), it indicates that the multiple correlation with other variables is high, suggesting the possibility of multicollinearity (Haque & Rahman, 2011).

The Coefficients Matrix from table 6, the Standardized Beta Coefficients give a measure of the contribution of each variable to the model. A large value has a big impact on criterion variable

given to the predictor variable. Normally, the Sig (p) and t values give a rough indication of the impact of each predictor variable- a big absolute t value and small p value suggests that a predictor variable is having a large impact on the criterion variable. If the correlation with other variables is high, meaning the possibility of multicollinearity is related. The other value given is the VIF (Variance Inflation Factor), which is just the inverse of the tolerance value (1 divided by tolerance). VIF values above 10 would be a concern here, indicating multicollinearity. In our mini thesis research, the tolerance value of all independent variables is within .147 to .826 which is not less than .10. Therefore, we can say that we didn't violate the assumption of multicollinearity. Furthermore, it supported the VIF which are also

less than 10. The next thing we want to know is which of the variables included in the model contributed to the prediction of the dependent variable.

There is none negative signs out the front in the data analysis found, the largest beta coefficient in the table is .826, which is for self-identity. This simply means that this variable makes the significant or unique contribution to explaining the dependent variable, when the variance explained by all other variables in the model is controlled for. The other beta values for religiosity and halal certificate of purchase intention of Halal food are accordingly, 0.147, 0.007 these made less of a contribution. From the coefficient matrix table we can generate (Y) Purchase intention of Halal food = $b_0 + b_1 X_1$ (religiosity) + $b_2 X_2$ (Halal Certificate) + $b_3 X_3$ (Self-identity).

Test of Hypothesis

H1. Religiosity is positively related to the purchase intention to choose Halal products. According to the table 6, the factor H1 independent variable in standardized coefficient is .007, meaning not supported and it's insignificant as it has the highest .918. The H2 which is the attitude based self-identity towards Halal products will positively influence intention to choose Halal products, it supported and has significant to purchase intention of Halal product so as the H3, Halal certified foods will positively influence the intention to choose Halal products and has the highest standardized coefficient beta of .826.

Furthermore, for the significance test of each variable, from the Table 6, we have checked the value in the column marked sig. This tells whether the variable is making a statistically significant unique contribution to the equation or not. According to the research, P value of Religiosity is 0.0 means $P < 0.05$. Thus, the religiosity is merely precluded which means that purchase intention of Halal food by the universities students in their perception doesn't have significant relationship with effectiveness of purchase intention. The P value of Self-identity is .026 means $P < 0.05$. Thus, it is strongly rejected which means that the morality appeal by the restaurant's owner does have a significant relationship with of effectiveness of advertisement. The P value of truthfulness, the third variable (H3), is 0.00 means $P < 0.05$. Thus H3 is also rejected which means that truthfulness appeal in the advertising message does have a significant relationship with effectiveness of purchase intention.

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component		
	1	2	3
AQ2		.814	
AQ3		.841	
AQ4		.816	
BQ3	.852		
BQ4	.813		
BQ5	.732		
BQ6	.743		
BQ7	.763		
BQ8	.731		
EQ1			.755
EQ3			.826
EQ4			.795

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

Conclusion

Universities students are very conscious about Halal purchase intention. Therefore, the 3 variables (religiosity, self-identity and halal certificate) are affected to its dependent variable. Firms/organizations must comply with the Islamic point of view. Muslim population 1.8 Billion with majority is adult age. Therefore, Halal products must be labelled accordingly as it may affect the purchase intention of each individual especially new generation.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest in this work.

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