

# The Awareness of Gen Z's toward Halal Food Industry

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**Abstract** This study focus on the issues and challenges of halal food industry implementation in Malaysia. Conflict to decide the halal-ness of the product is a new concept worth being discuss in the context of halal food implementation and certification. Other issue is the usage of Halal certification logo toward industry, rectify halal-ness have also been extensively reviewed. It was found that consumer still has skeptical attitudes towards halal logo and certification. Some of the industry has found that the logo and status can affects the marketing tool for business expansion. Halal assurance system has been found to be a wholesome system that ensures other systems such as Good Hygiene Practice (GHP), Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) which has been established and incorporated together. Halal governance hinders the process of certification, and thus has made it difficult for small and medium enterprise to establish halal status. Halal validity and traceability need to be established through research and development process. However, it is still under development and in need of support from universities and research centers.

**Keywords** Halal and Haram, Halal Food, Halal Issues, Halal Challenges

## 1. Introduction

The problem held in Muslim Gen Z is they lack of awareness in choosing food industry to consume. Some studies have shown that the lack of knowledge, awareness and understanding of the halal concept between Muslim producers of halal products may lead to the declining values of halal-ness. Malaysia which is a country with Islamic background has a minority of Muslim producers and 80% of halal products are manufactured by non-Muslims. Therefore, it has become a huge challenge for Muslim society to contribute more halal products in the local economy as well as internationally. Some of Gen Z lack of awareness that they didn't get noticed the halal logo or certificates by JAKIM to consume food and beverage in specific restaurant or product bought.

The understanding of halal industry can be enlightened by comprehending the world halal first. Halal originates from an Arabic world means 'permissible' or 'lawful' under Islamic Law. It refer to Al-Quran and Sunnah. The term halal explains any entity or action which is allowed to be purchase or implied to the body, according to Islamic Law. The reverse of halal is haram, meaning 'forbidden', which is assigned to anything that is forbidden under Islamic law. Muslim globally are opposite daily problem associated with the concept of Halal and Haram, as this concept is not limited to the food product. Halal branding is not a new issue in the

halal market despite being still in the early stages for some product.

According to the Quran and Sunnah, drink that contain alcohol and alcoholic beverage are haram in Islam. Even a drop of alcohol is haram and must be avoid by every Muslim. However, jurists have different on the 'Najasah' or the physical impurity of alcohol. Some of them consider it 'Najis' means impure which is if it not touches the human body or cloth, then a person must wash them immediately to purify himself. In Al-Quran also stated that, Muslim have to emphasis the usage of halal industry without forbidden ingredient.

*"O you who believe! Khamr (all kinds of alcoholic content), gambling, Al-Ansaab, and Al-Azlaam (arrows for seeking luck or decision) are Rijs of Shaitaan's (Satan) handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful."* [Surah Al-Ma'idah 5:90]

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Halal and Haram

In Islamic law, Muslims stress on the importance of the permissibility of sources of food to be consumed. This is because food intake will boost the development of human wellness and behaviour. Haram food is explicitly prohibited in the Qur'an, Sunnah and the consensus of the Muslim jurist (Ijma'). Muslim were prohibited from eating the flesh of pork and its derivatives as it is a sin and impiety to do so. These rulings have been stated from Islamic law as guidelines to all of mankind. Besides, eating of haram materials and using it as an adulterant or additives in food

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Published online at <http://journal.sapub.org/mm>

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products are also forbidden. This is clearly demonstrated in many verses of the Quran. In Surah al-Maidah, for example Allah says:

“Forbidden unto you (for good) are carrion and blood and flesh of the swine, and that over which is invoked the name of other than Allah, and the strangled, and the dead through beating, and the dead through falling from a height, and that which has been killed by (the goring of) horns, and the devoured of wild beasts, unless you have cleansed (by slaughtering) it in the proper, lawful way, while yet there is life in it, and that which has been immolated unto idols. And (forbidden is it) that ye swear by the divine arrows. This is an abomination.”

(Al-Ma'idah, 5: 3).

There are many reasons for the prohibition of pigs and one of the reasons is to protect Muslims from harm. It is submitted; however, that only Allah (s.w.t.) knows the exact reason and the real wisdom as to why pork is prohibited. From that perspective, Muslim scholars have a consensus opinion (Ijma') on prohibition for all part of pig. (A. Fadzlillah, B. Che Man, Jamaludin, Ab. Rahman, and A. Al-Kahtani 2011)

## 2.2. Halal Issue

Halal issue is starting to get the place and attention in the market, and it is very influencing in marketplace particularly in most Islamic countries. Among halal issues that arisen are including improper hygienic practice at processing premises and also the expiration of halal certification. At the same time, halal logistics capabilities are critical in ensuring that the halal integrity of the supply chain works from farm to fork. Since 2003, halal issues have been discussed and obtained highly attention by the Prime Minister of Malaysia. In today's global market, the concept of halal can no longer be restricted to simply meaning food that is 'pork free'. It is noted that it covers a multitude of forms such as emulsifiers and other food contents e.g. gelatine, enzymes, lecithin and glycerine as well as additives such as stabilizers, flavourings, colourings, breadcrumbs etc. These contribute to food that has been enhanced or added by doubtful substances or animal enzymes in to halal food products and questionable in Islamic law basically, halal almost related to the way of slaughtering of animals for Muslim's consumption. However, halal issue also attracted non-Muslim consumers' awareness and needs since it related to the highest quality of products and services that they consumed or used. Halal principles are not isolated to the religious only but appeal as healthy and hygienic cuisine style as people become more health-conscious. According to the, there are strong demands for halal product in non-Muslim countries. They chose to eat halal food due to the perception that it is a healthy choice. Due to lack of knowledge and insufficient information on the benefits of halal process, they are not practicing it on their daily lives. According to, Muslims regard foods and products with halal logo as permissible to be used or consumed in

accordant with Islamic law. (Majid, Abidin, Hayati, Chik 2015)

## 2.3. Halal Food

Halal food market exists wherever there are Muslim consumers whose tastes and preferences are governed by halal rules on food specification. Halal food may apparently be the same as other food, but its nature, technique of its processing involving the ingredients, handling, use of various methods from the beginning to the end, is always the one approved and recommended by Islamic law. The correct labelling on halal food is essential for consumers, because certain labels can often be misleading (HFA, 2002-2003). Riaz (1996) argues that there are very few labels on food items in grocery stores that indicate whether the food product is halal for Muslim consumption or not. Many different models have been proposed to explain consumer behavior towards food in general for example the work of buying behaviour of food products by Acebron, Mangin & Dopico (2000), the behavioural perspective model (Leek, Maddock & Foxall, 2000), and classical attitude behavioural model (Trondsen, Braaten, Lund & Eggen, 2004). In general, all of these models show that choice and motivation toward food consumption are driven by attitude towards the product. (Mohani, Ismail, Hashim, Johari 2009)

## 2.4. Halal Challenge

Marketing problems are actually closely related to many reasons. Among these, the lack of food industry small operators that have halal certification. Only about 15% of small food business with halal certification. This resulted in the lack of 'market-share' that would lead to the lack of opportunities in the global marketplace (Opening Speech of Seminar on Halal Food Standards EN 1500: 2004 – Realization of SME Sector In Halal Food Industry, December 5, 2006). Recognizing this need, small entrepreneurs should take advantage of business opportunities in the halal industry to reap the benefits of increasing profits for halal food areas have great potential to generate income. Looking at the involvement of small entrepreneurs in the halal food industry, it is still lacking due to a variety of capital constraints, competition, technology and weak business networks as well as lack of experience from the marketing aspect of their business expansion (Sazelin Arif, 2008). Apart from the lack of awareness in obtaining halal certification, most of halal food small entrepreneurs are lacking of knowledge about the registration requirements for intellectual property ownership. The products they produce should be registered so as to avoid infringement of their intellectual property. Several studies conducted have proven that entrepreneurs who registered intellectual property protection can increase the market value of their products, able to get the opportunity into the global market and able to get profitable returns. (Dr. Che Mohd Zulkifli Che Omar 2013).

### 3. Methodology

For this research. We used primary data to gain information. We have been choosing Gen Z in Kuala Lumpur area for our sample. We conduct two different way which is interview and observation to gain the information for the research study. We do the observation at the restaurant that don't have halal certification for our sample. Meanwhile, we also conduct the interview towards Gen Z for their opinion and behavioural of the awareness. In addition, we also took 3-5 minute for each respondent asking whether they aware of halal consummation and how it related.

### 4. Finding

Based on the review on the existing literature and the research done by previous researcher, we have summarized the findings on the awareness of gen-z towards halal food. There are 2 type of survey that has been conducted to collect information toward the awareness of gen-z on halal food, there are observation and interview. Though the test has been conducted earlier in the pilot test, different result could be obtained based from higher number of responses to the survey (Vloreen Nity Mathew, Ardiana Mazwa Raudah binti Amir Abdullah, and Siti Nurazizah binti Mohamad Ismail, 2016).

Our finding conclude that, Gen Z are not aware the halal logo on the product and also halal labelled on restaurants. Aunty Anne is a franchise chain food industry that not approved as a halal food production in Malaysia. But, from our observation, there are many Muslim among Gen-Z in Malaysia consume the product of Aunty Anne's. *"Aunty Anne's quality assurance and halal executive Farhatul Kamilah Mohamed Szali said the popular pretzel chain had submitted several options and was now waiting for a decision from Jakim's panel."* (Free Malaysia Today, October 2016).

Gen Z has many lack of awareness towards many things such as the ingredient in the food itself. Many restaurants and food products in Malaysia produced by non-Muslim. They (non-Muslim food producer) also not aware the ingredient in their recipe. They just put the ingredient in the food to make the taste good and delicious. Most of the producer and restaurant not labelling that they are selling non-halal food to the public. Ingredient such as gelatine used in sweets are made from animal fat. Most of gelatine are made from pig fat. pig are forbade by Muslim to consume. In Islam, the animal must be slaughter properly according to Syariah only can be eaten by Muslim and considered Halal.

Gen Z lifestyle also contribute to lack of awareness to halal consumption. Gen Z are generation of millennial and they are exposed widely to technology and media social. Eating in famous and stylish restaurant may gave them popularity to be shown into social media application to the

public. The food they are consume may not be halal to eat. But because of their lifestyle, they not are not aware to the halal-ness of the food. For example some Samyang Ramen Noodle is a production from Korea that is not halal. But it become a trend to youth in Malaysia called "Ramen challenge" that they recorded eating the spicy ramen and upload into internet.

### 5. Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the awareness of Gen Z's toward Halal food industry. Therefore, practical implications extend to food policy decision-makers and food marketers who might pursue identity- and/ or acculturation-related strategies in their distribution and communication efforts targeted at the growing Halal food market segment among Gen Z's consumers in Malaysia. In addition, understanding the why and how consumers perceive Halal food products can lead manufacturers to increase their level of awareness and knowledge on Halal principles and Halal food process in order to gain the most efficient way of communicating marketing information to their consumers. As JAKIM is the only main body that could certify halal food certifications, they should improve current halal practices in food industries. Halal food operators are new to the standard and need constant guidance from JAKIM. However, despite suspending or cancelling halal certificates of operators that do not comply with the halal standard, JAKIM may enforce a penalty that serves as punishment. In the perspective of the value chain, the manufacturers have to play significant role in establishing halal concept. In addition, JAKIM should encourage small business especially SMEs to apply for halal certificate. Many of food manufacturers are reluctant to apply for the halal certification. However, in stated that the process for halal certification of the food products is not complicated. As halal certification is important for business operators especially in food business, Malaysia could consider integrating and coordinating the processes and procedures for inspection and certification. Furthermore, to meet the halal requirement, food producers are encouraged to follow the standards that in line with global benchmarks such as ISO9000, Codex Alimentarius, QA, HACCP, GHP and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The present findings have demonstrated that the factors which influence Gen Z Muslims Malaysian consumers in choosing halal food, are mainly base on their instinct to having their meal and didn't concern towards halal food. The Gen Z should have an education about the halal food so that they know about the halal food. Future works should also add more variables that can explain deeper understanding of Muslim awareness. It is important to do that since the topic as earlier explained will attract many attention as Muslims population increase.

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