# PERCEPTION AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE CUSTOMERS TOWARDS HALAL PRODUCTS

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*Abstract---Islam has introduced the concepts of halal which includes hygiene, procedures, preparation, slaughtering, display and sanitation. Today, halal has become a vital concern among the customers, especially Muslim communities as well as non-Muslim communities. There are certain elements that influence towards the purchase intentions. This study explored the factors namely; attitude, subjective norm are the variables that duly influence the purchase intention. The data has been taken from various aspects while putting questionnaire to the different dimension, where to analyze the influence regression analysis has been performed while on the other hand relationship is also ascertained, for this correlation method has been adopted to enumerate the results. The study mentioned some significant relationship among the elected variables while some extent of influencing measures has been ascertained.*

*Keywords---Hygiene, Halal, Communities, Intentions, Dimensions, Regression, Correlation.*

## I. Introduction

This study will explore the elements that influence intention to purchase of halal products among customers. In short, it will further discuss the elements or factors that influence whether attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavior control, trust and knowledge are important in explaining the relationship between those variables with intention to purchase halal products among customers. There are challenges facing by Muslim communities to determine whether the food or water that they consumed is following the concepts of halal. The halal status is not mainly focusing in food and beverages, but also includes other products and services. Trade Description Order (use of expression halal) (1975), defines halal as relation to food and also the process of trade and commerce in its trading aspect. The term halal guarantees the food or the products as permissible to be consumed or to be used and allowed in the religion of Islam.

These explanations define the term halal in precise context, does not stem from or consists of any part of or item from animals that are forbidden to Muslims by Islamic law, or animals that have not been slaughtered according to Islamic law, does not contain any substances that is considered impure in Islamic law, is not prepared, processed or manufactured using equipment or utensils that are not free from impurities as defines by Islamic law. The halal concept is one of the important roles in Muslim's consumption and today, Islam is the fastest ever growing religion in entire world either by birth or adoption, with the Muslim population estimated to exceed three billion by 2010 (Rahim & Junos, 2012) Asia Inc., (2007) reported that the global halal market estimated to be worth US150 billion a year and halal food industry pegged to grow at rate of 2.9% annually. Business should indeed be tapping growing market segment (Ali, 2014). The fact is Muslim

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consumers are demanding healthy and quality products which conform to Shariah law requirements (Ali, 2014). In order to meet the requirement and demand from Muslim communities, many fast food restaurants and outlets around the world seem to react on the issue, as example in KFC Singapore, they obtained the halal certification as a counter response. Since being certified halal from the authority, KFC, Burger King and Taco Bell have seen an increase of 20% in customers (A. Khan & Azam, 2016; Nguyen et al., 2019; Nikhashemi et al., 2013; Pathiratne et al., 2018; Seneviratne et al., 2019; Tarofder et al., 2019). Muslims always associate themselves with the concept of Halalan and Toyyiban (refers to good and quality products). In order to comply with religious obligation to consume halal food, the understanding among Muslims about halal food market in Malaysia is well managed by all ethnic groups. There are mutual understandings among them even though this is subjective issue. In Malaysia, the halal application of certification and logo is based upon request by the food producers and halal certification logo has the advantage of capturing a bigger market because there are 60.4% of Malaysian markets are Muslims (Khalek, 2014).

Looking to this opportunities, government has decided to actively involved in promoting Malaysian own halal logo and certification in reaction to realizing and implementing of halal hub in Malaysia. In order to implement halal hub, the halal value chain in Malaysia should adhere to guidelines and procedures developed by several agencies and government department to meet the objective. The stakeholders must play an important role such as Department of Islamic Development (JAKIM), State of Islamic Religious department (JAIN), State Islamic Religious Council (MAIN), Halal Industry Development Corporation (DHC), ministry of Agriculture and Agro Based Industry (MOA), Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs (KPDNHEP), Chemistry Department, Department of Veterinary Services (DVS), Ministry of Trade and Industry (MITI), Standard and Industrial Research Institute of Malaysia and Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development (MARDI) are the government agencies that help and assist in realizing the halal hub. Majority of the population in Malaysia are Muslims and this requires producers of products or services to offer such commodities that follow the shariah rules and regulations, especially to comply with halal status. In order to get halal status, which awarded by JAKIM, the process that they have to go through are aspects of slaughtering, storage, display, hygiene, preparation and sanitation. This is not only applicable in food and beverages industry only but also involves services and non food category.

The growth in population, especially Islamic community, has increased demand for halal food as well as creating opportunities in halal food manufacturers. Several biggest players or manufacturing companies such as Nestle, Campbell, Mc Donald, Baskin Robbins and others have addressed the needs and increased the growing demand for foods that meet the Islamic dietary code. Attitude is by which the individual degree of person's favorable or unfavorable evaluate or appraisal of the behavior in question (M. Ahmad & Salehuddin, 2013). Ajzen and Fishbein (1975) in Theory of reasoned Action (TRA) explain that a person's intention depends solely on the person's attitude about the behavior and subjective norms. Ajzen (1987), suggested that subjective norm is a person's perception of the social pressure for accepting or rejecting performing the behavior in question. Thus, subjective norms depend on the effect of reflecting an individualism perception on people's surrounding and the importance to them in suggesting or advising them to perform or not to perform the specific behavior that still in question. This theory explains about three importance antecedents which are attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavior control developed by Ajzen (1991).

Cited in Chen (2007), knowledge is a familiarity with individual, someone or something which can include facts, information, descriptions or skills acquired through experience or education. Generally, knowledge can be concluded as anything individual known including information, skills, facts or description or resides in intelligence, competence of

people that pass though several experience and tertiary education. Today, knowledge is part of important factors that signifies one from the others. Thus, this research will point the knowledge of customers towards intention to purchase halal products. Research framework is based from Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), list of independent variables and dependent variables. These concepts need to be identified to develop comprehension of study.

## II. Literature Review

(Ismail & Nasiruddin, 2014) estimated that the Muslim population to exceed three billion by 2010 and with the global halal market estimated to be worth USD100 billion a year and the halal food industry pegged to grow at a rate of 2.9 per cent annually, business should indeed be tapping at this growing market segment. The halal industry must be marketable in developing and promoting the industry as new and dynamic source of economic growth.

There are 70% of Muslims worldwide who follow the halal standard (Haque, Sarwar, Yasmin, Tarofder, & Hossain, 2015) and it increased up to USD580 billion in 2012 . (Al-Nahdi, Ismail, Haron, & Islam, 2009) reported that 75% of Muslims in United States would still oblige to halal concept although they have migrated from another country. Thus, the halal aspect is now accepted as a quality system worldwide that appeals to both Muslim and non-Muslims. Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (Jakim) or department of Islamic Development Malaysia is the authority that manages and responsible in awarding and monitoring the halal certification in Malaysia. Halal status is not just issuing the certification but it involves site visit inspection of plants, examine the process of preparing the raw material that following tight procedure, the sources of raw material, how material is maintained and being monitored at all times. Many raw material products available in the market used imported products which require the appointment of reputable and credible foreign halal certification bodies or other recognized organization to monitor the halal status. In halal certification there are two types of certificate and the duration depending to the type of food or product or beverage (Wibowo & Ahmad, 2016). Firstly, certification granted to site registration certificate which is monitoring on plant, production facility, slaughtering, food establishment, abattoir or any establishing handling food has been inspected and approved to produce or serve halal food. This type of halal certificate does not be used as halal product certificate.

Secondly is a specific product or specific quantity granted to listed product or products meet the halal guidelines of certifying organization (follow the rules of JAKIM). Thus after passing this level certificate issued to specific products for a particular importer or distributor and if product based are meat or poultry products the batch certificate awarded for each consignment, generally received batch or shipment certificate. Each batch consignment is valid as long as specific product is based on their expiring date. The product is remaining halal as long as their meets the entire requirement, establishment, agreed upon production and marketing between the company and halal certified organization (Salman & Siddiqui, 2011).

(Mashitoh, Rafida, & Alina, 2013) , defined attitude towards the behavior is determined by a person's evaluation of those outcomes as favorable and unfavorable. According to (Rahman, Asrarhaghighi, & Ab Rahman, 2015), an individual is more likely to undertake a certain behavior if he/she has a positive attitude towards undertaking the behavior. (Abu-Hussin, Johari, Hehsan, & Mohd Nawawi, 2017) supported that attitude is the evaluation of performing a particular behavior involving the attitude object such as buying the product.

According to Anderson and (Ayyub, 2015), trust is a business relationship help to reduce business risk and a number of researchers suggest that the construct of trust is an important element in a business environment. (Briliana & Mursito, 2017)have pointed out that trust means someone regards his/her transactional partners are reliable and honest has confidence him.

According (Gurcharan & Mohamad, 2016), provided that there are so many different definitions on trust, the most straightforward definition is that one believes in and is willing to depend on another party." (Awan, Siddiquei, & Haider, 2015) suggested that trust is a cognitive expectation or emotional viewpoint. (M. M. Khan, Asad, & Mehboob, 2017) reported that consumers have to rely on seller or outside observer and at same times put their trust in the information sources and information received. Example, buying meat item, Muslim's consumer putting trust to halal meat relates to the certainty about process attributes (meat processing and handling status) and safety in term of meat wholesomeness. There are link exist between slaughtering method, health and safety perception. The Islamic slaughter method is believed to complete bleed out of the animal whereby less bacterial contaminant and resulting in health meat (Kamarulzaman, Ghani, & Madun, 2012).

(Newaz, Fam, & Sharma, 2016) found that there is significant and positive construct between attitude and intention to purchase halal products. The study shows that TPB model explained 29.1 percents of variance in the intentions to purchase halal products. This indicates that attitude is an important factor in influencing consumer's intention in purchasing halal products because those with high positive attitude appeared to have greater intentions to purchase. Another finding by (A. N. Ahmad, Rahman, & Ab Rahman, 2015), he has stated that attitude is an important element in predicting and describing human behavior.

(Newaz et al., 2016) found that trust has significant positive relationship over intention to purchase. A total of 473 respondents were involved in their online survey and only 458 respondents are data consider good and able to use. The results revealed that trust could interpret 25.2 percent of variance towards intention to purchase. Thus, this variable can be used to explain the relationship between both. (Yener, 2015) found that consumers have knowledge on the certified halal logo as issued by JAKIM, which therefore influenced ther decisions towards halal product. The results proven that they know which product are halal and which are not and they are able to avoid products coming from other countries based on halal logo and accepted the local logo produced by JAKIM. When building a research design, it is important to acknowledge the design or the structure before data collection or analysis can took place. In fact, sampling methods and the design of the questionnaire itself are critical in matters of obtaining reliable information (Mohtar, Amirnordin, & Haron, 2014). Descriptive approach is taken as the fundamental design of this research. Descriptive design is a design of research in which the main goal is to portray an accurate profile of persons, events, or objects. In descriptive design ad studies, the researcher is typically concerned with taken into consideration the importance of highlighting with providing a profile of variables such as age, race, religion, occupation and marital status (Hasan, 2016). Price is a sensitive issue and some products or services affected, some of them is unaffected to the price changes and some of them the higher the better. However in halal products, the price is considered as sensitive and companies specifically need to identify the market pricing as failure in determining the exact-market-appropriate price may lead to failure. Pricing determination strategy, it involves few considerations before the company finalized the price which includes fundamental selecting approaches to effective pricing. In engaging with a research, a research must firstly engage in sampling. Without sampling no research can be conducted and developed. As no sample represents any data, data are sustainable through some type of sampling. The type, size, composition and the nature of sampling depends on the purpose of study, the population available, the research design and others. Furthering this, sampling is a process whereby one makes estimates or generalizations about a population based on information contained in a portion (a sample) of the entire population (Hasan, 2016).

According to (Abdul Rahman, Rezai, Mohamed, Shamsudin, & Sharifuddin, 2013), the purpose of using t-test is to determine whether there is difference between two sets of scores. T-test has three main types which are one sample,

independents group and repeated group. In this research, independent samples test has been used in order to examine whether "sector which respondents were in" is significant towards intention to purchase halal products. The result of t-test is shown. (Abdul Rahman et al., 2013) further explained in determine accepting and rejecting hypothesis is by analyzing Levene's test which has value greater than 0.5. Then can be assume that the population variances are relatively equal. They elucidated in their notes, "the two-tail significance for without additive indicate that $p > .05$ and, therefore is not significant. Therefore you can accept the null hypothesis and reject alternative hypothesis, (Battour, Hakimian, Ismail, & Boğan, 2018). Today's business strategy hardly put promotion as a part of their strategy. Promotion is a vital and popular strategy which have has proven effective in creating awareness about the products in the market. This strategy can be divided into two types; push and pull strategy. In push strategy, the company uses their own company sales force and resources in stimulating sales as well as customers' demand, for example using intermediaries such as agent, wholesaler and retailer in promoting the products to customers. Whereas pull strategy is by launching of promotion via advertising, road shows, vouchers, discount and etc.

Brand is divided by three categories; national brand, private brand and generic product. National brand was offered by manufacturer such as Colgate, Gatorade, Swatch, Toshiba and Sony. The private brand is product offered by wholesaler or retailer which is not referring to any manufacturers' products such as Tesco or Mydin products. Finally generic products, this product have plain packaging or little advertising and little labeling. The sales of this product will be declined when the country economy is improved. The factor as brand loyalty emerges in new type of business in today's environment. In some cases, customers will insist a specific brand when making purchasing. This is simply because the customer is comfortable with some particular product and performs their own preference in specific brands strategy is a consistent and compatible with the target market in the company objectives. For instant, the pre packed lunch food target market is based on low income the price charge could as low as possible in order for everybody to purchase the products. Customers are very familiar with the brand and customers are more likely to purchase the recognize product rather than unknown products. With this familiarity the customer has an intention to purchase customer put loyalty if the brand is available in the store. The customer will start to look for the brand and if there is no brand available then the customer will purchase other brands.

As stated by (Newaz et al., 2016), they suggested that this type of study should be done in fast growing cities that linked to halal product in Malaysia. Thus, this study opts for the biggest city in Malaysia which is Kuala Lumpur the capital of Malaysia as to represent the population in intention to purchase halal product. But for future study, the researcher should consider other cities such as Kota Kinabalu, Tawau, Miri, Kuching, Kuala Terengganu, Penang, Johor Bahru, Putrajaya, Kajang as their study area. Finally, there are only 150 respondents out of 180 questionnaires that can be used in the study due to limited resources and time constraints. Perceived behavior control reflects individual perceives over performing the behavior in intention to purchase. If self desire to have intention they will influence expectation that they would buy it and should perform behavior, then the individual should be likely to do or not to do so. In this case, if perceived behavior control is seen as self desirable behavior that individual is more likely have an intention to believe and buy it. Consistent to the studies, the research found that knowledge was significantly related to believe. Another factor that influenced intention to purchase is trust which is score at 0.927. Trust is based by individual willingness to depend on another party, (Abu-Hussin et al., 2017). Thus, individual has willing to put his/her trust to those particular product then they will buy that product. In aspect of collection methods, the present research only utilizes quantitative method where questionnaires are used in the collecting data. The research of this nature may require a more rigorous method because it involves subjectivity in opinions, perceptions and feeling towards intention to purchase of which questionnaire did not fully captured. The researcher needs

to complement it with other method including interviews and focus group discussions in order to get a better insight of response. By doing this, the credibility of the findings and discussions are more effective and can be enhanced.

Following are the hypothesis of this study,

H1    There is significant relationship between attitude and intention to purchase.

H2    There is significant relationship between subjective norm and intention to purchase.

**THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The researcher will investigate whether the two factors namely, attitude, subjective norm, has influence ability to make them intention to purchase halal products. This study will perform investigation and run on correlation between independent variable and dependent variable. Below is theoretical framework that has been developed:-
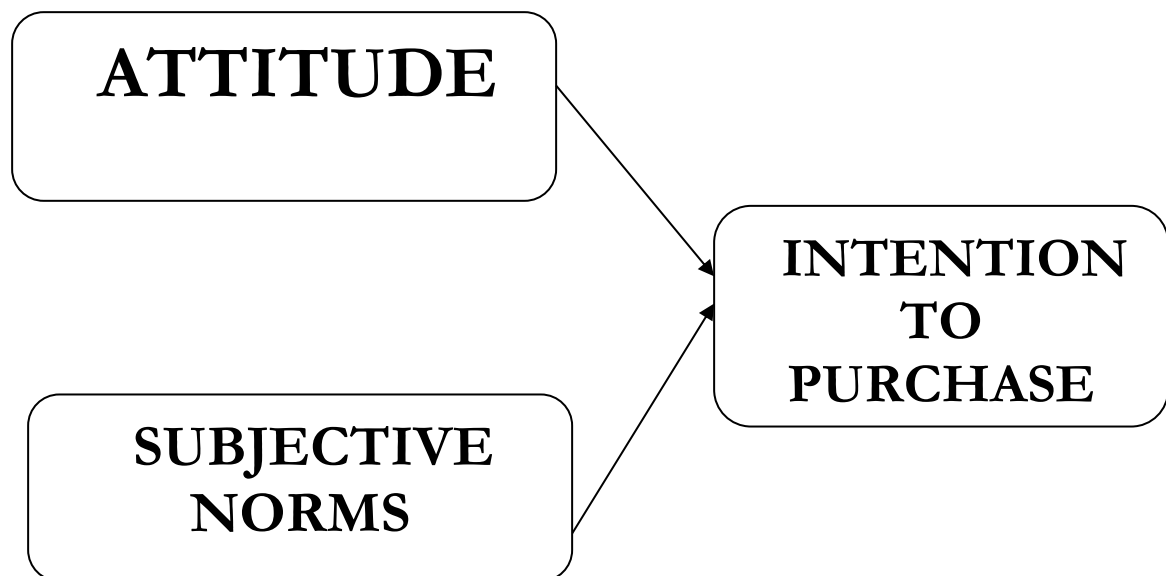


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework of the Research

The discussions include the scientific approach, research design, sampling and sampling procedures, target population and sample size, research instruments and analysis procedure. The first collection of data is measured, second section is about population and sample and finally third section explains the data analysis technique. In this particular research, cross-sectional survey will be conducted. The data recorded from survey were tested using statistical techniques such as frequencies distribution, t-test, one way ANOVA, correlation and multiple regression analysis. Cross-sectional surveys are studies aimed at determining the frequency (or level) of a particular attribute, in a defined population at a particular point in time. For instance, we can carry out cross-sectional surveys to estimate customer's preferences when purchasing in a given population at the time of the survey.

## III.  Analysis and Findings

This chapter emphasis the findings in details on result generated from the study. Data are processed by SPSS software in version 17.0 and presented in the tables. Data were analyzed by using several methods. A set of 180 questionnaires were

distributed to the respondents, whom were public and private sector employees in Kuala Lumpur. But only 150 respondents have been answered the questionnaires. All the questionnaires were usable for data analysis. Correlation coefficient (r) is computed to investigating the strength of association among the variable. The level of significance is set at .05 or less.

Table 1: Correlation between Attitude and Intention to Purchase.

**Correlations**

|  |  | Attitude | Intention to Purchase |
|---|---|---|---|
| Attitude | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .991[**] |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed) |  | .000 |
|  | N | 150 | 150 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results revealed that there is an existence of significant value between these two dimensions as the p value is smaller than significant value (p = 0.000 which < 0.05). In addition, there is high correlation between these two dimensions as correlation coefficient is at (r=0.991).

Table 2: Correlation between Subjective Norms and Intention to Purchase.

**Correlations**

|  |  | Intention to Purchase | Subjective Norm |
|---|---|---|---|
| Intention to Purchase | Pearson Correlation | 1 | 0.982[**] |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed) |  | .000 |
|  | N | 150 | 150 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results revealed that there is positive relationship between two dimensions as the p value is smaller than significant value, (p=0.000 which is <0.05) and correlation coefficient stand at (r=0.982) as consider high correlation.

**Regression Analysis**

The model summary shows that R correlation of five independent variables with dependent variable intention to purchase is equal to 0.993. After inter-correlation R square is generated actually the square of R $(0.986)^2$. This means that 98.6 percent of five independent variables have impact on the dependent variable. In other word, 98.6 percent of variance in intention to purchase was explained by the independent variables. Based on rule of thumbs, there is only 1.4% remaining percent of explaining on regression analysis.

Table 3: Regression Analysis on Model Summary

**Model Summary**

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .993[a] | .986 | .788 | .01337 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Attitude, Subjective Norm,

b. Dependent variable: Intention to Purchase

**Table 4: Regression analysis of ANOVA test**

The ANOVA shows that the F value of 98.031 is significant at the 0.000 level. This result reflects that 98.6 percent of the variance impact in intention to purchase has been significantly illustrated by the five independent variables.

Table 5: Regression Analysis of ANOVA test

**ANOVA**

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 11.015 | 7 | 1.574 | 98.031 | .000[a] |
| | Residual | 2.806 | 157 | .018 | | |
| | Total | 13.822 | 164 | | | |

a. Predictors: (Constant), attitude, subjective norm

b. Dependent Variable: Intention to purchase

This research revealed that the attitude and subjective norm are predictor to influence intention to purchase halal products. Study shows that attitude also can influence people in building confidence in making intention to purchase halal products.

# IV. Conclusion

This chapter focusing on summarizes the finding and discusses the results in details for entire of the study. Generally, the primary of objective of this study is to identify the main factors that influence the consumer's perception towards intention to purchase halal products with new variables derived from the literature. Using these implications in the construction of a theoretical and analytical framework, the researcher attempted to investigate consumer's perception towards intention to purchase and examine whether these attitudes vary in relation to the consumers personal characteristics such as the gender, age, race, religion, level of education, income of the respondent and sector of respondents. The sample size and physical coverage, to some extent, has influenced the quality of the research findings and its generalized ability. Due to time constraint and some other limitations, the coverage of this research was a small sample size of 150 respondents and Kuala Lumpur city. The results showed that it is reliable to use the five dimensions independent variables as an instrument to predict the intention to purchase halal products. The result reveals that of the elected variables; only some have significant relationship due to acceptance and intention to purchase of halal products. This implies with the respond made by respondent in the survey that agreed in the positive behaviour towards their belief and intend to purchase in halal products. In aspect of collection methods, the present research only utilizes quantitative method where questionnaires are used in the collecting data. The usual assumptions towards attitude and intention would be the more favourable a person's attitude toward some object the more

he will intend to perform positive behaviour and less he will intend to perform negative behaviour with respect to that object. This implies with the respond made by respondent in the survey that agreed in the positive behaviour towards their belief and intend to purchase in halal products. The research of this nature may require a more rigorous method because it involves subjectivity in opinions, perceptions and feeling towards intention to purchase of which questionnaire did not fully captured. There are few limitations related to this research. First, this study only covered area of Kuala Lumpur which is tentatively too small to represent the whole population. This research did not cover whole population of that area. Therefore the results cannot be expected to explain overall belief of Malaysian consumers toward intention to purchase.

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