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DETERMİNANTS OF HALAL FOOD PURCHASE INTENTİON: APPLYİNG THE THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVİOR(TPB) İN PREDİCTİNG HALAL FOOD CONSUMPTİON AMONG MİLLENNİAL GENERATİON İN MALAYSİA

Musdiana Mohamad Salleh[1], Etty Harniza Harun[2], Siti Meriam Ali[3]
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia

diana001@uitm.edu.my[1]

INTRODUCTION

This study aims to examine the determinants of millennial generations in consuming halal food in Malaysia. Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior is used as a framework postulates three components which are attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. The role of Islamic religiosity regarding halal purchase is also investigated as one of the predictor in the research model. Data were collected from 202 respondents through self-administrated questionnaires. The respondents were between 19 to 39 years old. Finding of this study demonstrates that the intention of millennial generation consumers in consuming halal food is predominantly influence by attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control and Islamic religiosity. This study extent the insights of the Muslim consumers' behaviors particularly on millennial generations. The result of this study is useful to predict the future of the halal industry in Muslim-majority countries.

PURPOSE/AIM & BACKGROUND

The halal industry is considered as one of the fastest growing industries and is estimated to accelerate further in the world market. Indeed, the demand of halal food in the world market is escalated due to the growth of Muslim population and the increase of purchasing power among Muslim consumers. As for Malaysia, since 1980s, the country has been the pioneer in establishing halal laws and enforcing actively in matters relating to halal certification globally. Since 2000s, the country has also taken an active action in developing the halal industry which resulted in export amount to reach RM 43 billion in 2017. Looking at the outstanding figures and strong support from the government to participate and increase the export amount of Malaysia halal products, it is interesting as well to look at the underlying consumption pattern of Malaysian consumers towards halal products. Purchase intention refers to the mental stage in the decision making procedure where the customer has actually develop a willingness to act on the object or brand (Garg & Joshi, 2018) Nowadays, Muslim consumers are becoming more sensitive and aware of the halal requirements. For Muslim, halal food is part of religious obligations. The Quran stated that Muslims have to give important emphasis toward the use of halal product that do not contain forbidden ingredients. The term halal explains any entity or action which is allowed, in contras the word haram meaning forbidden. For example, Muslims are prohibited from eating the flesh of pork and its derivatives, as it is a sin and immorality to do so This prohibition have been stated by the Islamic law as guideline to all humankind for committing any wrongdoings. Shah Alam & Mohamed Sayuti (2011) argue that knowledge about halal-related matters had an influence on purchase decision. In addition, attitude of Muslim consumers will contribute towards the future progress of halal industry in Malaysia. According to (Khalek, 2014; Khalek & Ismail, 2015), attitude towards halal food positively influenced the intention to purchase halal food among students in Malaysia. In recent years, generation Y or millennials played significant roles in many studies because they are heavily

consumption oriented, savvy generation, trendsetters and establish brand conscious. Millennials are individuals born between 1980 and 2000. They are called millennials because their birth years are close to the new millennium period and were raised in a more digital area (Kaifi, Nafei, Khanfar, & Kaifi, 2012). Research on millennial generation is significant mainly because this is the generation which comprises the largest and most lucrative consumer base (Abraham & Harrington, 2015) and specifically Muslim's Millennials generation is important for the current and future progress of the halal industry in Malaysia. However, it is observed that there is lack of empirical research in explaining the halal consumption from millennial generation point of view.

This study aims to examine the determinants which influence Muslim's Millennials generation intentions in consuming halal food in Malaysia. The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) was adopted in the study because the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) was among the prominent frameworks used in explaining halal consumption. The significant influence of attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control were highlighted as the main predictors of halal consumption. The TPB model explains if an individual's performance of a certain behavior is determined by his or her intent to perform that behavior. For TPB, attitude towards the target behavior and subjective norms about engaging in the behavior are thought to influence intention halal food purchasing behavior, and TPB includes perceived behavior control over engaging in the behavior as a factor influencing intention and purchasing behavior (Ajzen, 1991). This study also adds in the religiosity factor in search for understanding whether it does give effect to purchase intention of halal food. This is in line with a study made by (Machali, Abdullah, & Razak, 2013; Muslichah, Abdullah, & Abdul Razak, 2019) in which it explore the effects of religiosity as a moderating variable on the relationship of halal food purchase. Results from the study reveals 78% of the respondents who are Muslims aware in purchasing of halal food. This supports the findings of Soesilowati(2010), who found that Muslim respondents consistently put a high priority on the issue of halal whenever they purchase food, buy meat, or select a restaurant.

In conceptualizing the determinants influencing halal food consumption in this research, attitude towards behavior is referred to the respondents' favorable or unfavorable evaluation to consume halal food. The subjective norm is perceived social pressure for young consumers in consuming halal food. Perceived behavioral control referred to the respondents' belief about opportunities and availability of halal food. The Islamic religiosity is the important of religion on consumer's behaviour about consuming halal food. Hence, the framework yield the following hypothesis:

H1: There is a positive relationship between attitude of Millennials generation and their intentions in consuming halal food.
H2: There is a positive relationship between subjective norms of Millennials generation and their intentions in consuming halal food.
H3: There is a positive relationship between perceived behavioural control of Millennials generation and their intentions in consuming halal food.
H4: There is a positive relationship between Islamic religiosity of Millennials generation and their intentions in consuming halal food.

METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted at UiTM Kedah branch campus and the respondents were 202 participants attended the Halal Certificate Workshop in the campus. The responses were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).The analyses included demographic profile of respondents, reliability analysis, descriptive statistics, and correlation and regression analysis. For measuring the dependent variable and independent variables, the study used the items developed by Khan & Azam(2016).

FINDINGS/RESULTS

Demographic Analysis
Two hundred and two respondents participated in the survey. Majority were female (59.9%) and male (40.1%). Marital status of the respondents was mostly single (59.4%) and mostly received tertiary education until Bachelor's Degree (35.6%)

Reliability Analysis
Results from the reliability analysis showed that the intention to purchase halal product among the respondents were relatively high with Cronbach Alpha 0.83. Results of Cronbach Alpha for all the independent variables were considered as acceptable and good with attitude (0.7), subjective norm (0.83), perceived behavioral control (0.7) and religiosity (0.86).

Intercorrelations of the Study Variables
The value of Pearson's correlation coefficient for each independent variables has been examined to test the relationship with the dependent variable. The results obtained showed that a strong relationship between independent and dependent variable is attitude 60.9%, followed by subjective norm (59.1%), perceived behavioural control (57%) and religiosity (55.9%)

Summary of hypothesis testing
Four hypothesis were presented for this research. This calls for the use of regression with purchase intention as the dependent variables and attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control and religiosity as the independent variables.The results of the examination of the R square (0.522) implies that all the independent variables explain 52 percent of the variance of the dependent variable. The model is significance and all the independent variable significantly contributed to the prediction of purchase intention of halal product. Hence, all hypothesis were supported.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of this study showed that the TPB is an effective model that can be used to predict intention in consuming halal food. It was demonstrated that the factors influencing Millennial generation in halal food consumption mainly because of their positive attitude toward halal food, social influence especially by family and friends, their perceived behavioral control to consume halal food based on their viewed halal food in terms of good quality, safety and hygiene. The results obtained is in line with previous applying the same model (Alam & Sayuti, 2012; Khan & Azam, 2016; Marmaya, Zakaria, & Mohd Desa, 2019; Shah Alam & Mohamed Sayuti, 2011) The results

also shown that attitude depict the strongest relationship compared to other variables. Thus it shows that a person's action whether to buy or not to buy a product depends very much on how they view the product. In this case, attitude towards purchasing halal food is positive and may result in good acceptance from consumers. In this study, the result also shows that Islamic religiosity has a positive and significant effect on halal food consumption, the result support the previous study by (Ibrahim & Ismail, 2015; Machali et al., 2013; Muslichah et al., 2019; Muslichah, Abdulllah, & Razak, 2014).

This study extends the insights of the Muslim consumers' behaviors particularly on Muslim Millennial generation. The practical implication of this study contributes knowledge to the organization in expanding their market and for governmental organizations to stimulate halal consumption in the country. Therefore, this study suggest that government and marketers may incorporate the elements of attitudes and social pressures in their halal food campaigns and advertisements. The availability, variety and price of halal food also need to be given attention by Malaysian government. Future research may broaden the population and expand the geographical locations to another states in Malaysia.

Keywords: Halal food purchase intentions, attitude, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, Islamic religiosity.

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