

The Influence of Religious Commitment on Consumer Decision to Purchase Halal Food via Food Delivery Services

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of religious commitment on Malaysian customers' decisions to purchase Halal cuisine via meal delivery apps. The research methodology involved collecting primary data through an electronic questionnaire survey administered to Malaysian consumers with experience using food delivery applications. A total of 213 valid responses were gathered, and descriptive analysis and structural equation modelling were used to analyse them. The findings show that consumers' decisions to order Halal food delivery are highly influenced by their religious devotion. The decision to purchase Halal food increases by 0.73 standard deviations for every one standard deviation rise in religious devotion. The study also reveals that religious commitment accounts for approximately 53% of the variance in the decision to purchase Halal food, underscoring its importance in shaping consumer behaviour. These findings align with previous research on the influence of religiosity on Halal food purchasing. Therefore, food delivery companies should develop tailored marketing strategies that cater to the specific needs of religious consumers, including the presence of halal certificates and logos, adherence to Islamic dietary laws, and clear communication regarding the food's halal status. This study highlights the significance of considering religious commitment in understanding and targeting the preferences of Malaysian consumers in relation to the delivery of Halal food. By addressing the unique requirements and concerns of religious consumers, food delivery companies can effectively serve this growing market segment.

Keywords: Religious Commitment, Halal Food, Food Delivery Services, Consumer Decision-Making

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Religiosity is described as an individual's devotion to the religion he or she professes and its teachings, as evidenced by the individual's attitudes and behaviours (Sungkar 2010). So, religious commitment is the degree to which a person adheres to his or her religious values, beliefs, and practises and uses them in daily life (E. L. Worthington et al. 2003). The majority of 63.5% of Malaysian population, which amounted to 20.6 million, is Muslim. 18.7% of them are Buddhist, 6.1% are Christian, and 9.1% are Hindu. The rest are other religion or no religion (Department of Statistics Malaysia 2022). Religion has been extensively researched in many fields, including theology, philosophy, anthropology, history, and sociology. It can be approached as a dependent variable using economic tools and methods or as an independent variable influencing other socio-economic outcomes (Iyer 2015). Individuals who follow a faith have certain thoughts that can affect their decisions because religion is an aspect of culture that can determine the individual's actions (Bukhari et al. 2019). Religious belief influences people's attitudes and feelings towards specific products within the framework of consumption theory. Religion can strongly influence consumer behaviour and purchasing decisions (Muslichah, Abdullah, and Abdul Razak 2020). In Islamic law itself, there are laws that affect the consumption behaviour of Muslim (Putri, Daryanti, and Ningtias 2018 and Ayuniyyah, Hafidhuddin, and Hambari, n.d.). According to Surah Al-Baqarah, verse 168, one of the key priorities of Islamic teaching for its followers is to consume all acceptable (*halal*) and good (*thayyib*) goods. Besides that, Quran and Sunnah also had determined which foods are lawful and which are unlawful for Muslims such as stated in verse 173 of Surah Al-Baqarah.

In Malaysia, there are seven Halal schemes, which are food and beverage, consumer goods, food premises, abattoir slaughterhouse, logistic, pharmaceutical, cosmetics, and toiletries (Halal Malaysia Official Portal n.d.). Food consumption is the most important among them for meeting consumers' basic needs (Varinli, Erdem, and Avcilar 2016). Food and beverage are the most products that have been certified Halal with a sum of 505 319 compared to other products such as 17 280 products for cosmetics and personal care, and 9 750 pharmaceutical products (Verify Halal n.d.). Covid-19 has drastically altered lifestyle and diet selection factors. The market for halal meal delivery has expanded rapidly, attracting customers from a variety of religious backgrounds. This trend has spawned a halal meal delivery niche sector, with several enterprises catering to the expanding demand for halal-certified food products. As a result, in order to enter the halal food industry, sellers must first identify the elements that influence customer purchase decisions. Halal certificates and logos typically assist retailers in differentiating their items. This allows consumers to distinguish between halal and non-halal items (Muslichah, Abdullah, and Abdul Razak 2020). Prior to the introduction of halal certification, people's faith in halal status was established by how merchants and food providers persuaded them that the meals were halal. They believe the meals are halal if cooked by Muslims, and Muslims consider this type of food product to be guaranteed halal (Fathullah Harun et al. 2021). Therefore, understanding the influence of religious commitment on the decision to purchase halal food via food delivery services is of utmost importance for companies operating in this market. This study aims to address a knowledge gap by exploring the relationship between religious commitment and purchasing decisions in the context of halal food via food delivery, and suggesting potential consequences for firms in this industry.

2.0 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

In recent years, the worldwide halal food market has grown significantly, with an increasing number of consumers demonstrating interest in halal food items. Halal food is food that has been prepared and eaten in compliance with Islamic dietary regulations. Food is considered halal when it meets several criteria, including the absence of prohibited ingredients such as pork, blood, and alcohol, among others, the slaughtering of animals according to Islamic rituals; and the use of tools free from *najis* during preparation, manufacturing, and storage (Department of Standards Malaysia 2009). In addition to traditional brick and mortar halal food establishments, the introduction of halal meal via food delivery services has made halal food products more accessible to consumers. Grabfood, Lalamove, FoodPanda, AirAsia Food, and SmartBite are just a few of the food delivery companies in Malaysia. Most clients like these services, particularly those who live in metropolitan areas and are preoccupied with their jobs. According to Chai and Yat (2019), this is the primary reason for the concentration of delivery service providers in Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Penang, and Johor Bahru.

Despite the Covid-19 outbreak, Malaysia's Muslim populations are more vigilant in ensuring that the food given to them is halal, with integrity and cleanliness being their top considerations when selecting food. This concern stems from their growing understanding of halal food consumption and the critical role of interactive platforms such as social media, news, radio, and other technology in communicating halal-related information to customers, which can effectively boost their awareness of halal and any product or service provided (M. Al Amin et al. 2021). Muslim consumers are likewise concerned about the safety and quality of the meals they receive. They frequently refer to restaurant information updates or search engine portals dedicated to certain food service suppliers. Clients may choose the meal based on prior customer evaluations and ratings (Fathullah Harun et al. 2021). Furthermore, effective on-time delivery (OTD) performance is important for customer satisfaction and loyalty when ordering meals online (Kedah, Ismail, and Ahmed 2015). It is encouraging to observe the underlying factors that drive consumer purchasing decisions, particularly the role of religious commitment.

Despite the significant growth and demand for meal delivery services among Malaysian Muslims, little research has been undertaken on the Halal element of this type of service. Understanding the influence of religious commitment on consumer decision-making in the halal food purchasing is essential for food delivery companies. Such insights can help these companies develop effective marketing strategies that resonate with the religious beliefs and practises of their target consumers. This research is crucial not only for enhancing consumer satisfaction but also for contributing to the broader understanding of the intersection between religion and consumer behavior in a modern digital economy. Furthermore, this study might add to the current literature on the relationship between religion and purchasing decisions in the context of halal cuisine. As a result, the goal of this study is to investigate the impact of religious devotion on the decision to purchase halal meal via food delivery.

3.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Factors Influencing Consumer Purchasing on Halal Food

There are several studies regarding consumer purchase of Halal food. Different researchers found different factors influencing consumers to purchase Halal food. The most significant factor is religiosity. Religiosity is the most frequent factor influencing consumers' intention to purchase halal products (Varinli et al., 2016, and Hayat Muhammad Awan Ahmad Nabeel

Siddiquei Zeeshan Haider, 2015) and repurchase halal cosmetics (Putri, Daryanti, and Ningtias 2018). It also have been supported by Ahmad, Rahman, and Rahman (2015) where religiosity is a greater impact on one's attitudes towards Halal food and cosmetic products. Besides that, religiosity is also influence customers' decision to purchase halal-certified food products (Ayuniyyah, Hafidhuddin, and Hambari, n.d.) and one of the important purchase drivers for Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) household products in India (Sardana, Cavusgil, and Gupta 2021).

Another influential category revolves around psychological factors, often examined through the lens of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). This theory introduces three main factors influencing a consumer's intention to purchase; attitude, subject norms and perceived behavioural control (Sarwar et al. 2015). These three factors positively influenced Behavioural Intention to Use (BIU) and Continuance Behavior (CB) to use Mobile Food Delivery Applications (MFDAs) (M. Al Amin et al. 2021) and Non-Muslim consumers' perceptions of halal food products, particularly in the setting of Malaysia (Sarwar et al. 2015). However, intention to buy halal food among Gen Y consumers was influenced by subjective standards and perceived behavioral control, but attitude was unaffected due to Gen Y's exposure to modern communication technology and social media. Gen Y likes to eat at well-known and fashionable establishments, and documenting their dining experiences on social media platforms demonstrates their lack of knowledge about halal food (Marmaya, Zakaria, and Mohd Desa 2019). This result contradicts research by Abdul Khalek et al. which attitude and perceived behavioural control influenced young consumers in Klang Valley, Malaysia to consume halal food but the subjective norm was insignificant (Abdul Khalek, Syed Ismail, and Mohamad Ibrahim 2015).

Researchers delve into societal perception (Hayat Muhammad Awan Ahmad Nabeel Siddiquei Zeeshan Haider 2015) and knowledge (Billah, Ahabur Rahman, and Hossain 2020) as additional factors affecting consumers' Halal food purchases. Different nations exhibit diverse attitudes toward halal food products in Malaysia, encompassing perspectives, level of knowledge, and religiosity, despite the majority of the population being Muslim (Said et al. 2014). Conversely, halal knowledge shows a diminished impact on attitudes towards both halal food and cosmetic items (Ahmad, Rahman, and Rahman 2015). Similarly, it exerts minimal influence on the behaviour and shopping intentions of Muslim consumers at retail outlets (Suki and Salleh 2018). Said et al. (2014) highlight deficiencies in halal knowledge, information and education provided by government entities.

Beyond religiosity, psychological factors, societal perception, and knowledge, other factors play a role in Halal purchase intention. Marketing (Varinli et al., 2016, and Hayat Muhammad Awan Ahmad Nabeel Siddiquei Zeeshan Haider, 2015) and halal certification (Hayat Muhammad Awan Ahmad Nabeel Siddiquei Zeeshan Haider 2015) are emphasized. The halal certification logo shown at the Kopitiam restaurant prompted Muslim consumers to dine there (Mohd et al. 2019). The impact of factors like food safety and hygiene are also explored. Perception of food safety influenced Behavioral Intention to Use (BIU) and Continuance Behavior (CB) to use Mobile Food Delivery Applications (MFDAs) (M. Al Amin et al. 2021), but is not consumers' repurchase intention towards canned sardine (Omar et al. 2020). Hygiene positively impacted Behavioural Intention to Use BIU Mobile Food Delivery Applications (MFDAs) (M. Al Amin et al. 2021) and constitutes consumers' attitude towards street food in Phuket (Torres Chavarria and Phakdee-auksorn 2017). Researchers also found additional factors influencing consumer to purchase halal products, such as halal awareness (Hayat Muhammad Awan Ahmad Nabeel Siddiquei Zeeshan Haider 2015), halal image (Suki and Salleh 2018), affection, perceived service

quality, satisfaction, food quality, value (Torres Chavarria and Phakdee-auksorn 2017) and price perception (Varinli, Erdem, and Avcilar, 2016 and Omar et al., 2020).

3.2 Consumer Religiosity and Halal Food

Many studies have been conducted to evaluate the impact of religion on consumers to purchases of halal food. According to a study conducted in Pakistan, extremely pious Muslim customers would follow Islamic principles of food consumption by assessing food ingredients, spending moderately and validating a halal label before purchasing. However, regardless of religious stage, Pakistani brand users make purchasing decisions based on perceived product value, quality and their own healthy lifestyle (Bukhari et al. 2019). Religiosity has also not modified the link between Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) components and halal buying intention (Memon et al. 2019). Religion has a significant impact on opinions about the halal label of items from non-Muslim majority nations, such as South Korea, but has little effect on purchase intention. Religiosity, as mediated by an attitude towards the halal label, has a favourable but minor effect on purchase intention (Astuti and Asih 2021). However, Imtiyaz, Soni, and Yukongdi (2021) discovered that religious conviction is one of the important characteristics that is positively related to purchase intention and consumption of convenience food in emerging economies such as India. Religiosity also works as a moderating variable in the link between awareness and purchase decision among Brunei students (Muslichah, Abdullah, and Abdul Razak 2020).

The relationship between religious adherence and the purchase of halal food is the subject of certain studies. In the context of the Iranian consumer market, Mirkhah and Karami (2019) investigate the relationship between religious observance and the purchase of self-expressive (SE) brand products as well as consumers' recall of brands for Western versus local brand products. According to the results, people show less affinity for SE brand products the more religious they are. Additionally, there is no demonstrable correlation between customers' brand memories of Western products and their religious affiliation. Hosseini, Mirzaei, and Iranmanesh (2019) discovered that religious commitment in Malaysia positively modifies the association between food storage and transportation and the willingness to pay for halal-certified food.

Shiite consumers in Lebanon have more trust in their ability to judge Muslim products and are more likely to purchase them. In contrast to Shiites, Sunni consumers are more likely to purchase imported Halal goods (Farah 2021). On the other side, Maison et al. (2019) provide two products which are cake and energy drink with or without the halal label to examine the impact of the label on consumer views among Indonesian-Muslims who score highly on the Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS). The findings show that among Muslims who performed well on the CRS for both the cake and energy drink, the halal label improved positive product perceptions. In previous studies, the Ethiopian milk market was used as a case study to determine the preferences of urban dairy customers for the traits of milk sellers. This study discovered that consumers who consider religion prefer co-religious vendors and that consumers who consider gender prefer female sellers (D'Haene et al. 2021). Furthermore, raising religious salience in product promotion increases purchase intentions among Muslim consumers in the UAE (Nickerson and Nandialath 2019).

3.3 Purchasing Halal Meal via Online Food Delivery

There are a few research studies on online food delivery application (FDAs) that are relevant to halal food. Most research is regarding consumer behaviour. Consumer trustworthiness is

important. Consumers and food producers trust online FDAs as a platform to simplify the process for consumers to order food and for producers to market their products, even though consumers have little knowledge of product safety, halal status, and the quality of food items throughout transportation from food outlets to customers (Ramadhani et al., 2022, and Ahmad Nizar and Zainal Abidin, 2021). Based on the restaurant's rating, product photos, and taste, customers believe the products sold online FDAs are safe and halal. If there is no information indicating these items contain non-halal components, customers believe that they are halal (Ramadhani et al. 2022). Food delivery service providers should understand how to handle food and be aware of halal and food safety issues during preparation and delivery, according to Fathullah Harun et al. (2021). They must also be vigilant about sanitation, food ingredients, expiration dates, storage, and food temperature because any mistakes in food management can result in food poisoning or death (Fathullah Harun et al. 2021). Quality criteria for 'variety of food choices,' 'price' and 'trustworthiness' were most important to single-person families. In comparison, multi-person households valued 'design,' 'convenience,' and 'trustworthiness' the most (Cho, Bonn, and Li 2019).

Besides that, most researchers study on factors influencing consumer behavioral intentions and satisfaction in FDAs by employing the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT-2). Factors such as effort expectancy, performance expectancy, price saving orientation (Ramos, 2021, and Taylor, 2020), social impact, timeliness, task technology fit, perceived trust, and perceived safety (Muangmee et al. 2021) influence consumers' behavioral intentions and satisfaction in different region. Continued intention to use mobile food delivery applications (MFDAs) in Bangladesh influenced by delivery hygiene, subjective norms, attitudes, and behavioral control (A. Amin et al. 2021). User satisfaction with FDAs is influenced by social influence, trust, convenience, and application quality (Chotigo and Kadono 2021) and other factors such as number of vendors, food style, and service attitude of the delivery staff (Liu and Chen 2021).

Despite extensive research on consumer intention and satisfaction in FDAs, there is a gap in the literature regarding the role of religious commitment in consumer decisions to purchase halal food via FDAs whereas religiosity is the most common factor influencing consumer purchasing of halal food. Since the focus of this study is to investigate the influence of religious commitment on consumer decision to purchase Halal food via food delivery, the following hypothesis have been proposed:

H1: Religious commitment has a significant influence on the consumer decision to purchase Halal food via food delivery services.

4.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Sample and Data Collection

Primary data were acquired from Malaysian consumers who have used meal delivery apps via an electronic questionnaire survey approach. The survey was given in Malay language using a Google Form, and it was made available online to the respondents via social media and by sharing QR code with people in the Johor Bahru area. In total, 213 samples were collected which are more than minimum 100 sample required as the latent constructs in this paper is less than five with more than three measuring items for each latent construct (Awang 2016).

4.2 Data Collection Instrument

The purpose of the questionnaire was to investigate the impact of religious conviction on consumer decision to purchase halal meal via food delivery apps. There were three sections to the questionnaire. Section A detailed the respondents' demographics. Section B, on the other hand, was designed to assess religious commitment by employing a five-point Likert scale rating system ranging from 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree), adapted from Worthington et al. (2003) and dubbed the Religious Commitment Inventory – 10 (RCI – 10). Hosseini, Mirzaei, and Iranmanesh (2019) utilise it as well. Five-point Likert scale also used in Section C to measure consumer decision in purchasing halal food using food delivery application which the items were adopted from Ayuniyyah, Hafidhuddin, and Hambari (n.d.).

4.3 Reliability and Data Analysis Instrument

Using SPSS, descriptive analysis was conducted to summarise the demographic profile. Following that, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with AMOS 23 was used to perform Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to assess the measurement model's reliability and validity. Following that, AMOS 23 was used to examine the association between religious devotion and the decision to purchase halal meal using a food delivery app.

5.0 RESULT

The following are the respondents' demographic details, which are shown in Table 1

Table 1: Frequency Analysis

Item	Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	66	31
	Female	147	69
Age	Below 21	29	13.6
	21 – 30	107	50.1
	31 – 40	58	27.2
	Above 40	19	9.1
Marital Status	Single	122	57.3
	Married	85	39.9
	Widow	6	2.8
Race	Malay	156	73.2
	Chinese	34	16.0
	Indian	17	8.0
	Others	6	2.8
Religion	Islam	157	73.7
	Christian	9	4.2
	Buddhist	31	14.6
	Hindus	14	6.6
	Others	2	0.9
Employment	Government Servant	30	14.4
	Private	68	31.9
	Businessman	12	5.6
	Housewife	17	8.0
	Student	74	34.7

	Unemployed	3	1.4
	Others	9	4.2
Education	SPM	28	13.1
	Diploma/STPM	64	30.0
	Degree	89	41.8
	Master	25	11.7
	PhD	6	2.8
	Unschooling	1	0.5
Income	B40	149	69.8
	M40	51	24
	T20	13	6.1
State	Johor	116	54.5
	Selangor	34	16.0
	Perak	14	6.6
	Kuala Lumpur	12	5.6
	Kedah	10	4.7
	Others	27	12.6

Table 1 shows that 69% of the responders were female, whereas 31% were male. The majority of the 213 respondents (50.1%) were between the ages of 21 and 30 and were single (57.3%). Considering the race and religion of the respondents, most of them are Malay (73.2%) and Muslim (73.7%). The majority respondents were employed and can be categorized into private (31.9%), government (14.4%) and businessman (5.6%). Most of the respondents are degree holder which contribute 41.5%. The monthly income of most of the respondents in B40 category, which is RM4, 850 and below (69.8%). Most of the respondents, at 54.5%, are Johorean.

5.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

After eliminating the low factor loadings (B1, B2, B3, B10, C1, C2, and C3), the validity and reliability of the data were verified (See Table 2). The loading factor value > 0.7 was retained as the measurement items are valid in measuring the construct (Agus Purwanto and Yuli Sudargini 2021). Additionally, Cronbach's alpha values of 0.946 for religious commitment and 0.936 for the decision to purchase Halal food indicated adequate scale reliability (Shahid et al. 2023).

Table 2: Reliability and Validity of the Constructs

Construct	Measuring Item	Factor loading	Cronbach's Alpha
Religiosity Commitment	B4. Religion is especially important to me because it answers many questions about the meaning of life.	0.85	0.946
	B5. My religious beliefs lie behind my whole approach to life.	0.86	
	B6. I enjoy spending time with others of my religious affiliation.	0.83	
	B7. Religious beliefs influence all my dealings in life.	0.92	
	B8. It is important to me to spend periods of time in private religious thought and reflection.	0.89	
	B9. I enjoy working in the activities of my religious affiliation.	0.83	
Decision to	C4. The formal halal logo from JAKIM gives secured	0.84	0.936

Purchase Halal Food	feeling in consuming Halal food delivery products.		
	C5. The Halal food delivery products with JAKIM halal label have guaranteed quality.	0.79	
	C6. The complete information on the ingredients of food products including formal JAKIM Halal label becomes my consideration in purchasing food products through food delivery application.	0.84	
	C7. I buy JAKIM halal-certified food delivery products because it is in accordance with the Syariah.	0.85	
	C8. I will buy JAKIM halal-certified food delivery products again in the future.	0.88	
	C9. I will recommend others to buy JAKIM Halal-certified food delivery products.	0.85	

To evaluate convergent validity, the composite reliability (CR) should be larger than 0.6, and the average variance extracted (AVE) should be larger than 0.5 (Awang 2016). The CR values of 0.947 for religious commitment and 0.936 for decision to purchase, along with the AVE values of 0.749 for religious commitment and 0.710 for decision to purchase, indicated the achievement of convergent validity. Awang (2016) determined discriminant validity by comparing the CR values to the AVE values and verifying that the diagonal values (in bold) were greater than the values in their corresponding rows and columns. According to the study, the diagonal values of 0.865 for religious commitment and 0.843 for decision to buy were greater than the equivalent row and column values, proving that discriminant validity had been achieved (Awang 2016). Furthermore, the correlation of 0.728 between religious commitment and decision to purchase indicated that these two constructs were not redundant and could be further analyzed (See Table 3).

Table 3: Model Validity Measures

Construct	CR	AVE	Religious Commitment	Decision to Purchase
Religious Commitment	0.947	0.749	0.865	
Decision to Purchase	0.936	0.710	0.728	0.843

The model's fitness was subsequently assessed in accordance. The Chi-square divided by the df value (CMIN/DF) < 3.0 was regarded as excellent in the model fit summary (Awang 2016). Based on Figure 1, the findings revealed that the Chisq/df = 2.236, p = 0.000. Additionally, it was noted that the IFI = 0.972, the CFI = 0.972, the TLI = 0.965, the NFI = 0.951 and the RFI = 0.939. Awang (2016) stated that the RMSEA < 0.08 was considered to be good, and the results showed that the RMSEA = 0.076. As a result, the model fit was accomplished (See Figure 1).

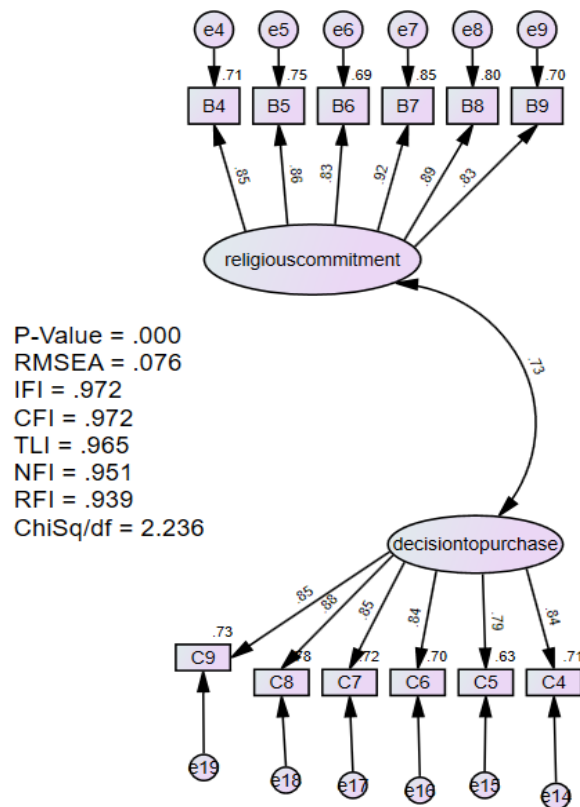


Figure 1: The Measurement Model

Based on these findings, the measurement model’s validity and reliability were confirmed, indicating that the data was adequate for further research to investigate the influence of religious commitment on the customer decision to purchase halal food via food delivery.

5.2 Analyzing the SEM Structural Model

Following the evaluation of the construct measurement model, the structural model is evaluated. In this regard, the structured model was tested using a variety of criteria, including the statistical significance of path coefficients, the coefficient of determination R^2 , and the regression path coefficients. The results, as shown in Table 4, show that the standardised beta estimate for the influence of religious commitment on the choice to purchase is 0.73. This means that when religious commitment grows by one standard deviation, the decision to order halal food delivery increases by 0.73 standard deviations.

According to Table 4, the value of the coefficient R^2 is 0.53, indicating that religious commitment contributes 53% to estimating the decision to purchase halal food. This means that the predictors of the purchasing decision account for 53% of its variance. In other words, the error variance associated with the decision to purchase halal meal via food delivery is approximately 47 percent of the variance associated with the decision to purchase itself.

Table 4: The Standardized Regression Weight and The Squared Multiple Correlations (R^2)

Relationship	Standardized Beta	R^2	Decision
Religious Commitment → Decision to Purchase	0.73	0.53	Accepted

Table 5 below indicates the regression path coefficients for religious commitment in predicting decision to purchase Halal food via food delivery:

Table 5: The Regression Coefficient for Religious Commitment in Predicting Decision to Purchase Halal Food Delivery

Relationship	The Actual Beta Value	S. E	C.R	P-value
Decision to Purchase ← Religious Commitment	0.57	0.050	11.468	***

*** Indicate a highly significant at <0.001

With reference to Table 5, the regression weight estimates of 0.57 has a standard error of roughly 0.050. The critical ratio (CR) of 0.57/0.050, or 11.468, is obtained by dividing the regression weight estimate by its standard error. Alternatively, the regression weight estimate is 11.468 standard errors above zero. Getting a crucial ratio with an absolute value of 11.468 has a less than 0.001% probability of occurring. As a result, this indicates that choosing to order halal meal delivery was highly influenced by one’s religious devotion.

6.0 DISCUSSIONS

The outcome demonstrates that consumers’ decisions regarding obtaining halal food through food delivery are influenced by their adherence to their religion. Religious commitment was found to have a significantly positive effect on the decision to purchase halal food via food delivery, consistent with the theory of religious values (E. L. J. Worthington 1988). Hence, it shows that H1 is supported. This result is attributed to the majority of respondents being Muslim, who prioritize halal options in their meal choices (Bukhari et al. 2019). Non-Muslim consumers, on the other hand, perceive halal food as safer (Billah, Ahbabur Rahman, and Hossain 2020). This result is in line with preliminary researches carried out by Varinli, Erdem, and Avcilar (2016), Hayat Muhammad Awan Ahmad Nabeel Siddiquei Zeeshan Haider (2015), Sardana, Cavusgil, and Gupta (2021) and Ayuniyyah, Hafidhuddin, and Hambari (n.d.) which also identified the influence of religiosity on halal food purchasing. However, religiosity is not important to influence brand users as studied by Mirkhah and Karami (2019) and Bukhari et al. (2019). Therefore, in order to cater to religious consumers, it is crucial for food delivery companies to devise effective marketing strategies that consider various aspects of halal food. These include ensuring the presence of halal certificates and logos (Muslichah, Abdullah, and Abdul Razak 2020), ensuring that the food does not contain prohibited ingredients, adhering to Islamic ritual slaughter practices for animals, using tools that are free from *najis* (Department of Standards Malaysia 2009), maintaining cleanliness (M. Al Amin et al. 2021), together with precise explanations of the food’s halal status requirements (Fathullah Harun et al. 2021).

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

Despite a substantial rise in demand for these services among Malaysian Muslims, minimal study has been undertaken on the halal element of food delivery services. According to prior study, religiosity is the most common factor driving people to buy halal food. As a result, this work would fill the gap in the literature by investigating the influence of religious commitment on consumer decisions to purchase halal food via a food delivery application. Religious commitment significantly influences the decision of Malaysian consumers to purchase halal food through food delivery applications. The study discovered that increasing religious devotion by one standard deviation increases the decision to order halal meal delivery by 0.73 standard deviation. Furthermore, religious commitment contributes to approximately 53% of the variance in the decision to purchase halal food, indicating its importance in shaping consumer behaviour. These findings are consistent with earlier research that additionally discovered a religious influence on halal food purchasing. Food delivery businesses must recognise the importance of

religious consumers and devise successful marketing tactics to meet their needs. In summary, the study emphasizes the importance of considering religious commitment in understanding and targeting the preferences of Malaysian consumers when it comes to halal food delivery. By addressing the specific requirements and concerns of religious consumers, food delivery companies can effectively meet the demands of this growing market segment.

The findings of this study offer valuable insights into the impact of religious commitment on consumer decision to purchase Halal food via food delivery. However, it's important to acknowledge certain limitations in the results. One limitation is that this study not uses a probability sampling technique, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to the general population. Therefore, future research should employ a probability-sampling approach to enhance the applicability of their results to the general populace. Another limitation is the data were collected only in Johor Baharu, which may lead to sampling bias. Therefore, future research should extend this study to other cities and other countries. A suggested avenue for further research is a comparative analysis of food delivery applications between Malaysia and Indonesia. Additionally, this study focused solely on the influence of religious commitment on online Halal food purchases via food delivery. To enrich future research, other variables including potential mediators or moderators, could be incorporated.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper

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