

## Beyond Religious Boundaries: Determinants Driving Non-Muslim Consumers' Halal Product Choices in Palu, Indonesia

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This study aims to identify the key factors influencing non-Muslim consumers' preferences for halal food products in Palu, Indonesia, focusing on knowledge, attitudes, pricing, accessibility, social influence, trust in certification, and consumption experience..

**Design/methodology:** A quantitative, cross-sectional survey was conducted with 117 non-Muslim respondents in Palu. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire adapted from validated instruments and analyzed using SPSS (version 29). The analysis involved descriptive statistics, validity and reliability testing, classical assumption tests (normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity), and multiple linear regression with t-test and F-test to examine the relationships between variables and purchasing decisions.

**Findings:** The results reveal that knowledge negatively influences purchasing decisions, whereas positive attitudes, accessibility, social influence, trust in halal certification, and consumption experience significantly enhance the likelihood of choosing halal products among non-Muslim consumers.

**Practical Implication:** The findings suggest that marketers should reframe halal knowledge into practical benefits (health, hygiene, quality), improve accessibility, strengthen social engagement, and enhance trust through credible certification to increase adoption among non-Muslim consumers.

**Originality/Value:** This study integrates consumer behavior theory, the Theory of Planned Behavior, and post-disaster consumer dynamics to explain halal consumption among non-Muslims in a multicultural setting, using a rigorous SPSS-based analytical approach.

**Keywords:** Halal Products, Non-Muslim Consumers, Purchasing Decisions, Palu, Marketing Strategy

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### A. INTRODUCTION

The development of the global Islamic economy has emerged as one of the most prominent economic and cultural trends of the 21st century. This is evidenced by the growing participation of both Muslim-majority and non-Muslim-majority countries in various halal-related sectors, including food, finance, tourism, and fashion (Sofyan et al., 2023). Even nations with relatively small Muslim populations have recognized the commercial potential of halal markets and established institutional frameworks to meet demand (Golnaz et al., 2010; Tarofder et al., 2022; Yunus et al., 2018). For instance, China, despite not having a deeply rooted halal economic system, has become the world's leading exporter of Muslim fashion (Wuryati, 2023). Similarly, the United Kingdom has expanded Islamic economic principles into halal-certified food, Islamic finance, and Muslim-friendly tourism, positioning itself as a global hub for halal innovation (H. Isnaini, 2023; Noval et al., 2023; Syamsu et al., 2024; Wilkins et al., 2019).

In addition, institutional development in Indonesia through initiatives such as the establishment of Halal Centers in higher education (Wahyuni et al., 2023) and efforts to strengthen financial inclusion (Asnaini et al., 2023) have further reinforced the halal ecosystem. Research on financial literacy and waqf stock (Harpepen & Yustati, 2025) also demonstrates how knowledge and awareness become critical in shaping consumer decisions, including among non-Muslims

In Southeast Asia, Indonesia plays a highly strategic role in the global halal economy. As the world's largest Muslim-majority country, Indonesia accounts for 11.34% of global halal consumption innovation (Noval et al., 2023). Importantly, non-Muslim consumers are increasingly interested in halal products not only for religious reasons but also due to perceived higher levels of hygiene, safety, sustainability, and ethical treatment of animals (Xiong & Chia, 2024). This suggests that halal is increasingly perceived not only as a religious mandate but also as a lifestyle value appealing to a broader consumer group. However, misconceptions about halal certification, such as concerns about slaughtering methods (Wibowo, 2020) and a lack of understanding of its cultural and religious foundations, can lead to misunderstandings that influence purchasing behavior.

Several prior studies have attempted to explore these themes. For example, (Barrion et al., 2022) examined the perceptions of non-Muslim students toward halal-labeled products and found that taste, convenience, and product familiarity often outweighed religious considerations. (A. Arifin et al., 2021) investigated non-Muslim consumer intentions in Jakarta, identifying product quality and halal awareness as key determinants of these intentions. (Wilkins et al., 2019) offered a broader international perspective by examining how religious identity, consumer cosmopolitanism, and ethnocentrism affect halal product acceptance in non-Muslim countries. However, most studies still focus on Muslim consumers in metropolitan areas (Adinugraha, 2020; Cupian et al., 2024; Samad, 2019; Lee & Vincent, 2021; A. Arifin et al., 2021). While previous studies in cities such as Palopo (Rahmawati, 2024) and Yogyakarta (Samad, 2019) have provided insights into non-Muslim perceptions, these contexts differ significantly from the multicultural and post-disaster reality of Palu, underscoring the need for more context-specific investigations. These studies offer valuable insights, they tend to generalize findings or focus on metropolitan Muslim-majority contexts, failing to capture local nuances, especially in under-researched, culturally diverse, and post-disaster regions such as Palu City, Indonesia. Thus, there is a need for research on how non-Muslims interpret and respond to halal products, especially in a multicultural and post-disaster context such as Palu City.

Palu provides a typical case study: a city with a 13.22% non-Muslim population (BPS Kota Palu, 2025), which is recovering from the 2018 earthquake, tsunami, and liquefaction that transformed its economy and social dynamics (Nurhadi et al., 2021). Based on Data UIN Datokarama Palu shows that 1,884 MSME products across Central Sulawesi have been certified halal by the Halal Product Certification Agency (BPJPH). A total of 1,278 certifications were completed in 2023 alone—an exponential increase from the 528 certifications in 2022, indicating growing awareness among both producers and consumers.

This gap in literature presents a critical opportunity. By focusing on non-Muslim consumer preferences for halal food in Palu City, this study aims to uncover localized insights often overlooked in national surveys or generalized models. It seeks to examine how factors such as religious identity, social influence, product knowledge, perceived quality, and ethical

considerations shape the attitudes and decision-making of non-Muslim consumers. It also explores how the post-disaster context and multicultural coexistence influence the meaning, trust, and consumption of halal-labeled products.

## **B. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1. Post-Disaster Consumer Behavior**

Consumer behavior undergoes significant transformation after disasters, driven by emotional stress, infrastructure disruption, and shifting priorities. In the initial phase, consumption focuses on basic necessities such as food, water, and medicine, often accompanied by panic buying due to fear of scarcity (Forbes, 2017; Yoon et al., 2018; Yuen et al., 2020). In the longer term, prolonged stress and trauma may trigger compulsive purchasing, as observed among Hurricane Katrina survivors (Kendler et al., 1999; Sneath et al., 2009). Disasters also reshape consumption patterns, including brand switching, increased reliance on trusted products, and the adoption of digital purchasing channels (Sthapit et al., 2022).

This study examines Palu City struck by an earthquake, tsunami, and soil liquefaction in 2018 where consumer behavior is shaped by both psychological and logistical recovery challenges. Factors such as accessibility of halal products (X4), trust in halal certification (X6), and prior consumption experience (X7) are critical, reflecting supply chain disruptions, safety concerns, and heightened ethical awareness. These insights align with Harpepen (2022) on impulse buying and Harpepen & Yustati (2025) on financial literacy and waqf stock knowledge. Integrating the post-disaster lens strengthens the analysis of non-Muslim consumer preferences by embedding cultural, economic, and trauma-informed behavioral dimensions relevant to Palu's recovery.

### **2. Integration of Consumer Behavior Theory, TPB, and Post-Disaster Context**

Consumer behavior is a multidisciplinary field that examines how individuals make purchasing decisions, focusing on motivations, perceptions, attitudes, and social influences (Egan, 2017; Foxall, 2015). In the context of halal food, consumer behavior theory explains how variables such as knowledge, perceived quality, trust, and past experiences influence purchase decisions, including those made by non-Muslim consumers. (Barrion et al., 2022), for example, found that taste (28.4%), health (27.8%), and safety (23.4%) were the most important factors influencing non-Muslim consumers' halal food choices, while religious motivations ranked lowest at just 17.5%.

Complementing this perspective is the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by (Ajzen, 1991), which posits that behavior is shaped by three key components: attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms (perceived social pressure), and perceived behavioral control (the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior). TPB has been widely applied in halal food research (A. Arifin et al., 2021; Lee & Vincent, 2021), providing a robust framework for examining how social expectations and perceived control influence intentions, particularly in religiously diverse and multicultural contexts. Other works, such as Asnaini et al. (2023), stress the importance of institutional quality and financial inclusion in strengthening halal ecosystems, while Wahyuni et al. (2023) demonstrate the role of university-based Halal Centers in building awareness.

These two theories are complementary. While TPB provides a model for understanding social and psychological intentions, consumer behavior theory expands on this

by examining the influences of utilitarian, emotional, and experiential factors. In a multicultural and post-disaster city like Palu, where religious identity, economic rebuilding, and social trust are intertwined, this integrated approach is essential for understanding non-Muslim preferences for halal products.

### 3. Consumer Behavior Theory

Consumer behavior theory is a multifaceted field integrating insights from psychology, economics, and marketing to understand consumers' purchasing decisions. A key concept in this theory is using heuristics in decision-making, influenced by factors such as representativeness, availability, and anchor values (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). Additionally, emotions and psychological factors, such as cognitive dissonance, play a crucial role in shaping consumer loyalty (Festinger, 1954). Socio-cultural factors significantly impact consumer behavior, as shifts in societal values and norms and technological advancements often determine consumer choices (Foxall, 2015). In the marketing realm, brand perception and practical strategies, including the use of social media, have been proven to alter consumer attitudes and behaviors (Egan, 2017). Furthermore, neuromarketing has emerged as an innovative approach that combines neuroscience with marketing to understand the motivations behind consumer decisions (Lei et al., 2020). Research indicates that a deeper understanding of neurological mechanisms can provide comprehensive insights into consumer behavior.

In the context of halal food, consumer behavior theory proves increasingly relevant. Research by (Barrion et al., 2022) reveals that the knowledge and attitudes of non-Muslim students regarding halal food products are significantly influenced by factors such as taste, health, and safety. Expressly, the study indicated that taste was considered the most important factor (28.4%), followed by health (27.8%) and safety (23.4%). Interestingly, religious motivations were viewed as the least important (8.2.5%), highlighting a gap in non-Muslim understanding of halal food.

Moreover, (A. Arifin et al., 2021) found that the halal logo and product quality significantly influence non-Muslim consumers' purchasing intentions for halal food in Jakarta. Research conducted by (Wilkins et al., 2019) further explores the acceptance of halal food in non-Muslim countries, identifying that factors such as religious identity and consumer cosmopolitanism are positively related to halal product judgments. This finding suggests that marketing strategies employed in non-Muslim markets should consider psychological and social factors to promote halal products effectively.

(Tao et al., 2023) emphasize the critical role of consumer trust in their intention to purchase halal food in China, arguing that clarity regarding the credibility and certification of halal products is vital for informed consumer decision-making. Additionally, research by (Yunos et al., 2018) indicates that, although confusion exists around halal concepts, non-Muslims in Malaysia are gradually accepting halal food as part of their dietary choices. Related studies such as Isnaini (2023) on maqasid syariah in waqf practices and Harpepen dan Yustati (2025) on literacy further illustrate the socio-religious and educational dimensions of halal acceptance.

### 4. Theory of Planned Behavior

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) developed by Ajzen (1991), explain behavioral intention through three constructs: attitude (the positive or negative evaluation of the behavior), subjective norms (perceived social pressures), and perceived behavioral control (the perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior). TPB has been applied across

various fields, including health, environmental, and consumer behavior, demonstrating strong predictive power in these contexts (Armitage & Conner, 2001). TPB provides a valuable framework for understanding purchasing intentions in the context of halal products. It emphasizes the roles of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control as key indicators influencing the acceptance of halal products among non-Muslim consumers (A. Arifin et al., 2021; Lee & Vincent, 2021). Research indicates that factors such as halal awareness, the credibility of halal logos, and product quality are crucial to non-Muslim customers' intentions to purchase halal food. However, a notable lack of data on non-Muslim consumer perspectives in localized areas, such as Kota Palu, creates opportunities for further exploration.

Grounded in TPB and consumer behavior theory, this study proposes seven key variables influencing non-Muslim preferences for halal food: (1) Knowledge (X1) (Yunos et al., 2018) found that greater awareness of halal definitions and processes leads to increased trust among non-Muslim consumers; Attitude Toward Halal Products (X2) This aligns with the "attitude" component of TPB. Positive perceptions—such as ethical sourcing, hygiene, and health—motivate the adoption of halal products (A. Arifin et al., 2021); Price and Economic Value (X3) Rooted in consumer behavior theory, this reflects practical and financial considerations when making purchase decisions (Foxall, 2015); Accessibility and Availability (X4): Corresponds to "perceived behavioral control" in TPB; the more accessible halal products are, the higher the likelihood of purchase (Lee & Vincent, 2021); Social and Cultural Influence (X5) Captures "subjective norms" in TPB, reflecting pressure or encouragement from peers, family, or media (Ajzen, 1991); Trust in Halal Certification (X6) According to (Tao et al., 2023), the credibility of halal certification is a crucial determinant of halal product acceptance by non-Muslims; and Consumption Experience (X7) According to behavioral approaches, past experiences significantly influence loyalty and future purchasing preferences (Festinger, 1954).

These variables were selected due to their strong empirical foundation and relevance to the unique characteristics of Palu. While other variables, such as religiosity or ethnocentrism, may be important in other studies, this research intentionally focuses on practical, observable factors that directly impact consumer behavior in diverse, post-disaster environments.

For each independent variable (X1–X7), the following are example hypotheses that can be used:

- a. **H1:** Knowledge (X1) has a positive effect on the decision to choose halal food products (Y) among non-Muslim consumers.
- b. **H2:** Attitude toward halal products (X2) has a positive effect on the decision to purchase halal food (Y).
- c. **H3:** Price and economic value (X3) have a positive effect on the decision to purchase halal products (Y).
- d. **H4:** Accessibility and availability (X4) have a positive effect on the decision to choose halal food (Y).
- e. **H5:** Social and cultural influence (X5) has a positive effect on the decision to purchase halal products (Y).
- f. **H6:** Trust in halal certification (X6) has a positive effect on the decision to choose halal products (Y).
- g. **H7:** Previous consumption experience (X7) has a positive effect on the decision to purchase halal food (Y).

## C. METHOD

This study employs a quantitative, explanatory design to test the causal relationship between seven independent variables—derived from Consumer Behavior Theory, the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), and post-disaster consumer behavior literature (Forbes, 2017; Sneath et al., 2009; Sthapit et al., 2022) and the dependent variable, namely the decision of non-Muslim consumers to choose halal food products. The research was conducted in Palu City, a post-disaster area affected by the 2018 earthquake, tsunami, and soil liquefaction, which continues to shape consumer purchasing behavior through logistical constraints and psychological recovery.

The population consists of non-Muslim residents of Palu who had consumed halal food products in the past six months. Due to time and resource limitations, non-probability convenience sampling was applied, yielding 117 respondents, exceeding the Slovin formula minimum of 112 at an 8% margin of error, based on an estimated population of 1,500. Respondents were recruited in shopping centers, culinary markets, and workplaces. Inclusion criteria were: (1) non-Muslim religion, (2) prior halal food consumption, and (3) informed consent.

Seven independent variables were tested: Knowledge (X1), Attitude Toward Halal Products (X2), Price and Economic Value (X3), Accessibility and Availability (X4), Social and Cultural Influence (X5), Trust in Halal Certification (X6), and Consumption Experience (X7). The dependent variable Decision to Choose Halal Food (Y) reflects the extent to which non-Muslims opt for halal-certified food. Hypotheses H1–H7 posit that each independent variable positively influences Y.

Data collection combined two methods: (1) non-participant observation over two weeks at halal culinary locations in Palu to capture consumer interactions, purchasing patterns, and product availability (Lubis & Setyono, 2023), and (2) a structured questionnaire, adapted from validated halal consumer instruments (Sukti & Aliansyah, 2019), refined through translation, back-translation, and expert review. Items used a five-point Likert scale. A pilot test with 30 respondents confirmed validity (all corrected item-total correlations  $> 0.361$ ,  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) and reliability (Cronbach's alpha  $> 0.70$  for all constructs: knowledge 0.81; attitude 0.82; price 0.79; accessibility 0.80; social-cultural 0.83; trust 0.85; experience 0.78; decision 0.84).

Data analysis was conducted with SPSS 29, including descriptive statistics, validity and reliability testing, multiple linear regression, classical assumption tests (normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity), and hypothesis testing at a 5% significance level. This methodological framework ensures rigorous empirical testing of the proposed conceptual model within Palu's socio-cultural and post-disaster context.

## D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Result

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis revealed that seven independent variables significantly influence non-Muslim consumers' decisions when choosing halal food products. These variables include Knowledge (X1), which describes the extent to which consumers understand the concept of halal; Attitude towards halal products (X2), which encompasses evaluations and positive perceptions of these products; and Price and economic value (X3), which relates to consumers' perceptions of the costs and benefits offered.

Furthermore, Accessibility and availability of products (X4) are key factors determining how easily consumers can obtain halal products. In addition, Social and cultural influence (X5) provides deep insights into the contributions of the social environment in shaping consumer decisions. Trust in halal certification (X6) emphasizes the importance of quality assurance and the halal nature of the products. At the same time, Experience in consumption (X7) reflects the positive impact of previous experiences on future purchasing decisions.

**Table 1. Results of Multiple Linear Regression on Non-Muslim Preferences for Halal Products**

		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>			t	Sig.
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	10.779	.928		11.616	.000
	TOTAL_X1	-.188	.051	-.227	-3.711	.000
	TOTAL_X2	.226	.028	.514	8.018	.000
	TOTAL_X3	-.320	.111	-.168	-2.886	.005
	TOTAL_X4	.414	.087	.270	4.780	.000
	TOTAL_X5	.114	.033	.188	3.421	.001
	TOTAL_X6	.353	.066	.328	5.338	.000
	TOTAL_X7	.189	.054	.213	3.514	.001

a. Dependent Variable: TOTAL\_Y

Source: Processed Data, 2024

The results of this regression analysis provide a comprehensive overview of the influence of various factors on non-Muslim consumers' decisions when choosing halal food products. Knowledge (X1) shows a significant negative influence (0.000), indicating that a general understanding of halal does not always motivate purchasing decisions. This finding is consistent with research by (Barrion et al., 2022), which demonstrates that although consumers have access to information about halal, such knowledge is not strong enough to motivate their choices in the marketplace.

Conversely, a Positive Attitude towards halal products (X2) has a significant positive impact (0.000), reflecting consumers' belief that halal products are considered high-quality and safe. This finding supports the results of (A. Arifin et al., 2021), which discovered that a positive attitude towards halal products correlates directly with purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, Price and Economic Value (X3) show a negative impact with a significant value of 0.005, indicating that consumers tend to choose more affordable alternatives when halal products are perceived as expensive. Previous research by (Lei et al., 2020) also underscores that price is a significant determining factor in decision-making, particularly for consumers sensitive to costs.

Accessibility and Availability of Products (X4) positively influence purchasing decisions, with a significant value of 0.000, emphasizing the importance of effective distribution in encouraging halal product purchases. This finding aligns with research by (Wilkins et al., 2019), which indicates that the availability of halal products in frequented locations can enhance purchasing opportunities. Social and Cultural Influence (X5) also proves significant, with a value of 0.001, indicating that individuals in an environment supportive of halal consumption are more likely to follow the prevailing norms. This finding is consistent with studies that show that social norms within communities can motivate individuals to behave according to the values endorsed by their groups (Masood & Zaidi, 2023). Trust in Halal Certification (X6) highlights the importance of certification agencies' credibility, with a

significant value of 0.000. Research shows that consumers who trust certifying bodies are more likely to choose halal products. This supports the findings from (Lei et al., 2020), which emphasize that trust in certification is crucial in influencing purchasing decisions.

Finally, Consumption Experience (X7) also contributes significantly (0.001), indicating that positive previous experiences can influence future purchasing decisions for halal products. This is in line with findings by (Lei et al., 2020), which indicate that consumer experiences play a vital role in building brand loyalty. These findings illustrate that knowledge alone cannot influence purchasing decisions and emphasize the need to create positive attitudes while leveraging social, cultural, and experiential factors to enhance non-Muslim consumer interest in halal products.

Based on Table 1, The T-test results indicate that all independent variables have statistically significant effects on the decision of non-Muslim consumers in Palu City to choose halal products, albeit with varying directions of influence. The findings reveal an interconnected decision-making process. Attitude (X2), Trust (X6), and Experience (X7) form the psychological core that drives purchase intention and loyalty. Accessibility (X4) and Social Influence (X5) act as environmental enablers, facilitating the translation of positive attitudes into actual purchasing behavior. Meanwhile, Price (X3) functions as a potential barrier, and Knowledge (X1) when delivered in overly technical or religious terms may be ineffective or even counterproductive for non-Muslim segments.

This pattern underscores purchasing decisions are not driven by a single factor but by the synergy between psychological, structural, and economic elements. Marketing strategies will be more effective if they optimize drivers, manage barriers, and maintain message consistency across marketing channels.

The F-test in this study was conducted to evaluate the simultaneous influence of several independent variables on the dependent variable, which, in this case, is the decisions of non-Muslims when choosing halal food products. By employing analysis of variance (ANOVA), the F-test helps determine whether there is a significant collective impact from all independent variables.

**Table 2. Factors Influencing Non-Muslim Decisions in Choosing Halal Food**

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	472.885	7	67.555	43.462	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	169.423	109	1.554		
	Total	642.308	116			
a. Dependent Variable: TOTAL_Y						
b. Predictors: (Constant), TOTAL_X7, TOTAL_X4, TOTAL_X1, TOTAL_X5, TOTAL_X3, TOTAL_X6, TOTAL_X2						

Source: Processed Data, 2024

The analysis results show that the value of F-test (43.462) is more significant than F-test (2.45), with a significant level of 0.000, less than 0.05. This indicates that, simultaneously, all independent variables—Knowledge (X1), Attitude towards Halal Products (X2), Price and Economic Value (X3), Accessibility and Availability of Products (X4), Social and Cultural Influence (X5), Trust in Halal Certification (X6), and Consumption Experience (X7) significantly affect non-Muslim consumers' decisions when choosing halal food products (Y).

The results of the F-test in this study indicate that the independent variables collectively have a significant influence on non-Muslims' decisions regarding halal products.

This finding aligns with existing literature, such as the work of (Wilkins et al., 2019), which emphasizes the importance of social and cultural factors in shaping purchasing decisions. Additionally, the positive attitude towards halal products (X2) proves to be significant, supporting the findings of (A. Arifin et al., 2021), which assert that a favorable perception of the quality and safety of halal products drives purchasing decisions.

Research by (Yunos et al., 2018) highlights that halal products (X4) availability is crucial; improved accessibility can enhance consumers' willingness to choose these products. While Price and Economic Value (X3) do not show significant influence, this suggests that consumers often prioritize value and quality over price, consistent with the findings of (Lei et al., 2020). Trust in halal certification (X6) also demonstrates a significant influence, which aligns with the results from (Masood & Zaidi, 2023), emphasizing the importance of Trust in certification bodies for consumption decisions. Lastly, Consumption Experience (X7) also contributes positively, as supported by findings by (Lei et al., 2020), indicating that positive experiences enhance consumer loyalty toward halal products. Overall, this study's results are consistent with previous findings and broaden the understanding of the dynamics influencing non-Muslim preferences for halal products, highlighting the need for more inclusive and effective marketing strategies.

In this study, the  $R^2$  test is utilized to assess the extent to which the combination of seven independent variables knowledge (X1), Attitude towards Halal Products (X2), Price and economic value (X3), Accessibility and Availability of Products (X4), Social and cultural influence (X5), Trust in Halal Certification (X6), and Consumption Experience (X7) explains the decisions made by non-Muslims when selecting halal food products (Y).

**Table 3. Non-Muslim Decisions Regarding Halal Products**

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				Sig. F Change
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	
1	.858 <sup>a</sup>	.736	.719	1.247	.736	43.462	7	109	.000
a. Predictors: (Constant), TOTAL_X7, TOTAL_X4, TOTAL_X1, TOTAL_X5, TOTAL_X3, TOTAL_X6, TOTAL_X2									

Source: Processed data, 2024

The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of 0.736 indicates that 73.6% of the variation in non-Muslim consumers' decisions when choosing halal products can be explained by the independent variables examined in this study. Meanwhile, the remaining 26.4% is attributed to factors outside the scope of this research model. This finding emphasizes the importance of considering a combination of various variables to understand consumer decisions in the halal market, providing valuable insights for the development of more effective marketing strategies.

The results of this research support previous studies that indicate the significant role of social and psychological factors in halal food purchasing decisions. For instance, (Barrion et al., 2022) note that limited knowledge of halal rarely translates into purchasing behavior. Conversely, (A. Arifin et al., 2021) highlights that a positive attitude toward halal products is a significant motivator for purchases. Additionally, research by (Wilkins et al., 2019) emphasizes the significance of good accessibility in purchasing decisions. Thus, the synthesis of these findings indicates the necessity for more comprehensive and inclusive marketing strategies to enhance understanding, positive attitudes, and accessibility of halal products among non-Muslim consumers.

## 2. Discussion

### a. The Influence of Knowledge on Non-Muslim Decisions in Choosing Halal Products

The findings of this study reveal a paradox: higher levels of knowledge among non-Muslim consumers in Palu are associated with lower purchase intentions. This aligns with Barrion et al. (2022), who noted that while non-Muslims in Southeast Asia often access halal-related information, such knowledge rarely motivates purchases unless linked to personal benefits. Value congruence theory (Schwartz, 1964) posits that consumers are more likely to adopt products when they perceive alignment between a product's attributes and their values. For non-Muslims, halal knowledge framed purely in religious or doctrinal terms may not align with their core consumption values, which tend to focus more on functional benefits such as health, hygiene, and quality assurance. In such cases, rather than increasing appeal, detailed religious knowledge may be perceived as irrelevant or overly specific to another group's identity. Second, from the perspective of information processing theory (Bettman, 1971), an overload of technical or religious detail can create information fatigue, leading consumers to disengage from the decision-making process altogether. When information fails to connect to personal relevance, it is less likely to influence attitudes and more likely to be ignored or deprioritized in the purchase decision. This is consistent with findings from (M. F. Arifin et al., 2020), which highlight that non-Muslim consumers respond more positively to halal product information when it emphasizes universal values such as cleanliness and ethical sourcing rather than religious obligations.

In Palu's multicultural setting, halal is often perceived as a quality marker rather than a religious necessity. Knowledge framed around practical concerns—e.g., hygiene assurance—can improve attitudes, while religious framing risks alienation. Knowledge also interacts with other drivers: paired with positive attitudes, it can enhance purchase intentions, but when linked with negative perceptions (e.g., higher prices), it may reinforce reluctance.

In line with social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), the source of knowledge also matters. Knowledge derived from trusted peers or personal experience tends to carry more persuasive weight than abstract information from unfamiliar sources. This implies that marketing efforts should make knowledge experiential and relatable, for example, through product trials, tasting events, or testimonials, rather than relying solely on printed labels or technical explanations.

In summary, knowledge alone does not drive non-Muslim consumers toward halal products. Its effectiveness depends on framing (universal vs. religious), delivery (digestible vs. technical), and integration with attitudes, trust, and experiences. Ultimately, knowledge shapes behavior indirectly, by influencing consumer attitudes toward halal.

### b. Attitudes of Non-Muslims Towards Halal Products

The findings of this study indicate that a positive attitude toward halal products exerts a direct and significant influence on purchasing decisions, considerably stronger than the effect of knowledge, which, in contrast, tends to display a negative association. This aligns with the Theory of Reasoned Action, which posits that positive attitudes generate strong behavioral intentions, particularly when supported by social norms and perceived behavioral control. The divergence in influence between knowledge and attitude suggests

that knowing about halal is not enough; purchase decisions materialize when such knowledge is accompanied by trust, appreciation, and positive perceptions that align with the consumer's priorities.

In Palu, a positive attitude toward halal products is frequently shaped by direct experiences and social influence. Consuming or purchasing halal products presented in a clean environment with high hygiene standards sends a strong signal that the products are not only compliant with religious standards but also reliably high in quality. Direct interaction and first-hand experiences with halal products significantly improve quality perceptions and foster loyalty, especially among non-Muslim consumers new to the category. These experiences strengthen the affective dimension of attitude, which in turn fuels repeat purchase behavior.

Effective marketing strategies can strengthen positive attitudes by aligning halal with values shared by both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers. Rather than focusing solely on religious compliance, campaigns that emphasize universal benefits such as health, cleanliness, and food safety resonate more broadly. (Yunos et al., 2018) demonstrate that health-focused halal marketing significantly improves positive perceptions among non-Muslims and correlates with stronger purchase intentions. In this way, halal transitions from being seen purely as a religious label to becoming a symbol of better living standards.

The Affective-Cognitive Model further suggests that attitudes combining rational evaluation and emotional association are more predictive of behavior. By positioning halal as offering both quality assurance and peace of mind, marketers can build lasting positive attitudes that amplify the influence of other determinants such as price, accessibility, and certification trust.

### **c. Price and Economic Value Perceptions Among Non-Muslims Towards Halal Products**

While a positive attitude toward halal products can serve as a powerful driver of purchasing behavior, its influence often intersects consumers' perceptions of price and economic value. In many cases, price functions as both a rational evaluator and a psychological filter: it can either validate a positive attitude by reinforcing the sense of value or undermine it if the perceived cost outweighs the perceived benefits. Economic value in this context refers not merely to the absolute monetary cost but to the perceived fairness of the exchange—what the consumer believes they are receiving in quality, safety, and reliability compared to what they are giving up financially.

The study's findings show that when halal products are perceived as more expensive than their non-halal counterparts, non-Muslim consumers—particularly those in middle to lower income segments—are more likely to seek alternatives. This outcome is consistent with Price Sensitivity Theory, which suggests that consumers with constrained purchasing power tend to prioritize affordability over other attributes, even if they hold favorable attitudes toward the product. (Lei et al., 2020) confirm this pattern, observing that price is one of the most influential determinants in food purchasing decisions, especially when the price gap between alternatives is easily noticeable.

However, prices do not operate in isolation. Behavioral economics highlights the role of perceived value concepts encompassing tangible benefits such as product quality and intangible benefits such as brand trust and emotional satisfaction. For consumers in Palu,

the decision to pay more for a halal product often hinges on whether they believe that superior quality, safer production processes, or better service justify the additional cost. Research by (Istiasih, 2022) shows that when halal products effectively communicate these added values, price resistance diminishes, even among cost-conscious buyers. In other words, economic value is negotiated in the mind of the consumer, shaped by both the product's intrinsic qualities and the narrative surrounding them.

Attitudes and price interact critically. Strong positive attitudes can frame higher prices as investments in quality, consistent with Equity Theory, which views fairness as a balance between consumer inputs and outputs. Conversely, weak attitudes make even modest price gaps prohibitive. Socio-economic diversity further complicates this: higher-income groups may interpret price as a quality signal (Price–Quality Inference Theory), while affordability remains a barrier for lower-income consumers.

Perceived value also depends on related factors. Accessibility reduces search costs, making higher prices more acceptable. Trust in certification reassures consumers that price reflects rigorous quality assurance. Positive past experiences strengthen loyalty, leading consumers to tolerate price differences.

Thus, price should not be seen as an isolated barrier but as embedded in broader decision-making. For marketers, this means pairing competitive pricing with value-based messaging that emphasizes universal benefits—hygiene, freshness, and ethical sourcing—shifting focus from cost alone to holistic worth.

#### **d. Accessibility and Availability of Halal Products for Non-Muslim Consumers**

While perceptions of price and economic value can strongly influence consumer decisions, these perceptions are profoundly shaped by the ease with which products can be found and purchased. Accessibility and availability function as both practical enablers and psychological reinforcers: when a product is within easy reach—whether physically in stores or digitally through online channels—it gains an implicit sense of normalcy and legitimacy. Conversely, limited access can undermine even the most favorable attitudes or well-justified price points, creating friction that dissuades purchase.

In the context of Palu, accessibility takes on multiple dimensions. Physical accessibility refers to the presence of halal products in high-traffic retail locations such as supermarkets, convenience stores, and traditional markets. Availability, in turn, encompasses both consistent stock levels and the diversity of product options. Research by (Wilkins et al., 2019) highlights that visibility and shelf placement significantly affect consumer purchasing behavior; products positioned in prominent, eye-level spaces are more likely to be chosen, not merely because they are seen but because their placement signals reliability and demand.

From a behavioral economics perspective, this connects closely to the concept of search cost theory. When consumers—especially non-Muslims who may not actively seek halal-certified goods—can find these products without extra effort, the perceived cost of the transaction decreases. This is particularly important for price-sensitive consumers: if a slightly higher-priced halal product is readily available alongside other affordable options, its accessibility can offset the potential deterrent effect of cost. In this sense, accessibility serves as a bridge between the perceived economic value discussed earlier and the actual act of purchase.

Social context further amplifies the role of accessibility. In communities where halal consumption is socially visible and culturally encouraged, the widespread availability of halal products reinforces the perception that these goods are not just for Muslim consumers but are a mainstream, high-quality choice for everyone. (Sumarliah et al., 2021) argue that when products are embedded within everyday purchasing environments—such as neighborhood minimarkets or popular online platforms—they gain social legitimacy. For non-Muslims in Palu, encountering halal products in common shopping spaces can normalize their consumption, shifting them from an optional consideration to an unremarkable, even preferred, choice.

The rise of e-commerce adds another layer to this dynamic. Online marketplaces and delivery services offer not just convenience but also educational opportunities, enabling consumers to compare halal products, read reviews, and verify certifications before purchase. (Yunos et al., 2018) found that online channels can be particularly effective in reaching consumers in areas with limited physical retail options, thereby equalizing access across geographic and demographic lines. For non-Muslims who may be hesitant to ask questions about halal products in-store, the privacy of online shopping can also reduce perceived social barriers.

Accessibility goes beyond distribution—it signals brand stability and trust. Consistent availability communicates reliability, while stockouts undermine confidence and risk switching to non-halal alternatives, regardless of positive attitudes or reasonable prices. The interaction between accessibility, price, and value is critical. Even well-priced products with strong perceived benefits lose relevance if they are hard to obtain. Conversely, products that cost slightly more can sustain loyalty when consistently accessible, particularly in locations aligned with consumer routines. Strategically, accessibility requires multi-channel distribution: regular stocking in physical outlets, strong presence on online platforms, and outreach in community-based retail. Equitable distribution across urban centers and peripheral areas helps normalize halal products and prevents them from being viewed as niche or exclusive. In Palu's diverse demographic, such inclusivity fosters broader acceptance among non-Muslims. Ultimately, accessibility ensures visibility, but trust in certification determines whether the product enters the consumer's basket—highlighting the transition to the next determinant of purchasing decisions.

#### **e. Trust in Halal Certification and Its Influence on Non-Muslim Decisions When Choosing Halal Products**

Even when halal products are well-priced, perceived as valuable, and easily accessible, the final gatekeeper in the consumer's decision-making process is trust, particularly trust in the halal certification itself. For non-Muslim consumers in Palu, this trust functions less as a matter of personal religious observance and more as an assurance of quality, safety, and compliance with recognized standards. In this sense, the halal label operates much like other quality marks—such as ISO or organic certifications—that signal credibility in the marketplace.

From a theoretical standpoint, the signaling theory in marketing explains this well. A certification mark, when issued by a reputable authority, reduces information asymmetry between producer and consumer. For products that carry intangible attributes—such as adherence to halal preparation processes, the certification serves as a tangible proxy for

these unseen qualities. Research by (Lei et al., 2020) confirms that consumers, including non-Muslims, often use halal certification as a heuristic for evaluating overall product quality, cleanliness, and ethical production.

In Indonesia, and specifically in Palu, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) is the most recognized certification body. Its credibility has been built over decades, creating a high level of public awareness. For non-Muslims, seeing the MUI logo can evoke a sense of reassurance that the product has passed through stringent vetting. (Yunos et al., 2018) found that when the certifying body has a positive public image, consumer trust extends beyond the religious significance of the label and into broader perceptions of product reliability. This is why consistent and transparent communication from certification authorities is vital—not only to maintain Muslim consumer confidence but also to expand appeal among non-Muslim segments.

Accessibility and trust often operate in tandem. A halal product that is widely available in multiple retail points but lacks a credible certification may still face hesitation from non-Muslims who equate certification with safety and legitimacy. Conversely, a strongly certified product that is difficult to find suffers from the same bottleneck: it cannot leverage its credibility if consumers cannot access it. This interdependence highlights that distribution strategy and certification credibility should be managed as parallel priorities.

The role of trust also intersects with consumer risk perception. For non-Muslims, halal certification reduces perceived functional risk (concerns about hygiene, contamination, or quality) and social risk (the possibility of criticism or skepticism from peers about product choice). According to (Masood et al., 2023), products backed by credible certification are more resilient in competitive markets because the trust factor creates a protective barrier against switching behavior, even when price or availability fluctuates.

In Palu's diverse context, trust in halal certification facilitates both consumer confidence and social alignment. Non-Muslims often choose certified products to harmonize with Muslim peers in shared meals or events, making certification a tool for inclusivity and repeat purchases. Transparency strengthens this trust: when consumers understand applied standards, audit mechanisms, and enforcement, labels are seen as meaningful rather than symbolic. This reflects institutional trust theory, where perceived fairness and integrity of procedures matter as much as outcomes. Yet trust is fragile. Negative publicity, conflicts of interest, or certification failures can quickly erode confidence, making proactive reputation management essential. Certification bodies must uphold strict standards while engaging the public through education and responsiveness to controversy. Trust often initiates the first purchase, but loyalty depends on consumption experience. Certification gets products into the basket; taste, quality, and satisfaction ensure they return.

#### **f. Experiential Factors in Non-Muslim Decisions to Choose Halal Products**

While trust in halal certification often serves as the initial gateway for purchase, it is the consumption experience that determines whether the product becomes part of a consumer's habitual choices. For non-Muslim consumers in Palu, this stage is where expectations—shaped by price, availability, and trust—are either confirmed or contradicted. If the experience aligns with or exceeds expectations, the product moves from being a one-time trial to a recurring choice; if it disappoints, even strong certification credibility may not be enough to secure repeat purchases.

From the perspective of experiential marketing theory (Schmitt, 1999), consumer decision-making is not merely a rational evaluation of attributes but also a sensory, emotional, and social process. For halal food, this means that factors such as taste, aroma, presentation, and even the atmosphere in which the product is consumed play a critical role. A positive sensory experience strengthens emotional attachment to the brand, which in turn reinforces purchase intentions. Research by (Lei et al., 2020) found that consumers—Muslim and non-Muslim alike—are more likely to remain loyal to products that deliver consistently satisfying experiences, regardless of whether the purchase was initially motivated by certification, price, or accessibility.

In Palu's culturally diverse context, consumption often takes place in social settings—family gatherings, community events, or shared meals with Muslim friends. Here, the social proof effect becomes particularly powerful: if the product elicits visible enjoyment or verbal praise from others, the experience acquires a social validation layer that deepens its memorability. Studies such as (Nazaruddin et al., 2023) confirm that social dining experiences enhance product recall and brand preference, making consumers more likely to seek the product again actively.

This experiential dimension is also where marketing can most effectively close the loop. Positive experiences can be amplified through word-of-mouth marketing, both offline and on digital platforms. Non-Muslim consumers who have enjoyed a halal product may share their impressions with peers, not necessarily in religious terms, but by emphasizing quality, taste, or health benefits. Such peer endorsements are especially influential in collectivist cultures like Indonesia's, where purchase decisions are often socially embedded.

Importantly, the consumption experience feeds back into other variables in the decision-making chain. A satisfying experience reinforces trust in certification—consumers begin to associate the certification label with positive quality outcomes. Similarly, it can soften price sensitivity; once consumers believe that the product delivers value beyond cost, they become less resistant to premium pricing. It can also strengthen attitudes toward halal products in general, creating an openness to exploring other halal-certified options across different categories.

Conversely, a negative experience can undo the cumulative influence of other factors. Poor taste, inconsistent quality, or disappointing service in a halal-certified establishment can erode trust, increase price sensitivity, and weaken positive attitudes. This is consistent with the expectation-disconfirmation theory (Oliver, 1980), which posits that satisfaction or dissatisfaction arises from the gap between expected and actual performance. When performance falls short, even long-standing brand loyalty can be jeopardized.

The strategic implication is clear: while certification, pricing, and distribution strategies can get the product into consumers' hands, it is the consumption experience that secures its place in their long-term repertoire. For non-Muslim consumers, this means that the halal label must translate into tangible quality benefits they can taste, see, and feel. In this way, the consumption experience not only closes the decision-making loop but also serves as the launch point for a cycle of repeat purchases, brand advocacy, and market expansion.

The findings of this study provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing non-Muslim consumers' purchasing decisions for halal food products in Palu

City. The multiple linear regression analysis reveals that knowledge, attitude, price, economic value, accessibility and availability, social and cultural influence, trust in halal certification, and consumption experience all demonstrate significant effects, albeit in varying directions and magnitudes.

The role of knowledge in shaping consumer behavior presents an intriguing paradox. While it might be expected that greater knowledge of the halal concept would encourage more purchases, the results show a negative relationship. This suggests that for non-Muslim consumers in Palu, understanding the religious or philosophical underpinnings of halal is not a primary motivator. Instead, they tend to evaluate halal products through a secular lens, emphasizing perceived quality, health benefits, and cleanliness rather than compliance with religious law. This aligns with Barrion et al. (2022), who found that access to halal information rarely translates directly into purchasing action, especially among consumers who do not feel bound by religious obligations. In a multicultural city like Palu, halal knowledge is more likely to be valued when framed in practical, lifestyle-oriented terms. Thus, the challenge for marketers is to reframe halal knowledge into tangible benefits that resonate across cultural lines.

In contrast, positive attitudes towards halal products emerge as one of the most decisive drivers of purchasing decisions. Consumers who perceive halal products as high-quality, safe, and trustworthy are far more likely to choose them. This mirrors Arifin et al. (2021), who highlight the role of attitudes as a bridge between awareness and action. In Palu, such attitudes are shaped not only by individual experience but also by community influence and environmental cues, such as seeing halal products prominently displayed in clean, reputable retail environments. Social reinforcement amplifies these perceptions: when friends, family, or community leaders endorse halal products, non-Muslim consumers are more inclined to adopt them. This illustrates a critical point for marketing strategy: fostering positive emotional and social associations may be more influential than merely providing information.

The variable of price and economic value adds another layer of complexity. While some studies (Lei et al., 2020) suggest that price is a decisive factor in food purchasing decisions, the present findings show that higher perceived prices for halal products can act as a deterrent for cost-sensitive consumers. In Palu's diverse economic landscape, where household incomes vary widely, affordability remains central to product acceptance. However, price sensitivity does not operate in isolation—it interacts with perceptions of quality. If higher prices are justified by demonstrably superior taste, packaging, nutritional value, or safety, consumers may still be willing to pay more. This suggests that pricing strategies for halal products should balance affordability with clear communication of added value.

Affordability alone is insufficient if products are not accessible. Accessibility and availability significantly enhance the likelihood of purchase, underscoring the logistical dimension of consumer behavior. As Wilkins et al. (2019) note, physical proximity and product visibility are strong predictors of purchase intent. In Palu, equitable distribution—ensuring halal products are present in both high-traffic urban markets and smaller neighborhood outlets—broadens their relevance beyond Muslim-majority areas. The integration of online channels further removes geographic barriers, enabling non-Muslim consumers to explore halal options from the convenience of their homes. The

implication is clear: a robust, multi-channel distribution strategy is vital to sustaining consumer interest.

Social and cultural influences play a reinforcing role in this network of determinants. When halal consumption is normalized within a consumer's social circle—whether through communal dining, cultural events, or workplace norms—individual adoption becomes more likely. This supports (Masood & Zaidi, 2023) findings on the power of normative pressure in shaping consumption habits. In Palu's context, where interfaith and intercultural interactions are everyday, these influences extend beyond religious boundaries. Marketers can leverage this by integrating halal products into culturally inclusive events and promotional campaigns that highlight shared values of quality and safety.

Complementing social influence is trust in halal certification, which acts as a formal assurance of product integrity. The credibility of certifying bodies, particularly the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), functions as a quality signal for both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers. (Lei et al., 2020) emphasize that trust in certification not only reduces perceived risk but also reinforces the perceived value of the product. For non-Muslims, the certification serves less as a religious guarantee and more as evidence of standardized quality control—akin to ISO or organic labels in other contexts. Transparency in the certification process, alongside consistent enforcement, can therefore enhance consumer confidence and strengthen brand positioning.

Finally, consumption experience emerges as both a short-term and long-term determinant of purchasing behavior. Positive experiences—whether in terms of taste, freshness, presentation, or service—create emotional connections that translate into repeat purchases and positive word-of-mouth. (Nazaruddin et al., 2023) highlight that dining contexts, such as family gatherings or community events, amplify the memorability of such experiences. In Palu's competitive food market, where consumers have ample alternatives, delivering consistently satisfying experiences is not merely advantageous but essential for building loyalty across demographic lines.

When these variables are viewed collectively, a clear pattern emerges: purchasing decisions among non-Muslims in Palu are less about doctrinal compliance and more about a holistic value proposition combining tangible benefits (quality, price, availability) with intangible reinforcements (attitude, social norms, trust, and experience). This interdependence suggests that effective marketing must operate across multiple touchpoints—shaping perceptions, reinforcing trust, ensuring accessibility, and delivering positive experiences—rather than relying on a single persuasive angle.

## E. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that non-Muslim consumers' purchasing decisions for halal products in Palu City are shaped less by religious knowledge and more by an integrated set of attitudinal, experiential, and contextual factors. While knowledge of halal concepts shows a negative association with purchase decisions, positive attitudes, accessibility and availability, social and cultural influence, trust in halal certification, and direct consumption experiences significantly encourage adoption. Price and economic value exert a more conditional effect, becoming influential only when aligned with clear perceptions of product quality.

These findings underscore that halal product acceptance among non-Muslim consumers is driven by a holistic value proposition that combines tangible benefits—such as quality, safety, and convenience—with intangible reinforcements, including social endorsement, certification credibility, and memorable consumption experiences. This integrated understanding provides practical guidance for producers, marketers, and policymakers: marketing should go beyond religious messaging, instead framing halal products in terms of health, hygiene, and quality while ensuring widespread availability and building trust through transparent certification processes.

The study's originality lies in revealing the interconnected pattern of factors influencing non-Muslim halal consumption in a post-disaster, multicultural city. Its practical contribution is the provision of targeted strategies for increasing market penetration in diverse communities, while academically it advances the discourse by bridging consumer behavior theory, the Theory of Planned Behavior, and post-disaster consumer dynamics.

Future research should expand the scope beyond Palu to compare regional differences, adopt longitudinal designs to track evolving perceptions, and explore the interaction between halal consumption and broader lifestyle trends such as wellness and sustainability. By doing so, both academic understanding and industry practice can better align with the realities of a diverse and evolving halal consumer market.

Further studies should adopt a multi-city design to explore regional variations in non-Muslim attitudes toward halal products. Longitudinal studies could examine how consumer perceptions evolve, particularly in response to marketing campaigns or policy changes. Additionally, incorporating qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews or focus groups, could yield richer insights into the nuanced motivations behind non-Muslim consumption of halal products. Future research could also investigate the intersection of halal consumption with broader health and wellness trends, enabling marketers to tap into emerging consumer priorities.

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