Can Halal Poultry be Trusted? A Study on Gen Y Non-Muslim Malaysia Consumers’ Perspective

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Research Highlights

Malaysia has taken a lot of initiatives to promote its halal products through branding, promotion, e-commerce and distribution. However, this probably raises many problems and challenges especially in selling Halal poultry to non-Muslim consumers as non-Muslim Gen-Y Malaysian paid less attention to Halal logo food product since it is not their religious obligation to consume Halal food. Therefore, the study proposed seventeen hypothesis and the results indicate that there is a positive relationship between brand comprehension, stimulus ambiguity, awareness and consumer confidence level. Moreover, the results also indicate that consumers’ attitude, motive, confidence level have positive relationship towards consumer choice. In other words, if the consumer have position attitude, motive and confidence towards Halal logo, they will purchase Halal poultry.

Graphical Abstract
Research Objectives

The "halal" term stands a significant importance for Muslim consumers in their daily life especially when it concerns food products. With the majority of the population in Malaysia is Muslim consumers, most of the food products will need to have halal certification. However, some concerns from the non-Muslim consumers exist as they do not fully understand the halal concept as well as the importance of halal certification in food supply chain. As such, this research is important as there are limited studies on Gen-Y Non-Muslim consumers and halal poultry.

General Objective:

To assess the Gen-Y Non-Muslim consumers’ confidence and choice criteria towards halal poultry.

Specific Objectives:

1. To determine the factors which influence non-Muslim consumers’ confidence level towards Halal poultry.
2. To examine non-Muslim consumers’ preference (choice criteria) towards Halal or non-Halal poultry.

Methodology

Howard and Sheth Model was used in this study because the model can objectively construct a contemporary model in determining consumers’ unobserved cognitive behavior. Data were collected from Generation Y non-Muslim consumers in Malaysia using personally administered questionnaires to gauge the consumers’ confidence level and choice criteria. Cluster sampling method was used in this study where Klang Valley was divided into nine sub clusters which are Kuala Lumpur, Klang, Kajang, Subang Jaya, Petaling Jaya, Selayang, Shah Alam, Ampang Jaya, Putrajaya, and Sepang. After the nine sub-clusters has been clarified, purposive sampling method was used in this study where non-Muslim consumers who look like generation Y and walks into selected supermarkets in each sub-clusters are interviewed. Information from 475 respondents were collected. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was utilized in this study to examine the interrelationships among the multiple variables such as stimulus display and symbolic, social, overt search, stimulus ambiguity, awareness, brand comprehension choice criteria, motives, attitude and confidence level.
Results

Non-Muslim consumers who are aware, having positive attitude and understand Halal concept preferred poultry with Halal logo from supermarket over poultry from wet market. The study is coherent with the study done by Fahmi (2017) and Khalek (2012); where young consumers’ awareness on JAKIM’s halal certification in Malaysia will influence consumer behavior towards Halal products. According to Mohamed Nasir and Pereira (2008), consumers with positive attitude will make an informed choice of their purchase with Halal product. The result also shows that non-Muslim consumer who are well-informed on Halal will have different perception towards the stimulus display and symbolic of Halal logo and certification. Furthermore, non-Muslim consumers who believe that Halal is relevant with the environment, hygiene, animal welfare and sustainable food chain will search more information regarding Halal logo and certification. Results indicated that non-Muslim consumers who have confidence in JAKIM, international food premise and Islamic Laws will spark other consumers to choose Halal poultry compare to non-Halal poultry. Confidence or trust is the main factor raised by De Jonge et al. (2008) and Essoussi and Zahaf (2008) when dealing with certification and relationship with the farmers. It is believed that consumers will feel better and safer with appropriate certification.

Findings

Company’s strategy to promote Halal poultry should be different between Muslim and non-Muslim consumers. For the non-Muslims, product’s quality can be emphasized through Halal logo. As shown in this study, the Gen-Y non-Muslim consumers are more confident on Halal poultry if they perceived that the production of Halal poultry is connected to animal welfare, environment, food safety and hygiene. Therefore, businesses may require to customize a clear and meaningful advertising messaging to appeal to non-Muslim Gen Y’s values, needs and sensitivities. The marketers need to emphasize on quality and promote Halal Poultry differently using unique display packaging.
Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank INTI International University for giving them a Seed Grant to undertake the study.

References


