



# A REVIEW OF THE INFLUENCE OF ADDING THE WORD HALAL TO POPULAR FOOD AND DRINK WHICH HAVE NON-HALAL CONNOTATIONS AND EXCESSIVE TERMS ON MUSLIM CONSUMERS

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## ABSTRACT

Nowadays, some people think that food is not merely a necessity but is a form of easy and cheap getaway amidst the hustle and bustle of a busy work schedule. The popularity of food is not only derived from the taste but also the name that attracts the attention of potential consumers. Naming foods without prohibited elements is starting to become a priority among food and beverage (F&B) businesses in Indonesia. One by one, well-known F&B businesses began to take steps to change the name of the menu which initially had unlawful elements into good ones. Lawful (halal) and good food, which can be seen from its ingredients, should not be given a bad name as a form of conduct that glorifies Allah, All-Provider. Even food/drinks inspired by foreign cultures that have names with non-halal connotations do not necessarily become halal by simply adding the term halal in front of it. This article aims to analyse people's behaviour in relation to how the naming of foods may become misconceptions and attractive among Muslim consumers. This article uses secondary research methods as data collection to provide a comprehensive and credible understanding.

**Keywords:** Naming Food, Food and Beverage, Halal

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## INTRODUCTION

Food and Beverage (F&B) business have been a shortcut to a lucrative business. As this renown business becomes a national favourite, the urgency to ensure halal certification have been given the needed attention. This explains why customers' need of halal assurance keep them tranquil and content (Putri, 2022). As the generation lays over to another generation to take over, a challenge to create a fresher ideas of menu in F&B business to cater for more customers' demand is granted.

However, problems emerge when demands of new menus lead to a misleading naming of F&B. Food enthusiasts are trying new menus including the halal version of what was available as non-halal only. Though there are exceptions such as some well-known international sweets that are composed of gelatin ingredients and no local halal certification, how they stay non-halal in the west, their halal version in Indonesia and muslim countries is assured by each of the halal certification body where in Indonesia it is LPPOM MUI for the halal version. The halal version with the same lawful name and brand are made using gelatin from halal sacrifices. Reported by Batu et al (2015), in muslim dominated countries and muslim countries, the gelatin is made of cattle, chicken, and fish treated Islamic way.

In the aspect of the background tradition such as not having specific spiritual connotations which do not align with Islam is an important factor. In the section for beverage, a less suspicious yet harming naming and claims are beginning to shore up in Muslim countries thus can become a concern which may easily be swept away by the Muslim youth as the area is in a grey zone judging from how subtly other countries on Muslims bombards through the media as diplomacy through food (gastro-diplomacy) for instance (Syam and Ichwan, 2023). Though not everything is harmful, the need to shield Muslims from this subtle bombardment in some of the food and drink with unlawful connotations is becoming urgent as to what extent customer decision making is influenced by faith as well as the rulings of halal

labeling for F&B with non-halal connotations. Therefore, a review of the influence of the word halal to popular food and drink which have non halal connotations and excessive terms on muslim consumers may be helpful to muslim readers as well as business owners.

## METHODOLOGY

The article was ordered using secondary research methods with journal articles, books, and muslim licensed scholar reference as data sources to provide a comprehensive and credible understanding. A rigorous review by manually analyzing and synthesizing secondary sources especially literature with common keywords of was conducted from April to May 2024. Ten relevant articles were studied, reviewed, and extracted of the key information without ignoring any less attention to detail which led to identifying common themes and key findings related to halal F&B mislabeling issues affecting Muslim consumers.

## RESULT

Some multinational companies are adjusting their products to align with the religious needs of consumers in various developing countries. As consumers hold stronger beliefs in the principles of their religion, they are less likely to accept products that oppose from what their religion endorses. This is in line with the outcomes achieved by Parvin et al (2020). The religious commitment also affects attitude and self-identity aspects. Customers willing to make the extra effort to buy halal products.

Parvin et al (2020) also stated that the attitude and religious self-identity impact Muslim consumers' willingness to pay for certified halal food. This means that if Muslims perceive halal food positively and see it as part of their religious identity, they are more likely to pay for a higher price for it. The customers willing to buy right away tend to be higher in number where 63.4% of the variance go for halal certified food, significantly higher than the planning to buy ones (48.7%). This highlights the importance of including self-identity and religious commitment in understanding consumer behavior in the halal market. Halal food companies should focus on enhancing positive attitudes towards halal certification and strengthening religious self-identity among consumers. Education and marketing efforts highlighting the benefits and importance of halal certification can motivate consumers to pay a higher price for halal certified products.

The study delves into consumer behavior, emphasizing its significance in understanding purchasing patterns. It highlights the influence of internal factors like perceptions and motivations on consumer decisions. In Islamic economics, the "Halal" label holds significant brand perception, guiding Muslim consumers towards products aligning with Islamic principles. Additionally, the study explores how industrial advancements, like digitization, impact consumer behavior in the halal industry. Perceived risks, including financial, performance, physical, psychological, and social aspects, also influence consumer decisions, particularly in online purchases. The discussion extends to how Islamic principles guide consumers in managing risks and making informed choices in online transactions (Hanım, 2021).

Anam et al (2018) stated it induces customer product knowledge which lead them to thinking it as a good quality food. The role of halal logos on perceived food quality, moderated by consumer knowledge creates a psychological impact on food quality perception thus can be a great cheat sheet for marketing business addressed to muslims. Moreover, Akbari et al (2018) also investigates the influence of subjective norms, knowledge, and religion on attitudes and purchase intentions of halal cosmetics consumers in Batam, using a quantitative survey method with 305 usable responses from 350 distributed questionnaires, analyzed. Findings reveal significant effects of subjective norms, knowledge, and religion on consumer attitudes, and a significant impact of religious factors on purchase intentions, while subjective norms do not significantly affect purchase intentions; results aim to aid marketing students studying factors influencing halal purchase intentions. Three hundred and five usable responses from 350 distributed questionnaires show significant impact of religious factors such as halal symbols on purchase intentions

Similarly, Youssaf and Shaukat (2013) reported that there is a connection between religiosity and product involvement in shaping various aspects of consumer behaviour. Through a survey conducted among university students in Pakistan, it investigates how religiosity influences consumer behavior differently across high and low involvement product categories (clothes and snacks,



respectively). Findings indicate that highly religious consumers exhibit different shopping orientations and decision-making tendencies compared to less religious consumers, depending on the level of product involvement. Specifically, highly religious consumers show less impulsiveness, are more socially influenced, and are less brand conscious, particularly in low involvement product categories. This study highlights the importance of considering religiosity and product involvement levels when analyzing consumer behavior.

Nurhayati and Hendar (2020) claimed key findings such as the effect of intrinsic religiosity (PIR) on awareness and purchase intention of halal products; effect of knowledge of halal products (HPK) on awareness and purchase intention of halal products; role of halal product awareness (HPA) in mediating the relationship among them. They all are interconnected. The importance of halal product knowledge impacts the decision making to buy products and it comes down to the effect of intrinsic religiosity and knowledge of halal products on awareness and purchase intention. Assess the effect of intrinsic religiosity and knowledge of halal products on awareness and purchase intention of halal products.

Bashir (2019) gave his word that Insights can help develop halal food products to attract both Muslim and non-Muslim foreign consumers. All factors (halal awareness, halal logo, attitude) significantly influence purchase intention and buying behavior. Non-Muslim consumers show higher attitudes and halal awareness compared to Muslim consumers. Majority of respondents were non-Muslims, predominantly Christians. The article explores how halal awareness, the presence of halal logos, and consumer attitudes impact the purchase intentions of foreign consumers in South Africa. Findings indicate that these factors significantly influence buying behavior, with non-Muslim consumers showing higher awareness and attitudes towards halal products compared to Muslims. The study suggests that this insight could aid in developing halal food products that appeal to both Muslim and non-Muslim foreign consumers.

Usman et al (2024) talked about the role of trust and perceived risk on Muslim behavior in buying halal-certified food. Attitude, halal awareness, religious commitment, trust, and perceived risk significantly influence the frequency of Muslims buying Halal Certified Foods (HCF). Attitude mediates the impact of halal awareness, religious commitment, and trust on the frequency of Muslims buying HCF. Perceived risk and trust moderate the relationship between religious commitment and the frequency of Muslims buying HCF.

Rauschnabel et al (2015) made a point that companies target religious consumer groups by adding religious labels (e.g., kosher, halal) to food packaging, which can attract consumers of that religion but may also affect brand perception among those with different or no religious beliefs. The article uses social identity and information integration theories to explore these effects. This study finds that attitudes towards religious labels on food packaging are influenced by perceptions of the religion and the brand, with the relative importance varying based on consumer characteristics. The article discusses the theoretical and managerial implications, limitations, and future research directions.

Yasid et al (2016) Things which put pressure on Religious beliefs, self-identity, and media exposure significantly affects Muslim customers' awareness of halal food, both partially and simultaneously.

## DISCUSSION

### Impacts of Faith on Consumer Behaviour

Behavioral decision theory has been a leading research focus in marketing for many years. Marketers must find ways to capture consumers' attention by disrupting their habitual decision-making processes, encouraging them to explore new or different products available in the market. This shift can be influenced by factors such as religious considerations (del Rio et al., 2018). As mentioned by Parvin et al (2020), devout consumers exhibit different shopping orientations and decision-making tendencies compared to less religious consumers, depending on the level of product involvement. They are more mindful though still socially influenced. Anam et al (2018) talks similarly, highly religious consumers will evaluate the religious acceptability of a product before making a purchase decision. Consequently, an individual's self-perception in terms of their religious beliefs influences their consumption choices. In developing countries, religiosity significantly impacts consumer purchase decisions. Thus the reason why businesses use marketing tactics that way to gain Muslim consumers.



This means that if Muslims perceive halal food positively and see it as part of their religious identity, as reported by Hanim et al (2021), the “Halal” label holds significant brand perception, guiding Muslim consumers towards products aligning with Islamic principles. They all are interconnected. As written by Bashir (2019), basic needs are important let alone halal certified products for muslims. Psychological and safety needs which consist of basic needs such as food, is said to be an important factor in successful business. How faith plays a role on what to pick and what to leave when it comes to food says a lot. But it comes down to another factor that is social needs or love and belonging needs. Social needs where youngsters prone to be a victim of finding a sense of belonging, catches up F&B from the infamous east asian tradition through tv or social media to stay relevant with friends during get-togethers. This is inseparable with egoistic or esteem needs. Youth like the reputation and to be acknowledged by their peers. They like to experience new things as well. Khoa (2020) said inward (self-esteem), outward (peer recognitions), or both orientations.

## Islam Perspective

### Excessive Terms on Halal Food

The naming halal food with good words is vital and to name good food with bad connotation is unanimously considered a disgrace to Allah. As Allah said foods that are halal are good (thayyib) and foods that are filthy are khabaits therefore haram, as stated in Al- Baqarah 2:168 (Via Kemenag RI, 2024),

وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ

Translation: “O Mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy”.

Thus, this type of sustenance (food) should be honoured as a form of piety (taqwa), a way to praise Him, and gain His grace. It would be ungrateful to name halal foods with unlawful naming (Via Konsultasi Syariah, 2024).

### Unchanged Terms for Non-halal Adaptation of F&B

Though there are exceptions such as international sweets that are composed of gelatin ingredients. In Indonesia, the uncertainty of them being non-halal is dismissed by the assurance provided by the halal certification body known as LPPOM MUI as these products are made using gelatin from halal sacrifices. The names, themselves, are allowed (Islamic term: mubah) as they do not have unlawful connotations whether it be from the terminology or their association with how and why they were originally presented as (in terms of other spiritual acts).

The need to attribute something to halal comes with responsibility. The negligence of it may cause damage to both themselves and customers. It is irresponsible to lightly judge a suspicious matter as halal or haram without knowledge. It is also irresponsible to call something halal without jurisdiction of official halal body certification or double-checking to criteria of what is considered halal. In general Satan (devils) are Allah's (God) creatures needed to be hated, waged war on, made sad of, and generally avoided. By placing them as real enemies, avoiding, and reminding others of their temptations, muslims implement "Enjoin goods, forbid evils" as written on Q.S Al-A'raf 7:157.

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوبًا عِنْدَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَالْإِنْجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُمْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَائِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ فَاَلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ مَعَهُ أُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

Translation: “Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered prophet, whom they find written in what they have of the Torah and the Gospel, who enjoins upon them what is right and forbids them what is wrong and makes lawful for them the good things and prohibits for them the evil and relieves them of their burden and the shackles which were upon them. So they who have believed in him, honored him, supported him and followed the light which was sent down with him - it is those who will be the successful ones”.

### Halal VS Originally Non-halal Influenced F&B

In the section for beverage, a subtle yet harming naming and claims are beginning to shore up in Muslim countries thus becoming a concern which may easily be swept away by the Muslim youth as the area is in a grey zone judging from how vast other countries influence on Muslims is through the



media such as TV entertainment. Through TV shows, a new soft and modern form of diplomacy is introduced. Food and beverage on TV shows are a form of gastro diplomacy which subtly influence the spectators to try and come to the countries they were aired in (Nihayati et al, 2022).

The exchange in taste and travels may initiate food restaurants to introduce it as a new dish in Indonesia. Some harmful naming of these dish due to their strong negative connotation be it from type of worship they are associated with or their well-known high alcohol content, is an area to look out for Muslims. The one sided claim of beverage e.g. soju that is remade without alcohol, no changing of the name, even so far as putting halal alongside the name is a real phenomenon in Indonesia (Zahro et al, 2023). Therefore, trusting the official halal certified body only for F&B originally known from non-Muslim countries, is a step to preserve faith and not to easily be misled.

## CONCLUSION

Halal term from halal established certification body to a food name attracts and assures muslim customers. Though attractive, naming something that is halal with something excessive that is hated by Allah is considered underestimating the Islamic law and not glorifying it (Islamic Fatwa No. 234755). It would be a low act to do such misleading thing for solely the purpose of marketing.

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