

Halal Information among Muslim Travelers and Tourist-Driven Industry

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Abstract

As Muslims, it is imperative that *halal* or *syariah* compliance is observed for food and beverages, services and products. Sometimes they face difficulties in getting *halal* food when travelling as they may be travelling to countries they are not familiar with. This paper aims to identify the perception of Muslim travellers with regards to information on *syariah* compliance. The objective of this study is to determine the *halal* information pertaining to awareness and attitude and the relationship with the tourist-driven industry. The respondents consist of Malaysians who travel frequently. There are 263 respondents taking part in the survey. The analysis includes descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings indicates there are relationships and positive correlation between *halal* information preferences and tourist-driven industry. This study is significant as increased information on *syariah*-compliant tourist destinations can enhance tourism in these countries, besides allowing Muslim tourists to choose the preferred destinations.

Keywords: Halal Information, Tourist-Driven Industry, Awareness, Attitude, Information Management, Library Science

Introduction

Halal in food and beverages is the important part of Muslims because it consists of what we eat and uses in our daily life. In Islam, *halal* will consider as no prohibition and something that is permitted to do according to Islamic law. The *halal* issue is not for a meal or beverages only, it also includes other products such as pharmaceuticals cosmetics supplements and daily care products such as shampoos, toothpaste or facial wash. There are so many aspects of life covered by *halal* terms which are clothes, life environment, job, financial, tourism, trading and so on. As a good Muslim, they have to ensure the ingredients or materials are not prohibited in Islam.

With respect to travelling, in Al- Quran, surah Al-Ankabut verse 20, "*Travel through the earth and see how Allah did originate creation, so will Allah produce a later creation, for Allah has power over all things*". From Hadith also, Prophet Muhammad pbuh said "*learned up to country of China*". Based on these quote from Quran and Hadith, Muslim is encouraged to travel all over the world. Tourism is consider not a new concept in Islamic civilization.

The objective for this paper are:

- i. To determine the perception on halal information pertaining to *awareness* and *attitude* among Muslim travellers.
- ii. To identify the relationship between halal information pertaining to *awareness*, *attitude* and *tourist-driven industry*.

Awareness

The increasing demand of *halal* products and services is driven by the increase in the knowledge and information on *halal*. According to Ambali and Bakar(2014), the awareness in the context of *halal* means having special interest in or experience of something and/or being well informed of what is happening at the present time on *halal* foods, drinks and products. Awareness is a concept where a person may be partially aware, subconsciously aware or may be acutely aware of an issue relating to *halal* aspects which is permitted by Allah. Meanwhile, different people have different awareness and thought about something. Therefore, awareness is the processes of informing the general knowledge or increasing level of consciousness about risks that dangerous to human life and how people can act to reduce their exposure. Awareness in the context of *halal* can be conceptualized as the informing process for increasing the levels of consciousness to what is permitted for Muslim to eat, drink and use (Ambali & Bakar 2014). In addition, Rahim *et al.*, (2013) stated that awareness is the main of fact or of Muslim consumers before decide to purchase any products.

Attitude

Attitude is one of the very significant factor in influencing the awareness and perception of certain products or events. Ajzen (1991), stated that attitude is the degree of an individual's positive or negative feeling towards the particular object or particular intention to perform certain behaviors. Musa (2013) emphasized that attitude has effects in the young adult urban Muslim women toward halal cosmetics based on the Theory of Planned Behavior. Price, *halal* logo and ingredients issue, it is the most discussed dimensions in the attitude toward *halal* cosmetics. The same theory also proposed by Aziz and Wahab, (2013) pointed that attitude is significant towards purchasing *halal* cosmetics. The attitude is consists of knowledge, purity and safety to the intention of *halal* cosmetics prior purchasing. Referring to Ajzen (1991), attitude originates from the individual belief that leading has an intention to purchase. Based on the study, Alam and Sayuti (2011) found that attitude are strongly influenced and have a high or positive intention to purchase *halal* food. Then, Mukhtar and Butt, (2012), found a significant relationship between *halal* purchase intention and the attitude of consumers. *Halal* certification plays an important role in shaping the attitude of Muslim towards *halal* foods (Khalek, 2014).

Tourist-Driven Industry

The tourist industry is one of the main contributions to the country. Tourist-driven must comply with the Al-Quran, Hadith and *ijma'* and *Qiyas*. Meng *et al.* (2008), found the tourist satisfaction consists of how well a tourism destination matches the tourists' needs which may help the tourism destination to improve the quality and services offered. Qu and Ping (1999) concluded, the satisfaction level of tourist is significant with their needs during travel. Halal compliance has the capability to encourage tourist industry. Regarding to Jafari and Scott (2013), shariah tourism is a combination of Islamic compliance and leisure of tourism. Furthermore, religious beliefs are influenced Muslim attitude and behavior, perceptions and emotions during travel. Essoo and Dibb (2004), identified that religious is one of the factors

and elements influenced tourism behavior even though from different religion. Weidenfeld and Ron (2008), mentioned the tourist-driven consists of destination choice, tourist product and facilities offered. The studied done by Heydari Chianeh and Rezatab-Azgomie (2012) agreed which is important to compare shariah compliance policy in different countries to evaluate their effects on tourism development and local community. Battour *et. al* (2010), indicated the Islamic tourism to have the capability to attract Muslim tourists and encourage repeat purchase or going to travel again. Tourist industry should better understand of Islamic tourism with developing marketing strategic to attract Muslim travelers.

Methodology

A survey research method was adopted to address the research questions. In this study, a set of questionnaire was distributed online. The researcher personally distributed the questionnaire to all respondents which are the travelers via email. The researcher found the email of respondents from the travel blog and social media, which are Facebook and Instagram and used hash tag traveler. 263 travelers reponded to the email. The questionnaire was designed on a 1 (strongly disagree) through 5 (strongly agree) Likert scale. A combination of descriptive and inferential statistics were used in analysing the data from this study. Mean ranking and standard deviation were performed to analyze the descriptive part of the analysis, and the parametric test were used to analyze the inferential part of the analysis.

Result and Discussion

Perception on Awareness

Table 1 shows the perception respondent of *awareness* dimension. The overall mean for *awareness* is 1.79 and the overall of standard deviation is 1.373. It shows that respondents are *buying a product with halal logo* is the highest mean value of which is 2.16 and the standard deviation is 1.319. The lowest mean which is 1.62 and 1.328 as a standard deviation is for *storage of halal products*.

Table 1

Means Scores of Perception on Awareness

	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I am aware about the halal logo on packaging in products	1.84	1.332
2	I only purchase a product in halal logo	2.16	1.319
3	Products with the halal logo from an organization recognized such as Jakim	2.02	1.318
4	Halal product is clean	1.73	1.443
5	Halal product is hygienic	1.75	1.413
6	Halal products is handled separately to avoid contamination	1.76	1.432
7	Halal products must be free from anything that is against Islamic law during preparation	1.67	1.406
8	Halal products must be free from anything that is against Islamic law during processing	1.71	1.42

9	Halal products must be free from anything that is against Islamic law during transportation	1.73	1.325
10	Halal products must be free from anything that is against Islamic law during storage	1.62	1.328
Overall		1.79	1.373

The finding revealed that travelers' perception of *awareness* is moderately high with the mean score is 1.79. The higher an item is *the respondent only purchase a product in halal logo*, which the mean score is 2.16. Travelers have the awareness and consciousness to halal information during the travel period. This finding is aligned with the Hayat *et al.*, 2015. The authors identified *halal awareness* is lead to *halal* consciousness because product or service awareness is one of the entire goals with marketing campaigns. As Muslim, these respondents are aware the requirement needed since they have to consume *halal* meat products which are *halal* and *toyyib*. It is also supported by Ambali & Bakar (2012), people are highly aware and conscious towards halal consumption.

Perception on Attitude

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistic for the *attitude* of the independent variable. The overall mean for awareness is 1.865 and overall standard deviation is 1.315. The table also describes the mean score for each item to measure this variable. The highest mean is respondent are *satisfied with halal product* in the market, which is 2.14 and the standard deviation is 1.276. The table shows the lowest mean which 1.76 and standard deviation is 1.433 from the first item.

Table 2

Means Scores of Perception on Attitude

	Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I prefer to use halal products	1.76	1.433
2	I prefer to dine in halal restaurant	1.87	1.425
3	I prefer to inspect the halal logo before purchase a food or product	1.69	1.126
4	I am satisfy with halal product at the market	2.14	1.276
Overall		1.865	1.315

Ajzen (1991), mentioned that attitude is an individual's feeling either positive or negative towards the particular object or particular intention to perform certain behaviors. This study revealed the perception of dimension of *attitude* is moderately high which 1.865 and standard deviation is 1.315. The highest mean is travelers are satisfied with *halal* product at the market. This is consistent with the related studies by Musa (2013), found that *attitude* have effect for the Muslim women toward *halal* cosmetic in terms of price, *halal* logo, and ingredient issues.

The studies done by Aziz and Wahab (2013), found knowledge, purify and safety consist of *attitude* and significant towards purchasing *halal* cosmetics. Alam and Sayuti (2011), found that high or positive attitude are strong influenced to purchase *halal* food. Mukhtar and Butt (2012) and Khalek (2014) found a significant relationship between *halal* purchase intention and the attitude towards *halal* product.

Relationship between halal information preferences and tourist-driven

Table 3 shows the correlation between independent and dependent variable. The following correlation is significant and strength of all the variables in the study. Tourist-driven is positive and moderately correlated with awareness ($r=0.696$; $p<0.01$) and attitude ($r=0.673$; $p<0.01$).

Table 3

Relationship between halal information and tourist-driven

	AWE ALL	ATT ALL	TOUR ALL
Awareness	1		
Attitude	.819**	1	
Tourist-Driven	.696**	.673**	1

This analysis reveals, there is a relationship between awareness and *halal* information preferences. Awareness is positive and moderately correlated with tourist-driven industry which is $r=0.696$ and p values is $p<0.01$. *Halal* issues are very sensitive issues for Muslim. Awareness in *halal* context is consciousness about food, drinks or product that will use or consume. Thus, in Islam it is clearly mentioned that *halal* foods, drinks and product are permissible and non *halal* is forbidden for Muslim consumptions. Awareness also can be described as an in-depth knowledge or understanding of *halal* issues such as ingredients, *halal* certification logo, the process and name of the product or meal and beverages itself.

The study indicates that *attitude* is positive and moderately correlated with *tourist-driven* which is $r=0.673$ and p values is $p<0.01$. *Attitude* in *halal* information can be described as the perception, view or thinking and influencing the action that will take towards *halal* products, meal and beverages. Muslim are encouraged to avoid doubts or hesitation during choose *halal* products, meals and beverages. The *attitude* is influencing Muslim user and cautions during purchasing the product, services, meal and beverages. *Attitude* of Muslim travelers towards *halal* information preferences are able to enhance contribution of halal tourism industry in countries, which meet the shariah and Islamic compliance.

Conclusion

In conclusion, wherever or place Muslim choose to travel, they are still aware of *halal* issues because of their religious knowledge and belief. *Halal* tourism industry will attract more people especially Muslim to visit their places. With shariah compliant services and food provided by any countries visited, Muslim travellers feel more confident and reliable, consequently this help in boosting the economy of visiting places.

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