

An extensive effect of religiosity on the purchasing decisions of halal products

Effect of
religiosity on
halal products

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to examine the moderator effect of religiosity on the relationship between halal brand awareness and habit towards purchasing decisions of halal products.

Design/methodology/approach – The quantitative method is used in this study. Descriptive and statistical (multiple and moderated regression) analyses are employed to test the hypothesis according to the research model. The data is collected using a cross-sectional design from 197 respondents consisting of business owners in North Sumatera, Indonesia.

Findings – It is found that both halal brand awareness and habit have a positive and significant effect on the purchasing decision of halal products. Meanwhile, religiosity significantly acts as a moderating variable in the relationship between awareness and purchasing decisions, as well as habit and purchasing decisions.

Research limitations/implications – This study revealed the important factor of religiosity as a moderating factor in purchase decisions of halal products. The government may need to collaborate with Islamic educational institutions to raise awareness of the halal concept and product awareness. It is assumed that individuals who know about the Islamic religion will have a higher degree of awareness of halal products compared to individuals with limited knowledge of Islam; thus, providers of Islamic education play a crucial role in raising the level of awareness of halal products. Schools may serve as catalysts for the dissemination of knowledge of halal products.

Originality/value – Developing halal product markets can be done by enhancing the religiosity level of consumers, one of them through attending formal or informal religious classes.

Keywords Religiosity, Halal brand awareness, Habit, Purchasing decision

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

The halal industry experienced a positive development and an increased acceptance of halal products in the world as stated in the State of the Global Islamic Economy 2019/20 report that was published by Dinar Standard where Muslim consumers spent \$2.2tn in the halal industry and Islamic lifestyle in 2018, an increase of 5.1% compared to 2017. This halal industry consists of various sectors such as food, pharmaceutical, fashion/modest, cosmetics, media and recreation, tourism/travel and finance. The report tells that, the halal industry and Islamic lifestyle are expected to reach \$3.2tn by 2024.

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Halal businesses open many opportunities and have a bright prospect in many countries as halal products have become a world phenomenon. Some countries undertake concrete actions toward creating a halal business hub or center. For example, the Malaysian government issued the Halal Master Plan and incentive public-private partnerships on halal food production. Similarly, the Emirates Authority for Standardization and Metrology (ESMA) in the UAE has initiated movements in the halal label and certification, to have entire processes that are Sharia compliant, from the process of agriculture until the products reach the dish. Such regulations aim to maintain and sustain the halal products to be distributed and have an integrated product supply chain (Zulfakar *et al.*, 2014). This consists of providing necessary materials, processes, packing and delivery of halal products to the consumer.

As the most populous Muslim-majority country in the world, Indonesia has a strategic position to be a trendsetter in the halal industry. Unfortunately, the development of halal lifestyles in Indonesia has remained stagnant when compared to other countries. It is reported by the Central Bank of Indonesia, Indonesia's halal market contributes to only 10% of the total global halal spending, which is mainly in the food and beverage sector. The report reveals that Indonesia is currently only the largest consumer of halal products, while the role to become the largest producer is still far from expectation.

Referring to consumer consumption, the halal brand is one of the attractions of consumers in choosing products. Some businesses take advantage of halal certificates and labels to assist in distinguishing their products. The halal logo is irreplaceable because it indicates a crucial symbol of consumption, safe, clean and trusted products to be consumed and has been used as a strategy in sales (Rafiki and Wahab, 2014), thus there are many factors influencing the decision of purchasing halal products. However, due to some abuses of halal certification, this makes Muslim consumers have difficulties distinguishing between authentic halal logos from the ones that are not (Shafiq *et al.*, 2015). One of the solutions is by applying technologies in detecting such cases which also can monitor the processes of the products (Tieman (2011), van der Spiegel *et al.* (2012). This refers to the awareness of consumers toward the halal brand/product. Ali *et al.* (2018) stated that halal brand awareness is the level of consumer knowledge to find and consume halal products by Shariah or based on other indicators such as recall, remembrance, or knowing and understanding of the products by halal standards that influence consumer intentions in decision-making (Awan *et al.*, 2015). In this study, halal brand awareness will be examined as a factor that influences purchasing decisions. Another assumed factor is the habit of consumers that influences in making decisions to purchase, which Triandis (1980) referred it as "situation-behavior orders that are automatically taking place without self-instruction". Meanwhile, the habit will direct an individual to purchase the products regardless of misperceptions of halal certifications perceived among consumers.

Both identified factors of awareness and habit of consumers may have a stronger relationship toward the purchase decision or otherwise due to the existence of the religiosity factor. Religiosity is among the popular factors and recent studies have been conducted on religiosity and halal awareness, e.g. Pratiwi *et al.* (2022) and Usman *et al.* (2022). It also transpired that religiosity is used as a magnet or a push factor that makes an individual act beyond his/her common behavior. In Islam, it refers to someone who has a higher belief in religious teachings which then encourages an individual to act immediately or spontaneously. Sometimes it is unpredictable but has a direct effect on any intended actions. Thus, it is important to analyze the extent of the role of religiosity in purchase decisions.

Numerous studies have recognized that religion is a substantial determinant of the decision to purchase halal products and used it as a moderating variable (Abdullah and Abdul Razak, 2020). Does religiosity have a role in the relationship between halal brand awareness and habit on a purchase decision? This study aims to test the predictors (halal brand awareness and habit) on purchase decisions as well as to analyze the moderating factor

of religiosity that is assumed to influence the relationship between halal brand awareness and habit on purchasing decisions. The results of this study will find out the important factors that influence the purchasing decision of consumers on halal products, which include the role of religiosity in both relationships of independent and dependent variables. With that, the government can push the promotion of religious education, to enhance the knowledge and awareness of consumers on halal products.

2. Literature review

Research on consumer behavior in making decisions about purchasing halal brands or products has become a very interesting topic. There are many factors influencing the purchase decision of the consumers. This includes religion, awareness, habit, attitude, surrounding or family influences and perceived behavioral control. Studies have been conducted in countries with a majority or minority Muslim population that have indicated increasing attention or concerns about halal products. Since then, research on halal brands or products has become one of the most prominent topics that can be seen in journals, among others the *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, *British Food Journal*, *International Journal of Commerce and Management*, *Management Research Review* (Emerald Publishing), *Journal of International Food and Agribusiness Marketing* (Taylor and Francis), *Agriculture and Human Values* (Springer), *Comprehensive Reviews in Food Science And Food Safety* (Wiley) and *Meat Science* (Elsevier). It is predicted that the number of journals that publish on halal-related topics will continue to increase due to the increasing number of curiosities and queries.

2.1 Halal concept and branding

Halal is an Arabic word categorized as things or acts permitted by Islamic or Shariah law. It has a comprehensive meaning that philosophically comprises many aspects of life, not limited to just specific goods. When referring to the brand or product, halal relates to the ingredients or the content that complies with the standards that have been set by the Shariah. The following are some verses in the Qur'an that explain the basic understanding of the halal concept: *Al-Maidah 5: 3-4*; *Al-Maidah 5: 88*; *Al-Baqarah 2:168*; *Al-Baqarah 2:173*; *Al-Baqarah 2:219*; *Al-An'am 6:121*; *An-Nahl 16:67*.

The concept of halal branding is used as a way to notify and convince consumers that products are Shariah-compliant (Wilson and Liu, 2010). Halal brands are closely related to emotions, identity and symbols of Islam. Ali *et al.* (2012) stated that the halal logo has an association with food purity, safety and cleanliness. The understanding of halal or Islamic brands is absolutely important, and if Muslim consumers are not incited and nourished, it may remain as a cultural identity or brand, thus the status of being halal is not permanent. Branding cannot be sequestered from the faith by Muslims, which implies that a whole activity should be divine and his/her feelings shall be geared towards Allah's guidance (Alserhan, 2010).

There are empirical studies that have discussed and investigated halal branding (Abdullah and Ahmad, 2010; Ahmed, 2008; Badrudin *et al.*, 2012; Ireland and Rajabzadeh, 2011; Marzuki *et al.*, 2012; Bin Nooh *et al.*, 2007; Che Man and Sazili, 2010). Che Man and Sazili (2010) asserted that halal branding consumption had a tremendous influence on organizations, the market and a country's economy and now Muslims have a growing awareness of the significance of purchasing halal products, which indirectly contributes to the growth of the global halal market. Halal products and brands have international requirements and recognition to serve the demands of various industries (Stephenson, 2014) specifically in countries like the UK and France. Meanwhile, there are many studies conducted on halal products all over the world such as by Alam and Sayuti (2011), Lada *et al.*

(2009), Mukhtar and Butt (2011); Bonne *et al.* (2007); Syed and Nazura (2011), Bashir *et al.* (2019), Ariffin *et al.* (2019), Aziz *et al.* (2019), Wibowo *et al.* (2020) and Rafiki and Wahab (2016).

2.2 Halal brand awareness and purchasing decision

Halal brand awareness is obtained from consumers' understanding and knowledge about the halal products they want to buy (Wilson and Liu, 2010; Ireland and Rajabzadeh, 2011; Ahmed *et al.*, 2019). Thus, it may relate to the level of education of the consumers. The more educated the consumer, the more likely they will have halal brand awareness. This awareness can be derived from the influences of the surroundings such as families and relatives that always mention certain brands, thus making them to be more aware. Additionally, the past behavior of consumers may create awareness too.

Wilson and Liu (2010) explained that the growing acceptance of halal brands is because of the captivating views given by the actual market size, increasing awareness of Muslim consumption and the substantial encouragement of Muslim consumers. Moreover, Muslim countries and corporations have acknowledged the potential of branding and recognized some of the conventional brands that have entered the Muslim markets. Islam is a religion with a strong reputation and image, thus it has been recognized as a special brand that has its criteria, principles, rights and identity to be considered as a global brand. Nonetheless, the reputation of Islamic or halal brands is perceived differently by various communities in diverse countries, even if it is viewed differently by Muslim consumers.

The halal paradigm is crucial to increase awareness among Muslims. Awareness of the halal brand particularly for food products is based on consumers' primary concern for health. Ambali and Bakar (2014) argue that the greatest contributor to the level of awareness of halal food by society is the attributes of healthiness and safety. Awareness of the Muslim community on halal products is a massive movement that needs to be done in stemming and avoiding undesirable products in consumption (Nasution and Rossanty, 2018). The Indonesia Halal Markets Report (2021/2022) revealed that currently, public awareness of choosing, buying and consuming halal products, is still far from expectations due to the low public awareness of halal products' consumption.

Halal concept and its certification are seen as something mandatory to adopt and not an option. When the public receives sufficient knowledge of halal products' ingredients, most probably they will be aware of consumer halal products. It is a necessity to know and learn about the halal concept. Indonesia Halal Watch (IHW) (2020) revealed that only about 20% of products are already halal-certified. However, this percentage cannot be ascertained on the manufacturers' commitments that supposedly extend the validity of the halal product certificates. The lack of awareness of consumers on halal brands creates opportunities for the producers which are then able to push them in extending or promoting such certificates.

Purchasing decision is one of the issues discussed in the consumer behavior subject. Karimi *et al.* (2015) referred to the purchasing decision as a process where consumers assess various alternative products and then choose one product that is needed based on certain considerations. Consumers decide to make a purchase based on their knowledge and experience of a product (Racherla, 2008). The decision to buy a product begins with information. The most efficient way to convey information on halal brands or products is through the adoption of halal certifications or labels to the customers. The awareness of consumers on halal products will reflect their understanding of the content of halal labels or certification, thus individuals with a high level of awareness of halal products should be better informed which is expected to decide to purchase. This asserted by authors that halal brand awareness has a strong effect in predicting consumer decisions to purchase halal products (Mukhtar and Butt, 2011; Aziz and Vui, 2012; Azam, 2016; Yunus *et al.*, 2014; Awan *et al.*, 2015; Diallo and Siqueira, 2017; Aslan, 2023). With these arguments, the proposed hypothesis is:

H1. Halal brand awareness is positively related to purchasing decisions of halal products.

2.3 Habit and purchasing decision

Limayem and Hirt (2003) define a habit as “a person’s tendency to replicate behavior which was established in the past”. Habits lead people to take steps that they are used to without taking into account the reasons behind their behavior. Limayem *et al.* (2007) added, “individuals subconsciously take part in specific actions because of repetitive learning”. This so-called past behavioral frequency or consecutive action relates to product purchase (Jolley *et al.*, 2006; Ouellette and Wood, 1998; Seetharaman, 2004) or as a variable predicting behavior (Aarts and Dijksterhuis, 2000; Aarts *et al.*, 1997; Aarts *et al.*, 1998; Bargh, 2002; Bargh *et al.*, 2001; Dahlstrand and Biel, 1997; Dunn, 2000; Guariglia and Rossi, 2002; Limayem *et al.*, 2003; Limayem and Hirt, 2003; Lindbladh and Lyttkens, 2002; Orbell *et al.*, 2001; Ouellette and Wood, 1998; Quine and Rubin, 1997; Saba and di Natale, 1998; Saba and di Natale, 1999; Saba *et al.*, 1998; Saba *et al.*, 2000; Trafimow, 2000; Verplanken and Aarts, 1999; Verplanken *et al.*, 1997; Verplanken *et al.*, 1998; Verplanken, 2006; Wood *et al.*, 2002).

Habit is conceptualized as past behavior that has become automatic and is beyond an individual’s awareness. The intention that presents the consciousness level in performing a behavior decreases as the habit level presenting unconsciousness increases (Bamberg and Schmidt, 2003; Gardner, 2015; Amalia *et al.*, 2020). The habit was the strongest predictor of purchase decision (Venkatesh *et al.*, 2012), an independent predictor of intentions to purchase (Verbeke *et al.*, 2004; Honkanen *et al.*, 2005; Ahmed *et al.*, 2014; Bonne *et al.*, 2007; Armitage and Conner, 2001; Verbeke, 2005; Ali *et al.*, 2017; Vanany *et al.*, 2019; Azeema *et al.*, 2016). With the above arguments, the proposed hypothesis is:

H2. Habit is positively related to purchasing decisions of halal products.

2.4 Religiosity and consumer research

Religiosity means “the level to which an individual obeys his or her religious values, beliefs, and practices and applies them in routine activities” (Worthington *et al.*, 2003). While Johnson *et al.* (2001) added religiosity is the immensity to which a person is committed to their religion based on religious attitudes and behavior. For a Muslim, religiosity can be known from the extent of knowledge, belief, implementation and appreciation of the religion of Islam.

The discussion of religiosity in marketing and consumer research has become an interesting topic for publication. One of the points is how the consumers involve the religiosity aspect when buying products or consuming goods. Religiosity can be associated with the perceptions, attitudes and preferences of consumers (Salam *et al.*, 2019). This has been asserted by Muhamad and Mizerski (2010), who mentioned that religion has several constructs and can influence other things through religious orientation, affiliation, knowledge, commitment and societal effects. This concludes that religiosity has a wide concept and various associations with other aspects including consumer research.

2.4.1 Role of religiosity in purchasing decisions of halal brands. The halal brand is not simply a name, label, logo, or packaging element, but halal itself has a complete meaning as “a belief system and ethical code of conduct that is an integral part of Muslim devotional life as an affirmation of Islamic identity and worldview as well as an acknowledgment of spiritual purity” (El-Bassiouny, 2014). This understanding is not only perceived by Muslims living in Muslim-majority countries but also by those living in non-Muslim-majority countries like the United Kingdom. They know that halal brands/products indicate compliance towards the Shariah in terms of processing and handling of ingredients (Verbeke *et al.*, 2013). Mukhtar and Butt (2011) argue that the living of Muslims in multi-religious communities is more

mindful related to the permissible products of halal. It shows the significance of religiosity in shaping consumption preferences. A halal logo can reflect self-expressive gains (Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012).

Abdul *et al.* (2009) revealed a positive association between religious affiliation and perceptions of halal labels and content. This has been confirmed by authors such as Ambali and Bakar (2013), Khan *et al.* (2017), Rehman and Shabbir (2010), Soesilowati (2010) Wisker (2020), Abror *et al.* (2020), Akhtar *et al.* (2020), Sulaiman *et al.* (2021), Junaidi *et al.* (2021) and Usman *et al.* (2022), who all found that religiosity is a significant factor of the halal product purchasing decision. Nonetheless, the study by Salman and Siddiqui (2011) in Pakistan revealed that highly religious individuals may not have a high level of awareness of halal products. Ahmad *et al.* (2013) also discovered that Muslim customers were selecting products based on price and taste rather than products with halal labels or certification.

Religiosity is justified as a moderating variable in this study due to its motivational and behavioral commitment which affects the decisions (Worthington *et al.*, 2003) including the purchase decisions. It is also been adopted as a moderating variable in several studies by Vanany *et al.* (2019), Mokhlis and Sparks (2007), Khan *et al.* (2020), and Bang *et al.* (2014), while Umar *et al.* (2022) adopted ethical orientation as a moderating variable which associated with religiosity. Hence religiosity is considered a crucial factor in any relationship of factors.

2.4.2 The relationship between awareness, religiosity and purchasing decision. Abdullah and Abdul Razak (2020) stated that consumers with a high level of religiosity vary from those with a low level of religiosity in their buying behavior. A person with a high level of religiosity will do more investigation on halal and haram (prohibited) products. They will deliberately consume safe and less risky ingredients, especially when it has been highlighted in the teachings of his/her religion (Wilson and Liu, 2010). Thus, this study assumed that customers' purchasing decision is affected by awareness and then moderated by religiosity.

Moreover, faith is bound in the decision to purchase halal products. Some consumers rely on information about halal brands/products as well as other factors such as trust/authenticity or perceived values. However, it does not make them feel more compliant compared to relying on the religiosity factor, thus influencing the consumption or purchase decision. The measurement of religiosity is contained in devotion or obedience, which is then able to increase the awareness of consumers in their purchase decisions. This suggests that only an individual who has an awareness of halal products and has a higher level of religiosity would be expected to make the purchase. In other words, awareness alone can't predict to influence the purchase decision of halal products. With these arguments, the proposed hypothesis is:

H3. The higher the level of religiosity, the stronger the influence of awareness on purchasing decisions.

2.4.3 The relationship of habit, religiosity and purchasing decision. Limayem *et al.* (2007) argued that individuals subconsciously engage in certain behaviors because of repeated learning. Habit as one of the predictors of purchase decisions can be influenced by religiosity. The variable of habit is moderated by other factors such as attitude (Saba and di Natale, 1999) and education (Limayem *et al.*, 2003), while religiosity as a moderating variable will be tested in this study. Verplanken *et al.* (1998) mentioned that the habit is "called as adopted acts that emerge due to the immediate responses to any occasions", which means it can be changed and used as a factor that makes the goals more achievable. Religiosity proved to be the factor influencing Muslim consumer behavior (Shah Alam *et al.*, 2011; Amalia *et al.*, 2020). In this study, religiosity is employed to moderate or make a strong effect on purchase decisions or otherwise. With these arguments, the proposed hypothesis is:

H4. The higher the level of religiosity, the stronger the influence of habit on purchasing decisions.

Table 1 shows the number of articles based on the keywords used as the variables of the study. This indicates the width and depth of the literature review of the subject which is related to halal awareness, habit, religiosity and purchasing decisions.

With the arguments and elaborations in the literature review, the authors decided to draw the conceptual framework for this study as presented in Figure 1:

3. Research methods

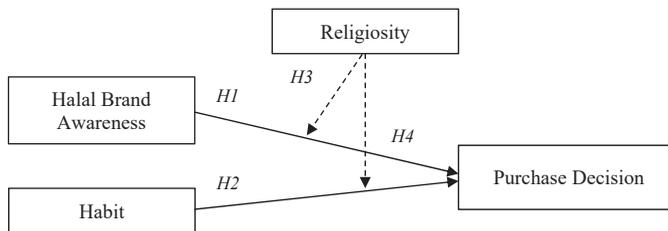
A quantitative methodology with a cross-sectional method is used in this study. The questionnaires with Likert scale type of questions are distributed to the respondents to collect the primary data. The Likert scale is widely used in past research and has been extensively examined in both marketing and consumer behavior subjects. The five-point Likert-type statements ranging from 1 (“Strongly Disagree”) to 5 (“Strongly Agree”) are used for the four variables. The sample of respondents was selected using the convenience sampling technique of consumers that visited the four big supermarkets such as Carrefour, Hypermart, LotteMart and SmarCo located in Medan City, North Sumatera province, Indonesia. Using convenience sampling is meant to explore more on the interests of the consumers which has been used by previous studies in the same field by Casidy *et al.* (2017) and Amalia *et al.* (2020). Each of the mentioned supermarkets has its uniqueness and characteristics, hence this study may have responses from various types of respondents. There are 197 respondents from 200 distributed questionnaires (3 questionnaires were considered to not fulfill the criteria set). Kline (2005)

No	Keyword	Number of article	
		Scopus*: Article title, abstract, keywords (2008–2020)	Google scholar in the title
1	Halal awareness	132	917
2	Purchase decision	15,576	127,000
3	Habit purchase	1,315	64
4	Religiosity halal	81	59
5	Religiosity habit	94	3
6	Religiosity purchase	107	42
7	Halal religiosity purchase	25	2
8	Halal awareness purchase	26	8
9	Habit religiosity purchase	2	0

Table 1. Number of article indexed by Scopus and google scholar database from 2008 to 2020

Note(s): *Scopus: the highest and popular bibliographic index

Source(s): Authors’ own work [Output from Scopus and Google Scholar Databases (2008–2020)]



Source(s): Authors’ own work

Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

stated that a sample over 200 is considered large and potentially has reliable data. [Guilford \(1954\)](#) earlier mentioned that an absolute minimum of 200 samples is required for validity test of Pearson Correlation analysis. Thus this justifies the 200 samples in this study. Moreover, 50 respondents which are chosen from each supermarket coincidentally aligned with the capacity of each supermarket at a time, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Each respondent was approached directly face to face with a standard of health protocol due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Table 2](#) shows the measurement justification of the items in questionnaires that were adapted from previous studies.

3.1 Multiple and moderated regression analysis (MRA)

This study employs regression analysis to test all hypotheses as well as the moderated regression analysis (MRA) that is used to identify the moderator variable ([Russell and Bobko, 1992](#)). A moderator variable which is religiosity will affect a relationship (make it stronger or weaker) of the three variables of awareness, habit and purchase decision. Thus, this moderating variable is significantly crucial in the process of purchase decision.

4. Results

4.1 Profile of respondents

The profile of respondents in terms of frequency/percentage of gender, age, education level and religious education level is depicted in [Table 3](#) below. It is presented that a majority of the respondents are male with 106 individuals (57.7%), while the age between 31 and 40 years old is a dominant group with 60 individuals (36.1%) and followed by a group with age 21–30 (29.9%). Regarding the educational level, 72 individuals (48.5%) of respondents attended the undergraduate level, followed by 47 individuals (22.7%) who attended the diploma level. Lastly, 72 individuals (48.5%) attended informal religious classes, followed by 49 individuals (24.7%) who attended the lower level of religious school called *ibtidaiyyah*. This means that a substantial number of respondents are sufficiently exposed to Islamic religious education.

4.2 Reliability and validity tests

The reliability test is measured by Cronbach's coefficient alpha which must be higher than 0.70 (>0.70) ([DeVellis, 2003](#)). As depicted in [Table 4](#) below, all survey items are reliable with a Cronbach's coefficient alpha of higher than 0.70.

As depicted in [Table 5](#), the validity test is performed using the Pearson Correlation method. The variables are valid if the level of significance is < 0.05. The test results indicate that the significance level for all variables is smaller than 0.05, which means all are valid. [Cohen \(1988\)](#) suggested that a strong correlation between the two variables would be indicated by a score of above 0.50. It is shown that the moderator variable strongly affects awareness, which is seen from the correlation value of 0.862, while habit has a correlation value of 0.855. It is concluded that both variables are strongly influenced by the moderator variable. Moreover, it is also shown that awareness has an average value of 4.13 and a standard deviation of 5.22, habit has an average value of 3.66 and a standard deviation of 2.40 and religiosity has an average value of 4.70 with a standard deviation of 4.44.

As depicted in [Table 6](#) above, the 10 indicators of awareness measurement must have more than 0.40 cut-off values as stated by [Ladhari \(2010\)](#) and [Loiacono et al. \(2002\)](#), so it can be concluded that all questionnaire items are valid. For the 3 indicators of habit measurement, all have more than 0.40 cut-off values, thus all items are considered valid. For the 9 indicators of religiosity measurement, all have more than 0.40 cut-off value, thus all items are valid.

Variables	Number of items	Indicators	Authors
Religiosity	9	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Religion is especially important to me because it answers many questions about the meaning of life 2. I often read books and magazines about my faith 3. I spend time trying to grow in understanding of my faith 4. My religious beliefs lie behind my whole approach to life 5. I make financial contributions to my religious organization 6. I enjoy spending time with others of my religious affiliation 7. Religious beliefs influence all my dealings in life 8. It is important to me to spend periods of time in private religious thought and prayer 9. I enjoy taking part in activities of my religious organization 	<p>Mokhlis (2009), Fam <i>et al.</i> (2004), Michell and Al-Mossawi (1995), De Run <i>et al.</i> (2010), Awan <i>et al.</i> (2015), Mukhtar and Butt (2011), Bang <i>et al.</i> (2014), Warburton and Terry (2000), Ali <i>et al.</i> (2017), Ahmed <i>et al.</i> (2014), Bonne <i>et al.</i> (2007), Garg and Joshi (2018), Vanany <i>et al.</i> (2019), Worthington <i>et al.</i> (2003), Mokhlis and Sparks (2007), Khan <i>et al.</i> (2020) Aziz and Vui (2012), Azam (2016), Yunus <i>et al.</i> (2014), Awan <i>et al.</i> (2015), Aziz and Chok (2013), Kurniawati and Savitri (2019), Nurhayati and Hendar (2019), Vanany <i>et al.</i> (2019), Rachmawati and Suroso (2020)</p>
Halal brand awareness	10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I always make sure that the food is halal 2. I always make sure that the product's ingredients are halal 3. I always make sure that the food additives are halal 4. I understand what is halal 5. Buying the halal product have been becoming your lifestyle 6. I know that lamb/beef/chicken meat slaughtered are not in accordance with Islamic Shari'ah including haram food 7. I know that pork, dogs, and other wild beasts are among the unlawful (haram) foods eaten 8. I know that processed food from unlawful (haram) meat makes the food unlawful (haram) also 9. I know that alcoholic drinks include unlawful (haram) drinks 10. Every producer must be responsible for the availability of halal food products 	<p>Ahmed <i>et al.</i> (2014), Bonne <i>et al.</i> (2007), Honkanen <i>et al.</i> (2005), Verbeke (2005), Ali <i>et al.</i> (2017), Armitage and Conner (2001), Vanany <i>et al.</i> (2019) Mittal (1989), Bauer <i>et al.</i> (2006), Jusmaliani and Nasution (2013), Islam and Chowdhury (2018)</p>
Habit	3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consuming Halal-certified food is something I do reflex 2. I feel weird if I do not consume Halal-certified food 3. Eating halal-certified food is something that I do without reasoning 	<p>Ahmed <i>et al.</i> (2014), Bonne <i>et al.</i> (2007), Honkanen <i>et al.</i> (2005), Verbeke (2005), Ali <i>et al.</i> (2017), Armitage and Conner (2001), Vanany <i>et al.</i> (2019)</p>
Purchase decision	6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I take halal buying decision based on religious 2. I take halal buying decision based on hygienic 3. I take halal buying decision based on quality assurance 4. I take halal buying decision based on mental satisfaction 5. I take halal buying decision based on family learning and practice 6. I take halal buying decision based on healthy consumption 	<p>Mittal (1989), Bauer <i>et al.</i> (2006), Jusmaliani and Nasution (2013), Islam and Chowdhury (2018)</p>

Source(s): Authors' own work

Table 2.
Measurement
justification

PRR	Demographic factors	Frequency	(%)
	<i>Gender</i>		
	Male	106	57.7
	Female	91	42.3
<i>Age</i>			
	21–30	54	29.9
	31–40	60	36.1
	41–50	47	22.7
	Above 50	36	11.3
<i>Education level</i>			
	High school	44	19.6
	Diploma	47	22.7
	Undergraduate	72	48.5
	Postgraduate	34	9.3
<i>Religious education classes</i>			
	Ibtidaiyah (lower level)	49	24.7
	Tsanawiyah (middle level)	43	18.6
	Aliyah (high level)	33	8.2
	Other kind classes	72	48.5

Table 3. Demographic characteristic ($N = 197$)
Source(s): Authors' own work (research output)

Variable	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
Halal brand awareness	10	0.964
Habits	3	0.943
Religiosity	9	0.960
Purchase decision	6	0.958

Table 4. Reliability test
Source(s): Authors' own work (research output)

	Mean	Std. deviation	Awareness	Habit	Religiosity	VIF
Awareness	4.13	5.22	1			1.743
Habit	3.66	2.40	0.857**	1		1.743
Religiosity	4.70	4.44	0.862**	0.855**	1	

Table 5. Mean, std. deviation, pairwise correlations and collinearity test
Note(s): **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
Source(s): Authors' own work (research output)

Finally, for the 5 indicators of purchasing decision measurement, similarly, all have cut-off values more than 0.40, thus all items are valid and therefore fit for further analysis.

4.3 Hypotheses test

As depicted in Table 7, below is the elaboration:

- (1) Halal brand awareness has a significant effect on purchase decisions with a t -value of 42.612 and a significant value of $0.000 < 0.05$, thus hypothesis 1 (H1) is accepted. Meanwhile, the regression coefficient is 0.529 with a positive linear direction, which

Effect of religiosity on halal products

Awareness	Corrected item-total correlation	Habit	Corrected item-total correlation	Religiosity	Corrected item-total correlation	Purchase decision	Corrected item-total correlation
A1	0.840	H1	0.861	R1	0.817	PD1	0.869
A2	0.864	H2	0.924	R2	0.830	PD2	0.879
A3	0.857	H3	0.861	R3	0.830	PD3	0.896
A4	0.843			R4	0.830	PD4	0.896
A5	0.916			R5	0.830	PD5	0.869
A6	0.846			R6	0.830	PD6	0.887
A7	0.907			R7	0.830		
A8	0.891			R8	0.855		
A9	0.798			R9	0.841		
A10	0.615						

Source(s): Authors' own work (research output)

Table 6. Item-total statistics

Test	Variable	t-Value	Sig	R ²	Results
Regression test (H1)	Halal brand Awareness Purchase Decision	42.612	0.000	0.950	H1 Accepted
Regression test (H2)	Habits Purchase Decision	47.875	0.000	0.960	H2 Accepted
Interaction test (H3)	Halal brand Awareness Moderate1 (Religiosity) Purchase Decision	4.813	0.000	0.959	H3 Accepted
Interaction test (H4)	Habits Moderate2 (Religiosity) Purchase Decision	5.567	0.000	0.969	H4 Accepted

Note(s): * The requirement for interaction test if the value of R-Square after interaction is bigger than the value of R square before interaction

Source(s): Authors' own work (research output)

Table 7. Summary of hypothesis test results

means that the higher the level of halal brand awareness, the higher the purchase decision. Moreover, an R Square value of 0.950 means the contribution of halal brand awareness in explaining its influence on purchase decisions by 95%, and the remaining 5% is influenced by other variables.

- (2) Habit has a significant effect on customer purchase decisions with a t-value of 47.875 with a significant value of $0.000 < 0.05$, thus hypothesis 2 (H2) is supported. Meanwhile, the regression coefficient is 1.599 with a positive linear direction, which means that the higher the levels of habit, the higher the purchasing decision of customers. Moreover, an R Square value of 0.960 means that the contribution of habit in explaining its effect on the purchase decision by 96%, and the remaining 4% is influenced by other variables.
- (3) The R Square value after the interaction of the moderating variable (religiosity) is 0.959, which is higher than the R Square value before the interaction of 0.950. This proves that religiosity can moderate (strengthen) the correlation of halal brand awareness to purchasing decisions.
- (4) The interaction of M1 (Moderating 1) religiosity has a significant influence on the correlation between halal brand awareness and purchase decisions with a t-value of 4.813 and a significant value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Thus hypothesis 3 (H3) is accepted.

- (5) The R Square value after the interaction of the moderating variable (religiosity) is 0.969, which is higher than the R Square value before the interaction of 0.960. This proves that religiosity can moderate (strengthen) the relationship of habit to purchase decision.
- (6) The interaction of M2 (Moderating 2) religiosity has a significant influence on the correlation between habit and purchase decision with a *t*-value of 5.567 and a significant value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Thus, hypothesis 4 (H4) is accepted.

Moreover, Figures 2 and 3 concluded that for both high and low halal brand awareness and habit levels, there is a religiosity role in increasing the positive influence between halal brand awareness and habit on purchase decisions.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study align with a large number of empirical studies that suggest a positive correlation between brand awareness and purchase decisions (Aziz and Chok, 2013;

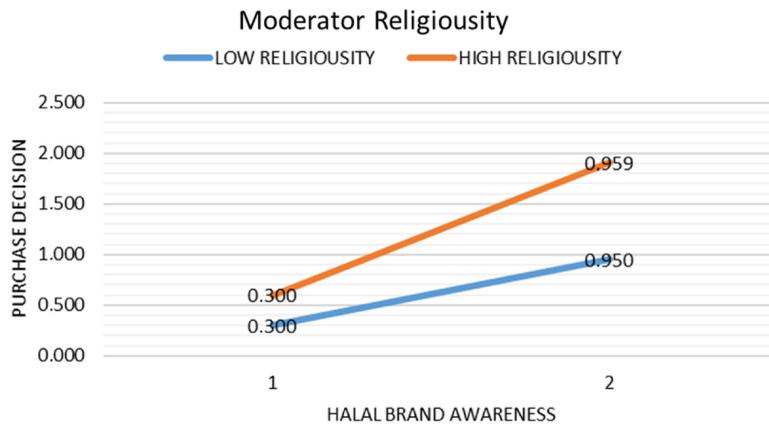


Figure 2. Interactions of halal brand awareness and religiosity and purchase decision

Source(s): Authors' own work (research output)

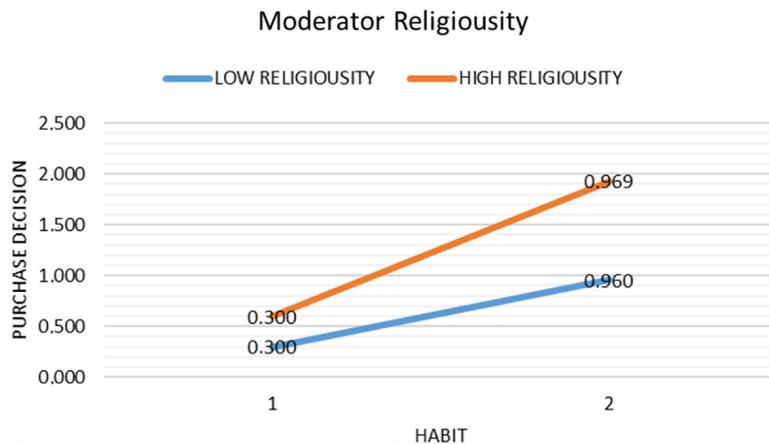


Figure 3. Interactions among habit and religiosity and purchase decision

Source(s): Authors' own work (research output)

Yukichika *et al.*, 2018; Agustina and Hana, 2019; Babatunde *et al.*, 2019; Mohamed, 2019). For example, Mohamed (2019) revealed that halal brand quality produces a superior reputation and provides absolute brand awareness to consumers. Halal brand awareness is one of the stronger variables affecting purchasing decisions. The higher the level of halal brand awareness, the higher the purchase decision by consumers. As has been mentioned, the know-how or possession of knowledge on the products may contribute to the level of awareness reflected in the 48.5% of the respondents in this study who attended undergraduate programs and at least 22.7% of them have diploma certificates.

Meanwhile, habit which is regarded as an automatic behavior has a positive and significant relationship with purchasing decisions. This result is supported by the findings of past research that stated habit was the strongest predictor of purchase decisions (Venkatesh *et al.*, 2012; Ali *et al.*, 2017; Vanany *et al.*, 2019). Habits may change when a person reaches the age of above 50 years. The reason is that 66% of respondents between the ages of 21–40 years seem to have a similar habit. Thus it is assumed, that if the majority of respondents are above 50 years old, the habit factor couldn't be the predictor of purchasing decisions because the habits of those ages would be different.

The present research found the influence of religiosity as a moderating variable on the association of awareness with halal product purchasing decisions as well as a habit on halal product purchasing decisions. The chosen variable of religiosity as a moderating variable will be the primary endowment of this study, which found that both relationships have positive moderates. Religiosity has a significant role in individual cognition and behavior. In other words, religion influences the beliefs and behaviors of an individual through or depends on the degree of individual religiosity. Thus, it is likely that religiosity will influence the behavior of an individual that assumedly encompasses a decision to purchase halal products. The results in this study conclude that the higher the level of religiosity, the stronger the effect of awareness on purchasing decision of halal products, and the higher the level of religiosity, the stronger the effect of habit on purchasing decision of halal products, despite the existence of prior researches by Ahmad *et al.* (2013) and Salman and Siddiqui (2011) have reported that highly religious individuals might not automatically have a high degree of awareness on halal products. This shows that religiosity has a crucial role in influencing both relationships in this study.

As it is shown in Table 7, that religiosity can moderate (strengthen) the correlation of halal brand awareness to purchasing decisions. It might be that religious values and teachings are embedded in the minds of any individuals, which makes it easy to make a decision. Moreover, religiosity is moderating (strengthening) the relationship of habit to purchase decision. This means that religious values and teachings which are used as push factors can support an individual's habit in making decisions.

Religiosity can be shaped by the education process and application of Islamic values, thus making consumers have the intention to purchase halal products. Moreover, Muslim community organizations could play a significant role in enhancing the activities that are related to the consumption of halal-branded products. Awareness programs need to be held by the municipals among the consumers in villages or rural areas that emphasize the instructions of Islamic religious teachings related to halal product consumption. Continuous support from the government and its agencies will be a key factor in promoting halal brands/products.

Religiosity has been adopted as the variable in purchasing decisions but mostly as an independent variable, which strongly gives an impact and has a significant relationship (Bonne *et al.*, 2007; Sitasari, 2008; Mukhtar and Butt, 2011; Weaver and Agle, 2002). Islamic teaching has a direct influence on the personal and social lives of its followers (Bakar *et al.*, 2013; Lawrence, 1998) and Islam reigns both spiritual, materials and social aspects of its adherents (Muhamad *et al.*, 2016; Turner, 2006), thus it is aligned with the facts that the

religious Muslims are likely to integrate their beliefs in daily consumption behavior (El-Bassiouny, 2014). By exploring the role of religiosity as a moderating factor in halal product purchasing decisions, the results of this research have supported past literature on halal product research. This would be the first study in Indonesia as the most populous Muslim-majority country that analyzes the halal purchasing decision towards halal products among consumers, taking into consideration the factor of religiosity.

For the Indonesian community, the issue of halal products is critical. So far, the government has made initiatives through rules, regulations and strategic actions related to halal products. However, the government may need to collaborate with Islamic religious education institutions/ centers to give more understanding and awareness of the halal concept and product. It is assumed that individuals who know about the Islamic religion will have a higher degree of awareness of halal products compared to individuals with limited knowledge of Islam, thus Islamic education plays a crucial role in raising the level of awareness of halal products. Schools may catalyze the dissemination of halal product information.

Business practitioners and managers in the respective supermarkets should take part to enhance the awareness of all their employees and customers by offering attractive programs or packages related to halal products, for instance, door prizes or discounts for halal products. Some would conduct talk shows to encourage younger (Gen Z) customers to know better about halal products as it is crucial to create awareness among them. This could generate individual habits to purchase halal products.

6. Conclusion and limitation

The purpose of this study is to examine the factors (halal brand awareness and habit) influencing the purchasing decision of halal products as well as the moderating variable of religiosity on the purchase decision. The finding has proven that religiosity affects business development. All hypotheses (H1, H2, H3 and H4) are supported. Specifically, the variable of religiosity can moderate both relationships or in other words strengthen the relationships. Some stakeholders need to be involved in supporting the halal products and market, including the halal products' producers that can take advantage of opportunities and industrial movements to increase public awareness of halal products. Creating a halal value chain, i.e. among small enterprises is one of the effective strategies to enhance the consumption of halal products. The Halal brand is a sign of health, safety, cleanliness and quality for Muslim consumers; hence, there is no reason that Muslims would deny the clear messages of the importance of consuming halal products.

Nonetheless, the authors acknowledge some limitations of this study. First, the sample size was limited and needed to be added. It also needs to consist of more variety of places or communities, i.e. Muslim minority countries. To enrich the sources of data and information, the stratified or purposive sampling technique is to be considered for future studies. Hence, the validity and robustness of data can be attained. Secondly, there could have been overlooked factors that also influenced the purchasing decision for halal products. Thirdly, the mediating factor/variable should be considered as been adopted by past studies that would have an impact on the purchase decision. Finally, although the literature recognizes awareness, habit and purchase decision-making, the research instruments and conceptualization of religiosity need to be examined to get further robustness in the findings. Future studies may explore the broader relevance or scope of outcomes in various contexts related to halal products.

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