What Make Intention Halal Food Consumption? Study on Turkey's Consumers' Perspective

Ahasanul Haque[1*], Cansu Tor-Kadioglu[2], Sardar Md Humayun Kabir[3]

[1,3] International Islamic University, Malaysia

[2,] Tarsus University, Turkey

* ahasanul@iium.edu.my

ABSTRACT

The study purposes to investigate the factors that influence Muslim consumers' purchase behaviour on halal food products in Turkey. Based on the extended TPB model; halal food awareness among Muslim consumers, their religious level, social factors, intention to purchase and actual behaviour towards halal food products are investigated. 152 valid responses were obtained using online survey method. Confirmatory factor analyses were performed to ensure reliability and content validity. A structural equation modelling technique was performed to test the hypotheses among variables. It has been understood that the intention to purchase halal food has an effect on the behavioral intention of consumers. Besides, it was understood that the awareness of halal food was not affected by the level of religiosity, and that social factors were effective in awareness of halal food. First, some respondents were unwilling to respond to survey due to the sensitivity of religious issues. Secondly, the sample of the research was limited to Turkey. A comparative study would be desirable between other Muslim countries. This study contributes to the literature and sectoral inferences can be made.

Keywords

Halal Food, Purchase Behavior, Muslim Consumers, Turkey, Marketing

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Introduction

The halal food market has developed fastly over the past decade. It is growing rapidly, especially when it comes to food which is consumed every day. Second largest religion all around world is Islam and it is expected that the halal food market grow from 1.4 trillion U.S. dollars in 2017 to around 2.6 trillion by 2024. The main consumer of halal food is Muslims although it is not exclusively produced for them. Islamic beliefs in terms of Halal is known to be an important factor in consumer behavior and international marketing decisions (Mokhlis, 2009; Othman and Hashim, 2010:2). According to a recent global market research, Muslims represent an estimated 30% of the world's population, with around 1.9 billion consumers. Understanding this huge large consumer market is essential. Clearly, this quick growing population causes to the increasing demand for halal products. While buying food, Muslim countries abroad also check whether the products have a halal food certificate and begin to make this requirement mandatory. Nowadays, both suppliers and Muslim customers who buy and sell food at home and abroad want to know whether the food they buy and consume is halal and prefer products with halal certification when purchasing. The majority of Muslim countries are in the position of food importers. This basic halal market economy is largely in the fields of halal food, finance, travel, clothing, tourism, medicine and cosmetics. The food sector plays a key role in this halal economy.

Literature Review

The term "Halal" is come from the Quran and refers to some-thing which is legal and allowed. Moreover, the opposite of Halal is Haram which means not allowed or illegal (Muhammad et al., 2009; Rosly, 2010). Halal meaning is allowed, permitted or lawful. Halal food is the food that is prepared in compliance with the Islamic law or also known as the Sharia law. The principle of Halal is based on Quran (the Muslim Holy book) and Sunnah (habitual practices of Prophet Muhammad). (Syukur and Nimsai; 2018:2). Halal is an Arabic term meaning 'permissible'. So, it is crucial to approve the status of the products if they are halal or haram. The subject of allowed and not allowed status is important for Muslims, as it relates to religious arguments (Al-Mamun et al., 2019:370). Halal food coverage must meet the following conditions (Talib and Johan, 2012: 95):

- It should not contain the meat of animals that are considered haram or not slaughtered with feeding
- It should not contain material accepted as impure
- It should be safe and not harmful
- It should not be prepared where non-halal or deemed impure products are prepared

- The content of the products should not contain any human parts.
- It should be separated from haram products during production, preparation, packaging, storage processes or distribution.

Figure 1 represents the estimated market income of halal food products from 2018 to 2027 whereas Figure 2 represents potential Muslim market value worldwide in 2017 and 2023. In line with the context, some statistics also have been presented. Table 1 represents the regional distribution of Muslim population between 2010 and 2030 whereas table 2 represents the top 20 Muslim majority countries in the world in the year 2020. Muslim consumers are unique because they have restrictions on what they have to eat, mainly when it comes to eating animals. Muslims abstain from eating dead meat, pork, blood, anything invoked in the name of other than Allah (Quran 5:3) and anything containing wine (Quran 2 :219) and other alcoholic ingredients.

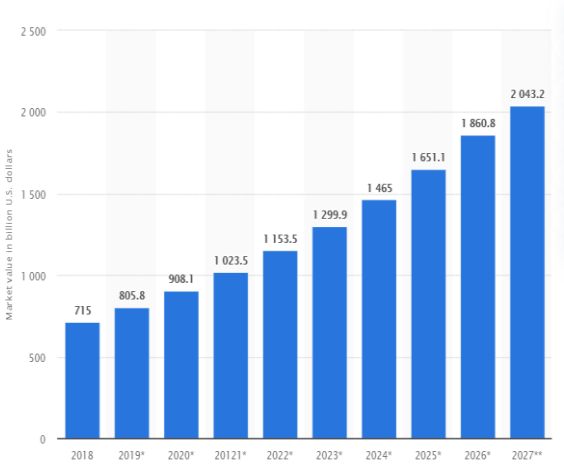

Fig 1. Estimated market revenue from 2018 to 2027 (Source: Statista, 2020)

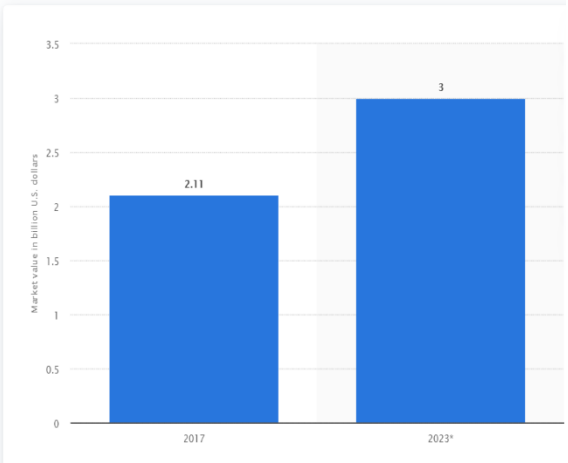

Fig 2. Value of Muslim market worldwide in 2017 and 2023 (Source: Statista, 2020)

It is possible to say that the Muslim population has increased over the years in different regions and all over the world. Table 1 shows that regional distribution of Muslims from 2010 to 2030.

Table 1. Regional distribution of Muslim population between 2010 and 2030

	2010		2030	
Region	Estimated Muslim Population	Estimated Percentage of Global Muslim Population	Projected Muslim Population	Projected Percentage of Global Muslim Population
World	1,619,314,000	100%	2,190,154,000	100%
Asia-Pasific	1,005,507,000	62.1	1,295,625,000	59.2
Middle East-North Africa	321,869,000	19.9	439,453,000	20.1
Sub-Saharan Africa	242,544,000	15.0	385,939,000	17.6
Europe	44,138,000	2.7	58,209,000	2.7
Americas	5,256,000	0.3	10,927,000	0.5

(Source: PerForum, 2011)

Asia is the biggest market for halal food whereas America is the least. Looking at the year 2010, it is understood that more than half of the Muslims in the world lived in the Asian- Pacific region. It is predicted that this leadership will continue in 2030. Middle East-North Africa is the place with the highest number of Muslims in the world after Asia in 2030.

Table 2. Top 20 Muslim majority countries in the world (2020)

	Country	Muslim Population	Population 2020	Muslim % of Total Population
1	Indonesia	229,000,000	273,523,615	87.20%
2	Pakistan	200,400,000	220,892,340	96.50%
3	Bangladesh	153,700,000	164,689,383	90.40%
4	Egypt	87,500,000	102,334,404	92.35%
5	Iran	82,500,000	83,992,949	99.40%
6	**Turkey**	79,850,000	84,339,067	99.20%
7	Algeria	41,240,913	43,851,044	99.00%
8	Sudan	39,585,777	43,849,260	97.00%
9	Iraq	38,465,864	40,222,493	95.70%
10	Morocco	37,930,989	36,910,560	99.00%
11	Afghanistan	34,836,014	38,928,346	99.60%
12	Saudi Arabia	31,878,000	34,813,871	97.10%
13	Yemen	27,784,498	29,825,964	99.10%
14	Uzbekistan	26,550,000	33,469,203	96.50%
15	Niger	21,101,926	24,206,644	98.30%
16	Mali	17,508,398	20,250,833	95.00%
17	Syria	16,700,000	17,500,658	93.00%
18	Malaysia	16,318,355	32,365,999	61.30%
19	Senegal	15,112,721	16,743,927	96.10%
20	Kazakhstan	13,158,672	18,776,707	70.20%

Table 2 shows the top 20 countries in the world with a Muslim majority. According to a recent global market research, Muslims represent an estimated 30% of the world's population, with around 1.9 billion consumers. Turkey ranks 6th among the 20 countries. Table 2 shows the importance of the use of Turkey in the research sample.

Consumer Behaviour Theory

There are many consumer behaviour theories among which the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) developed by Ajzen in the year 1991 is a well-known and widely used theory in consumer behavioral studies. This theory usually supported by researchers who studied the cognitive elements to predict the behaviour of consumers. According to TPB, there are three important factors, i.e. Attitude, Subjective Norm and Perceived Behavioral Control that influence consumer behaviour. These three components provide a guide to understand of consumers' intention and final behaviour. In the literature, it is possible to come across many consumer behaviour studies based on TPB. Some research is about organic food (Maria et al, 2001; Tarkiainen and Sundqvist, 2005), purchasing behavior (Ajzen, 2015), green product consumption (Paul et al., 2016), luxury product purchase intention (Jain et al., 2015), online purchasing behavior (Hsu et al., 2006), etc.

TPB has some limitations. It is developed for conventional studies. When it comes to the intention to purchase Halal food products, particularly for Muslim consumers, then the theory is not sufficient enough to measure the religious beliefs which is of utmost importance. Therefore, for gaining a comprehensive understanding about the intention of purchasing Halal food, it is necessary to consider Halal awareness and the level of religiousity of Muslim consumers. İn this study, some variables were determined by examining the relevant literature and considering the TPB theory. Indeed, purchasing halal food can be affected by the subjective norm. For instance, a consumer can act on specific pressure groups (Wilson and Grant, 2013).

There are many studies regarding Muslim consumers. Some studies have investigated the relationship between the Halal/Haram according to Islamic Shariah, legal awareness and religiosity of Muslim people and their zakat system (Al-Mamun et al., 2019). Some research is about Halal food purchasing intention (Haque at al., 2015; Vanany et al., 2019; Alam and Sayuti, 2011), Halal labelled food product (Elseidi, 2018), Halal meat (Ahmed, 2008; Allam, 2008; Tieman, 2011; Thomas et al., 2017) the relationship between religiosity and also there are studies about non muslim consumers Halal food purchasing (Bashir, 2019; Ismail and Nasiruddin, 2014; Haque et al., 2015; Mathew, 2014; Wibowo and Ahmad, 2016). However, there is a lack of research that has taken into account the concurrent impact of halal awareness, religiosity level and social factors with purchase intention of halal food.

For such reason, this study has been developed with the final target of examining these relationships, particularly in the setting of Turkey.

Social Factors, Halal Awareness and Purchase Intention

Social factors are subjective norms that refers to the social pressure to perform or not to perform a behavior. In the TPB model, attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control are the level of ease or difficulty in performing a behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Ajzen (1991) also notes that these three determinants of intentions symbolize the influence over their actions by individuals. With the requisite tools and opportunities, combined with intentions, the desired behaviour may be carried out effectively (Ajzen, 1991). Hofstede (2010) describes collectivism as the degree to which persons are incorporated into communities in a society. In the light of related research, social factors, including social norms, are likely to have a major impact on the intention to purchase a halal food product, especially in the Muslim community. Attitude and perceived behavioral influence are personal variables generated by the thought mechanism of a user, while subjective expectations are a social element perceived as a result of witnessing the actions of those around the user. Social variables have a major positive impact on behavioral intent. In the other hand, according to Islamic Shariah, halal cognizance is the capacity to sense, to experience, and to be mindful of all situations. Knowledge has been believed to play an critical role in deciding the decision to pick (Aziz & Viu, 2012). The above definition suggests that, due to the belief of the faith he follows, persons who have an inherent halal consciousness can implement religious ideals in all facets of their lives. They would really make sure that what is eaten is halal. Although individuals with extrinsic halal knowledge, from the information received, will obey the dedication of their faith. Therefore, this study posits,

H1: Social factors has a significant positive effect on halal food awareness.

H2: Social factors has a significant positive effect on purchase intention of halal food.

H3: Social factors has a significant positive effect on purchase behaviour of halal food.

Religiosity, Halal Awareness and Purchase Intention

Piety is the acceptance of one's faith including images, views, principles and intentions guided by divine influences (Fatmawati and Pramintasari, 2017: 743). In the lives of consumers, particularly in the patterns of consumption, religion has a significant influence. Muslim customers, in fact, are very selective because of their faith with regards to food intake, personal care goods, hotels, and restaurants. "The belief in the existence of a supernatural power and in life after death" (Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary) is classified as religion. A lot of people who believe religious principles still believe that their actions in this life can influence their afterlife; trust in religion determines the behaviour of adherents. The purpose of consumption was taught and specified in several verses in the Qur'an according to Islamic Shariah.

In academic research, previous literatures also shows significant contribution of religiosity with regards to halal awareness and purchase intention of halal food products. Some studies showed that there is an essential correlation between the faith of respondents and their interpretations of the halal logo, ingredients (Abdul et al. 2009). In their research on the discovery of the religious element and its effect on the buying intention of organic food in Malaysia, Shaharudin and others (2010) stated that religion has significant effect on intention to purchase organic goods. Ambali and Bakar (2014) suggested that this awareness is affected by several other factors other than halal certification logo or halal knowledge, halal logo, and hygienic problems. Hamdan and others (2013) studied the effective factors in the buying decisions of processed food goods by Muslim customers and concluded that the main variables in this sense are the characteristics of processed food products, perception of halal labelling, and knowledge of processed halal food products. Their results found that the degree of awareness (and/or familiarity) about the processed product is the most important element in the buying decisions of Muslim consumers. Results of studies by Ahmad et al. (2015) also suggest that, relative to halal awareness, religiosity is more influential in purchase intention. Therefore, this study posits,

H4: Religiosity level has a significant positive effect on halal food awareness.

H5: Religiosity level has a significant positive effect on purchase intention of halal food.

Halal Awareness, Purchase Intention and Behavior

The word "awareness" refers to the perception or experience of a given topic or situation. In the sense of "Halal," though, the word "awareness" simply means having a particular interest in or experience of something and/or becoming well-versed in what is going on halal foods, beverages and goods at the moment (Ambali and Bakar, 2014). Shaari and Arifin (2010) clarify that halal understanding is the degree of information Muslim customers have in compliance with Sharia in order to identify and use halal goods. The production of halal knowledge research is growing rapidly in the recent years (Ardyanti et al. 2013; Windikusuma, 2015; Waskito, 2015). Subjectively speaking, consciousness or awareness is a term in which an entity can be partly aware of, subconsciously aware of, or acutely aware of, a problem related to the halal aspect of what Allah permits (Nizam,2006). Knowledge is, thus, that which is a central part of human life. In order to raise the level of understanding of what Muslims are able to eat, drink and use, awareness in the sense of halal may also be referred to as the informing process (Ambali and Bakar, 2014). Yunus et al. (2014) notes that a Muslim's halal consciousness has a major effect on the intent of the customer to buy (Waskito, 2015).

If the buyer has halal knowledge, then the intent to buy is strong and only compatible with the halal commodity. The business would then feel obligated to obtain or retain halal certification. This has been one of the communications techniques for the customer acquisition industry as well. In 1988, the cooking oil dilemma triggered a major decrease in the turnover of certain food items in Indonesia. Furthermore, the mixing of beef with pork on meat increased consciousness of Indonesian consumers. According to Windikusuma (2015), refined items such as meatballs, formalin chicken and so on increased this consciousness more. Bashir (2019) found that between halal understanding and buying behaviour there is a substantial impact. In addition, according to Machali et al. (2013), halal awareness of halal food is reasonably high, and that the effect of awareness of buying decisions result found positive and critical. Therefore, this study posits,

H6: Halal food awareness has a significant positive effect on purchase behaviour of halal food

H7: Purchase intention has a significant positive effect on purchase behaviour of halal food

Methods

The study purposes to understand the factors affects Muslim consumers' purchasing behaviour on halal food in Turkey. Based on the extended TPB model; halal food awareness among Muslim consumers, their religious level, social factors, intention to purchase and actual behaviour towards halal food products are investigated. 152 valid responses were obtained using online survey method. All respondents were Muslim and older than 18 years old. Data were obtained using an online questionnaire between 16.01.2021 and 05.02.2021. The participants were told to choose a number on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 meaning is "strongly disagree", 5 meaning is "strongly agree''). The survey questions were written in English and later was translated to Turkish.

The generalizability of a study relies on the representatives of the respondents. The survey included statements measuring the components based on the TPB which consists of behavioral intention, attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control. In this study structural equation model is used. According to Hair et al. (2011), SEM is a model that allows the prediction of many structures, variables and structural paths in accordance with the characteristics of the research and the quality of the collected data. This choice was first made due to the investigative nature of the study. Before the hypotheses testing, this study was assessed using the factor analysis and also reliability test. Statistical Package for Social Statistics and Structural Equation Modelling Analysis (SEM) software AMOS were used to analyze the collected data.

Table 3. Questionnaire Items

Factor	Items	Source
Religious Level	4	Azam, 2016
Halal Awareness	4	Syukur & Nimsal 2018; Azam 2016
Behavioral Intention	3	Abd-Rahman et al., 2015; Lada et al., 2009; Tan, 2013; Amin et al., 2011
Intention to Purchase Halal Food	4	Haque et al., 2015; Lada et al. 2009
Social Factors (Subjective norm)	3	Lada et al., 2009

Findings

Descriptive Statistics

The data were analyzed first on the basis of the demographic characteristics. We found that 65.1 per cent participants were female, whereas 34.9 per cent of the participants were male. When the answers given to the question measuring the education level of the participants, it has been observed that 5.3% of them were graduated from high school, 67.1% (n: 102) were graduated from bachelors, 19.7% (n: 30) were graduate from master degree, 7.9% (n: 12) has a doctorate degree. While 76.3% of the participants have a profession, 16.4% are not working and 7.2% are students. Table 4 shows that confirmatory factor analysis and construct validity scores.

Table 4. Important values of scale statements

Variable	Statement Code	Factor Loadings	AVE	CR	Cr.Alfa
Intention to Purchase Halal Food	INT1	0.84	0.742	0.919	0.936
	INT2	0.94			
	INT3	0.92			
	INT4	0.73			
Halal Awareness	HA1	0.95	0.870	0.964	0.963
	HA2	0.91			
	HA3	0.91			
	HA4	0.96			
Behavioral Intention	BEH1	0.86	0.862	0.949	0.956
	BEH2	0.99			
	BEH3	0.93			
Religious Level	RL1	0.69	0.678	0.891	0.885
	RL2	0.97			
	RL3	0.67			
	RL4	0.92			
Social Factors (Subjective norm)	SF1	0.77	0.694	0.871	0.895
	SF2	0.93			
	SF3	0.79			

Table 4 shows factor loadings are between 0.99 and 0.97. All factor loadings are higher than the minimum correlated 0.5 value, all mean variance and composite reliability values extracted for significant correlated t-values and multi-item scales exceed the minimum criterion of 0.5 and 0.6, one by one (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

Table 5. Goodness of fit values

Scales	X2	df	X2/df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
Intention to purchase	3.532	2	1.766	0.988	0.997	0.071
Halal Awareness	3.274	3	1.091	0.989	1.000	0.025
Behavioral Intention	0.851	1	0.851	0.996	1.000	0.000
Religious Level	5.525	3	1.842	0.982	0.994	0.075
Social Factors	9.686	2	4.843	0.933	0.951	0.078
Good Fit Scores *			≤3	≥0.90	≥0.97	≤0.05
Agreeable Fit Scores *			≤4-5	0.89-0.85	≥0.95	0.06-0.08

Before the path analysis to be carried out to test the research model, the VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) values of these variables are examined in order not to have a multicollinearity problem between the

variables in the analysis and to prevent the multiple connectivity problems of the implicit variables in the model. Among the variables, ideal VIF values are values below 10 (Smith et al., 2020). The findings show that the VIF values are below 10, the indicators have the expected VIF values and there is no multi-connection problem.

Data Analysis

The structural model improved in this study consists of five major constructs namely; halal awareness, religious level, social factors, purchase intention and behavioral intention.

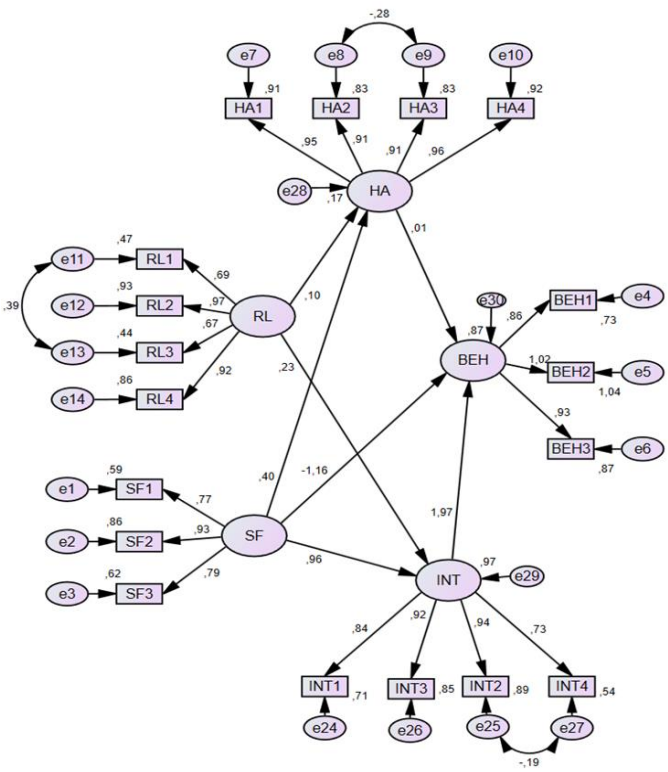

Figure 3. Structural Model of Study

Table 6. Fitness Assessment of the Structural Model

	X2/df	GFI	CFI	**RMSEA**
Fit values of the model	4.039	0.901	0.903	0.077
Good Fit Scores *	≤3	≥0.90	≥0.97	≤0.05
Agreeable Fit Scores *	≤4-5	0.89-0.85	≥0.95	0.06-0.08

Byrne (2010); Hair et al. (2010)

As a result of the analysis, it was determined that R2 values representing the power of the model to predict the dependent variable have a high predictive power (Intention to purchase: 0.966; Behavioral intention: 0.872). Han et al. (2019) stated that an R2 value above 0.75 would have significant explanation power for the dependent variable. It has been determined that the R2 value of halal awareness is low.

Table 7. Results of the Hypotheses of the General Model

	Variables →		Stand. β	S. E.	C.R.	P	Result
H1	SF	HA	0.404	0.063	5.170	***	Accepted
H2	SF	INT	0.956	0.055	18.057	***	Accepted
H3	SF	BEH	-1.160	0.257	-5.122	***	Not Accepted
H4	RL	HA	0.101	0.056	1.299	0.194	Not Accepted
H5	RL	INT	0.227	0.034	6.270	***	Accepted
H6	HA	BEH	0.015	0.049	0.426	0.670	Not Accepted
H7	INT	BEH	1.973	0.262	8.269	***	Accepted

Results

Table 7 shows that 4 of the 7 hypotheses established are accepted (H1, H2, H5, H7), while 3 hypotheses (H3, H4, H6) are rejected according their level of p-value (***) is less than 0.05). According to result of hypothesis, its concluded that social factors has a significant positive effect on halal food awareness, purchase intention and has a significant negative effect on purchase behaviour. Also it has been understood that the intention to purchase halal food has an effect on the behavioral intention of consumers. This result shows similarity with previous researches (Bashir 2019; Khairi et al. 2012; Tarkiainen and Sundqvist, 2005; Soon and Wallace, 2017). According to the results, the level of religiosity and social factors significantly affect the intention to purchase halal food. This results are same direction as the previous studies (Mukhtar and Butt, 2012; Salman and Siddiqui, 2011; Rehman and Shabbir, 2010; Loussaief, A., and Haque, 2018; Said et al. 2014; Borzooei and Asgari, 2013). Besides, it was understood that the awareness of halal food was not affected by the level of religiosity, and that social factors were effective in awareness of halal food. Ambali and Bakar (2014) suggested that this awareness is affected by many other factors, for example religious level and halal awareness. There is no significant effect of halal food awareness on behavioral motivation in this study. With the rejection of this hypothesis, a different result from the literature was reached.

Discussions

Today, when it comes to halal food, it should be mentioned a brand value that reflects the production philosophy and business ethics of the believer and represents the highest quality in food. Halal food subject is a sensitive and serious matter to Muslim consumers. There are very scarce source numbers of researched in this field even in Turkey to know about the consumers' perceptions of halal food. This study filling an important gap to investigate factors influencing halal food consumption in Turkey. In this research conducted the TPB and incorporate religiosity constructs into the TPB model to better understand Muslim consumers' halal food consumption.

The results revealed that Turkish Muslims' purchase behaviour towards halal food products is predominantly influenced by intention of buying halal food and social factors. If consumers giving importance to perform Hajj, namaz, paying zakat on time and believe in Allah and his last prophet; these consumers believe that halal food is safe and product is guaranteed with a halal certificate. However, it has been observed that the level of religiosity has no effect on halal food awareness. In other words, it can be said that even religious consumers do not know much about halal certification.

This research also produces important implications for researchers and sector managers. And shows a strong link between religious level, halal awareness and halal food purchase intention. So we can suggest that consumers' consider buying halal food product is high link with their family and friends. If the people which is most important for them are choosing halal food, these consumers believe that halal food product is safe. Consumers aware more about Halal foods when their friends and family prefer halal food. In this respect, companies can use "halal" as an attribute to form a distinctive image in the minds of Muslim consumers and their family/friends. Also they can use this image for non-Muslims to positioning halal food as a hygienic segment.

Limitations and Future Studies

There are some limitations in every study. This research has few limitations. First, some respondents were unwilling to respond to survey due to the sensitivity of religious issues. Secondly, the sample of the research was limited to Turkey. A comparative study would be desirable between other Muslim countries. As this research used the online survey to get information from consumers, further studies should use a focus group discussion. Focus group method can provide valuable feedback. In this study, five variables are used, different variables can included into research model such as culture, generation, food advertising, type of distribution etc. Increasing and expanding the existing institutions of the halal food market share in order to take that Turkey must be able to respond to customers' expectations.

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