

# Non-Muslim Consumer Perspective on Cosmetics and Personal Care Products

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## Abstract

Majority of non-Muslim society believes that Halal is meant for Muslim only. Since they don't have sufficient knowledge and awareness about halal products, the benefits of it is not well appreciated. After all, most of the company didn't focus on non-Muslim market. The aim of this paper therefore is to determine the factors affecting purchase intention of Halal personal care products among non-Muslim consumer. Data was collected in Penang of 240 non-Muslims via structured questionnaire to gather information on their perspective towards Halal personal care products. Multiple Regression Analysis is applied to determine and assess the strength of relationship between variables. The factor that influences the purchase intention of Halal cosmetics and personal care products is halal awareness, religiosity, halal certification, attitude and brand trust. The result of the study suggest that brand trust strongly influences the purchase intention of Halal cosmetics and personal care products. Companies targeting non-Muslim markets are therefore are encouraged to tailor their marketing activities based on a behavioural perspective which increases and benefits social expectations and awareness which in turn would enhance their competitive advantage. By strengthening the brand trust through Halal process standard in production of guaranteeing hygiene and quality will allow products to penetrate into new market of non-Muslim consumer.

**Keywords:** *Personal Care, Purchase Intention, Halal.*

## Introduction

When it comes to Halal, food is always associated with it. However, the scope of Halal covers a lot more than just food. From banking to health care, tourism to cosmetics and personal care products, there is a whole lot more of halal products or services offer in the market. Perhaps the misconception of Halal is when products or services offers misunderstood as it servessolely for the use of Muslims consumer. Nowadays, Halal is not limited only to Muslims, but non-Muslims also adapt and practice in their everyday lives. Halal is not limited

to Muslim only but it also a choice for non-Muslim worldwide<sup>1</sup>.

Halal is an innovation to all products because it is way more hygiene and safe to be used. The Halal product contains no dangerous and harmful ingredient. To manufacture halal products, manufacturer has to adhere with stringent manufacturing process standard which follow the Islamic rules. The process must comply with the standard quality and hygiene aligned with Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP). From selecting raw ingredients, the process of making the products, storage, display and delivering the products must conform with the Islamic law. Therefore, for non-Muslims, Halal can become a mark of unquestioned conformance and quality in trade dealings with Muslims<sup>2</sup>.

The Halal industry in Malaysia had a rapid growth in not only healthy lifestyle but also in other life activities. Therefore, manufacturer and entrepreneur must come out with a fresh and new idea in developing a variety

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of Halal products that can be used not only Muslim but also non-Muslim. In order to ensure non-Muslim also buy a Halal product, the companies need to convince and create awareness in their community.

In Malaysia Budget 2019, the government has stated that they will focus more on halal industry where the government will allocate 100 million ringgit to improve the capacity of small and medium-sized enterprises in the halal industry through different programs to increase exports and make Malaysia as a global halal hub by 2020.

Non-Muslim society has yet to appreciate the underlying benefits of Halal products that include a hygienic process<sup>1</sup>. Before reaching the market, Halal products must be subjected to them. Today, the trends in the purchase of cosmetic and personal care products are increasing every day. Consumers nowadays are expecting products that are not harmful to them. Therefore, the market can be expanded to new market category by tapping into non-Muslim market as their awareness of Halal is high<sup>3</sup>.

**Literature View:** Halal in Cosmetics and Personal Care: The word Halal originated from an Arabic word "HALLA" which indicate "allowable" and "not forbidden" to all Muslims to consume or practice in their daily lives. In general, halal products do not contain pork, alcohol, blood or additives of animal origin and throughout the entire production process, they are not contaminated with said ingredients. Halal nowadays is a universal concept<sup>1</sup>. Non-Muslims also believe they should not buy or use an animal-based product due to concern over animal abuse and harmful effects. The cosmetic and personal care products segment has emerged as one of the leading market segments. Halal beauty industry has grown tremendously especially in the halal pharmaceuticals and cosmetics sectors which continue to expand<sup>4</sup>.

**Halal Awareness:** Awareness is the ability to perceive events and objects, to feel and to know. It is a concept of understanding and perceiving events and subjects<sup>5</sup>. Awareness was assumed to be an important part of determining the intention to choose halal product and personal care.

One of the main issues for consumers is the difficulty in securing legal status for imported cosmetics because they do not have halal certification where these halal cosmetic products are generally welcomed by Muslims

and attract non-Muslims to consume of cosmetic products<sup>6</sup>. The growing awareness of non-Muslim users about their religious obligations calls for personal care and Halal cosmetics: Some consumers are aware of cosmetic products, so they bought more reliable and safer cosmetic products<sup>7,8</sup>.

**Religiosity:** Most people in this world have shown that religions are one of the most influential roles in shaping the choice of food among the members of societies. Religion is not an important factor in consumption of the product, but someone religious known as religiosity is vital on shaping one's purchasing behavior. Such religious commitments and beliefs would certainly have an effect on people's feelings and attitudes to buy and consume<sup>9,10</sup>.

**Halal Certification:** Halal certification means the official recognition by the established body of the orderly preparation, slaughter, cleaning, handling and other relevant management practices<sup>5</sup>. Interestingly, the principle of halal is more than it was, because both Muslims and non-Muslims accepted it broadly. The Halal concept is considered the preferred standard for these two groups globally<sup>1</sup>. There is no other way to determine the "halalness" of a product except by using a credible Halal logo<sup>11</sup>. This is because the halal certificate is only issued if it complies law and proper requirements and these organizations have the authority to certify that the products are halal and have the infrastructure<sup>12</sup>.

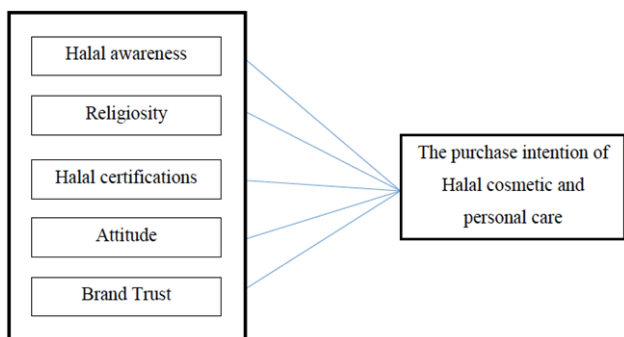
**Attitude:** It is worth noting that the product focuses not only on halal status but also on safe and clean products that are used as ingredients in the production of the cosmetic and personal care product based on natural resources<sup>7</sup>. Consumers place their trust in information obtained from sources, especially when it comes to religious authorities. With a wide variety of beauty products, consumers may not know what they have taken or used on their skin and some will mislead the consumers<sup>13</sup>. Furthermore, the accessibility of a product in some places may alter its attitudes towards buying a good cosmetic product<sup>8</sup>.

**Brand Trust:** Brand trust refers to the feeling of being secure between consumers with their trust in certain brand. Consumer belief the brand can be dependable and accountable for their well-being<sup>14</sup>. Through the Islamic belief system, product strength is associated with the production process, quality control and environment can attract the interest of consumers to purchase and use

Halal cosmetic and personal care as non-Muslim start to put their confidence on that brand<sup>15</sup>. The trust level was low if the brand was not known<sup>16</sup>. This also applies to non-Muslim Malaysian consumers, where trust in the brand determines the level of trust in the product's halal status<sup>5</sup>.

**Theoretical Framework:** Consumer tends to make a presumption before deciding to make prior to decide when making a purchase. Organization doing internal audit function will be more effective to detect and to report that there is fraud in organization<sup>9</sup>, and accountancy fraudulence tendency can be led down by to increase an internal controlling effectiveness, accountancy role loyalty, management morality, and to eliminate information asymmetry<sup>4</sup>.

**Based on the above, the research framework adapted from can be described as:**



**Figure 1: Research framework**

### Methodology

To achieve the aim of this research, explanatory method is chosen. Questionnaire is constructed based on research framework. About 240 non-Muslim participated in the survey to collect relevant data. The statistical tool used in the study is multiple linear regression to test the relationship between variables.

### Results and Discussion

The R<sup>2</sup> is valued at 0.634, which the purchase intention is explained by 63.4% by all five independent variables. In this study, four independent variables (religiosity, Halal certification, attitude and brand trust) are making a statistically significant contribution to equation ( $p < 0.05$ ) with p-value 0.000, 0.000, 0.021 and 0.00 respectively. From the analysis it is found that out of the five variables, all are significant except for Halal awareness.

The p-value of Halal awareness resulted a 0.778 value output which is not significant. This result is supported by another research which stated that among Muslim women in Klang Valley, the level of Halal awareness towards Halal cosmetic is still low which also shows that non-Muslim level awareness is low as well. Halal awareness is a major factor in explaining in non-Muslim societies the interest to buy halal product<sup>5,17</sup>.

### Conclusion

In this research, brand trust variable is the most influential towards purchase intention on Halal cosmetic and personal care rather than other variables which is Halal awareness, religiosity, Halal certification and attitude. The customer will choose the product that they have trust on it. By means of trust, they will purchase a product that have the best advertising or might be influence from their family and friends who has been a loyal customer towards certain brands. Therefore, the Halal companies and government should focus on designing a good product that include safe ingredient and trusted manufacturer so that it can attract the interest of non-Muslim to purchase and used the Halal product.

Next, implication of the research is Halal awareness which has the least influential towards purchase intention on Halal cosmetic and personal care. This research shows that majority of the respondent being ignorance about the Halal when purchasing a cosmetic and personal care. For them, Halal is not the priority when choosing the product. This also shows that the level of Halal awareness is still low among non-Muslim. Therefore, the companies and government must implement many activities and program such as talk, Halal exhibition by spreading the benefit of choosing Halal cosmetic and personal care. From that it will increase the exposure of Halal and attract their interest to get know more about Halal product.

**Recommendations:** To overcome the limitation of this study, there are some recommendation proposed by the researcher. This study covered respondents from a state in Malaysia only, because of that it is recommended for further study to collect the data from all states. From that, it will help the researcher to make a comparison on the behaviour of the consumer in intention to buy Halal cosmetic and personal care. The researcher also needs to cover the sample towards all areas in Penang to ensure be comprehensive and represent more population.

Lastly, this research only used five variables in

measuring the intention of non-Muslim in purchasing the Halal cosmetic and personal care. It is suggested to future researcher to used additional variable such as knowledge and quality that will provide more information about this study.

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**Conflict of Interest:** Nil

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