

Halal Image in Product Acceptance: A Comparative Study from Muslim Majority and Minority Countries

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ABSTRACT

The development of Islamic branding and strategic marketing has skyrocketed over the past decades. Islamic branding companies started to expand their targeted market into the non-Muslim majority countries. This research aims to identify the most significant determinants of brand acceptance and rejection, specifically in Islamic branding, by measuring intention to buy as the determinant of buying behaviour. Utilising the extended theory of Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour, by measuring the 3 factors constructed by the theory (attitude to behaviour, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control) and the halal image determiner, the research examined the correlation between the four independent variables and the intention to buy. Using quantitative methods and an online questionnaire, the paper found that subjective norm and perceived behavioural control are 2 significant determinants of intention to buy. In addition, based on the sample collected, it is to be noted that there is a significant disparity in the perspective of marketing by being a Muslim and a non-Muslim, as the result showed religion as a significant factor for implementing certain marketing strategies.

Keywords: Halal image, attitude to behaviour, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control.

ABSTRAK

Perkembangan branding Islami dan pemasaran strategis telah meningkat pesat selama beberapa dekade terakhir. Perusahaan dengan branding Islami mulai memperluas target pasar mereka ke negara-negara dengan mayoritas non-Muslim. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui penentu paling signifikan dari penerimaan dan penolakan merek, khususnya dalam branding Islami, dengan mengukur niat membeli sebagai faktor penentu yang mendorong perilaku pembelian. Dengan memanfaatkan teori yang diperluas dari Theory of Planned Behaviour oleh Ajzen—meliputi tiga faktor utama yaitu sikap terhadap perilaku (attitude to behaviour), norma subjektif (subjective norm), dan persepsi kontrol perilaku (perceived behavioural control)—serta menambahkan variabel citra halal (halal image), penelitian ini menguji korelasi antara keempat variabel independen tersebut terhadap niat membeli. Melalui metode kuantitatif dengan kuesioner daring sebagai alat pengumpulan data, penelitian ini menemukan bahwa norma subjektif dan persepsi kontrol perilaku

merupakan dua faktor signifikan yang menentukan niat membeli. Selain itu, berdasarkan sampel yang dikumpulkan, terdapat perbedaan yang cukup mencolok dalam perspektif pemasaran antara responden Muslim dan non-Muslim, di mana hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa agama menjadi faktor penting dalam penerapan strategi pemasaran tertentu.

Kata kunci: *Citra halal (halal image), sikap terhadap perilaku (attitude to behaviour), norma subjektif (subjective norm), persepsi kontrol perilaku (perceived behavioural control).*

A. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Islam has become highly visible in media, politics, and the marketplace. The increasing popular and academic attention to Islam is partly driven by the events of 9/11 and the related imperative to 'better' understand Muslims. The interest is also stimulated by broader socio-economic developments, in particular neoliberal transformation and the so-called Islamic identity search. Beginning in the late 1970s and accelerating in the 1980s and 1990s, Islamization has become a major social and political force impacting the Muslim world and beyond. Studies conducted across various fields of the social sciences discussed the rise of Islamist movements and the spread of political Islam in connection with globalisation and as an expression of resistance to Western-style modernisation and secular modernity (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2000).

Indeed, with the increasing presence of Islam in the marketplace, marketing scholars' and practitioners' interest in the topic has intensified (Jafari, 2012; Wilson *et al.*, 2013). In recent years, studies addressing different aspects of Islam in relation to consumption marketing appeared in journals such as *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Marketing Theory*, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *Journal of Business Research*, and *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*. Furthermore, the specialised *Journal of Islamic Marketing* and several books addressing academics and/or practitioners were introduced. The organisation of academic conferences and executive workshops in various parts of the world and the production of high-profile consultancy reports underlined a shift from 'omission' to 'discovery' of Muslim consumers and Islamic markets (Sandıkçı, 2011).

Inevitably, the bracketing of 'Muslim' and 'Islamic' in studying consumption and marketing phenomena raises the question, 'What is it about Islam that calls for a focused approach?' Given the lack of comparable interest in 'Christian', 'Jewish' or 'Buddhist' marketing (Sandıkçı and Ger, 2011), many scholars believe that Islamic encounters in consumption and marketing should be approached and assessed critically.

Thus, people from different beliefs observe the daily lives of Muslims, including their financial activities, lifestyles, consumption, and other day-to-day habits and traditions. From the financial perspective, the growth of the Islamic financial sector is increasing

globally, not only in the Middle East and South Asian but also in Western Countries where capitalism and socialism are claimed to be sound financial systems. From the perspective of marketing and branding, Muslim consumers' awareness of the need for *halal* products and services prompted suppliers to respond to those needs. Many multinational companies, such as Nestle and Unilever, and food franchises like KFC, Subway, and Pizza Hut, need to meet the *halal* standard to serve their Muslim customers, or expand into Muslim-majority territories. This phenomenon attracted not only Muslims, but also non-Muslim who decided to consume *halal* products since they consider its cleanliness and hygiene.

Apart from the above phenomenon, people can form negative brand attitudes and refrain from using a brand for various reasons. Consumers may boycott a brand because of its overt commercialism, disrespect for human rights or the environment, or involvement in unethical business practices (Friedman, 1985; Micheletti *et al.*, 2003). Consumers may avoid a brand because they feel animosity toward the country of origin or believe that purchasing foreign-made products is unpatriotic (Klein *et al.*, 1998; Shimp and Sharma, 1987). Alternatively, consumers may choose not to purchase a brand because it represents an undesired self or an avoidance group they do not want to identify with (Englis and Solomon, 1995; Hogg and Bannister, 2001). They may also refuse brands that are not compatible with their social roles or with other products they already use (Hogg, 1998).

This research explores the determinants of people in deciding whether to accept or to reject an 'Islamic branding', regarding their religiosity (Muslim or non-Muslim) alongside other social psychological. This is formulated within the extended Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and analysed using correlation analysis.

East (1997) stated that the TPB has been applied in recent years to examine a variety of topics, including marketing and consumption decision processes, such as quitting cigarette smoking, complaining, and blood donation, and the results have been found to be highly robust. Symbolically, the TPB model is structured by attitude to behaviour (related to personal motivations), subjective norm (related to social push) and perceived behavioural control (related to psychological encouragement). The paper needs to extend the TPB by measuring the *halal* image (related to cultural consideration) as the research will consider the behaviour of non-Muslim as well, and to give a future suggestion for marketing strategy for both Muslim and non-Muslim targeted countries.

With the emergence of research interest in Islamic marketing, branding, and consumer behaviour, it is essential to determine the factors that motivate some individuals to accept or reject a faith-based product, such as one with Islamic branding. It involves two segments of consumers, the Muslim and the non-Muslim counterparts, as the

subject of research. It will contribute to increasing efforts to expand Islamic branding in a particular region, or *vice versa*.

Several studies were conducted in the field of Islamic Branding and Marketing Strategy. First to be noted is research by Suki and Salleh (2016), which examined the determinants that strengthen consumer intention to re-patronise *halal* stores. They used a self-administered questionnaire for Muslims in Sarawak, Malaysia. The research aimed to find out the correlation between 3 components of the TPB, plus *halal* image to extend the model, in respect of consumer behavioural intention to patronize *halal* stores. The output turned out to be as expected, since all tested variables provided a significant positive correlation to the hypothesis.

Another study, commenced by Sandıkcı (2011), aimed to explore the rationale for the emergence of Islamic marketing and to discuss a future research perspective for the field. The author used a critical approach to existing literature to develop an understanding of Muslim consumers and businesses. The result came out with 2 distinct phases: the 'omission', which assumed Muslims as uncivilised and Islam as incompatible with the ideology of capitalism, and the 'discovery', which identified Muslims as viable customers.

The third study was undertaken by Sandıkcı and Ekici (2009) that analysed about factors influenced Politically Motivated Brand Rejection (PMBR) as an anti-consumption behaviour which targeted both local and global brands. The author used qualitative methodology on semi-structured interviews facilitated with open-ended questions in Ankara, Turkey. The findings identified several factors behind the PMBR: predatory globalisation, chauvinistic nationalism, and religious fundamentalism, which encouraged consumers in Turkey to reject global and foreign brands and opt for local brands instead.

Based on the background provided, this research aims to explore factors influencing consumers' acceptance or rejection of a non-domestic, faith-based product, and to assess perceptions of the potential of Islamic marketing development in Muslim-majority and non-Muslim-majority countries.

In relation to the stated aims, the research means to develop a critical understanding of Islamic marketing concepts and processes; to develop an advanced understanding of factors relating to brand acceptance and rejection; to conduct a questionnaire based survey to identify the factors determining brand acceptance and rejection by testing the extended TPB framework; and to develop critical reflections on the potential strategies for Islamic marketing development.

Based on theoretical framework of TPB and the extended point of measurement covered by the research, this paper intended to answer whether TPB's framework; attitude to behaviour, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control, contribute to

consumer in accepting or rejecting Islamic; whether the extended measurement of TPB, the *halal* image, influence the consumers' decision in accepting or rejecting Islamic branding; and whether Islamic Branding need to perform a different marketing strategy between Muslim and non-Muslim major-populated countries?

B. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

Extension of the Theory of Planned Behaviour

As the measurement variable to observe factors influencing a person's acceptance or rejection of a brand, the author utilises the extended theory of Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour (TPB). This theory offers the possibility of imperfect intention control by combining 3 main components: attitude to behaviour, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 2005). Then, to construct a reliable tool for measuring intention to buy, the author modified the TPB by adding the *Halal* Image factor to complete the extended theory, based on previous research by Suki and Salleh (2016).

Based on the TPB theory, intention is the function of 3 main determinants, which are in correlation with human nature, reflection of social influence, and controlling behaviour (Ajzen, 2005) whilst *Halal* Image is a determinant constructed from the marketing perspective of a consumer to *halal* branding, specifically into logo, name, and advertisement (Suki and Salleh, 2016). Attitude to behaviour is a positive or negative evaluation of a certain behaviour based on human nature. On the other hand, a person's perception of social pressure, as manifested in his/her behaviour, is called a subjective norm. In addition, a consideration for self-efficacy to actualise a behaviour is defined as perceived behavioural control.

The figure below shows the relationship between the 4 determinants predicted to have a significant influence on the intention to buy that will lead to a decision-making process, whether to accept or reject a certain product. The last factor added to the theory, *the halal* image, aims to strengthen the study and make it more specific to the Islamic marketing field, particularly branding.

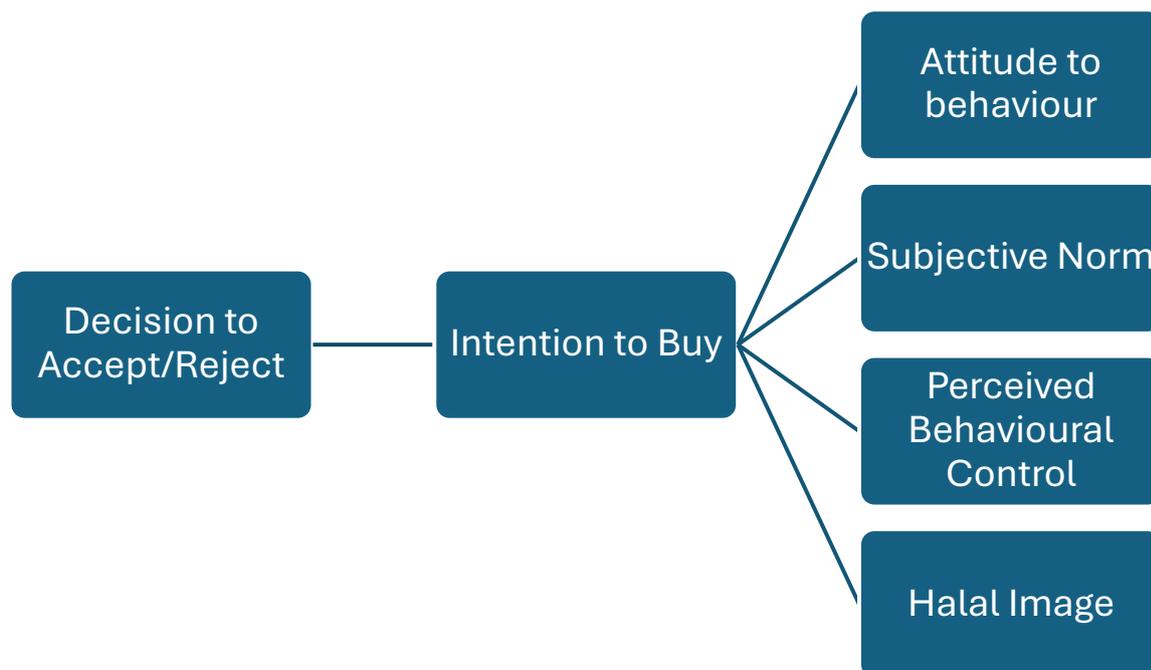


Figure 1. Extension of the Theory of Planned Behaviour

Features of Attitude toward the Behaviour

According to the TPB, attitude to behaviour is determined by the perceived credibility of the consequences of the behaviour, or, in other words, behavioural beliefs (Ajzen, 2005). Each behavioural belief is connected to the behaviour of a certain output, or to another nature which arises from a phenomenon. Thus, the evaluation of each output contributes to the attitude in proportion to someone’s subjective assessment of the possibility of producing a certain result.

Furthermore, by contemplating the above features of attitude toward behaviour, a proposed model is described as below:

$$AB \propto \sum b_i e_i$$

Where:

AB = attitude to behaviour

b_i = behavioural belief producing ‘i’

e_i = evaluation outcome of ‘i’

Features of Subjective Norms

Ajzen (2005) argues that the second important determinant in TPB theory might be subjective norms, which are generally assumed to be the function of someone’s belief in others’ agreement or disagreement with certain behaviour. From a marketing

perspective, consumers' choices are likely influenced by references that encourage them to consume a product. Hence, if the referees agree on their selection, they will proceed to a behaviour under social pressure perception while undertaking it, and vice versa. The correlation between normative beliefs and subjective norms is symbolically expressed in the equation below:

$$SN \propto \sum n_i m_i$$

Where:

SN = subjective norm

n_i = normative belief referenced by 'i'

m_i = consumers' motivation to obey 'i' reference

Features of Perceived Behavioural Control

The final predictor in the TPB is perceived behavioural control, which is believed to be a function of trust and to facilitate or prevent certain behaviour. These structuring components might be based on past behavioural experience, information from the surroundings, observation of communities, and other components. To collect direct responses to the perceived behavioural control measurement from a marketing perspective on buying intention, we could ask consumers whether they decide to buy/use something based on their own awareness or on a third-party reference. Further, perceived behavioural control could be extracted by this model:

$$PBC \propto \sum c_i p_i$$

Where:

PBC = perceived behavioural control

c_i = control belief by 'i' factor

p_i = control behaviour by 'i' factor

Features of *Halal* Image

This determinant aims to determine consumers' perception of a brand characteristic (logo, name, advertisement) embedded in their memory, as reflected in their buying patterns (Suki and Salleh, 2016). Nguyen and Leblanc (2001) said "... it was revealed that when consumer perceptions towards an organisation are very favourable, there is a tendency for those consumers to show a high degree of loyalty to that organisation". To measure the *halal* image's influence over intention to buy, the author modified a model as below:

HI ∞ eipi

Where:

HI = *Halal* image

ei = perception based on 'i' sub indicator

pi = economic consideration based on 'i' sub-indicator

Issues in Islamic Branding

As Islamic branding has emerged globally, the obstacles faced by Islamic companies mostly stem from the brand itself. To compete with their respective counterparts for a market share, several Islamic branding companies tend to be camouflaged and not necessarily *halal* or completely *halal* (Wilson and Liu, 2011). A beer company, Cobra Zero, claims they provide *halal* beer, which is rejected by common sense from the perspective of Islam, but it is consumed by Muslims. Another case is derived from Emirates Airlines, which promoted Islamic calligraphy and Arab symbolism in its name. Apart from providing *halal* food for their passengers, they also serve alcoholic drinks. In addition, the cabin crew is required to wear a standardised uniform, which prevents them from wearing *hijab* whilst serving as flight attendants.

From those cases, it could be concluded that Islamic branding should be assertive in promoting its business and segmentation. They need to decide what is permissible and avoid offering or promoting products or services that conflict with their branding campaign. What is in accordance with Sharia is not the same as Sharia-compliant. Thus, to regain trust and be fully acceptable to the market and Sharia law, Islamic branding companies need to remain aligned with the Sharia code of conduct.

The rapid growth of the *halal* market is spreading across every sector of business. Not only in food and beverages, but also in lifestyle, financial services, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals and tourism. As Samori *et al.* (2016) argued in their study on *halal* tourism in several Asian countries. They pointed to Malaysia as one of the world's successful tourism destinations, citing the campaign to make the environment more sustainable. In other words, Malaysia tried to become not only a Muslim destination for holidays, but also a non-Muslim counterpart by presenting multicultural attractions such as restaurants, street decorations, and shopping complexes, modelled on what is offered in Western countries. In contrast, Japan, a non-Muslim majority country, took an opposite approach by providing easy access to prayer rooms and *halal* food for Muslims to attract more tourists to their country.

Another market sector, such as lifestyle, has also been considered for expanding its target consumer base to Muslims by offering Muslim clothing in well-known outlets like

'Zara' and 'Mango'. In addition, the cosmetic sector followed suit, offering *halal*-certified products for Muslim women through its own creative advertisements.

Marketing Strategy

The research will mainly focus on the strategy of *halal* branding in maintaining their market in the Muslim world and try to produce a similar output for the non-Muslim market, and thus it needs to discover a precise marketing strategy to compete with well-known local or international branding dominating the market. Temporal (2011:225) stated that at least 6 main strategies for brand building must be employed by Islamic companies.

Understand the market clearly

Religious interpretations can vary from one culture to another. Failing to understand this will lead to significant branding losses and contribute to market rejection (Temporal, 2011:226). As in lifestyle, Islamic marketers could not expect a large return for headscarves and '*Burqini*' (Islamic swimsuit) selling in France and Turkey for some cultural reasons. In France, students have been banned from wearing headscarves, and *burqinis* are prohibited in public places. As in Turkey, the demand for these items has been decreasing.

A comparable case can be drawn from the financial sector, as Islamic banks are gaining greater trust from non-Muslim customers for their embedded transparency and ethical service. In addition, the *halal* food industry has expanded worldwide, as customers, particularly non-Muslims, have shown a preference for it due to its cleanliness and health benefits.

Brand building based on Islamic values with universal emotional appeal

Islamic branding is based on Islamic values derived from the Quran, the practices of the prophets, and the 99 names of Allah (Temporal, 2011:227) and thus could be used as one strategy to utilise these values to attract customers, not only Muslim but also non-Muslim counterparts. As the values are universal and prioritise ethics, justice, morality, and other managerial axioms, as discussed by Asutay (2007). Al Rajhi Bank is one of the successful models employing this strategy in Malaysia and has effectively increased non-Muslim customers' trust by promoting ethical values.

Relevance and positioning

Adaptability is another indicator of Islamic branding's ability to compete in a tight market nowadays. For a local company expanding into a diverse, foreign market, this means they need to adjust their standards to be accepted and trusted. This principle is taken seriously by Chicken Cottage Ltd., which serves diverse tastes from the

cultures in which its franchises are located, while prioritising guaranteed *halal* meat as its main concern to promote Islamic branding.

Communicate the brand appropriately with an Islamic appeal

As the market grows, competition is becoming increasingly stringent. Islamic branding needs to advertise differently with its respective well-known counterpart (Temporal, 2011:231). Thus, Islamic companies should learn from Western companies about emotional advertisement techniques with some Islamic touches. As Olpers (Pakistani milk brand) undertook to be in the competition track with Nestle in Pakistan, or Zain (telecommunication company), which promoted their brand name, which means 'beautiful', 'good' or 'wonderful' in Arabic.

Gain more advantages by being the 'first mover'

Another approach, from a marketing perspective, for gaining greater returns is to be the first mover or trendsetter (Temporal, 2011:234). This strategy is supported by evidence that 'Google' and 'Facebook' are market leaders in web browsing and social media.

Consider mergers, acquisitions, and partnerships

One methodology to be on a fast track with less effort is to merge the Islamic branding company with multinational companies. This strategy appears applicable to the local market to gain more customers.

C. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As this study aims to explore perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours of global respondents, Muslim and non-Muslim, this research has benefited mostly from an exploratory design. Those measurements (attitudes, perceptions, and behaviours) will inform the intention and decision-making processes for accepting or rejecting an act. In addition, since the research uses a questionnaire for data collection, this study is also proposed as a survey study. Hence, the research design of this study should be considered as an explorative survey.

As for research design, this research employed an inductive approach, or a 'bottom-up' or inductive approach (Trochim, 2005:14). It starts with a specific observation and measurement (undertaken by questionnaire), followed by detecting patterns and formula (data analysis), answering research question and hypotheses (through analysis result) and end up with conclusion development (result summaries).

This research aims to use global respondents as the population, both Muslim and non-Muslim, with a heavy focus on five countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, Australia, the United States of America, and the United Kingdom. Having their own National *Halal* Board is the rationale for selecting Indonesia and Malaysia as the target countries for

Muslim respondents. Thus, the development of *Halal* branding across sectors is high in both countries, including products (food, cosmetics, fashion, pharmacy) and services (banking, tourism, social services).

On the contrary, the remaining three countries, namely Australia, the USA and the UK, are pointed out as representative for non-Muslim respondents, since they are non-Muslim majority countries with the largest Muslim diaspora. Consequently, market demand for *halal* products and services competes with that of their counterparts to fulfil the needs of the Muslim community.

Regarding sampling, this research uses non-probability sampling, as the 311 target respondents were selected without any procedures and rely on the researcher's personal judgment (Malhotra and Birks, 2007: 410). Furthermore, the sampling techniques used in this research employ convenience sampling, which aims to obtain a sample of convenient elements. Applying this technique means respondents are selected because they happen to be in a specific place at a certain time.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Validity Test

Instruments' validity is in correlation with the accuracy of the measurement tools used. Thus, before the instrument is utilised in the questionnaire or survey, the researcher needs to conduct a validity test. This test set of procedures was applied to the questionnaire to assess its appropriateness for measuring research variables in a survey.

Based on the validity test result (see table below), all questions are valid, except for 3 questions related to the *halal* image variable. But, since the model is considered fit, the 3 questions are not eliminated from the questionnaire. In addition, if the validity test is generated by a variable component, the result will be valid for all variables, as the coefficient per variable is higher than the p-value.

Table 1. Validity Test

		Correlations				
		AtoB	SN	PCB	HI	ItoP
AtoB	Pearson	1	.764**	.841**	.735**	.129*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.023
	N	311	311	311	311	311
SN	Pearson	.764**	1	.792**	.737**	0.018
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.748
	N	311	311	311	311	311
PBC	Pearson	.841**	.792**	1	.747**	.148**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.009
	N	311	311	311	311	311

HI	Pearson	.735**	.737**	.747**	1	0.103
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.070
	N	311	311	311	311	311
ItoP	Pearson	.129*	0.018	.148**	0.103	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.023	0.748	0.009	0.070	
	N	311	311	311	311	311

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Reliability Test

A reliability test is used to determine whether the data collected through the survey are reliable. As shown in the table, the total sample for this research is 311, and all samples were valid. In addition, the reliability statistic table, represented by 'Cronbach's Alpha' coefficient, shows a significant result with 0.96, indicating a 'very sound' result, or in other words, highly reliable.

Table 2. Reliability Test

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	311	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	0.0
	Total	311	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha		N of items
0.960		44

Regression analysis

For the analysis part, this paper first elaborates on multiple linear regression, which explores the relationship between two or more variables, in which the predictor variables relate to one another (Krzywinski and Altman, 2015). Furthermore, this analysis is utilized to find out the positive or negative correlation between dependent variable, in this case intention to buy, and independent variables, the extended theory of planned behaviour for this research labelled as attitude to behaviour (AtoB), subjective norm (SN), perceived behavioural control (PBC) and *halal* image (HI), and thus we might be able to predict the value of dependent variable if the coefficient of independent variables degrading or increasing. The table shows the results of a multiple linear regression on intention to buy, using SPSS.

Table 3. Multiple Linear Regression

		Coefficients^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.946	0.291		10.108	0.000
	AtoB	0.077	0.086	0.099	0.900	0.369
	SN	-0.304	0.096	-0.317	-3.174	0.002
	PBC	0.270	0.117	0.270	2.315	0.021
	HI	0.089	0.130	0.063	0.685	0.494

a. Dependent Variable: Intention to Buy

From the table, we could extract a multiple linear model or formulation as below:

$$Y = 2.946 + 0.077X1 - 0.304X2 + 0.270X3 + 0.089X4$$

The coefficient of the above multiple linear models could be described as:

- If the value of AtoB (X1), SN (X2), PBC (X3) and HI (X4) are zero (0), then the value of intention to buy (Y) is 2.946.
- If AtoB with a coefficient value of 0.077 is increasing by 1%, whilst the other independent variables are kept constant, then the value of intention to buy will increase by 0.077 points. A positive coefficient indicates a positive correlation between attitude to behaviour and intention to buy.
- If SN with a coefficient value of -0.304 is increasing by 1%, whilst the other independent variables are kept constant, then the value of intention to buy will decrease by 0.304 points. A negative coefficient means that there is a negative correlation between subjective norm and intention to buy.
- If PBC with a coefficient value of 0.270 is increasing by 1% whereas the other independent variables are unchanged, then the value of intention to buy will increase by 0.270 points. A positive coefficient means that the relationship between perceived behavioural control and intention to buy is in positive correlation.
- If HI with coefficient value 0.089 is increasing by 1% whereas the rest of independent variables are fixed, then the value of intention to buy will increase by 0.089 point. The correlation of both dependent variable (intention to buy) and independent variable (*halal* image) is also positive.

After elaborating the multiple linear regression to construct a linear model, the next step is to conduct determination analysis. This analysis is to test how significant independent variables explain their influence on dependent variable (Y).

The finding indicates that, among 4 independent variables, subjective norm and perceived behavioural control contribute significantly, even though both variables have contrasting relationships with the dependent variable (subjective norm is negatively

associated, whilst perceived behavioural control is positively associated) with the intention to buy. In other words, having more information and greater trust in *halal* products or services will increase the intention to buy, and thus lead the customer to accept the *halal* product or service. Suki and Salleh (2016) support this finding with their research on the influence of perceived behavioural control, which significantly strengthens consumer intention to patronise a *halal* store.

A closer examination revealed another variable that significantly influences customers' decisions to buy and utilise *halal* products and services: the subjective norm. However, the coefficient indicates a negative relationship, suggesting that social or community agreement and recommendations are not necessarily needed for a person/customer to decide whether to purchase a *halal* product. This contrasts with the study by Suki and Salleh (2016), which found a positive correlation between subjective norm and intention to buy, suggesting that customers are likely to seek information from others, such as friends, family, neighbours, and their communities. It might be because most of the respondents are Muslim, and they are well informed about *halal* products and services that they are utilising.

On the contrary, the other two variables (attitude to behaviour and *halal* image) do not contribute significantly to the intention to buy, which is inconsistent with previous studies by Suki and Salleh (2016), Baker (2011), Barbara *et al.* (2003), and Khraim (2010). Those scholars argued that the relationship between attitude to behaviour and intention to buy (the same applies to *the halal* image) should be positively significant, as customers' behavioural beliefs should be considered a significant factor in leading them to re-patronise a *halal* product or service. In addition, *the halal* logo, symbols, and advertisements should convey an upright impression that encourages people to buy and use *halal* products and services. This contrast might be attributed to the involvement of non-Muslims in the survey sample.

Further to another aspect of the regression result, it shows that the regression model produces a low score of *R* square (0.041) which is a reflection on small effect of the four independent variables (attitude of behaviour, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control and *halal* image) in explaining their influence for customers' decision in accepting and rejecting *halal* product and service, represented by intention to buy for the measurement. In other words, there are several determinants besides the 4 research variables that might influence customers' intention to buy.

Instead of engaging 'family' as one of the sub-indicators in the subjective norm variable, Loudon and Bitta (2002) excluded this factor and treated 'family leverage' as an independent variable in explaining its correlation to the intention to buy. The greater the family's encouragement, the higher the intention to buy a product. They argued that 'family' cannot be grouped as a small type of community, since it predominantly influences consumers' behaviour.

Another factor that might contribute to the impact of intention to buy is 'cognition'. Barber *et al.* (2009) argued that cognition is differentiated into subjective cognition and objective cognition. Both might be observed independently or after first interacting with the attitude to determine whether this factor influences the decision to buy.

Regarding the significance between Muslim and non-Muslim consumers, the results from the earlier chapter show that Muslim consumers contribute significantly to all variables tested for engagement with *halal* products and services. The mean value of Muslim respondents is higher than that of non-Muslim respondents for attitude to behaviour (4.162 to 2.337), subjective norm (3.976 to 2.957), perceived behavioural control (4.024 to 2.707), and *halal* image (3.761 to 3.025). From a marketing perspective, this result indicates that Islamic branding, or *halal* products and services, should adopt different marketing strategies in Muslim-majority and non-Muslim-majority countries if the market expects equal output from both target consumers.

As for the Muslim-targeted consumer, it is expected to adopt a minimum-effort approach, as the need for *halal* products and services becomes a necessity, a compulsory requirement, and the priority, as described in the holy book and the practice of the prophet (*Al-Qur'an* and *Hadith*). On the contrary, for the non-Muslim targeted country, the strategy that needs to be implemented might vary from employing a more environmentally friendly marketing, exhibiting more ethics in the advertisement and products' presentation, and providing a further explanation about the Islamic livestock slaughtering method and process, since it has become a top issue in marketing for consumers in choosing *halal* food. Considering the *significance test* result as a mirror for developing a sounder marketing strategy, since religion emerged as a significant factor in implementing *halal* branding.

E. CONCLUSION

The development of Islamic marketing has flourished in recent years and has even reached the non-Muslim majority countries. To support this positive development, marketing research on market segmentation for *halal* products and services is needed to expand the market further and make it available not only to Muslim consumers but also to non-Muslim consumers.

In conclusion, the research aims to identify the significant determinants of brand acceptance and rejection, specifically in the context of *halal* branding. The output showed 2 factors significantly influencing consumers' decision to buy or use *halal* products and services: subjective norm (based on social agreement) and perceived behavioural control (based on trust and information availability).

Apart from those 2 significant determinant findings, there are several factors that might contribute to influencing the consumers' decision to buy or not, such as 'family leverage' and 'cognition' that need to be observed further in future research, and thus

it might produce a sounder output for Islamic marketing strategy implementation worldwide. Furthermore, this research might be discussed to increase the intention to buy *Halal* products and services. It could be employed by concerning deeply to both significant factors, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control.

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