

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**THE INFLUENCE OF SYUBHAH
SEMI PROCESSED FOOD
KNOWLEDGE ON CONSUMER
PURCHASE BEHAVIOR**

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management

November 2017

ABSTRACT

No exaggeration that Muslim consumers around the world with regard to food undeniably put their greater concern on the three concepts that are halal, haram and Syubhah or doubtful. In this sense, Muslim consumers are ascertained that the food products obtained or buying from any market place should religiously fit for their consumption or complied with Islamic regulation. The concern on these three concepts directly relate with the ingredients used, preparation and cleanliness of the products either on dry, wet, fresh, canned or processed food. In other words, the halal, haram and syubhah are the important religious elements in shaping Muslim consumer attitudes that influence their food purchasing behavior. Despite these, most of the available studies are dealing with halal food products, halal certification, halal logo, halal quality assurance and halal consumer awareness with less investigation particularly looking at the cause and affect between Syubhah semi- processed food and Muslim consumers purchase behavior. In filling the gap, hence this study is empirically examining the causal relationship between knowledge on syubhah semi processed food attributes and semi and-rural Muslim consumers purchase behavior. With that, a causal research design using the quantitative approach was used and the semi and rural consumers in the Kedah state was chosen as a sample of the study. Through a self-administered survey, 780 usable questionnaires were successfully collected. With the various statistical analyses ranging from frequency, descriptive, inferential and the Multivariate Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) via Partial Least Square (PLS- SEM) used to answer the research objectives, research questions and hypotheses, some useful insights pertaining to the issues investigated was significantly obtained. The results provide evidences that there is a linkage between knowledge of syubhah semi processed food attributes and consumer purchase behaviour. In detail, lack of knowledge or ignorance on the composition of ingredients, wholesomeness, labelling and certification cause the Muslim consumers in semi and rural areas of purchasing the syubhah semi processed food products. It is interesting to revealed that lack of knowledge on the composition of ingredients, wholesomeness, labelling and certification has elevated the trust among the Muslim consumers in the semi and rural area in turn translate their confident toward purchasing the syubhah or doubtful semi processed food products. Another remarkable finding is that the translation of trust toward purchasing the syubhah or doubtful semi processed food products are also influence through the influence of others either families, friends or other consumers and brand equity which relate to halal logo and Islamic symbol although these elements are being manipulated or fake. These pessimistic indications from the practical aspects carry varying consequences and implications for the Muslim consumers, the semi processed food producers that closely and the relevant authorities particularly State. The remarkable findings from this study indicated that without knowledge on the characteristic of the products, consumers still purchase the product although they are still in the doubtful stage due to the influence of trust.

Keywords: Halal, Syubhah, Semi Processed Food, Halal Certification and Knowledge.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, Alhamdulillah Thank You to Allah S.W.T for the kindness, blessing, strength, perseverance and good health which enable me to complete this study journey. Absolutely, there a lot of applied knowledge and experience gathered besides the formal education. I learnt and improved a lot during this process.

My truly appreciation goes to my Supervisor, Prof. Dr Mohd Salehuddin Mohd Zahari for his commitment and effort in guidance me from the beginning of my journey until completed, guidance, patience and ungrudging generosity with time throughout the whole journey. Thank you for the commitment and it was a great privilege to work under his supervision, professionalism and expertise which led to the completed of my study. And also my appreciation goes to my second supervisor, Assoc. Prof Dr. Mohd Nor Mamat as his guidance and commitment in my study journey.

The greatest debt also goes to my beloved mother, Hjh Hatun Md Isa that always gave a moral support and pray for my success. Also to my lovely and supportive wife, Salmi Bt Harun and our children, Nur Aisyah Reezlin, Muhammad Ammar Reezlin and Muhammad Ahnaf Fathurahman Reezlin also special thanks goes to Al Huda Family. Without their support, patience, love, encouragement and sacrifice this endeavour could never have been successful.

Finally, thank you to the Department of Polytechnic and Community College who has giving the permission to me furthering the study and it is honour for me to carry the name of organization along the way in my study journey.

Reezlin Bin Abd Rahman

November 2017

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PREAMBLE

This chapter consists of eight sections with the first section explaining the general outline of the chapter. The second section highlights the introductory remark as a general knowledge of Islam. Then, the third section explains the expansive aspects of halal food, consumer knowledge, trust and how they relate to purchase behavior as the background of the study. This is followed by illustrating the research context and the problem statement. The significant issues and indications related to *syubhah* or doubtful halal is centrally discussed in this section. The objectives, research questions and scope of the research are addressed in the fifth, sixth and seven sections of this chapter. The final section presents the definitions of key terms and the organization of the thesis dealing with a synopsis of all the chapters.

1.2 AN INTRODUCTORY REMARK

Islam is confine into three basic concepts which are 1) Halal (permitted), 2) Haram (prohibited) and 3) *Syubhah* (ambiguity) with detail of these terms is further explained in the literature. In general, halal means lawful, permitted pure, wholesome and recommended by the Islamic law (Dahalan, 2008; Man & Yahaya, 2014; Aziz & Nyen, 2013). Haram on the other hand refer to unlawful, not permitted, unwholesomeness and not recommended by the Islamic law (Al Ghazali, 2013; Qaradhawi, 2014) and those that contradict with the above mentioned conditions while *syubhah* is the ambiguity between *halal* and *haram* and it inclination is descending more toward Haram (Man & Yahaya, 2014; Al Ghazali, 2013; Qaradhawi, 2014; Hamdan, Issa, Abu, & Jusoff, 2013). In this sense, a Muslim is strongly advised to practice good religious and beware on the issue of *syubhah* or doubtful halal to avoid them to be fallen into Haram and commit sin (Aziz & Nyen, 2013; Man & Yahaya, 2014). A good Muslims are aware of this order which came from Allah and this shown as their Islamic self-identity. With this, the subsequent section discusses the purchase behavior in association with halal food products.