

UNDERSTANDING THE DETERMINANTS OF PURCHASE INTENTION FOR HALAL COSMETICS AMONG GEN Z

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to determine the factors influencing the purchase intention of halal cosmetics among Gen Z. The author applied the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) to ascertain the determinants influencing Gen Z's intention to purchase halal cosmetics. The predictors are subjective norms, attitudes, and religiosity. The study used a sample of 215 respondents from UiTM Cawangan Johor Kampus Segamat, and statistical analysis with SPSS was used to determine the significance of the impact of the independent factors. The results of the experiments show that attitudes, subjective norms, and religion positively and significantly influenced the intention to buy halal-certified cosmetics.

Keywords: Gen Z, halal cosmetic, purchase intention

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is progressively focusing on domestic halal product development, intending to become a regional hub for halal goods. The effort is driven not only by Muslim tastes but also by an emerging global trend toward halal products. Given Malaysia's primarily Muslim population, the government is especially concerned with matching the country's economic development with Islamic principles, particularly in the production and provision of halal products and services. With the increasing demand for halal products around the world, talks on current practices, production methods, and consumption patterns for halal items, including cosmetics, have received a lot of attention from various groups (Meng, 2014).

The Malaysian Halal Industry Development Corporation (2023) reported the cosmetics and personal care industry holds its position as the third-largest halal contributor, witnessing a total halal export value of RM3.49 billion. This marks a notable increase of 43.5% compared to the figures reported in 2021. Furthermore, Muslims have started to search for halal personal care and cosmetics. Research done by Meng (2014) stated that there has been an increase in the number of Muslim individuals who are aware of the nature of beauty products that align with their religious and cultural requirements. At the same time, non-Muslims are also attracted to cosmetics that emphasize principles of purity, cleanliness, and contamination-free. This has driven market advancement (Meng, 2014). The researcher added that the majority of the Muslim community consists of young individuals who possess the information and therefore, they actively adopt the Islamic lifestyle and prioritise the preservation of Halal practices in their daily lives.

In one observation by Tjiptono et al. (2020), currently, young individuals that are Gen Z who is born between 1996 and 2012 holds the position of the most substantial age demographic, constituting 29% of the total population in Malaysia. Analysts predicted they have a stronger preference for cosmetics. These items are frequently used to boost performance and attain the desired look (Ishak et al., 2020). In another analysis done by Ma et al. (2017), Gen Z is characterised by scepticism and concern regarding their appearance. This group, often referred to as the selfie generation, actively strives to portray an idealized version of themselves. The discovery indicates that a significant proportion of individuals who take selfies also use makeup, demonstrating a connection between their behaviour and grooming rituals. Wilson (2019) reported that research on halal branding has been expanding quickly, but little focus has been placed on the opinions of young Muslim consumers. According to BELI et al. (2020), one of the gaps for further research on halal products' purchase intention there is a lack of research in the halal pharmaceutical, halal fashion, halal tourism, halal supply chain, and halal finance fields. Therefore, to foster the growth of halal cosmetics in Malaysia, it is essential to prioritise the preferences of consumers, particularly focusing on the key factors that influence their decision to purchase halal cosmetic products.

To address this gap, this study aims to identify the factors influencing Gen Z's purchase intention of halal-certified cosmetics. Under the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), this research will mainly focus on subjective norms, attitudes, and religiosity to measure Gen Z's intention to purchase halal cosmetics. This study was conducted at UiTM Cawangan Johor Kampus Segamat because these students are young individuals who also belong in the Gen Z group based on their age and year of birth. The findings of this study can be used as a basis for decision-making not only by the producers but also by the government, and future researchers.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Intention to Purchase

Tsiotsou (2006) in his study, indicates that the purchase intention functions as one of the main marketing strategies, including promotional initiatives, dynamic demand, and tactics segmentation. As mentioned by Chang & Liu (2009) and supported by Shah et al. (2011), purchase intention refers to the cognitive process in which customers evaluate their tendency and readiness to purchase and engage with a brand. This analysis enables the market to predict customer buying behaviour and gain a deeper understanding of market dynamics (Ahmad, 2011).

In another research conducted by Saifudin et al. (2020), the Theory of Plan Behaviour (TPB) and the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) are the most favourable frameworks applied in examining customers' intentions. In TPB, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behaviour control were identified as predictors of purchase intention (Lee et al., 2009; Liu et al., 2020; Xie et al., 2017). Meanwhile, TRA was developed by two independent variables, the attitude and the subjective norms (An et al., 2021). On the other hand, another study by Khan et al. (2021); Lestari et al. (2020); Suleman et al. (2021), revealed religiosity as another significant factor influencing the intention to purchase.

2.2 Subjective Norm

Ajzen (as cited in An et al., 2021) defined subjective norm as an individual's evaluation of the viewpoints held by influential others in their life regarding whether they ought to or ought not to participate in a particular action. Thus, in TRA, subjective norm describes how individuals form their attitudes and intentions towards a specific action. Individuals are more

likely to consider whether to adopt a behaviour if they believe that others expect or approve of it.

Saifudin et al. (2020) reveals the significant effect of subjective norm on Muslim consumers' decision-making process in choosing halal products. These findings are supported by other research conducted by Ali et al. (2019); Ibeabuchi et al. (2024); Ngah et al. (2021), which indicates that constructive behaviour is influenced by consumers' attitudes towards Halal cosmetics and the family and peers' expectations. Azizan et al. (2022) also suggest that subjective norm encourage consumers' halal product trust and purchase. In conclusion, it is undeniable that social influence significantly affects customers' decision-making in choosing Halal cosmetics, even without positive personal.

2.3 Attitude

Consumer attitudes encompass a range of emotions, behavioural intentions, and beliefs that an individual holds towards a behaviour or product. These attitudes can be altered by influencing any of their three components: behavioural, affective, or cognitive. This study focusses on cognitive competence where this component is concerned with thoughts and beliefs regarding the halal product.

According to Hashim and Musa (2014), attitude constitutes a thorough evaluation of a particular action that indicates how much a person likes or dislikes doing so. However, Shah et al. (2011), define the attitude of Muslim consumers reflects the overall evaluation of their likes or dislikes in carrying out Islamic "aqidah".

Bui et al. (2021) found that attitude has a significant relationship with product involvement and knowledge. On the other hand, Hashim and Musa (2014) found from non-users or users of halal cosmetics that product involvement has a positive relationship with the attitude towards halal cosmetics. Knowledge is shape by the depth of understanding acquired from information that provides more detailed insight into halal products (Abd Rahman et al., 2015). Another previous research has found that the more positive the customers' attitude, the more positive their purchase intention of halal cosmetics (Bahjam et al., 2022; Balques et al., 2017; Cullen et al., 2021; Handriana et al., 2020).

Consumers with high attitudes were more likely to have a purchase intention of halal products. This finding suggested consumer attitudes can increase trust and purchase intention for halal products (Azizan et al., 2022).

2.4 Religiosity

Religiosity refers to the degree of commitment an individual has to their religion, which is reflected in their attitudes and behaviour. In this context, the level of religiosity can be reflected in one's attitude towards purchasing cosmetics with a halal label. Previous studies have shown a significant relationship between religiosity and the attitude of consumers in their consumption of halal cosmetics (Abd Rahman et al., 2015; Suki and Suki, 2018; Tuhin et al., 2020).

According to Putri et al. (2019), the level of one's religiosity can be said to be reflected in one's attitude towards buying cosmetics that have a halal label. The level of religiosity of one's shows their understanding of the importance of halal in everyday life. Religion itself is the most important social factors that affect the lives of those who believe in it. Ezzo and Dibb (2004); Suparno (2020) religion acts as the foundation on which people build their attitudes and behaviour.

The aspect of religiosity in this research has a positive effect on purchasing decisions for halal products on the Shopee and Tokopedia e-commerce platforms. This means that consumers who use the platform already believe that the products that should be purchased are halal products. After that, it is developed in the behaviour of being alert to non-halal products and raw materials, conducting transactions using methods that are in accordance with sharia principles, and feeling more secure and calm when transacting with methods that are in accordance with Islamic principles (Widyarma et al., 2023).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The methodology used to determine the factors affecting Gen Z's adoption of halal cosmetics involves the collection and analysis of quantitative primary data. This study collects data through a survey conducted by disseminating questionnaires. The population under investigation consists of students from various programs residing in UiTM Segamat aged between 17-22 years. The convenient sampling method was used and a total of 215 usable questionnaires were analysed. The data was analysed using the SPSS method.

Figure 3.1 illustrates the theoretical framework, with the intention to buy Halal cosmetics among Gen Z as the dependent variable. Additionally, the outlined theoretical framework encompasses three independent variables: subjective norm, attitude, and religiosity. This research examines the relationship between the identified independent and specified dependent variables. Cronbach's alpha is used to estimate the reliability of the internal consistency of items. The range of 0.6 to 0.7 was deemed the lower limit of acceptability (Hair et al., 2018).

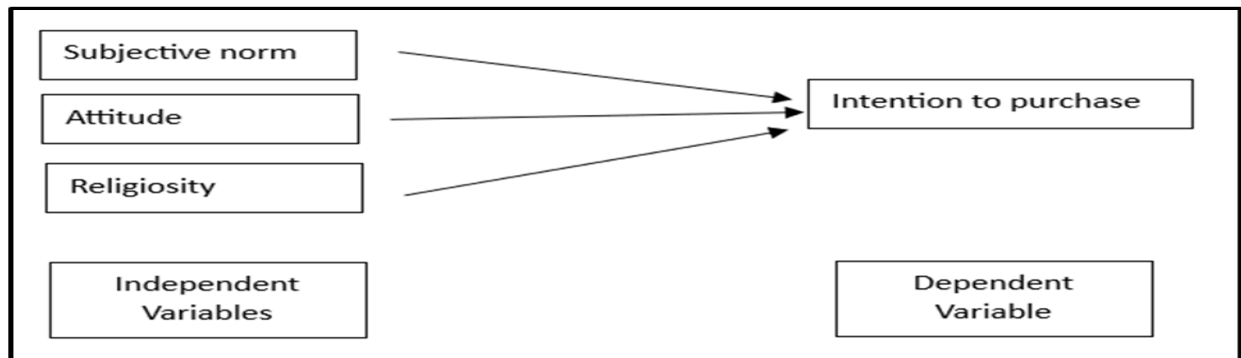


Fig. 1 Conceptual framework of the study

The variables considered in this research encompass subjective norms, attitudes, and religiosity. Variables are measured using indicators derived from prior research, employing a five-point Likert scale for evaluation. The scale spans from 1, representing strong disagreement, to 5, representing strong agreement.

Based on table 1, part 1 of the questionnaire consists of demographic questions, while part 2 has three items defining subjective norms. Section 3 contains three items explaining attitude. Section 4 comprises three items assessing religiosity, while Section 5 consists of four items measuring purchase intention.

Table 1. Distribution of Items in Survey

Section	Variable	No. of Items
2	subjective norms	3
3	attitude	3
4	religiosity	4
5	purchase intention	4

4.0 EMPIRICAL RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Findings for Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis is used to analyse the demographics section. Meanwhile, to determine the factors that influence saving behaviour, multiple linear regressions are conducted. The F-test is used to establish the overall significance of the model. The F-test is a statistical test used to test the null hypothesis that there is no independent variable significantly related to saving behaviour, while the alternative hypothesis is at least one independent variable significantly related to saving behaviour. Also, the F-test, R-value, and R-squared value are employed to explain the model fits of the data. Meanwhile, the t-test is used to determine the significant factors for the saving behaviour variable.

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis of Demographic

Item		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	51	16.2
	Female	164	52.1
Age	17-22	147	68.3
	23-27	68	31.7
Education	Diploma	125	39.7
	Bachelor Degree	90	28.6

The descriptive analysis is summarised in Table 2. There are 16.2 percent male respondents and 52.1 percent female respondents among the 215 total respondents. The majority of respondents (68.3 percent) are between the ages of 17-22 years old, followed by those between the ages of 23-27 years old (31.7 percent). In terms of academic level, 39.7 percent are at the diploma level, 28.6 percent are at the bachelor's degree level.

Table 3. Reliability Test Analysis

Variable	Cronbach Alpha
Subjective Norms	0.881
Attitude	0.749
Religiosity	0.872
Purchase Intention	0.839

4.2 Findings for Reliability Analysis and Multiple Linear Regression

Table 3 indicates the value of Cronbach's alpha for each of the variables. The value of Cronbach's alpha lies from 0.749 to 0.881 meet the minimum range of acceptability 0.6 (Hair et al., 2018). It shows that the items are internally consistent for each of the variables.

Table 4. The goodness fit of multiple regression model

Statistical Measure	Value
R	0.790
R- Squared	0.625
F-test	(<0.001)

Table 4 shows the model's goodness of fit is considered good when R can be categorised as a strong relationship between dependent variable and independent variables. While R-squared describes that 62.5 percent variation in purchase intention can be explained by the variation in subjective norm, attitude and religiosity. Moreover, the value of F statistic (p-value < 0.001) explaining that the null hypothesis is rejected. It can be concluded that there is sufficient evidence to conclude that at least one of the independent variables is related to purchase intention.

Table 5. Fitted model

Variable	t	significance	Status
(constant)	0.683	0.495	
Subjective Norms	4.379	<0.001	Significant
Attitude	5.273	<0.001	Significant
Religiosity	5.664	<0.001	Significant

The multiple linear regression coefficients for independent variables shows in table 5. The independent variables of subjective norm, attitude and religiosity are statistically significant because p-value is less than significance level of 0.05. They have a positive coefficient value, hence as the value of independent variables increases, the mean of purchase intention also tends to increase.

The above result explains the significance of norms within the Muslim community, as they play a central role in shaping consumer behaviour, particularly in the context of purchasing halal products. This study's outcomes align with prior research by Handriana et al. (2020); Lestari et al. (2020); Suleman et al. (2021), highlighting the tendency of Muslim consumers to actively seek information regarding halal cosmetics, including scrutinizing ingredients and production processes. The findings by Nurcahyono (2023) which involve Muslim students in Semarang, indicate that respondents had a strong presence of subjective norms, and that their social circle had a significant impact on their intention to purchase halal-certified cosmetics.

Attitude is known as one of the important factors in psychological and modern society. It helps the producer to have a better knowledge of how consumers make their purchase decisions. The above result indicates that attitude has a significant influence on the purchase intention of halal cosmetics, with a p-value below 0.05. This result is consistent with previous studies conducted by Bahjam et al. (2022); Balques et al. (2017); Cullen et al. (2021); Handriana et al. (2020) revealed that attitude strongly influences purchase intention. On the other hand, Kotler et al. (2018); Suryadi et al., 2020 highlighted that preferences and

beliefs heavily influence one's attitude. Purchasing choices are strongly influenced by consumer attitudes toward a product.

The findings of this study revealed that religiosity has a significant impact on attitudes toward halal cosmetics among respondents. Mufrodah and Adinugraha (2021) state that people who have better knowledge about Islam and strong religious beliefs are more likely to prefer halal-cosmetic products. Their strong religious beliefs have made them tend to be more selective in their purchasing decision-making.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Nowadays, Malaysia is placing a growing emphasis on the advancement of local halal products, with the goal of positioning itself as a central hub for halal goods in the area. The growing global trend and the demand of the Muslim population towards halal products lead this project. The government specifically dedicates itself to ensuring that Malaysia's economic growth aligns with Islamic values, particularly in the manufacturing and distribution of halal products and services, given the country's predominantly Muslim population. The increasing global demand for halal products has led to major disputes among stakeholders over present practices, production methods, and consumption patterns, particularly in the context of halal cosmetics. Gen Z is an emerging group that influences the current marketplace. Most of the studies focus on halal food. However, there is concern that halal is not restricted to food but also to other products and services used by Muslim community. Therefore, this study explores cosmetics purchasing behaviour among students as young consumers in UiTM Segamat. Based on the findings and analysis, it can be inferred that the attitude influences consumers' purchasing decisions. When individuals develop a positive sentiment towards a product, they are more likely to make a purchase. Subjective norms suggest that devoted Muslims will take Islamic examples into account while making decisions or taking acts. Meanwhile, religiosity refers to the extent to which a person has internalised religious values, leading them to consistently prioritise compliance in their actions.

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