# Religiosity and Consumer's Attitude Towards Halal Food and Cosmetic Products

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#### ABSTRACT

Islam is a universal and comprehensive religion. It urges Muslims to choose for the good in every facet of life including food. Muslims are aware of the prohibition from using pork, alcohol and any other related matter. This may lead to promptly rising demand for halal food and cosmetics products. Although Muslims are majority in some countries, yet there is still much food not served according to the Muslim halal ruling and issues of abuse of halal logo and certification. Hence, this paper investigates the relationship between knowledge and religiosity on attitude towards halal food and cosmetic products. There is a need to examine the implications of Religiosity as one of the main factors that should be considered in promoting cosmetic products. The paper looks at existence of significant difference between consumers' attitude towards halal cosmetic and halal food products were investigated. It also aims at drawing the attention of Muslims to the Halal concept that originated from the Quran and Sunnah, which are the two sources in Islam. The methodology adopted in this paper is the conceptual research through the consultation of relevant literature, which focuses on the thematic study of the halal food and cosmetic products. This is followed with analysis and discussion on the contents of the materials used. It is concluded that religiosity is more influential towards attitude compared to halal knowledge. The paper also observed that non-Muslim's intention of buying halal product depends on many important factors including age, educational qualification, religious thoughts and animal welfare. An important conclusion is that the perception of non-Muslim consumers about halal food products is influenced by their subjective norm, attitude and comprehended behavioural control. The paper also indicates that Muslim consumers have more positive attitudes and intentions towards halal food products as well as halal cosmetic products.

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#### 1. Introduction

The internal dimension refers to religious beliefs, values, and identities, while the external dimensions reflect religious affiliation, worship practices, or membership in a religious environment. Therefore, to understand the nature of consumer's behaviour, marketers should determine the extent to which affiliated consumers are committed in terms of upholding their religion. This is because religiosity shows their belief system and firm adherence to their basic belief, as well as the decision-making process regarding the manner of consumption.

In fact, Islam has set up rules and regulations concerning food preparation which imply the process, legitimacy, source and actors that should conform to the fundamentals of Islam. Cosmetics these days can be categorized as a must-have item used for the minority of men and most women. The Arabic word ( $\Delta U$ ) *halal* means "lawful or permissible", where ( $\Delta U$ ) *haram* the opposite means "unlawful or prohibited" (Sayuti & Alam, 2011; Liu & Wilson, 2010). Undoubtedly, establishing a *halal* hub is a collaborated effort of several industry professionals in food, cosmetics, logistics, pharmaceuticals, packaging as well as different services from all over the world.

Interestingly, the study of halal brands has developed rapidly, even though an interest in the perspectives of young Muslim consumers on halal brands remains limited. Wilson (2019) emphasizes that the halal branding is not only about attaching a halal logo to the package, but also the trademark materials giving full confidence to the buyers. Although previous research has been undertaken to explore materials and logos as important factors of intent to buy among Muslim consumers in general, yet the influence of promotional factors on halal cosmetics is still in the controversial stage (Benyahia, 2018). Additionally, there is still a lack of well-established studies on the role of religious belief as a factor affecting young Muslim consumers today. Therefore, there is an urgent call to examine the impact of religious beliefs on the behavior of young consumers (Abu-Alhaija et al., 2018). In order to address this gap, this study proposes a model to reveal an important indicator of intent to buy halal food and cosmetics among the Muslim generation.

The legality of halal is not merely focussed on foods, rather it extends to all consumables, such as pharmaceutical, toilet requisites, cosmetics and services including investments, finance and business. The global population of Muslims is roughly 1.6 billion, which is equivalent to 23 percent of the world's population (Rajabzadeh and Ireland, 2011; Lada *et al.*, 2009; The Philippine Star, March 2014).

According to Shahbandeh's (2019) report, the market for halal products is expected to expand from US\$ 45.3 billion in 2016 to more than US\$ 58.3 billion in 2022. The largest sector in the global halal industry is Islamic finance, which owns 43% of the halal market; the second is halal food, which has a market share of 36%. It is estimated that the global halal food market revenue will grow from about 1.25 billion US dollars in 2016 to approximately 2.57 billion US dollars in 2024. The Halal Food Index score indicates that the statistics of the halal food market worldwide in 2017, where the United Arab Emirates scored the highest point in the index. On halal food trade factors, official regulations, community awareness and prices, Malaysia ranked second and Turkey ranked twelfth.

Halal certified products, halal awareness of the community and demand for value-oriented products have increased in recent times. In fact, when consumers buy food products, they confirm whether they are halal or not rather than trying them (Ismoyowati, 2015). Companies are working on developing logistics and supply chain (Tieman and Ghazali, 2014), expanding portfolios by adding beverages and halal-certified foods, and subsequently reviewing product ingredients in terms of halal principles to meet demand.

This paper has paramount importance due to its precedence in studying and assessing the precursors and outcomes of religiosity of consumers' attitude towards halal food and cosmetic products in one model. Moreover, this paper is among the realistic attempts to explore the significant difference between Muslim consumers' attitude and intention, as well as non-Muslim consumers' attitude towards halal food and cosmetic products.

## 2. Literature Review

Previous researches show some tangible results for halal products such as:

The theory of Muslim consumer's behavior and intention has been used in many relevant studies in terms of purchasing both products and services (Yunus et al., 2014; Awan et al., 2015; Souiden & Jabeur, 2015; Ghadikolaei, 2016; Suki and Salih, 2016). In reference to the results obtained for this research, it was pointed out that the intention is the result of the influence of different types of factors.

The research was conducted by Awan et al. (2015) to determine the factors that motivates the intention of Muslim consumers to buy halal products. With reference to the results of the study, it

was noted that when it comes to buying halal; Muslim consumers are influenced by personal factors, halal logo and social factors.

Regarding consumption of halal cosmetics, previous research has shown that certain elements, especially consumers' adherence to their religion or their religiosity in other words, in fact their attitudes are followed by subjective standards which are critical aspects that influence their intention of buying halal Products (Ansari & Mohammed, 2015). The findings of the research conducted by Majid et al. (2015) shows that consumers' religiosity is among the most important factors in purchasing cosmetics.

In the research conducted by Said and Hassan (2014), there is a statistically significant relationship between religious observance and halal consumption. In a study by Jamal and Sharifuddin (2015), the religious milieu gathered amid collectivism and consumers' purchase of halal-labeled products. Other research findings also reveal an important relationship between Muslim consumers' religiosity and intentions to purchase halal cosmetics (Majid et al., 2015).

None of the above studies addressed the assessment of variables that may be effective for consumers towards halal food and cosmetics. Hence, the current study activates the effects of knowledge and its implications, as well as the matter of religiosity on the attitudes of halal food and cosmetic products, and the extent to which these attitudes affect the intention of purchasing halal food and cosmetics.

# 3. Religiosity and Consumer's Attitude Towards Halal food

Religion is one's beliefs about the real inherent traits of religion and religious scriptures (Moschis and Ong, 2011). Fundamentally, it changes and determines the behaviour of the people (Alam et al., 2011a; Berger, 1961; Mukhtar and Butt, 2012; Schneider et al., 2011) and makes it affect consumer's attitudes and behaviour (Delener, 1990, 1994; 2000; Pettinger et al., 2004; Wilkes et al., 1986). Religiosity can be defined as "*the extent to which an individual is committed to his religion, so that religion is reflected in the behaviour and attitudes of the individual*" (Johnson et al., 2001). In other words, religiosity has an exceptional religious level (De Run et al., 2010; O'Connell, 1975). Undoubtedly, religion plays an influential role in societies pertaining to the forming of food choices (Dindyal, 2003; Musaiger, 1993); this is due to the consumption of food that is based on religion itself and the expansion of individual teachings (Bonne et al., 2008; Lada et al., 2009).

Religion is a pioneer and an important indicator in decision-making process because it is the origin that simplifies a person by acting in an ethical and legal capacity. According to BJ Johnson (2001), religiosity is the way in which an individual adheres to his religion, as this is reflected in his behaviour and attitudes (Ed Run, M. Butt, K. Fam, and T. Jong 2001 / & B. O'Connell, 1978). In short, religiosity is an acquired degree in religion. According to S. S. Alam, R. Mohd and B. Hisham (2011), that the religious fact is one of the pillars or sub-components of man's culture, which is not attributed to ethnicity, nationality and geography, and which possesses the many factors influencing human behaviour. Regarding the consumer's behaviour in the past, the researchers found an important relationship between the consumer's affiliation to religion and the types of variables connected to consumption.

## 4. Consumer's Attitude Toward Purchase Behaviour

Purchasing behaviour can be interpreted as the power of consumers to make decisions to purchase specific products and services available in the market (Rani, 2014). Studies have shown that there are many internal and external factors that influence consumers' buying decisions. The former consists of age, personality and beliefs, while the latter includes attitudes, family and social status (Khaniwale, 2015). In line with this, marketers are expected to be able to define the buying behavior of target market segments and devise strategies in order to serve consumers' demands.

Therefore, consumer's attitudes toward purchase behaviour have three components, namely, cognitive, emotional, and behavioural. The cognitive component refers to beliefs that are the reality of attitudes towards something. The affective component deals with the feelings and emotions that the situation generates. The behavioural components include actions and intentions towards the attitude of the subject (Solomon, 2017).

# 5. The Concept of Halal Food

"Halal" is an Islamic term, which implies "permissible" or "unrestricted", based on the Holy Qur'an which is considered the word of Allah. Halal is at the core of Muslims' belief, where all Muslims are obliged to know basic information about Islamic rules, because a Muslim should know whether something is halal or not (Wilson, 2014).

Awareness of halal food shows the consumer's knowledge toward the concept of halal, which should make him aware of halal foods, beverages, meat or otherwise. A higher level of halal awareness can have a positive effect on intent to purchase halal food in the future (Yasid and Andriansyah, 2016). Furthermore, Bashir (2019) found a positive correlation between awareness of halal food and the intention to purchase halal food produced by non-Muslim companies (Azam, 2016). In fact, even in the non-Muslim sample, knowledge of halal food influences attitudes towards halal food (Mumuni et al., 2018).

Hence, halal can be defined as something authorized by Islamic law. Al-Jurani said in the book of definitions, that "*halal is the ability to use something which is required to cover the material needs, such as drinks, food and medicine*". Mainly, halal is having permission to eat, drink and to act according to Islamic law and principles. Moreover, halal is a universal term that can be applied to all aspects of life (MHABM Baharudin, 2012). We must know that the word halal is not only used in consumable goods or products used by Muslims, rather it contains a concept and a wide range from the practical point of view that strengthens human relations with treatment, clothing, trade, style, financial or other services that match the guidelines and principles identified by Islam (N.M.N Maheran and C.F.F.M.I. Bidin, 2009).

There is no doubt that the sphere of forbidden things is very limited in Islam, while the permitted things are many. For example, in the Qur'an and the Sunnah, there are few explicit texts regarding prohibited things, which indicate that everything that is not mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah is considered to be permitted. On this occasion, the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "The lawful is what Allah made lawful in His Book, the unlawful is what Allah made unlawful in his Book, and what He was silent about; then it is among that for which He has pardoned" [at-Tirmidhi, vol. 3, Hadith no. 172].

Pagan Arabs used to eat dirty foods before the beginning of Islam, like blood and carrion of animals. Hence, Allah Almighty addressed all human by saying: ((*O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy*)). [Surah al-Baqarah: 168]. In another verse, Allah (S.W.T) addressed the believers by saying:

((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\*\* He has only forbidden to you dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah. But whoever is forced [by necessity], neither desiring [it] nor transgressing [its limit], there is no sin upon him. Indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful)). [Surah al-Baqarah: 172-173].

It is understood from Almighty's statement of the above verses that all foods are halal except the four that have been specified as prohibited. More clarifications about six categories of haram food are stated in another verse, as Allah Almighty says:

((Prohibited to you are dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah, and [those animals] killed by strangling or by a violent blow or by a head-long fall or by the goring of horns, and those from which a wild animal has eaten, except what you [are able to] slaughter [before its death], and those which are sacrificed on stone altars, and [prohibited is] that you seek decision through divining arrows. That is grave disobedience. This day those who disbelieve have despaired of [defeating] your religion; so fear them not, but fear Me. This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion. But whoever is forced by severe hunger with no inclination to sin - then indeed, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful)). [Surah al- Maidah: 3]. This Qur'anic verse indicates that there are six categories of forbidden animals:

- 1. Animal killed by strangling
- 2. Animal killed by violent blow
- 3. Animal killed by falling from a height
- 4. Animal killed by the gorging of horns
- 5. The devoured of wild beast except that which you have slaughtered lawfully
- 6. Animal that has been immolated to idols.

All these take the rule of dead animals in terms of prohibition.

#### 6. Consumer's Attitude Towards Cosmetic Products

Cosmetics can be defined as "*products used to change facial features, body scrubs or fragrance*". Several cosmetics are offered to decorate the face, hair and body (Women's Health, 2013). The promotion and manufacture of cosmetics has an impact on global culture in the field of halal, thus demand for halal cosmetics is increasing worldwide (E. Lowe, June 2010). According to J. Rajabzadeh (2011) and DK Yousef (2010), they believe that halal users are often radically loyal to halal brands, so there is no serious impact of economic decline. However, C. Hornby and S. Yucel (2009) believe that halal usage is not limited to Muslims, rather even non-Muslims buy halal products to realize that they are safe and benefiting them materially and financially.

Hence, knowledge about the buying of halal cosmetics is actually very limited. This suggests that more research is needed on the buying of halal cosmetics (Kaur et al., 2014). Halal cosmetics should not contain ingredients originated from carrion, pigs, human body parts, blood, predators and insects. Among others, cosmetic ingredients come from the animals permitted according to Islamic law must be slaughtered in an Islamic way order to be considered halal (Yusuf, E; Yajid, M.S.A, 2017). When preparing, processing, manufacturing, storing and transporting halal cosmetics, it must always be ensured that they are preserved in their hygiene and original condition, whereby confirmation that they are preserved from filth. The purpose of certifying a product as halal is in line with the objectives of most quality assurance procedures (Hashim, P.; Mat Hashim, D, 2013). Therefore, halal cosmetics that carry halal logo should be recognized as an indication of cleanliness, quality, safety and purity.

The provision of ingredients intended for the manufacture and enhancement of halal cosmetic products, plays an important role in the overall performance and results of the product. The manufacturers are responsible to support the safety of the ingredients used particularly for halal cosmetics (Silva, P.A.; Ansell, J.; Boisleve, F.; Dent, M.; Amaral, R.T.; Hatao, M.; Hirose, A.; Kasai, Y.; Kern, P.; Kreiling, R.; et al., 2018). Additionally, producers should work closely with suppliers in ensuring that only halal certified ingredients are supplied. This should begin with the conclusion that the raw material, active ingredient, or excipient should be obtained from an approved halal source. Not only that, but they are also safe for consumers to use for their intended means. This part focuses on common ingredients used in cosmetic preparation. Hence, these ingredients are categorised into halal, haram (prohibited) and critical.

Although the huge market for halal beauty products, is full of the most of the personal care products and cosmetics produced by non-Islamic companies, especially in non-Muslim countries, yet it leads to conflicts over their components. Accordingly, the field of cosmetics and pharmaceutical sector particularly requires more serious scrutiny by Muslim scholars for the uncertainty, where most brands worldwide use alcohol or pork in their products as preservatives, which in fact causing ridicule between Muslim consumers searching about halal products towards these brands (Mukhtar and Bette, 2012).

There is no doubt that the halal cosmetics market is of great importance to producers and consumers. The current literature on halal food products is based on a few studies on halal cosmetics (e.g. Ireland and Rajabzadeh, 2011; Mukhtar and Bate, 2012; Teng and Jusoh, 2013). In addition, all studies evaluate the variables that affect the consumer's understanding and attitude toward halal cosmetics. In view of the well-known theory of "rational work", this study addresses the effects of knowledge on religious attitudes towards halal cosmetics. Hence, the impact of attitudes towards halal cosmetics is well precise. Based on the findings of Ireland and others (2011) on consumers attributed to the UAE, this study revealed that there are differences between consumer attitudes towards halal food products and halal cosmetics, as well as their intentions of choosing halal products such as cosmetics and foodstuffs.

## 7. Non-Muslim Attitude Towards Halal Food and Cosmetic Products

Halal is not just a religious matter and procedure, but it is an optional criterion for Muslims and non-Muslims. In fact, Muslim consumers are obliged to only consume their halal products. The positive attitude towards halal consumption by non-Muslims has been influenced by perceptions of food and environmental safety. In contrast, many non-Muslim consumers consider halal food to be an Islamic food (Alam and Sayuti, 2011; Mathew et al., 2014). Therefore, the researcher believes that it is desirable to conduct research on the use of standards for non-Muslim consumers towards halal food. According to the halal food purchase scenario, non-Muslims may observe and evaluate energy-related factors (such as food safety, hygiene, prices... etc.) before purchasing the halal food product.

In the process of promoting halal products, the producer should be concerned about this. On this context, the existence of halal food products can be increasingly proven to have an impact on non-Muslim consumers in to move away from non-halal food (Ajzen, 1989). Furthermore, Bergeaud-Blackler (2006) points out that the issue of non-Muslims' intention to purchase halal products is the result of important synergistic factors such as ideas on religion, age, educational qualifications and animal welfare. Some non-Muslims believe that halal foods are not only tastier and beneficial to health, but also is an important and useful treatment for animals. The slaughter system in Islam is characterized by compassion to animals in terms of removing the pain of slaughtering.

## 8. Conclusion

This study concludes that religiosity has an effective influence on the behavior of individuals compared to knowledge of halal. Accordingly, traders should develop marketing activities by adhering to religious channels to influence the conscious consumer at this time, as this will create excellence in products in general. Although the behavior of the respondent is proven to be more likely towards halal-branded food products in comparison with halal cosmetic products, yet the companies should not think negatively about the way halal products are obtained because they are not at risk. Consequently, halal certification in the present time is a pioneering business process that offers opportunities for those who set their feet in dealing with the bash products every year.

## 9. Findings

The results of this study revealed that the relationship between attitude and knowledge does not represent that importance, but the positive relationship stands out considerably between attitude and religiosity. From the theoretical point of view, this study indicates the strong relationship between the man's attitude and his intention regarding the choosing of halal cosmetics. The study also found that there is a clear difference between consumers' attitudes toward halal cosmetics and his attitudes towards halal food products, as well as the intentions of buyers and consumers of choosing halal food and cosmetic products. In addition, the results show that the positive attitude towards halal consumption by non-Muslims has been influenced by perceptions of food and environmental safety.

#### 10. Recommendation

This study provides some proofs about a mechanism closely related to background attitude concerning halal food and cosmetic products. In administrative terms, the factors that influence consumers' attitudes towards halal food and cosmetics are provided to the companies and producers. Undoubtedly, behavioural trend is an important indicator of consumers' attitudes towards halal food and cosmetics. Hence, managers are advised to consider their distribution policies.

To avoid obstacles in obtaining halal food and cosmetics, both online stores and wholesalers close to residents should pay attention to the availability of halal food and cosmetic products. Similarly, retailers should pay attention to halal food purchase points and recommend access to them. Consequently, in marketing communications and package design, messages sent to consumers should include contextual trigger rather than information.

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