

FACTOR AFFECTING CONSUMERS' PURCHASE INTENTION OF HALAL READY-TO-EAT FOOD PRODUCTS

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Abstract: *The aim of this research is to identify the factors influencing consumers' purchase intention for halal ready-to-eat food products in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. Primary data were collected through convenience sampling by distributing self-administered questionnaires to identify the factors affecting consumer purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products. A survey was conducted in the Klang Valley, Malaysia, where data were collected from 300 respondents consisting of Muslim and non-Muslim consumers. Theory of planned behaviour (TPB) was used as the conceptual framework, and the variables identified are attitude, subjective norms, perceived behaviour and one additional variable which is awareness. The collected data were tested by using multiple regression analysis in Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).*

Keywords: *purchase intention, attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavior, awareness*

Introduction

Today, changes in consumer behavior especially in their eating habits (Osman et al., 2014) and changes in the needs of society due to modernisation have created a need for ready-to-eat food products because consumers prefer a more convenient way of preparing food so that they can spend the least amount of time cooking (Candel, 2001). Escalating demand is seen for ready-to-eat food products, which have become an important meal for most people specifically the urban communities who have a busy daily life (Nondzor & Tawiah, 2015). This is because ready-to-eat food products provide busy people with convenient meals that are easy to store and prepare (Harper, 1981). Furthermore, Harper (1981) argued that ready-to-eat food products have gained consumers' interest because those products are valuable and have an attractive texture and appearance to them.

However, ready-to-eat food products do not come without cost and risk. Although the convenience of a ready-to-eat food products is preferred by most people, it is also accompanied by health issues such as long-term health effects and chronic diseases (Celnik et al., 2012). According to previous studies, some ready-to-eat food products can be categorised as high-risk food due to the growth of pathogenic (food poisoning) bacteria or the formation of toxins in the food. To avoid these issues, this type of food must be kept at a certain temperature. Moreover, consumers lack the awareness of the adverse effects of ready-to-eat food products that may contain genetically modified organisms (GMO) substances, a high concentration of salt, preservatives, and addictive substances. Sometimes, consumers are not aware of the contents before purchasing these products due to the lack of enforcement on food labeling for GMO in ready-to-eat food products (O'Fallon et al., 2007).

Several health cases have emerged, affecting people all around the world concerning the safety and microbiological quality of these food products, such as foodborne diseases (Nguz, 2007). According to the Malaysia Ministry of Health (2024), approximately 53.67 incidences of foodborne and waterborne diseases were reported for every 100,000 population in Malaysia. Some contributing factors for these diseases include insecure sources, inadequate cooking, inappropriate holding temperature, contamination of equipment, and poor personal hygiene (Sani & Siow, 2014). Furthermore, there are numerous health implications associated with poor nutrition and unhealthy food products from their daily food consumption (Khazanah Research Institute, 2024). Thus, consumers demand a high-quality diet comprising healthy products that must comply with the *Shariah* requirements (Al-Harran & Low, 2008). The health concerns encompass several healthcare aspects, such as the type of nutrition from food that is taken into the body, food hygiene, food sources, and also the procedure for food handling and preparation to reduce adverse health implications to the body (Mathew et al., 2014). Thus, Muslims are encourage to consume halal food that is also *Thayyib* (good) (Fatmawati, 2019) as stated in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 168:

"O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth (that is) lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy".

In assuring consumer safety, Malaysia has developed standards on halal food through agencies including Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM), Department of Standards Malaysia, Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia, and Malaysian Institute of Industrial Research and Standard (SIRIM) (Talib et al., 2008) to convince that the Malaysian standards will not certify halal or food products which are unsafe to the consumers.

Nowadays, due to the rising health concerns among society, consumers' demand for food has changed substantially where both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers are more aware of the concept of halal. The halal concept is not specific to the Muslim society (Alam & Sayuti, 2011), but has also attracted the interest of non-Muslim consumers when it comes to food. They start looking for food that can help them to maintain their health and improve their quality of life because of their awareness about the importance of health. This awareness can benefit the halal food producers because the health concerns in food consumption share the same value with the halal concept, which encompasses hygiene, cleanliness, and the quality of the food consumed (Mathew et al., 2014). Thus, halal in ready-to-eat food products includes the ingredients used, safety issues, and the production process which covers manufacturing, storage, packaging, and delivery, all of which must comply with the *Shariah* requirements (Hussain et al., 2016). Being halal and *toyyib*, halal food is not only healthy but also safe for consumption (Shafiee et al., 2017). Hence, the strong need for *halalan toyyiban* ready-to-eat food, especially among Muslim consumers, is due to the health consciousness and the culture of eating that have undergone some transformation because of the current trend of urbanisation that has affected food consumption and the eating behavior of the people (Nondzor & Tawiah, 2015).

Problem Statement

As Muslims, it is compulsory to consume halal food as it is closely related to the religious obligation in Islam (Khalek, 2015). However, not all Muslim consumers consume halal food because of religious beliefs. They may do so because of their attitude towards halal food, the influence of the people around them, and the perceived over consumption of halal food products (Billah et al., 2020). In this current study, attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control and awareness are selected as factors that affect consumers' intention to purchase halal ready-to-eat food products. Based on the review of the literature and to the best of the researcher's knowledge, limited studies have been conducted on the purchase intention towards halal ready-to-eat food products in the Klang Valley by using the theory of planned behavior (TPB). Most of the previous halal food studies that have been conducted used the theory of planned behaviour (Khalek et al., 2015). Several studies found that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control have a positive relationship with consumers' intention to consume halal food (Alam & Sayuti, 2011). However, most studies look at halal food in general (Ahmed, 2008; Shafie & Othman, 2006), but limited studies focus specifically on halal ready-to-eat food products in the Klang Valley, Malaysia using theory of planned behaviour with awareness added as a variable.

In this study, in addition to attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control, another factor, namely awareness is proposed as a determinant of consumers' purchase intention. It is in line with Aziz and Chok (2013), which found awareness as a key factor that affects the purchase intention towards halal food. Besides, consumers who are health-conscious are motivated to maintain their health and quality of life because of their awareness and concern about well-being (Schifferstain & Oude, 1998). Several studies indicated that there are substantial awareness on the purchase intention towards halal foods (Vadakepat, 2013; Lai et al., 2010). However, limited research has been conducted regarding awareness as a determinant of the purchase intention towards halal ready-to-eat food products in an urban setting. Therefore, this study addresses this problem by investigating the direct effect of attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and awareness on consumer purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products. In other words, this gap has become the focus of interest in this study, as it is necessary to look at consumers' purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products among Muslim and non-Muslim consumers in urban areas.

Literature Review

Related Theories of the Study

For the purpose of the study, the researcher is using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991) as the model was proven effective in predicting consumer behavior on halal food (Spark et al., 1992). This study seeks to examine the factors that affecting consumers' purchase intention for halal ready-to-eat food products. The theory of planned behavior (TPB) was selected as the theoretical framework, which describes that behavioral intention is influenced by attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control as shown in Figure 1 below. This theory examines the extent to which consumers' intention to purchase halal ready-to-eat food products is influenced by their favorable or unfavorable evaluation of such consumption, the degree to which they believe important people want them to consume these products, and their perceived ease or difficulty of doing so.

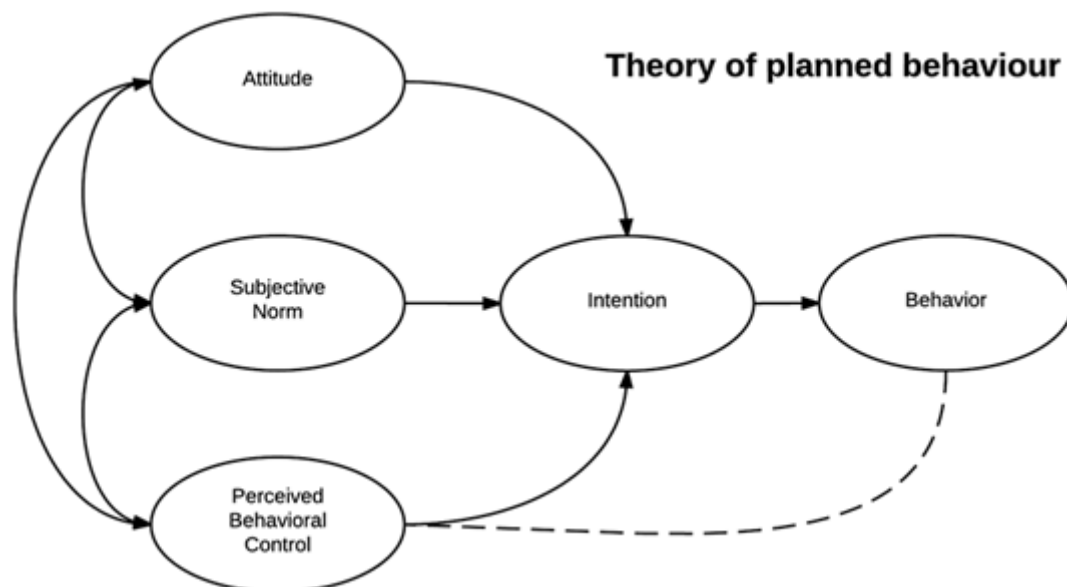


Figure 1: Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991)

Regards to the study, theoretical expansion should be appropriate for consumer intention which awareness would be included as predictors with the expectation to provide a greater variance. The relationship of awareness with purchase intention will be discussed in past studies in the literature review. The extended theory of planned behavior model which is proposed variables namely attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control and awareness would be applying in this study to examine the factors which have an impact on consumer purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products in the Klang Valley, Malaysia.

Regards to purchase intention, it can be described as planned behavior of evaluation which consumer is willing to purchase certain goods or services (Ajzen, 1991). Various studies have been conducted regards to purchase intention associated with buying behavior. A few studies have been reported a positive correlation between purchase intention and purchase behavior (Fitzsimons & Morwitz, 1996). Therefore, purchase intention is powerful intuition of a consumer to repurchase a product whenever they are interested in acquiring that product (Nabil & Imed, 2010). However, this study does not explore the purchase behaviour of a consumer as the objective of this study only related to the purchase intention.

Hypothesis Development

Attitude

Attitude is one of the elements in theory planned behaviour as Ajzen (1991) states that attitude is the appraisal of performing a particular behavior which refers to a person has favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the behavior in questions. The attitude was found to be positively related to the intention (Nora & Minarti, 2016; Rajendra et al., 2020). There are several factors that influence the consumer's attitude to purchase such as quality, taste, and packaging. Regards to the ready-to-eat food, consumer attitudes toward purchasing ready-to-eat (RTE) food are influenced by their level of health consciousness. It can be conclude that being aware of this food and its implications on health are one of the decision that consumer makes (Abdullah, 2018; Kavitha, 2012). While, the previous study highlights that consumers are highly aware of the food and its impact on health, and they utilize various technological sources for information before making purchase decisions. Packaging is especially influential as it elicits various responses and is a key point of contact during the buying process. Brand and packaging together help in creating awareness and influence consumer purchase behaviour significantly (Patel & Rathod, 2017; Vijayabaskar & Sundaram, 2012).

In India, a study by Suresh Babu et al. (2020) investigated factors influencing the purchase intentions of ready-to-eat food (RTE) food products among consumers in Chennai city. The findings indicated that convenience, quality, mood, sensory appeal, price, and stress-free experiences significantly influenced consumers' purchase intentions. Similarly, previous studies found that convenience and price as significant determinants of consumers' purchase intention toward ready-to-eat (RTE) food among Malaysian consumers (Mohd Zaki et al., 2025; Rosli & Sahak, 2024). However, product quality and packaging were found to have no significant impact on purchase intentions towards ready-to-eat foods among Malaysian urban.

In the context of halal, attitude is a vital element that influencing consumer intention in purchasing halal products as those with high positive attitudes seem to have greater intentions for the purpose of purchase halal products. Previous studies found that attitude has a significant and positive relationship towards purchase intention of halal products (Abdul Jabar et al, 2024; Alam & Sayuti, 2011; Rusli, 2015). This further strengthens the statement that attitude can be explained as an essential element in predicting and describing human behavior (Ajzen, 1988). Thus, their attitude is a vital part of predicting and describe their behavior towards halal food.

Previous studies have found that Muslim consumers' attitude toward halal food are significantly influenced by factors such as safety, religious values, health, and exclusivity. In particular, food safety and the assurance of avoiding contamination with haram substances are key expectations that reinforce positive attitudes and strengthen purchase intentions toward halal products (Amat et al., 2014). Thus, these findings suggest that consumers' attitudes toward halal food are strongly influenced by their confidence in safe and hygienic practices. Several studies also has highlighted the critical role of food safety and hygiene in shaping consumers' perceptions and purchase intentions of halal food. These studies reported that food safety significantly and positively influences consumers' purchase intentions of halal food (Adib et al., 2021; Begum et al., 2025; Ismail et al., 2023). A positive attitude arising from trust in food safety standards not only reinforces perceptions of halal compliance but also strengthens consumers' intention to purchase.

Abdul Aziz et al. (2021) examined food handlers in Malaysia and found that proper knowledge, attitudes, and practices in food handling are essential to ensure both halal compliance and consumer safety. Mulia & Setyaning (2024) explored the effect of digital halal labeling on Generation Z in Indonesia. The findings revealed that a strong halal brand image, conveyed through digital labels, enhance perceived quality, satisfaction, trust and loyalty can lead to higher purchase intention. Digital labels clarify and authenticate halal status, fostering positive consumer attitudes that, in turn, strengthen purchase intentions

According to this research, as in the literature have been seen, there was a positive impact on attitude towards both halal food and ready-to-eat food products. Therefore, in the relation of halal ready-to-eat food products, the attitude would be individual positive or negative feelings towards halal ready-to-eat food products. According to the previous studies has shown that consumer is more concern about health and halal in ready-to-eat food can change their attitude towards ready-to-eat food products. As Kim and Erdogan (2004) discover that attitude has a great influence on purchase intention. Thus, when a person thinks that halal ready-to-eat foods are safe and healthier, they are more likely to intend to consume that food. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Attitude affects the purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products.

Subjective Norms

Subjective norms mention about perceived social pressure on whether to perform or not to perform a particular behavior, which is referred to the social factor of subjective norms (Ajzen, 1991). It can be determined by perceived social pressure from people surrounding to act in a certain way and their motivation to adopt the views of people (Ham et al. 2015). In the case in Malaysia, subjective norms can be linked to the individual's perception of social pressure from those around them that are important to them such as family, friends, colleague and others who will influence someone's behavior and attitude and will create an intention for that person (Afendi et al., 2014).

Previous studies have shown that purchase intention influenced by social influence from friends, family and etc. (Kelkel, 2015; Moons & Pelsmacker, 2012). Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior which expresses that subjective norms are the key determinant of intention (Shah et al., 2016). In the ready-to-eat food context, a study conducted by Rajendra et al., (2020) in urban India applied the Theory of Planned Behavior to assess subjective norms and purchase intentions regarding ready-to-eat foods. The finding emphasizes the significant role of subjective norms, where social pressures and expectations strongly shape consumers' intentions to purchase ready-to-eat (RTE) food products. Similarly, Samarakoon Mudiyanse et al., (2025) integrates the Theory of Consumption Value (TCV) with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to examine the combined effects of lifestyle, knowledge, sensory attributes, subjective norms, and behavioral factors on consumers' purchase intentions for meat-based chilled ready meals. Subjective norms, particularly social influences, play a significant role in shaping consumers' purchase intentions toward ready-to-eat food products (Lahap et al., 2024; Olsen et al., 2010).

In term of purchase intention on halal food products, a study by Rasdi et al. (2023) found that social influence, including word of mouth, significantly affects consumers' attitudes and decision-making in shopping for halal food. This suggests that opinions from close social circles can shape purchasing intentions. Similarly, research by Marmaya et al. (2019) indicates that

subjective norms, which encompass perceived social pressure from significant others, influence Gen Y consumers' behavioral intention to purchase halal food in Malaysia. In their findings, it has been proven that subjective norms are the most influential driver of intention to choose halal products. Moreover, Nawawi et al. (2018) investigated the impact of friends' and family members' influence on the intention to purchase halal personal care products. The research found that both friends' and family members' influences were significant determinants of subjective norms, which in turn positively influenced the intention to purchase halal personal care products. People are more likely to buy halal products when they perceive social approval from significant others, making subjective norms one of the main factors influencing halal purchase decisions (Alam & Sayuti, 2011; Lada et al., 2009; Aziz & Chok, 2013).

In that case, the object refers to the halal ready-to-eat food products and the intention of the consumer to buy halal ready-to-eat food products is related to the subjective norms. Regards to this research, as in the literature have seen there is a positive impact on subjective norms towards both halal food and ready-to-eat food. In relation to halal and ready-to-eat food, subjective norms would be how much a person desires to respect and follows individuals' view or opinion who are important to them to buy halal ready-to-eat food products. Therefore, the consumers' intention to purchase halal ready-to-eat food products will increase as the intention of important person surrounding them increases since the halal in a ready-to-eat food products is assumed to be a convenience, healthier, and safe to consume. In this research, subjective norms refer to the perceived social pressure that shapes consumers' intentions to purchase halal ready-to-eat (RTE) food products. Among the constructs examined, subjective norms are found to be the strongest predictor of purchase intention (Alam & Sayuti, 2011; Ham et al., 2015; Samarakoon Mudiyansele et al., 2025). Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Subjective norms affect the purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products.

Perceived Behavioral Control

Perceived behavioral control is the extent to which a person feels he or she is able to involve in the behavior. There are two divisions in which how a person has control over behavioral and how confident a person feels regards being able to perform or not perform the behavior which can be determined by the individual beliefs about the power of both situational and internal factors to assist the performing of the behavior (Ajzen, 1991). This decision is consistent with the study of Ajzen (1991) that the theoretical framework of perceived behavioral control over the performance of a behavior couple with one's perception of ability can include for significant influence and variance in the intention of conducting the behavior. Although control ability which refers to the availability of resources needed to engage in the behavior (Tan & Teo, 2000).

According to previous research, barriers such as price, availability, trust, and information play crucial roles in limiting consumers' ability to make their desired consumption choices (Aitken et al., 2020). These barriers are closely associated with perceived behavioral control, which in turn shapes consumers' purchase intentions. The previous research found that perceived behavioral control one of the factor that significantly predicted the intention to purchase ready-to-eat foods (Rajendra et al., 2020). Samarakoon Mudiyansele et al., (2025) found that perceived behavioral control over the intention to purchase meat-based chilled ready meals will be significantly influenced by factors such as packaging information and price. Previous research supports this assumption, showing that similar factors, including labeling and price, significantly affect consumers' purchase intentions for organic food products through their

influence on perceived behavioural control (Aitken et al., 2020). Thus, several studies supported that perceived behavioral control has positive significant on intention (Kim et al., 2013; Kim & Lee, 2017).

While, a comparative study between Malaysian and Indonesian consumers explored the impact of Theory of Planned Behavior constructs on ready-to-eat food consumption. The findings revealed that perceived behavioral control significantly influenced consumers' behavioral intentions toward ready-to-eat foods in both countries. This suggests that individuals' confidence in their ability to purchase and consume ready-to-eat food products, considering factors like availability and personal resources, affects their consumption behavior (Che Mat et al., 2024). The study also affirms that perceived behavioral control has a positive relationship whereas the greater control effect in explaining variability in behavior is not uncommon.

Furthermore, the previous study has found that perceived behavioral control has a significant and positive impact on purchase intention of halal bakery product consumption. It describes that perceived behavioral control significantly is able to explain the variable purchase intention (Aditami, 2016). Similarly, a PLS-SEM study on Malaysia Gen Y revealed that perceived behavioral control significantly influences behavioral intention to purchase halal food (Marmaya et al., 2019). However, perceived behavioral control did not have a significantly effect on the purchase intention of halal food products among non-Muslim consumers in the Klang Valley, Malaysia (Mohamad Suib, 2024). While, Alam and Sayuti (2011) have found in their study that perceived behavioral control is the least predictor on the intention of buying halal food in Malaysia. Generally, if the consumer believes that they have more opportunities and resources such as money, time, specialty shops and skills, their perceptions of high control, then their behavioral intention also increases (Alam & Sayuti, 2011; Al-Nahdi et al., 2015). Consequently, the more control of both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers feels to buy a halal ready-to-eat food products, they likely intend to do so. It is about the perception of how to ease or difficult to perform the given behavior, which is subject to the particular product's ability and availability (Ajzen, 1991). In this study, perceived behavioral control can be seen as a person's perceived capabilities and their belief in consuming or not to consume halal ready-to-eat food products in their environment. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Perceived behavioral control affects the purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products.

Awareness

Awareness is a concept that implies the understanding and perception of events or subjects. Awareness has been hypothesized to be an important part of determining the purchase intention to choose a product (Aziz et al., 2013). In the context of ready-to-eat food products, it is necessary for the consumer to have the knowledge and know what ingredients are contained in the food which they are consumed in daily life. Kumar et al. (2013) were conducted a study aimed at assessing consumer awareness, safety perceptions and flavoring agents used in canned or packaged food. The result has shown that about 91.7% of total respondents are aware of food preservatives and 84.9% are aware of flavoring agents but their knowledge was insufficient.

A study by Palaniammal and Deepika (2017) in Vellore District found that consumers perceive ready-to-eat food as convenient and easy to prepare. This is supported by recent studies that convenience is often the major motivator for the purchase of ready-to-eat foods (Anusha et al., 2020; Rosli & Sahak, 2024). Additionally, research by Suresh Babu et al. (2020) in Chennai

City identified convenience, quality, mood, sensory appeal, price, and stress-free preparation as significant factors influencing the purchase intentions of ready-to-eat (RTE) food products. These studies collectively suggest that increasing consumer awareness and addressing key influencing factors can enhance the adoption of ready-to-eat (RTE) food products in India.

However, safety concerns come into play strongly when consumers evaluate the products. Awareness of food safety significantly affect consumers' purchase intention of ready-to eat foods by influencing their confidence and trust in the safety and hygiene of the products (Singhal, 2022). Consumers who are aware of food safety issues tend to look for proper labelling, certification and standardized of ready-to-eat foods before purchasing, as these factors provide assurance that the food is hygiene and safe to consume. This increase awareness can either encourage or discourage purchase depending on the availability of trustworthy safety information and perceived product safety (Singhal, 2022). The study also noted that awareness levels vary among consumers, suggesting that targeted marketing strategies could enhance consumer acceptance of ready-to-eat food products.

In the context of halal, awareness is the level of consumers' knowledge especially Muslim consumer to find and consume halal products in accordance with *Shariah* (Shaari & Arifin, 2009). According to Islam law, it is mandatory for the Muslims to know about all processes, ingredients, distributions, operations and so forth towards the product that they used are halal. As a Muslim, they must be understanding and concern about the halal and haram concept which is important and compulsory in Islam. Furthermore, they should be aware of how the food processing method whether it follows *Shariah* compliances or not. Halal consciousness of a Muslim has a positive significant influence on consumer purchase intention (Mutmainah, 2017). This is supported by Wahyuddin et al., (2025) that awareness of food safety significantly affects halal purchase intention among consumers, particularly Muslims, by enhancing their confidence and trust in halal products. Halal food is defined not just by religious permissibility but also by its wholesomeness, healthiness and safety (*toyyib*), which includes sanitation, hygiene and nutrition. Awareness of these food safety assurance reinforces consumers' perception that halal products meet both religious and health standards, thereby increasing their purchase intention.

The higher the level of awareness about halal, the stronger the relationship between purchase intention and actual buying behaviour of halal food products. Consumers who possess a clear understanding of halal concepts and certification processes are more likely to demonstrate stronger, more consistent, and sustained purchase intentions toward halal products. This awareness encourages consumers to slowly recognize the product they consume whether it is halal or not (Vizano et al., 2021). Not only Muslim but non-Muslim consumers start looking for halal-certified products to maintain their health with the product they consume (Teng & Wan Jusoh, 2013). Consumers' awareness of halal is shaped by their understanding of what halal entails, their knowledge of halal food production processes, and the extent to which they prioritize halal food in their consumption choices. A similar study was conducted by Ambali and Bakar (2014) which deals with the determinants of Muslim consumers' awareness of halal products or foods in the urban area of Shah Alam, Selangor in Malaysia. The study found that religious beliefs, halal exposures, halal logos, and health reasons were the determinants of Muslims' awareness about halal consumptions. In the context of the study, the researcher examines Muslim consumers' awareness when choosing food, for example, they look out for the halal logo or JAKIM signage on a food product. This is supported by previous studies that knowledge of the halal supply chain, familiarity with halal logos, labeling, and packaging was

significantly associated with halal awareness (Hanifasari et al, 2024; Ibrahim et al., 2023). Furthermore, Siti Aminah (2024) analysed how halal certification and digital marketing strategies influence consumer demand in the digital era. The study suggests that combining credible halal certification with online advertising significantly boosts consumer preference and awareness of halal products.

In this case, if buying halal ready-to-eat food products is seen as health consciousness, based on consumers' perception of it, then an individual is more preferable to purchase a halal ready-to-eat food products by looking first at halal certificate and halal logo. Therefore, the consumers' intention to purchase halal ready-to-eat food products will increase when the consumer is aware of the concept of halal in ready-to-eat food products assumed as healthier and safe to consume. In this research, awareness influence consumers' purchase intention of a halal ready-to-eat food products. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Awareness affects the purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 2 illustrates the conceptual framework of purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. It shows that four key factors that affect consumers' purchase intention, namely attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and awareness.

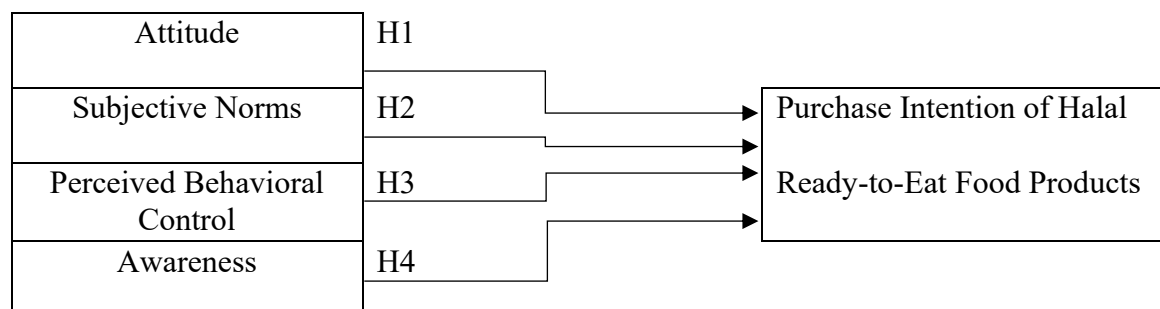


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework of Purchase Intention of Halal Ready-to-Eat Food Products.

Methodology

The structure of this research is that of a typical quantitative design. This method is preferred due to its simplicity and standardised approach, as contrasted with the sophistication of value judgments and assessments demanded of a qualitative research method (Kothari, 2008). The researcher was collected primary data to complete the research by using a self-administered survey method. The researcher was decided to choose convenience sampling, where subjects are selected based on suitable criteria for the research interest. It enables the selection of respondents who meet the study's relevant criteria, facilitating practical, cost-effective, and time-efficient data collection (Hair et al., 2010). Also, it allows the researcher to select the respondents who can provide correct information regarding the topic being studied (Hair et al., 2009). Therefore, the target population of this study included Muslim and non-Muslim consumers aged 18 years old and above who consume halal ready-to-eat food products. Based on Sloven's (1960) formula, the target sample size of this study would be 204 respondents. However, in this study the data was collected from 300 respondents consisting of Muslim and

non-Muslim consumers who consume halal ready-to-eat foods products. Before conducting the actual survey, a pilot test was carried out in which 30 sets of the questionnaire were distributed to respondents from the target population to obtain their feedback on the questionnaire's design. Data from the pilot were analyzed to assess internal consistency reliability of the constructs using Cronbach's Alpha. In addition, the draft questionnaire was reviewed by two academic experts with subject-matter expertise to ensure content validity and appropriateness of the items. Based on the feedback from both the pilot test and expert review, minor modifications were made to enhance the reliability, validity and overall quality of the research instrument.

For this research, Klang Valley, Malaysia, was selected as the sample area as it is an urban area populated by many people resulting in a tremendous increase in food consumption. The population in the Klang Valley, Malaysia, was around 7.6 million people in 2018 (World Bank, 2018), which feeds to the new trend of halal ready-to-eat food consumption. It is supported by the change in the eating behaviour (Ali et al., 2012) whereby an increasing proportion of the urban population lives in a fast-paced society, thus requiring food products that are convenient and save time to cook. Therefore, the Klang Valley is the best proxy to study the urban lifestyle in Malaysia. In this survey, the questionnaire was adopted from Aditami (2016), Khalek (2015) and Perdana et al. (2018), which the questionnaire was developed based on a five-point Likert scale developed by Rensis Likert (1932) to collect data on the main constructs.

Data Analysis and Results

Demographic Analysis

The sample was made up of (59.3%) female, while the male was only (40.7%). The majority of the respondents between 31-35 years old (29%), followed by 36-40 years old (22.3%), while 41 years old and above representing (21.7%), while 26-30 years old representing (19.3%). The smallest number of respondents are between the ages of 18-25 with (7.7%). The majority of the race is Malay (67%) followed by Chinese (10.7%) and Indian (8.6%). The minority come from other races with (7%). Meanwhile, majority are Muslim (94%) followed by Buddhist and Christian with (2.7%) and (3.3%), respectively. This is because non-Muslim consumers are also aware the benefits of halal food consumptions. However, no Hindu involved in this survey. Most consumers were married with (47%), while (45.3%) were single and (7.7%) were divorced.

Reliability Analysis

Table 1: Reliability Test

Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Attitude	.762	4
Subjective Norms	.832	4
Perceived Behavioral Control	.862	4
Awareness	.741	5
Purchase Intention	.886	5

Based on the result above, all of the variables are above 0.70, which is acceptable. Whereas, to get a good score and considers as good correlation, the range of reliabilities must be over 0.80 indicates that there are 80% consistencies in the result (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Based on the result, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control can be considered as good which is

8.32 and 8.62 respectively. While Cronbach Alpha for attitude is 7.62 and awareness is 7.41 considered as acceptable. It shows that all the questions of each variable can be used because the score is near to 1 and considered as good and consistent because the score is more than 0.7.

Correlation Analysis

Table 2: Correlation Analysis

	Attitude	Subjective Norms	Perceived Behavioral Control	Awareness	Purchase Intention
Attitude	1	.583**	.475**	.312**	.556**
Subjective Norms	.583**	1	.518**	.368**	.612**
Perceived Behavioral Control	.475**	.518**	1	.282**	.468**
Awareness	.312**	.368**	.282**	1	.617**
Purchase Intention	.556**	.612**	.468**	.617**	1

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

According to the rules of the correlation coefficient, the range of 0.41 to 0.70 is considered as moderate, the range of 0.71 to 0.90 is considered as high and the range of 0.91 to 1.00 is very strong (Hair et., 2010). The table shows that each independent variables having a relationship with the dependent variable because all the score is above 40%. According to the result, the strongest relationship is between awareness and purchase intention which is 0.617. The results show a moderate relationship of 61.7%, indicating that awareness is the variable that most strongly influences the purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products. Whereas, perceived behavioral control has a moderate relationship on purchase intention compared to other variables with a score of 0.468.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 3: Model Summary of Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. The error of the Estimate
1	.772 ^a	.597	.591	.44694

a. Predictors: (Constant), Awareness, Perceived Behavioral Control, Attitude, Subjective Norms

Multiple linear regression is the extent to which a set of independent variables contributed to the variance of the dependent variable (Punch, 2005). As shown in Table 4.19, multiple coefficients of determination (R^2) =0.597 indicate how much the independent variables (attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control and awareness) clarify a proportion of the variance in the dependent variable (purchase intention). The higher the value of R^2 , the stronger the relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable with ranges from 0 to+1.0 (Hair et., 2007). Moreover, the R^2 = 0.597 and adjusted R^2 = 0.591 which indicate that the independent variables could explain approximately (R^2) 59.7% of the variance of purchase intention toward halal ready-to-eat food products whereas, 40.3% of the variance is not included in this study.

Table 4: Result of Hypotheses Testing

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.756	.267		-2.829	.005
	Attitude	.228	.051	.213	4.506	.000
	Subjective Norms	.296	.052	.281	5.687	.000
	Perceived Behavioral Control	.143	.062	.104	2.322	.021
	Awareness	.487	.047	.418	10.381	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention						

The p-value demonstrates whether these variables have a significant contribution to the equation. There is a significant or positive relationship if the p-value is equal or less than 0.05. Otherwise, if the p-value is more than 0.05, the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable is not significant (Hair, 2010). Based on the result above shown that all variables are significant and hypotheses are supported as all variables are less than 0.05.

The finding shows that the biggest coefficient beta is 0.487 which is awareness, followed by subjective norms and attitude with 0.296 and 0.228 respectively. However, the coefficient beta for perceives behavioral control scored the lowest value with 0.143. In addition, t-values that are greater than 1.96 value are considered as statistically significant (Field, 2012). This means that attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control and awareness will positively affect consumer purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products in the Klang Valley, Malaysia.

Discussion of the Finding

Hypothesis Testing

The first hypotheses of this study are to identify the relationship between attitude and purchase intention of a halal ready-to-eat food products. Based on the result, the p-value for attitude is 0.000. Since the p-value is lesser than 0.05, it can be concluded that hypotheses are supported. Thus, attitude contributes to the prediction of consumer purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. Moreover, the t-value of 4.506 is positive which shows the relationship between both factors is positive too. In other words, the higher the attitude, the higher purchase intention of a halal ready-to-eat food products. So that, attitude has a positive effect on purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products in the Klang Valley, Malaysia.

The second hypotheses of this study are to identify the relationship between subjective norms and purchase intention of the halal ready-to-eat food products. Based on the result, the p-value for subjective norms is 0.000. Since the p-value is lesser than 0.05, it can be concluded that hypotheses are supported. Thus, subjective norms contribute to the prediction of consumer purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. Moreover, the t-value of 5.687 is positive which shows the relationship between both factors is positive too. In other words, the higher the subjective norms, the higher purchase intention of a halal ready-to-eat food products. It can be concluded that subjective norms have a positive effect on purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products in the Klang Valley, Malaysia.

The third hypotheses of this study are to identify the relationship between perceived behavioral control and purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products. Based on the result, the p-value for attitude is 0.021. Since the p-value is lesser than 0.05, it can be concluded that hypotheses are supported. Thus, perceived behavioral control contributes to the prediction of consumer purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. Moreover, the t-value of 2.322 is positive, which shows the relationship between both factors is positive too. In other words, the higher the perceived behavioral control, the higher purchase intention of a halal ready-to-eat food products. It can be concluded that perceived behavioral control has a positive effect on purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products in the Klang Valley, Malaysia.

The fourth hypotheses of this study are to identify the relationship between awareness and purchase intention of a halal ready-to-eat food products. Based on the result, the p-value for attitude is 0.000. Since the p-value is lesser than 0.05, it can be concluded that hypotheses are supported. Thus, awareness contributes to the prediction of consumer purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products in the Klang Valley, Malaysia. Moreover, the t-value of 10.381 is positive which shows the relationship between both factors is positive too. In other words, the higher the awareness, the higher purchase intention of a halal ready-to-eat food products. It can be concluded that awareness has a positive effect on purchase intention of halal ready-to-eat food products in the Klang Valley, Malaysia.

Managerial Implication

The conceptual framework for this study is grounded not only in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) but also enriched through Islamic management principles. In the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control reflects an individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing a behavior. In this case, purchasing halal ready-to-eat food motivated by religious, ethical, or health-related concerns, directly aligns with the core objectives of *Maqasid al-Shariah*. The overarching goals of *Maqasid al-Shariah* (objectives of Islamic law), particularly the protection of religion, life, and intellect, justify positive attitudes and social influence toward halal consumption. This integrated framework provides a value-based explanation for Muslim consumers' purchase intentions. Halal logistics can promote transparency and quality assurance, which are universally valued by all consumers (Tasmia & Sidek, 2019). Thus, management should prioritize *Shariah-compliant* supply chains, including staff training and traceability systems to ensure halal integrity (Tieman (2011). This is because consumer trust in halal products depends on management control, including staff training, clear labeling and supply chain transparency (Bonne & Verbeke, 2008). Business actions like transparency, staff training, and compliance with *Shariah* not only improve consumer trust but also represent moral obligations in Islamic ethical frameworks (Beekun, 1996).

For managers and business leaders in halal food companies, these findings underscore the necessity of aligning organizational practices with Islamic principles of *halalan toyyiban* (permissible and wholesome) and *amanah* (trust). Businesses leaders can ensure the integrity and wholesomeness of halal food products, thereby fulfilling their *amanah* to consumers (Zainal Ariffin et al., 2021). In the context of halal food production, *amanah* entails the obligation for individuals and organizations to act ethically, uphold integrity, and be fully transparent and accountable in their dealings. This trustworthiness is essential for halal certification bodies and producers to inspire confidence among consumers (Nur Janah & Yazid, 2024). By integrating *Maslahah* (public interest) into the conceptual framework of halal ready-

to-eat food production and consumption, businesses can ensure that their practices not only comply with religious requirements but also contribute positively to public welfare, health, and ethical standards. *Maslahah* underpins constructs related to public welfare, such as health benefits and ethical branding, highlighting halal ready-to-eat foods as part of societal well-being. These factors are crucial in protecting halal integrity and ensuring that food products meet both religious and public welfare standards (Zulfakar et al., 2014). Moreover, awareness are among the factor influence halal ready-to-eat food products. Thus, the recommendation for government-initiated programs, such as organizing halal awareness events in public and private universities, is in line with the Islamic concept of *da'wah*, spreading beneficial knowledge and encouraging ethical consumption. These initiatives can foster a collective responsibility in promoting halal awareness and help in positioning Malaysia as a global halal hub.

Conclusion

Regarding this study, the Theory of Planned Behavior is supported by all the variables of purchase intention. There are significant impacts of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control on the purchase intention towards halal ready-to-eat food products if consumers have knowledge of food and practice Islam as the way of life, have a positive attitude towards halal food, are health-conscious, and are surrounded by people who encourage them to consume halal food. This study makes a significant contribution to marketers, manufacturers, policymakers, practitioners, and also academicians by helping them to understand the behavior of consumers, especially their intention to purchase halal ready-to-eat food products. Besides, it is important for the government, food marketers, and food producers to understand the health concerns of consumers and promote halal products to maintain consumers' confidence in the hygiene and safety of halal ready-to-eat food products. It also aligns with the Islamic principle of *amanah*, where businesses are entrusted to meet the needs of Muslim consumers by offering hygienic, safe and *Shariah-compliant* food options. Moreover, *mas'uliyah* requires businesses and governing bodies to uphold their responsibility in ensuring that halal standards are preserved throughout the supply chain. Based on the findings, awareness are among the factor influence halal ready-to-eat food products. Thus, the recommendation for government-initiated programmes, such as organizing halal awareness events in public and private universities, is in line with the Islamic concept of *da'wah*, spreading beneficial knowledge and encouraging ethical consumption. These initiatives can foster a collective responsibility in promoting halal awareness and help in positioning Malaysia as a global halal hub.

At the end of this research, it is important to discuss the limitations of the study. In the study, the researcher used the quantitative method, and data from 300 respondents were obtained through convenience sampling. Although this approach is practical and efficient, it introduces potential sampling bias, as not every individual in the population had an equal chance of being selected. Consequently, the results may not be fully generalizable to the broader Malaysian population. The study focused on consumers' purchase intention rather than purchase decision by measuring the effect of attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and awareness. Also, the study was conducted in the Klang Valley, Malaysia, because this survey is suitable for a busy urban lifestyle with a high demand for ready-to-eat food products. However, it limits the applicability of the findings to consumers in other regions of Malaysia, particularly rural areas, where lifestyles, purchasing power, and awareness of halal certification may differ significantly.

Therefore, future research should be conducted across different regions to provide a broader and more comprehensive understanding of consumers' purchase intentions toward halal ready-

to-eat food products. Moreover, it could compare management approaches across various regions or examine the role of Islamic corporate governance in sustaining consumer confidence in halal-certified ready-to-eat products. Future research should explore the interplay between organizational leadership, Islamic values, and consumer trust in the halal food sector using qualitative methodologies to gain deeper insights into the complex factors that influence halal ready-to eat foods consumption. By aligning practices with Islamic principles, organizations can strengthen consumer trust, enhance brand credibility, and support Malaysia's aspiration to lead as a global halal hub. These efforts contribute not only to business sustainability but also to the ethical and spiritual objectives of Islamic management.

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