



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v13-i1/14809>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v13-i1/14809

**Received:** 05 November 2022, **Revised:** 09 December 2022, **Accepted:** 29 December 2022

**Published Online:** 13 January 2023

**In-Text Citation:** (Harun et al., 2023)

**To Cite this Article:** Harun, N. H. binti, Idris, N. A. Z., & Bashir, A. M. (2023). Factors Influencing Halal Food Products Purchasing among Young Adults According to Theory of Planned Behavior. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business & Social Sciences*, 13(1), 1296 – 1307.

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**Vol. 13, No. 1, 2023, Pg. 1296 – 1307**

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ISSN: 2222-6990

## Factors Influencing Halal Food Products Purchasing among Young Adults According to Theory of Planned Behavior

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### Abstract

Nowadays, youth consumers have turned out to be increasingly aware and sensitive towards Halal food products requirements. Recently, there were premises found not having Halal certification logo serving viral beverages. People nowadays especially young adults will not usually think twice about purchasing those beverages and they are willing to stand in a long queue. This study was done to determine the relationship between influential factors such as attitudes, subjective norms and behavioral control according to the Theory of Planned Behavior towards the purchase intention of Halal food products. The respondents for this study were students in Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism, UiTM Puncak Alam. Factors that lead to purchase intentions among consumers must be well-informed in order to boost growth of Halal industry. Based on multiple linear regression analysis, subjective norms were found to have a significant impact on the intention to purchase Halal food products while attitudes were seen to have no effect significant to the intention of purchasing Halal food products. The findings show that an individual can control their perceptions and intentions of purchasing Halal food products. Therefore, this study had achieved its main objectives by validating that the intention to purchase was significantly influenced by subjective norms and behavioral control and subjective norms was the most influential factor influencing purchasing intention among students.

**Keywords:** Halal, Youth Consumers, Theory of Planned Behavior

### Introduction

Halal has now become a universal concept where it does no longer restricted to the slaughtering of animals or merely free from alcohol and swine, but it covers the whole process in production and services. Moreover, Halal is no longer merely a religious obligation but beyond that, it becomes a standard of choice for both Muslims and non-Muslims (Nawai et al., 2007). According to MS1500: 2019, Halal means matters that are lawful and permitted in Islam based on the Shariah law and fatwa. The concept of Halal food in Islam refers to the

safety, hygiene and the processes that make them permissible and safe for consumption as mentioned by Ab Talib et al (2015) and cited by (Chemah et al., 2018). Islam urges Muslims to opt for the good and the best in every facet of life including food. Islam has also outlined rules and regulations for food preparation which suggest the source, process and actors should conform to the principles of Islam (Samori et al., 2014).

It is common nowadays to see Muslims, particularly Muslim youth, eating at non-Halal food outlets and premises, including alcohol-serving restaurants. Not only that, but some of them also believe that the food prepared and served should be Halal, if the staff are Muslims. Based on Zakinan (2019), there was an issue regarding Restoran Maulana Nasi Kandar, most of whom are Muslims, and some people said they were hiding behind the Quranic text written on their restaurant. To date, there are no mamak restaurant premises in the state of Melaka that have a valid Malaysian Halal Certificate.

Furthermore, the youngsters also tend to follow the trend and consume 'hipster' foods. This trend of unique or 'hipster' food shows is often going viral on social media, in an attempt to engage the average visitor in the capital city. However, the 'hipster' trend is seen as overstating, especially when it comes to restaurant owners who use recycled goods that can endanger consumers. For example, a viral eatery in Penang previously served a beverage serving customers using milk cans. Not only that, it was reported that a food store in Shah Alam also served steamed rice in recycled milk cans (Nursyazwani, 2018). It is important for restaurant owners to be aware of food laws and regulations enacted through the Ministry of Health (MOH) as it also not to stray away from the meaning of Halalan thoyyiban itself, which is safe, pure and clean.

According to Zulkipli (2019), The Selangor Islamic Religious Department (JAIS) has recognized various premises serving bubble tea drinks with ingredients that are not certified Halal. The majority of the ingredients were imported from Taiwan and checks revealed that they were not having Halal certification logo. The premises found to be serving the beverages would be monitored as their action could lead to confusion among Muslim customers. Many of the premises employ Muslim workers and this would confuse the customers. People will not usually think twice about buying those beverages the bubble tea product becomes viral on social media and they are willing to queue for it without having to clarify whether the premise is certified Halal or not.

To date, the trend of consuming hipster food and beverages that is not Halal certified and dining in eateries that serve foods in dangerous items is increasing especially among young adults. Therefore, this study was done to achieve two objectives which are:

- To determine the relationship between attitude, subjective norm and behavioural control in purchasing halal food products among young adults.
- To investigate the most influential factor in purchasing Halal food products among young adults.

### **Literature Review**

Based on Mukhtar & Butt (2012), Muslims and non-Muslims all over the world have become more sensible towards Halal issues. As Muslims, Halal is essential to all things, methods and process applied and consumption in an individual daily life. In a Muslim country the Halal concept is not limited to Muslims alone but must be widespread as the law of a country. Generally, many non-Muslims in Muslim countries are exposed to knowledge about Halal among Muslims. However, there is an insufficiency of studies that include non-Muslim customers in their awareness studies. Muslims are supposed to know what Halal products

are. Failure in recognizing Halal product can lead them to thoughtlessly in buying non-Halal products (Sirajuddin et al., 2013).

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) was used to analyze how attitude, subjective norms, and perceived regulation control can affect the intention (Bashir et al., 2018). According to Ajzen (1991), the TPB is well founded through empirical studies. Intention to perform different kinds of behaviors can be predicted with high precision from attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control; and these intentions, together with expectations of behavioral control, account for major differences in actual behavior. Based on the expected behavioral theory, there are three factors that determine an individual's intention to act, namely attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control, while behavior is affected by intention and perceived behavioral control (Ira Eka, 2018).

According to Hanzae & Ramezani (2011), the propensity of a person to purchase a product can be interpreted as purchasing intention. Other than that, purchase intention is a prior of a behavior seen in the future (Borzooei & Asgari, 2013). Based on Hashim et al. (2013), it could be clarified that the interest of purchase is a form of behavior or a positive attitude towards an object, so as to make an individual to try to use or own the object even though must spend some money and sacrifice. As Ajzen (1991) discussed in the TPB, showing the inner self and past behavior is one of the best ways to interpret the human being's conduct and psyche.

Blackwell et al (2006) mentioned that attitude is the determination of a specific behavior affecting the object of attitude, such as the purchasing of the commodity. Meanwhile Alam, (2011) found that the mindset and expectations to buy Halal goods have a strong and positive relationship. The findings of their study present that the TPB model could explain 29.1% of the variation in the intention to purchase Halal products. Attitude is considered a crucial factor that affects customer intention in purchasing Halal products because those with high positive attitudes seemed to have more intentions to purchase Halal products. This result verifies Ajzen (1991), a statement he said can be defined as an essential element in the conveyance and representation of human behavior. Halal products purchasing aim, based on Afendi et al (2014), conducted the process prior to actual purchase. Intention represents the actions of the future. Attitude is predicated to be directly related to actions of intention. Other than that, attitude also is the aspect of personal that derives from a common belief in actions. In shaping one's purpose it is the most important aspect of TPB (Derahman et al., 2017). They also mentioned that the attitude is characterized by a positive or negative assessment of the performance of the behavior of the person.

Subjective norms refer to perceived social pressure on other individuals' performance of the specific behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Derahman et al (2017) described the subjective standard as the interpretation of the perceived social pressure on the individual to engage in this behavior or not (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). They also described subjective norms as a person who believes that in order to do so, most of the people with whom he is guided must feel he should act. Based on Alam (2011), who conducted the research on the intention to purchase Halal foods, it appears that the subjective norms have a positive and important effect on the intention to purchase Halal food. Bonne et al (2007) also found that the subjective norms for Muslims in France is positively linked to Halal meat consumption (Derahman et al., 2017). Different consumers have different convictions about Halal products, where beliefs and subjective norms play an important role in delivering intention (Lada et. al., 2009).

The suggested theoretical or conceptual structure is a diagram showing both dependent and independent variables as well as connecting or linking these variables to form a test on this analysis. From the literature review, the following framework is amended, and there are three independent variables (attitude, subjective norms, and behavioral control) that are developed to analyze their relationship with dependent variable (students' purchase intention) as shown in Figure 1.

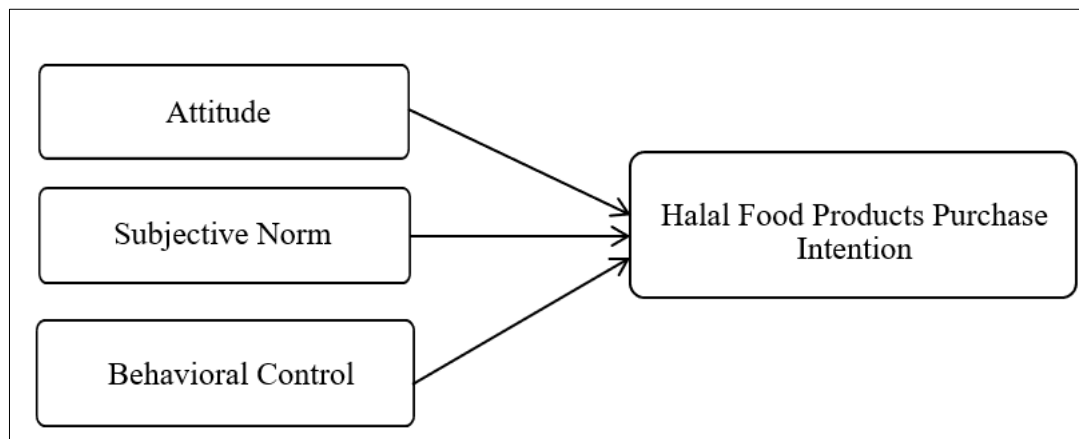


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework  
(Source: Developed for the research)

### Methodology

The instruments were developed based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which consists of three models; attitude, subjective norms, and behavioral control. A survey was conducted by circulating questionnaires to respondents from Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism, UiTM Puncak Alam. The questionnaires used comprise 5 elements, namely section 1, section 2, section 3, section 4 and section 5. Section 1 includes 5 items relevant to the respondents' background. This segment is intended to collect demographic information from respondents such as gender, age, religion, marital status, and educational level.

Section 2 contains eight items related to the attitude towards Halal products before purchasing it among students in Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism, UiTM Puncak Alam. The attitude was measured by eight items from the evaluation of Halal food by the favorable and non-favorable respondents as below;

Table 1

*Questionnaire's Instrument*

<b>Question</b>	
<b>Section 2</b>	
<b>Q1</b>	Eating Halal food is important for me.
<b>Q2</b>	I prefer to consume Halal food compared to non-Halal food.
<b>Q3</b>	Halal food is clean.
<b>Q4</b>	I am sure Halal food is cleaner compared to non-Halal food.
<b>Q5</b>	Halal food is safe to eat.
<b>Q6</b>	I am sure Halal food is safer to eat compared to non-Halal food.
<b>Q7</b>	Halal food is healthy.
<b>Q8</b>	Halal food is healthier compared to non-Halal food.
<b>Section 3</b>	
<b>Q1</b>	Most people who are important to me are choosing Halal food.
<b>Q2</b>	People can influence me to eat Halal food.
<b>Q3</b>	My family members prefer Halal food.
<b>Q4</b>	My friends would think that I should choose Halal food.
<b>Q5</b>	My family imposes on me the importance of eating Halal food.
<b>Section 4</b>	
<b>Q1</b>	It is easy to find Halal food in Malaysia.
<b>Q2</b>	It is easy to find Halal food in my University.
<b>Q3</b>	It is easy to find Halal-labelled food in my University.
<b>Q4</b>	I always have a chance to eat Halal food.
<b>Q5</b>	There are many choices of Halal food in my University.
<b>Q6</b>	Price of Halal food is reasonable and affordable.
<b>Section 5</b>	
<b>Q1</b>	I will not eat if the food is non-Halal.
<b>Q2</b>	I will not eat if the food is doubted as Halal.
<b>Q3</b>	I will eat only in Halal food outlets.
<b>Q4</b>	I will eat only Halal food.
<b>Q5</b>	I will make sure that the food is Halal before I consume it.
<b>Q6</b>	I will make sure that the food is Halal before I purchase it.
<b>Q7</b>	I will not consume the food if it is prepared using any non-Halal ingredients for example alcohol.

While section 3 contains five items covering items related to the subjective norms towards Halal products before purchasing among students in Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism, UiTM Puncak Alam. As for section 4, it contains six items related to the behavioral control towards Halal products before purchasing it among students in Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism, UiTM Puncak Alam. Behavioral control variable consisted of six items. As for section 5, it includes seven items related to the purpose of purchasing Halal products before purchasing them among students at the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism, UiTM Puncak Alam. The final section of the questionnaire, consisting of seven items on the intention to purchase Halal food products. All of the items in section 2, 3, 4 and 5 are using measurement based on Likert scale 5 points.

## Results and Discussions

Table 2 shows that 65 respondents were female 31 were male. The percentage of female is 67.7% whereas 32.3% was male which shows the difference of 35.4%. According to the data obtained, most respondents are between 21-25 years old which amounted 78.1% or 75 out of 96 respondents. The second highest are between 15-20 years old which amounted to 19.8 or 19 out of 96 respondents while the lowest which is the remaining 2 out of 96 respondents are between 26-30 years old. All the respondents' marital status was single with 96.9% were Muslims and the remaining 3.1% are non-Muslims.

Table 2

### *Demographic Profile Respondents (n=96)*

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	65	67.7
Male	31	32.3
<b>Age</b>		
15-20 years old	19	19.8
21-25 years old	75	78.1
26-30 years old	2	2.1
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	96	100.0
<b>Religion</b>		
Muslim	93	96.9
Non-Muslims	3	3.1
<b>Level of education</b>		
Diploma	1	1.0
Bachelor's degree	95	99.0

## Reliability Analysis

When looking at the results of the reliability tests in Table 3, the Cronbach Alpha results range more than 0.90 thus confirming the reliability of the instrument which, according to Brown (2002), can vary from 0.0 (if no variance is consistent) to 1.00 (if all variance is consistent) and all values are also possible between 0.0 and 1.00.

Table 3

### *Reliability Analysis*

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of items
.924	.927	4

## Descriptive Analysis

According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, Table 4 provides the mean scores and standard deviations of the models used in this analysis. All mean scores are shown in the Likert scale of five points (1-5). Overall, the attitude of the respondents was scored at 4.72, the subjective norms at 4.81 and behavioral control at 4.81. Intention to purchase has been established with a mean score of 4.71. This refers to most respondents had high positive

influence of behavioral control and subjective norms towards the intention to purchase Halal food products.

Table 4

*Descriptive Analysis*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Attitude	4.72	0.54
Subjective Norm	4.81	0.50
Behavioral Control	4.81	0.46
Purchasing Intention	4.71	0.58

Attitude was the first contributing factors. 91.7% of respondents strongly agreed that it is necessary for them to eat Halal food. Not only that, 90.6% of respondents agreed strongly they also prefer to consume Halal food compared to non-Halal food. It could therefore be said that many respondents were optimistic and positive about Halal food. The second contributing factor was subjective norms. Behavioral intention to purchase Halal food is also important, which could be attributed to the characteristics of young consumers who are more dependent on their environment when making decisions about their food preferences. The findings revealed that 91.7 percent of respondents strongly agreed that they prefer their family to choose Halal food and influenced them. 81.3% of respondents also strongly agreed that people can affect them to consume Halal food. Furthermore, 80.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that most people who are important to them are selecting Halal food. This data shows that the influence of family and friends among students is positive and stronger in influencing them to consume Halal food.

The third element that contributes purchasing intention was behavioral controls, specifically referring in this study to the possibility of purchasing Halal food products and they are available in Malaysia. This could be because of Malaysia's Halal food is easily accessible. Behavioral control has been found to be the one of the strong factors in purchasing Halal food products for young consumers. 92.7% of respondents agreed strongly, and 6.3% agreed that Halal food in Malaysia is easy to find. It could be concluded that most respondents had a strong subjective norms and behavioral control towards the intention to purchase Halal food products.

**Pearson Correlation**

Table 5 illustrates that the correlations among students at the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism, UiTM Puncak Alam, between independent variables that include attitude, subjective norms, and behavioral control with dependent variable which is purchases intention towards Halal food products. Independent variables at significant level 0.05 have a positive linear relationship to the dependent variable. All interest in this possibly is less than 0.9, suggesting that there is no question of multicollinearity. The association between independent variables is less than 0.9, which varies from 0.627 to 0.834.

At the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism, UiTM Puncak Alam, there is a significant relationship between attitude and intention to buy Halal food products among students. This is because the value of p is 0.000 lower than the value of alpha 0.05. The value of the coefficient of correlation, which is 0.723, falls below the range of  $\pm 0.60$  and  $\pm 0.70$ . It suggests a moderate relationship among students at the Faculty of Hotel Management and



Tourism of UiTM Puncak Alam between attitude and purchasing intention towards Halal food products.

Table 5

*Result of Correlation Analysis*

Variables	Attitude	Subjective Norm	Behavioral Control	Purchasing Intention
Attitude	1.000	0.832**	0.725**	0.723**
Subjective Norm	0.832**	1.000	0.829**	0.834**
Behavioral Control	0.725**	0.829**	1.000	0.627**
Purchasing Intention	0.723**	0.834**	0.627**	1.000

**\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level**

Source: Questionnaire, UiTM Puncak Alam, 11 November-11 December 2019

There is a significant relationship between subjective norms and the intention to purchase Halal food products at the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism, UiTM Puncak Alam. That is because the p-value is 0.000 and below 0.05. The value of the coefficient of correlation, 0.834, dropped from  $\pm 0.60$  to  $\pm 0.80$  in the sample. This shows a very positive relationship between subjective standards and the intention to purchase Halal food products among students at UiTM Puncak Alam's Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism.

There is also a significant relationship among students in the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism, UiTM Puncak Alam, between behavioral control and purchasing intention towards Halal food products. This is because the p-value is 0.000 and below 0.05 alpha. In addition, the value of the coefficient of correlation, which is 0.627, falls below the  $\pm 0.60$  to  $\pm 0.70$  coefficient range. This suggests a moderate relationship among students in the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism, UiTM Puncak Alam, between behavioral control and purchasing intention towards Halal food products.

Table 6

*Coefficients*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Significant
	B	Std.	Beta		
	<b>Error</b>				
Attitude	.126	.109	.116	1.149	.253
Subjective Norm	1.077	.146	.919	7.368	.000
Behavioral control	-278	.127	-2.19	-2.181	.032

Source: Questionnaire, UiTM Puncak Alam, 11 November-11 December 2019

Based on the table above, (Coefficients) show that subjective norms and behavioral control are essential in predicting dependent variable (intention to purchase halal food products among students at the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism, UiTM Puncak Alam) since p-value is below 0.05. Meanwhile, attitude is the only independent variable that

is insignificant to predict the dependent variable; the p-value is equal to 0.253, which is more than 0.05.

According to Table 6, the subjective norms was found to have a significant positive effect on the purchase intention that has an influence on the purchasing intention of the students ( $t= 7.368$ ,  $p=0.000$ ,  $\beta= 1.077$ ) as its p-value is less than 0.05. Table 6 also indicates that behavioral control has a significant positive influence and effects on the decision to purchase ( $t=-2.181$ ,  $p= 0.032$ ,  $\beta= -0.278$ ), as its p-value is less than 0.05. On the other hand, there is no significant influence or no effects by attitude on the intention to purchase ( $t= 1.149$ ,  $p= 0.253$ ,  $\beta= 0.126$ ) because its p-value is more than 0.05.

Based on Figure 2, the result shows that attitude shows the insignificant influence ( $\beta=0.126^{**}$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) on the intention to purchase halal food products. The second independent variable, subjective norms is important and has a major and significant influence on the intention to purchase halal food products ( $\beta=1.077^{**}$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). While the third independent, behavioral control shows the significant influence ( $\beta=-0.278^{**}$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) in purchasing halal food products towards the intention. Hypotheses 2 and 3 are therefore accepted while hypotheses 1 are rejected. The R<sup>2</sup> of 0.70 indicates that the attitude, subjective norms and behavioral control could explain 76 percent of the variation in purchasing intention in buying halal food products.

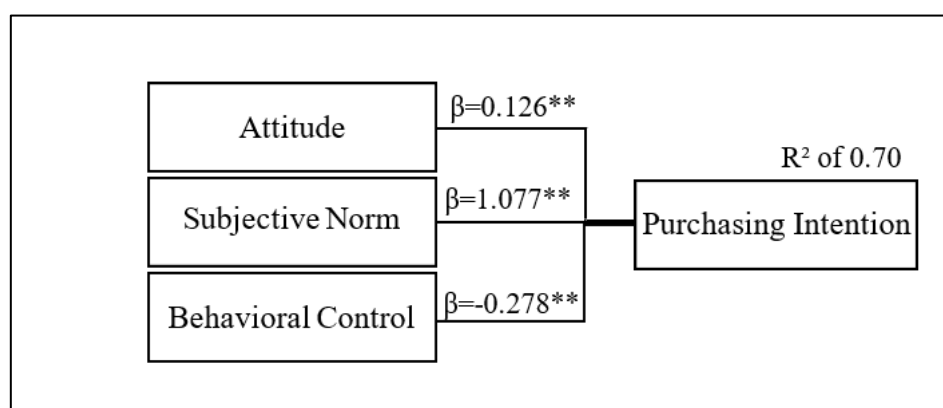


Figure 2: Result of Regression Analysis

(Source: Regression Analysis on the influence of attitude, subjective norms, behavioral control on the intention to purchase halal food products, UiTM Puncak Alam, 11 November- 11 December 2019)

## Conclusion

As all correlation values are below 0.9, the three independent variables are free of the multicollinearity problem. The Pearson correlation test was also used to calculate the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. This is because their p-values are less than 0.05, all three independent variables create a significant relationship with the intention to purchase. However, in the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism, UiTM Puncak Alam, subjective norms and behavioral control establish positive relationships whereas attitude has negative relationships that are more than 0.05 towards the intention of purchasing Halal food products among students.

To be concluded, the study had achieved its main goals by validating that the intention to purchase was significantly influenced by subjective norms and behavioral control and that subjective norms were the most influential factor influencing purchasing intention among students. Following this study, in order to attract younger consumers and continue to develop

the Malaysian Halal food products industry, companies and industries should emphasize these factors. For modification or reference purposes, potential researcher may make full use of the information contained in this study. This research exposes a brighten view of the factors influencing the purchasing of Halal food products among students in Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism, UiTM Puncak Alam.

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