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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# The Relationship Of Attitude, Subjective Norms, Trust And Intention To Use Halal Cosmetic Products At Public Institutions Of Higher Learning In Malaysia

<sup>1</sup>Abd Rahim Romle, <sup>2</sup>Mashitah Mohd. Udin, <sup>3</sup>Nurul Hamimah Abu Seman, <sup>4</sup>Ilman Nabil Ismail Bakri, <sup>5</sup>M Shahadat Ali Nordin, <sup>6</sup>Ummi Hidayah Mohd Zaya

<sup>1</sup>School of Government, College of Law, government and International Studies, Universiti Utara Malaysia.

<sup>2</sup>School of Government, College of Law, government and International Studies, Universiti Utara Malaysia.

<sup>3</sup>School of Government, College of Law, government and International Studies, Universiti Utara Malaysia.

<sup>4</sup>School of Government, College of Law, government and International Studies, Universiti Utara Malaysia.

<sup>5</sup>School of Government, College of Law, government and International Studies, Universiti Utara Malaysia.

<sup>6</sup>School of Government, College of Law, government and International Studies, Universiti Utara Malaysia.

### Address For Correspondence:

Ilman Nabil Bin Ismail Bakri, Public Management School of Government,, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok Darul Aman, Kedah.  
Tel: +6017-4059239; E-mail: [ilmannabil93@gmail.com](mailto:ilmannabil93@gmail.com)

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Halal branding is not a new issue in the halal market. Even though it still in the early stages for some products, it is well known that branding has a good. Besides that, the application of brand theory unnecessarily restrict to the term of halal and the interpretation of its meaning and overall concept of halal in Islam. Halal conscious customers have a high regard for halal concept, and they tend to use behavioral traits decision making. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine empirically the relationship between attitude, subjective norms, trust and intention to use Halal cosmetics products among students at public institutions of higher learning in northern region Malaysia. The respondents of this study are 327 students in various backgrounds. The data were analyzed through descriptive analysis, ANOVA, T-test, Pearson Correlation and Multiple Regressions by using SPSS version 19.0. Suggestion for further research and recommendation for the decision makers have been forwarded.

**Key words:** Halal product, Intention to Use, Subjective Norms, Trust

## INTRODUCTION

Muslim represents the fastest growing in the earth both by the birth and adoption. The population of Muslim consists of up to one quarter of the world's population. About 60.4 percent in 2013 majority of the population is Muslim in Malaysia and that represents over half of our population are Muslim majority. Interestingly, this figure is expected to increase up to 30% in 2025 [17].

Even though the majority of population in Malaysia is Muslim, the halal issues actually is not new and they all facing problem related to the concept of halal since the concept is not only focusing to the food products but more than that including cosmetic products. There is a growing concern among consumers' towards the importance of halal labeled cosmetic products, the implementation of halal logo and marketing strategies are

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still not widely utilized in the Malaysian cosmetic industry. There are still incidences about utilization of fake halal logo which will decrease consumers' confidence towards the halal products. Therefore, more effort should be carried out to spread the halal concept to Malaysian industries in general.

As reported in Kosmo's news article dated 10 September 2009, there is famous local cosmetic company has been importing beauty products banned from China and Indonesia to be repackaged and sold here using their brand. Among their products is a night cream, whitening cream, skin care creams and herbal scrubs. The operation was also uncovered when a team of 10 enforcement members of Pharmaceutical Selangor Health Department invaded the factory packaging in Klang, Selangor. The products consist film processing material, hidroquin which causing the consumer who used this cosmetic complained that their skin become peeling and even worse some of them was recognized by the doctor to get the skin cancer.

In Berita Harian dated 25 July 2013 report that a skin whitening product brand Kanebo get many complain from the consumer which this product give discoloration of their skin after using its whitening products. Even though this company was comply with local requirement, the material called 4HPB, a synthetic version developed by Kanebo from natural compounds give the negative impact to that cosmetic product. Kanebo is cosmetic company from Japan and it recalled its 54 cosmetic product outside Japan including Malaysia.

Almost twenty years ago, the World Halal Council (WHC) was formed to develop a unified Halal Standard and they were so many steps ahead of everybody else in terms of realizing the need for single standards for the halal industry. Production, preparation, handling and storage – General Guidelines (MS 1500:2009) has been developed under the Malaysian Standard Development System under the Department of Standard Malaysia (DSM), Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation. It aims is to provide guidelines for food products and food trade or business in Malaysia. It will used by JAKIM as the basis for certification but will be added to many other requirement in completing the certification process.

Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) is the competent authority being responsible for halal certification in Malaysia. The responsibility in ascertaining the halal status of the products involved not only on the official site inspection of plants but also on the examination on how the Halal status of the raw material is maintained and monitored at all times. In view of many raw material used in local food production are mostly imported products which requires the appointment of reputable and reliable foreign halal certification bodies or organizations to monitor the Halal status of these raw materials. The recognition is also extended to halal status of finished products. The Department of Islamic Development Malaysia or JAKIM (Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia) introduced its new Halal Stamp in October 2003. The new stamp is the standard stamp used by all states in Malaysia in contrast to the earlier one where each state has its own stamp. The original colour of the Halal Stamp is black and white. However, certificate holders can choose any color they wish to suit their need. The code number printed within the circle indicates the Malaysian State that issues the certification.

Intentions have frequently been subsumed under the concept of attitude and that no distinction between attitude and intention has usually been made. The usual assumptions towards attitude and intention would be the more favorable a person's attitude toward some object, the more he will intend to perform positive behavior and the less he will intend to perform negative behavior with respect to that object [1].

Lada *et al.* [10] state that subjective norms also significant to influence intention. In their findings, subjective norms have been shown to be most influential driver of intention to use Halal products. Lin and Lu (2009) suggested that trust has a significantly positive influence on using intentions. They did a study on "The influence of corporate image, relationship marketing and trust on intention to use: the moderating effects of word-of-mouth". One of the purposes of this study is to study the influence on consumer used intention. A total of 473 respondents were involved in their online survey and 458 questionnaires are effective to be used as the data. Most of their respondents are based in Northern Taiwan (76.4 percent). The testing results revealed that trust could interpret 25.2 percent of variance towards intention to use.

The theoretical framework for this study was based on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). The TRA has emerged as one of the most influential and popular conceptual frameworks for the study of human behavior and have strong support from past studies [12,13]. It has been shown for the efficacy of the theory as predictor of behavior in a variety of experimental naturalistic, systematic and though behavior rather capricious or primarily under the control of unconscious motives [15].

According to the TRA, an attitude is representing as a function of behavioral beliefs (BB) and outcome evaluation. A person perceives that the outcome from performing behavior is positive; she or he will have a positive attitude thought to be negative [6]. If relevant, other see performing the behavior as positive and the individual is motivated to meet the expectation of relevant others then a positive subjective norm is expected. If relevant, other see performing the behavior as positive and the individual is motivated to meet the expectation of relevant others then a positive subjective norm is expected [3]. If relevant, others see the behavior as negative and the individual wants to meet the expectations of these "others", then the experience is likely to be a negative subjective norm for the individual [7,20]. Attitudes and subjective norm are measured on scales (*i.e.* Likert Scale) using phrases or terms such as like or unlike, good or bad and agree or disagree. The intent to perform

behavior depends up on the product of the measures of attitude and subjective norm. a positive product indicates behavioral intent.

#### Objectives:

The specific aims of this study are as follows:

1. To investigate the relationship between attitude and intention to use Halal cosmetic products.
2. To examine the relationship between subjective norms and the intention to use Halal cosmetic products.
3. To determine the relationship between trust and intention to use Halal cosmetic products.

#### Limitation Of The Study:

Respondents selected mostly are from Malays and the answer not accurately as a whole result. Currently, there are 17 public universities in the country and the sample is selected from only one university. Therefore, the samples cannot be generalized to all students in the Malaysian universities or higher learning institution. The limitation is due to the problem of manageability, financial and time.

There are only 327 out of 350 questionnaires that can be used in the study due to limited resources and time constraints. Therefore, the findings of this study were unable to be generalizing to all population in the northern region Malaysia of public institution and higher institution.

#### Methodology:

This research is designed to study the level of knowledge to use Halal cosmetic products among students in public university. The data were collected using self-administered questionnaire adapted from Haslizatuliza (2011). A 5- point multi item Likert scale format was employed, ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Neutral), 4 (Agree) and 5 (Strongly agree).

A total 350 questionnaires were distributed to the students in Universiti Utara Malaysia, Kedah by using random sampling. Subsequently, 327 replies were obtained. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 for Windows was used to generate descriptive statistics.

#### Finding And Discussion:

This study has a total 327 of respondents. There are altogether 94 males (28.7%) and 233 (71.3%) females respondents for this questionnaire. Table 1 show that 180 respondents (55%) were aging 20 -30 years old, 92 respondents (28.1%) aging 31-40 years old, 52 respondents (15.9%) were 41-50 years old and 3 respondents (0.9%) were aging 51 and above. For race, Malay consist of 302 respondents (92.4%), Chinese are 15 respondents (4.6%), 7 respondents (2.1%) are from Indian and others respondents are 3 (0.9%). In term of citizenship, most of the respondents are Malaysian, 234 (71.6%) and 93 respondents (28.3%) are non-Malaysian. Out of the total respondents, 205 respondents (62.7%) is single, 115 respondents (35.2%) are married and 7 respondents (2.1%) are divorce. According to this analysis, most of the respondents are in degree level which are 203 respondents (62.1%), 98 respondents (30%) are in Master level and PhD students consists of 26 respondents (8%).

**Table 1:** Profile of Respondents

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	94	28.7
Female	233	71.3
Age (year)		
20 - 30	180	55.0
31 - 40	92	28.1
41 - 50	52	15.9
51 and above	3	0.9
Race		
Malay	302	92.4
Chinese	15	4.6
Indian	7	2.1
Others	3	0.9
Citizenship		
Malaysian	234	71.6
Non- Malaysian	93	28.4
Marital status		
Single	205	62.7
Married	115	35.2
Divorce	7	2.1
Level of Education		

Degree	203	62.1
Master	98	30.0
PhD	26	8.0

By analyzing the Pearson Correlation analysis through the hypothesis testing, it is concluded that all the three independent variables (Attitude, Subjective Norms and Trust) are correlated among each other.

**Table 2:** Hypothesis Testing

Alternate Hypothesis	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Result
HA 1: There is relationship between attitude and intention to use Halal cosmetic products.	0.820	0.000	Significant and supported
HA 2: There is relationship between subjective norms and intention to use Halal cosmetic products.	0.825	0.000	Significant and supported
HA3: There is relationship between trust and intention to use Halal cosmetic products.	0.757	0.000	Significant and supported

*Correlation is significant at 0.01 confidence level (2-tailed):*

The multiple regression analysis (entered method) is applied to measure the variable that explained the variance in the overall intention to use. Table 3 illustrated the multiple regression analysis results of the independent variables against dependent variable.

**Table 3:** Multiple Regression Analysis

	B	Beta	t	sig.
ATTITUDE	0.354	0.365	5.777	0.000
SUBJECTIVE NORMS	0.213	0.211	3.958	0.000
TRUST	0.034	-0.034	-0.688	0.492
R= .906      R <sup>2</sup> = .821      Adjusted R= .817				
F= 238.270      F significant= .000				

\*\*P<0.05

\*\*P<0.01

The above table exhibit that correlation of the independent variables against dependent variable is 0.906 with R square is 0.821. The F statistic is 238.270 and is significant at the 0.000 level. Thus, this means that 82.1% of the variance in intention to use is significantly explained and influenced by the independent variables. Beta value is used to identify which of the three independents variables is more important in explaining the variance in intention to use. As suggested in above table, attitude shows the highest score value, 0.365, which is significant at the 0.01 level. At the mean time the result indicates trust is not significantly correlating in explaining student intention to use.

The analysis outcome indicated all indicators which employ as independent variables: attitude, subjective norms and trust have significant relation with intention to use. Overall observation shown subjective norms appear the highest significant level of  $r = 0.825$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , followed by attitude at the significant level of  $r = 0.820$ ,  $p < 0.01$  and trust at the significant level of  $r = 0.757$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . Based on this result, the manufacturer especially should play their role effectively in dealing with the consumer choosing behaviour towards Halal cosmetic products in the markets.

The result is corresponding with NurHaslizatul [14] that indicates attitude, subjective norms and trust in consumer behaviour have positive impact towards purchasing the Halal products in the markets. This is in line with Nadiah (2015) and Sudin, Tanakijal and Amin (2009). According to Nadiah (2015), intention to use is mostly related with subjective norms followed by attitude among the consumers in using the Halal food products.

Generally, in the multiple regression analysis, only subjective attitude are found statistically correlated to the intention to use Halal cosmetic products. In the analysis, attitude explained 82.1% of the intention to use. The findings is accordance with Mukhtar and Butt (2011), that found attitude was one of predictors on intention to use. However, the findings was contradicting with the study by Rosita, Ishak and Aziz (2012) suggesting trust was among three predictors to Halal food industry that most consumer have intention to use. The inconsistent in the findings perhaps is due to the differential perception among the students.

#### *Conclusion And Recommendations:*

It should be emphasized that attitude become the main factor to influence the intention to use Halal cosmetic products. This is because halal product is related to religion, there is an issue of religiosity there where majority of the respondents are Malay and Muslim. Not to mention that even so other religion are not obligated to find Halal products, but still there are non-Muslims' consumer who prefer to have Halal products as it is reported that Halal products assured the quality of the food. Thus, marketers, retailers and manufacturers have to realize how essential for them to really understand Halal concept as whole.

This research provides valuable insight for halal label product manufacturer and retailer in the halal industry by indicating attitude as the most important determinants of using intention among the three predictors. The findings of the study suggest that creating a positive attitude toward using halal products may be significant consideration for retailers to increase consumers' purchase intention for halal products. These give retailers an insight to develop effective marketing strategies to satisfy that values of potential consumers.

The legislator has to provide the needs of the society. The legislator will protect the consumer from misleading or false claim and make this achievable without increasing the cost. On the other hand, consumers are to make informal decision regarding the quality and health. Some are also making choices that support religious lifestyle and philosophy. Consumer's appeal is increased when the information extends beyond basic to consumer basic needs and responds to the consumer's religious lifestyle and philosophy. These studies will likely adding their knowledge in making a wiser decision. After completing the study, it is hoped to give better perception and more confidence and thus the respondents will be aware the halal logo.

On the other hand, Delenar (1994) suggested that the role of religiosity should be used as a moderating factor. Furthermore, Omar *et al.* (2012) pointed out that Halal consumers' confidence should be considered for future research as he found that it was one of the predictor of Halal cosmetic purchase among consumer in Malaysia. Karijin *et al.* (2007) suggest other variables should be considered for future research such as habit and self-identity.

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