

Religiosity, Halal Awareness, and Muslim Consumers' Purchase Intention in Non-Food Halal Products

Ganjar Mohamad Disastra^{a*}, Bethani Suryawardani^b, Widya Sastika^c,
Fanni Husnul Hanifa^d, ^{a,b,c,d}Telkom University, Bandung, Indonesia, Email:
^{a*}ganjar@tass.telkomuniveristy.ac.id

This study aims to find out how religiosity and the subjective norm can influence Muslim consumers' purchase intention in halal products, with the halal awareness as an intervening variable. Considering the number of existing studies with the same variables in food products, this research seeks to enrich the literature with concerns of non-food halal products, especially in halal personal care products. This study is a quantitative survey method, by collecting data through the distribution of questionnaires to the respondents. The proposed model is then tested using the Partial Least Square (PLS) technique. Results of this study indicate that religiosity positively influences halal awareness, but negatively influences purchase intention. Meanwhile, subjective norms have a significant positive effect on halal awareness and purchase intention. It can be concluded that halal awareness fully mediates the relationship between religiosity and purchase intention, and partially mediates the relationship between subjective norm and purchase intention.

Key words: *Religiosity, Subjective Norm, Halal Awareness, Purchase Intention.*

Introduction

Muslim consumers have a unique consumption because they are required to comply with halal requirements as specified in Islamic teachings (Ishak, Raflis, & Omar, 2019). Muslims around the world are required to always ensure the halal status of the products they consume, both from edible products, as well as from products and services that are not edible (Hong, Sun, Beg, & Zhou, 2019). In Islamic law, consuming products that are not halal can lead to the risk of physical or spiritual punishment, so Muslims tend to avoid something that is not halal (Wilson and Liu, 2010).

Halal is an Arabic word that means "permitted" or "lawful" and is an obligation that governs all aspects of the lives of more than 1.6 billion Muslims worldwide (Lada, Tanakinjal, & Amin, 2011).

Even though Muslim consumers are more involved in issues regarding halal products because religious knowledge is a major aspect that can influence their buying behaviour (Essoo and Dibb, 2004), nowadays halal issues are no longer just problems that only Muslims consider (Wilson) and Liu, 2010). This awareness is caused by customers, both Muslim and non-Muslim, who are gradually more involved in the food they eat (Awan, Siddiquei, & Haider, 2014). Awareness of halal products appears for not only consumers but also on the part of producers. Uniquely, non-Muslim food producers have also shown an interest in participating in addressing the halal consumption needs of Muslims (Alserhan, 2010).

The halal industry itself has become one of the fastest-growing consumer segments in the world (Awan et al., 2014; Hong et al., 2019). The halal product industry does not only include food products, but also includes cosmetics and personal care products, pharmaceutical and health products, tourism, logistics, and financial services (Lada et al., 2011). For Muslims, there is an easy way to ascertain whether a product is halal or not, namely by looking at the halal logo printed on the product packaging or halal certificate displayed on the shop wall (Shafie and Othman, 2006). At present, halal certification guarantees are issued by more than 100 halal certification institutions throughout the world (The Halal Journal, 2008). Some studies prove that the existence of halal certification can increase sales of company products. A study conducted by Sabri (2006) shows fast food producers can be seen as an example. Since holding the "Halal" certification, KFC, Burger King, and Taco Bell have experienced increased sales to customers (Sabri, 2006). Therefore, we need to examine more deeply the interests of consumers to choose halal products, which can be used to predict and meet consumer needs.

Consumer purchase intention for a product can be influenced by many factors and can be driven by real or perceived features of the product (Haque et al., 2018; Desai, 2014). For example, exclusive product packaging can attract and stimulate consumer interest in making purchasing decisions (Ishak et al., 2019). The study of consumer behaviour is certainly very important in terms of marketing halal products. The fact is, Muslim consumers are very similar to other consumer segments, demanding healthy and quality products, which must also comply with Shariah requirements (Al-Harran and Low, 2008).

Because the demand for halal products and services has increased (Bernama, 2009) and even with the advantages of the halal market segment and the benefits that arise (Fischer, 2008), the study of halal products and their consumption patterns is important to do (Bonne et al., 2009). Various studies with the theme of halal have done a lot. These studies cover a wide

range of aspects, which include purchase intention, basic returns (Regenstein et al., 2003), consumer attitudes toward halal products and purchase intentions (Mukhtar and Butt, 2012, Maheswaran and Sternthal, 1990), word of mouth (Söderlund, 2006) and religiosity (Worthington et al., 2003).

Of the many studies that have been done, research on the theme of halal is generally carried out on food products and very few studies have been conducted on non-food halal products. Based on Abd Rahman et al. (2015), consumers have different attitudes towards halal food products and non-food products. In this case, consumers have more positive attitudes and intentions towards halal food products than non-food halal products. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct studies on non-food halal products among Muslim consumers. This is because the concept of halal is not only limited to food but covers all ranges of products and services consumed by Muslim individuals (Annabi and IbdanpoObe, 2017).

Literature Review

Halal Purchase Intention

Behaviour is an action or method performed by an individual (Rahman, Asrarhaghighi, & Rahman, 2015). To understand how behaviour can be influenced by attitudes and intentions, we can refer to the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) which was first put forward by Fishbein (1967). According to this concept, there are two things that are factors that cause direct emergence of a behaviour, namely attitudes and subjective norms (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Attitude is defined as a person's feelings for their likes or dislikes in a behaviour, which is the result of an individual's positive or negative evaluation of something (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). Whereas subjective norms are one's perceptions of a behaviour that should or should not be done, where these subjective norms are influenced by social pressure (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980).

Intention is the willingness of an individual to perform a behaviour (Ajzen, 1985). Based on Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), intention is related to attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. These aspects are used to understand someone's intention to choose and their attitude towards something (Hrubes et al., 2001). TPB has also been widely used by many researchers in measuring consumer interest in the purchase, consumption and acceptance of halal food products (Nazahah and Sutina, 2012).

A study conducted in the UAE and Saudi Arabia found that consumers pay attention to the halalness of the meat they want to buy (Ireland and Rajabzadeh, 2011). The study also revealed that consumers in the UAE are not only concerned about the halalness of food products, but they are also concerned about the halal status of non-food products, such as

toiletries. This study contrasts with the results of another study conducted by Rajagopal et al., (2011) which shows that most consumers have never sought Halal certification when buying non-food products. According to the researcher, this might be because consumers associate Halal with only food consumption (Rahman et al., 2015).

Religiosity

An individual's identity consists of many things, including family, religious, regional and national identity (Béji-Bécheur et al., 2012). According to Peek (2005), religious identity is a strong identity because it provides social, economic and psychological impacts, in addition to meeting spiritual needs (Peek, 2005). Religion is a key meaning system that helps individuals to deal with existential anxiety and understand existence (Greenberg et al., 1997).

Many studies have attempted to reveal the role of religion in consumer behaviour. Some researchers, focus on examining consumer behaviour patterns with different cross-religious affiliations (Essoo and Dibb (2004), Hirschman (1983) Cornwell et al. (2005)). However, Wilkes et al. (1986) argue that this is not enough to help, so that other researchers develop the concept of religiosity.

Religiosity can be interpreted as the degree to which a person is committed to his religion, and the extent to which religion is reflected in the attitudes and behaviour of the individual (Johnson et al., 2001). Or in other words, religiosity is one's religious level (De Run et al., 2010; O'Connell, 1975). Religion plays one of the most influential roles in shaping food choices in many societies (Dindyal and Dindyal, 2003; Musaiger, 1993); its impact on food consumption depends on the religion itself and on the extent to which the individual interprets and follows its teachings (Bonne et al., 2008; Lada et al., 2009). According to the self-concept theory, religious consumers will behave in ways that maintain and enhance their religious sense (Hollenbeck and Kaikati, 2012). Individuals who have strong beliefs are more likely to engage in behaviours that complement their religious beliefs, values and practices (Delener, 1994; Minton et al., 2015).

How can an individual's level of religiosity be measured? Early research on religiosity relied on a single index, such as the presence of religion in an individual's life. Then this measurement develops by exploring religiosity as a multidimensional construct (Azam, 2016). In many contributions to the literature, Worthington et al. (2003) developed a measure of religiosity known as the Inventory of Religious Commitments that had been validated in different samples. Worthington et al. (2003, p. 85) describe religiosity as: "The extent to which a person embraces religious values, beliefs and uses them in everyday life." Furthermore, they argued that "the assumption is that religious people will evaluate the world through religious schemes and thus will integrate their religion into most of their lives."

However, other research does not support this (Salman and Siddiqui, 2011), where religious consumers may not always have high halal awareness. A study by Ahmad, Abaidah and Yahya (2013) found that Muslim consumers were more likely to choose food outlets based on price and taste than the halal logo and certification.

Nevertheless, several studies were conducted in Muslim-majority countries, such as by Khan et al. (2017), Rehman and Shabbir (2010) Ambali and Bakar (2013), which found that religiosity can be a strong determinant of purchasing decisions for halal food products. A study by Hamdan et al. (2013) revealed that awareness of halal is an influential factor in determining purchasing decisions among Muslim consumers. In line with that, Ahmad et al. (2015) found that religiosity also influences halal purchasing behaviour. Consistent with these results, Abd Rahman et al. (2015) found that the relationship between knowledge and attitude was not significant, but there was a significant positive relationship between religiosity and attitude. Based on this explanation, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H₁: Religiosity affects halal awareness of Muslim consumers

H₂: Religiosity affects the purchase intention of Muslim consumers

Subjective Norm

Subjective norms relate to consumers' perceptions about social norms that apply in their environment, thereby affecting their behaviour (Ajzen, 2005). Those who are able to, bring social encouragement, such as family, friends, and coworkers. According to Ajzen, 1991, the urge to do or not do a certain behaviour can be influenced by these people. Previous research by Bonne et al. (2007), Sukato (2008), Webster (2000) and Yoh et al. (2003) argue that friends and family members really influence consumer decision making on product choices and purchasing patterns.

Subjective norms have been proven to be one of the most influential drivers of Muslim interest in consuming halal products (Ansari and Mohammed, 2015; Awan et al., 2015). When social solidarity and social responsibility receive high attention in the Islamic paradigm, this subjective norm of social pressure is also an important aspect of Muslim consumption behaviour (El-Bassiouny, 2014). Alam and Sayuti (2011) draw the same conclusions through their exploration of the relationship between halal purchase intentions and attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. In the context of the interest in buying halal products, Al-Nahdi (2008) also revealed that consumers' interest to visit places to eat is significantly related to subjective norms. Another study conducted which supports this is the study conducted by Lada et al. (2009) and Shah Alam and Mohamed Sayuti (2011), who found that subjective norms are important predictors of intention to purchase halal food. Abdul et al. (2009) also found that consumers are looking for guaranteed

halal products and guarantees from environmental elements such as the halal logo. The same conception was subsequently confirmed by Shah Alam and Nazura (2011), who found that social pressure was a strong influence of consumers' intention to buy halal food. Relating to these studies, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3: The subjective norm affects the halal awareness of Muslim consumers

H4: The subjective norm influences the purchase intention of Muslim consumers

Halal Awareness

Awareness is a person's knowledge or understanding of a subject in a particular situation (Randolph (2003). Awareness in the halal sphere means having special interest or experience in something and or getting information about what is happening right now, relating to food, drinks, and halal products (Azam, 2016). Referring to Ambali and Bakar (2014), halal awareness can be defined as having special interests or experience or having enough information about something about food, drinks and halal products; so halal awareness is the process of informing to increase levels of Muslim awareness about what they are allowed to eat, drink and use (Ambali and Bakar, 2014).

Consciousness is a relative concept in which a person may be partial, unconscious or very aware of a problem related to the halal aspect of what is permitted by God. Different people can have different levels of awareness. According to a psychologist, the level of awareness means awareness of external events and internal sensations that occur under conditions of passion (King, 2008).

Awareness to use halal products is very important for Muslims. This is because halal products are produced and managed by a number of ethnic groups, both locally and for imported products. When choosing halal products, Muslims will generally look for halal logos that emerge from certain halal certification bodies. Awareness of Muslims to consume halal products, indirectly resulted in the expansion of the global halal food industry (Che and Sazili, 2010).

Schiffman and Kanuk (1997) state that consumers' purchase intention from a different religious group will be influenced by their religious identity, orientation, knowledge and beliefs and show that religion and belief are sources of alertness to consumption behaviour. Based on the explanation above, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H5: Halal awareness affects Muslim consumers' purchase intention

Research Methods

This study uses a quantitative approach in its efforts to test hypotheses. All indicators in the measurement of variables refer to previous studies. The measurement of the construct of Religiosity is measured using 7 measurement items that refer to Ahmad et al (2104) and Azmawani Abd Rahman, whereas the social norm is measured using 4 measurement items that refer to studies conducted by Suddin Lada, Geoffrey Harvey, Hanudin Amin. Furthermore, the construct of Halal Awareness is measured through 6 measurement items developed from studies conducted by Azmawani Abd Rahman, Ahmad et al. (2014) and Tatiek Nurhayati, Hendar Hendar. Finally, the construct of purchase intention halal products, measured through items that refer to Ahmad et al. (2014), Azmawani Abd Rahman, and Suddin Lada, Geoffrey Harvey Tanakinjal, Hanudin Amin.

Data collection is done through online surveys. In order to find out the behaviour of Muslim consumers towards halal body care products, the sample of this study are Muslim consumers, male or female, who use body care products such as soap, shampoo, body lotion or shampoo, of any brand. To test the research model with this mediating variable, the Partial Least Square (PLS-SEM) equation is modeled, where data processing is performed using SmartPLS software.

Findings and Discussion

Although there are 120 respondents who have filled out the questionnaire, there are some invalid data. In the end, the total number of samples consisted of a total of 100 Muslim consumers who use personal care products from various brands. Most respondents were women (65.57%), with respondents ages ranging from 19 to 51 years old.

Validity and Reliability

To measure the level of measurement reliability, the Cronbach alpha for each construct was calculated. As presented in Table 1, all Cronbach alpha values are higher than 0.7, and all composite reliability (CR) values are higher than 0.7. This value indicates the reliability of all research variables.

Table 1: Cronbach Alpha, CR, and AVE

Construct	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
Religiosity	0.842	0.883	0.559
Subjective Norm	0.899	0.930	0.770
Halal Awareness	0.909	0.925	0.694
Purchase Intention	0.921	0.922	0.761

The next step is to measure Average Variance Extracted in the construct. As shown in the Table 1 and Table 2, the AVE value of each construct is higher than 0.50, and the AVE of each construction pair is higher than the square correlation between each construction and other constructs, thus showing the construct validity and convergent validity (Hair et al., 2017). Based on the results, it has been ascertained that the questionnaire used for the measurement of the construct has met the validity and reliability requirements.

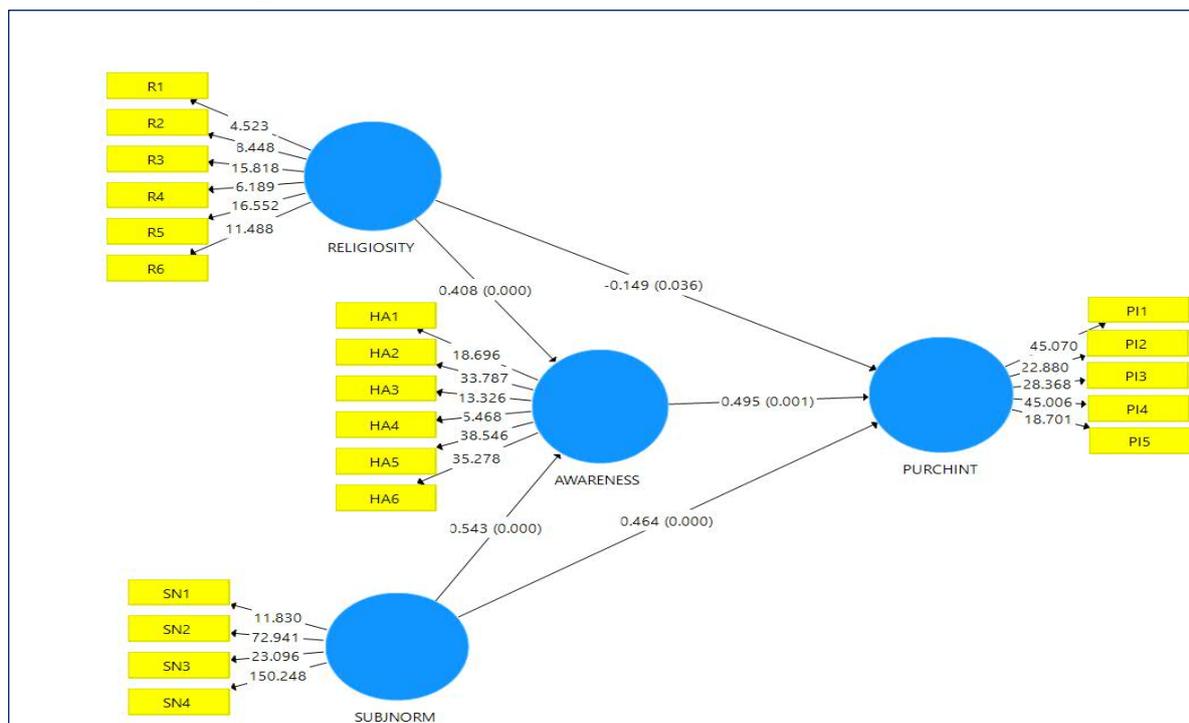
Table 2: Correlation

Construct	Halal Awareness	Purchase Intention	Religiosity	Subjective Norm
Halal Awareness	0.833			
Purchase Intention	0.727	0.872		
Religiosity	0.611	0.327	0.748	
Subjective Norm	0.695	0.753	0.374	0.878

Hypothesis Testing

To test the research hypotheses, a bootstrapping procedure was performed with 500 bootstrap samples. A significance level of 10 percent was chosen because this level is possible in psychology (Hair et al., 2017). As explained in Picture 1 and Table 3, all direct relationships are significant, except RELIGIOSITY → PURCHINT ($p = 0.036$).

Picture 1. Path Diagram



Further analysis of the indirect effect shows that all indirect relationships are significant. The effect of RELIGIOSITY to PURCHINT through AWARENESS is significant (P Values = 0.003), while the effect of SUBJNORM to PURCHINT through AWARENESS is also significant (P Values = 0.002). Because of the relationship between RELIGIOSITY and PURCHINT is not significant, it can be said that AWARENESS fully mediates the relationship between RELIGIOSITY and PURCHINT. But since the relationship between SUBJNORM and PURCHINT is significant, it can be said that AWARENESS partially mediates the relationship between SUBJNORM and PURCHINT.

Table 3. Path Coefficients

	Path Coefficients	T Statistics	P-Values
AWARENESS -> PURCHINT	0.495	3.380	0.001
RELIGIOSITY -> AWARENESS	0.408	5.201	0.000
RELIGIOSITY -> PURCHINT	-0.149	2.105	0.036
SUBJNORM -> AWARENESS	0.543	8.566	0.000
AWARENESS -> PURCHINT	0.464	3.825	0.000

Conclusion and Suggestion

While existing literature highlights the importance and benefits of Muslims' consumer behaviour in the consumption of halal products, less attention has focused on non-food halal products, such as personal care products. Moreover, the lack of understanding of how religiosity, subjective norm and halal awareness, work together to influence purchase intention, motivates this study to pay attention to these relationships. Drawing on the goal-setting and the resource depletion theories, this paper makes several contributions to the field of Muslim behaviour in non-food products' purchase intention. Accordingly, this study proposes that religiosity positively influences halal awareness, but negatively influences purchase intention. Meanwhile, subjective norms have a significant positive effect on halal awareness and purchase intention. So then it can be concluded that halal awareness fully mediates the relationship between religiosity and purchase intention, and partially mediates the relationship between subjective norm and purchase intention.

The findings of this study suggest that producers of non-food halal products, especially in body care products, should always be concerned about consumer halal awareness. This certainly aims to increase the number of sales of their products. Halal Awareness can be increased for example through promotional programs such as advertising in various media.

The significant effect of subjective norms on halal awareness and purchase intention shows that producers can also improve their Word of Mouth program regarding the importance of



using halal products. In addition to increasing consumer awareness, this can also support an increase in sales, as research findings have proven to have a positive subjective norm effect on purchase intentions.

Despite its contributions, this paper also has some limitations. First, the study only investigates the small sample Muslim consumer in Indonesia. With the larger number of respondents, the results may be different. Thus, future studies can examine this topic in larger samples. Second, other variables can be included in the model to enrich the result of this kind of study and enrich the literature as well.

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