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Halal Integrity Shapes Consumer Behavior in the Agri-Food Economy, with Lifestyle, Trust, and Perceived Risk Influencing Mak Halal Adoption

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the factors that determine the purchase of halal, based on socio-religious, psychological, and market-based factors. The research places the concept of halal integrity in addition to consumer behaviour as an emerging economic driver that connects certified agri-food production and rural development, as well as sustainable trade. A theoretical model involving six main predictors, namely, religiosity, halal labeling, trust, Muslim lifestyle, risk perception, and perceived price, was developed; Muslim lifestyle was also investigated as an intermediate. The partial least squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyse survey data of 293 respondents. The model used to measure was highly reliable and valid. The findings of the structural model revealed that the strongest predictors of halal consumption were religiosity ($\beta = 0.31$), halal labeling ($\beta = 0.29$), and trust ($\beta = 0.27$), and they were followed by lifestyle ($\beta = 0.24$) and risk perception ($\beta = 0.18$). The perceived price did not matter ($\beta = 0.09$). The model described 68 percent of the variance in halal consumption ($R^2 = 0.68$) and had high predictive relevance ($Q^2 = 0.42$). Mediation analysis proved that the Muslim lifestyle was one of the mediators of the effects of religiosity, trust, and halal labeling on consumption behaviour. The results are an extension of the Theory of Planned Behaviour, where lifestyle and trust are used as prime motivations in halal consumption. In practice, the findings highlight that authenticity, certification, and values are much more important to consumers

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than the price, and can provide recommendations to policy makers, certification agencies, and companies aiming to build trust and credibility in the halal market.

Keywords: Halal Consumption; Trust; Lifestyle Mediation; Agricultural Economics; Agri-Food Value Chain; PLS-SEM

1. Introduction

The halal food industry in the world has become one of the fastest-growing sectors of the food industry, and recent estimates show that it has become over sixty percent of the global halal market^[1]. Although initially the notion of halal consumption had a rather religious overture, it has slowly transformed into an element of lifestyle choice, a trend that is now also becoming evident among both non-Muslim consumers who tend to attach the label of halal to a set of quality, hygiene, and morals^[2,3]. Halal certification has thus come to include a wide range of goods and services, such as fresh meat to processed goods, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and even other aspects of life like tourism and finance, thus highlighting its central role in international trade and the modern consumer society.

The rapid growth of the halal market has also brought significant changes in the area of agricultural economics and rural development. Agri-food production that is Halal-certified has emerged as a fundamental factor in the diversification and export competitiveness of agriculture in Muslim countries and non-Muslim countries as well. An example is Malaysia, Indonesia, and the United Arab Emirates, which have built integrated halal supply chains that connect farmers, processors, and exporters using certified agricultural hubs. These measures not only add value at the farm level but also boost investment in livestock, poultry, and organic crop production in accordance with the halal principles^[4,5]. As a result, the increasing international demand for halal raw materials has repositioned halal consumption as a religious or lifestyle practice to reflect agricultural modernization, food security, and economic sustainability of rural communities.

In spite of this increase, there is a tentative trust towards the integrity of halal products. Repetitive scandals, such as porcine DNA in branded chocolates, branded counterfeit halal logos, mislabeling in restaurants, and

so on, undermined the belief in certification systems and weakened the entire halal ecosystem^[6-8]. These scandals are some of the most devastating weaknesses in the globalised food supply chains, where transparency and traceability are often lacking. In this scenario, the perceived risk of consumers increases and, consequently, leads to an additional extenuation of the level of scrutiny of halal products and, in other cases, avoidance itself^[9,10].

The conventional models of consumer behaviour, such as Kotler's buying behaviour model^[11] and the Theory of Planned Behaviour^[12], offer practical backgrounds but fail to represent the socio-religious aspects of halal consumption. The models fail to capture the mediating role of the Muslim lifestyle practices or the role of trust and perceived risk when determining the actual purchase decisions. An example of this is that religiosity or health consciousness can influence the attitudes of consumers towards halal food, but the interpretation of the attitude into consistent behaviour is screened by lifestyle practices like prayer, fasting, and ethical purchasing^[13]. Correspondingly, certification is insufficient in providing consumer confidence unless it goes hand in hand with the trust in institutions, producers, and the regulatory authorities^[14].

The demographic and technological changes also make the necessity of a more comprehensive model even stronger. As a result of the fact that the world Muslim population is estimated to continue to grow to a minimum of 2.2 billion by 2030, the demand for halal products will increase significantly. Younger generations who are digitally savvy are feeling the need to be able to see inside food systems, barcode authentication, and blockchain-based traceability^[15]. However, the uptake of these technological solutions is yet to be seen, depending on the level of consumer trust and their compatibility with the current lifestyle values. Without these mediating factors, even the most advanced systems stand a chance of not influencing the consumers to be reassured.

Halal consumption is thus conceptually considered to be a multidimensional effect that goes beyond just the choice of food with aspects of identity, ethics, and lifestyle. Although researchers have studied drivers like religiosity, knowledge, and certification, a model that combines the normative values and behavioural mechanisms is still lacking^[16, 17].

This paper fills that gap by targeting six fundamental predictors, including religiosity, halal labeling, trust, Muslim lifestyle, risk perception, and perceived price. All these constructs represent the main socio-religious and psychological predictors of halal consumption as well as a market-based dimension (price), usually central to consumer decision-making but not well studied in religious consumption settings. Most importantly, the Muslim way of life appears to be a direct predictor and a mediator, which converts abstract values like religiosity and trust to tangible consumption practices.

On that note, the purpose of the current study is to empirically evaluate the extent to which these six constructs affect the behaviour of consumers to consume halal, and to find out whether lifestyle acts as a mediator between values and behaviour. This research will theoretically and practically contribute to the literature on the influence of religiosity, labeling, trust, lifestyle, risk perception, and price on halal choices through a partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) done with 293 respondents. This two-dimensional concern of direct and mediated pathways provides a solid basis for explaining halal consumption as a value-oriented, identity-based phenomenon and provides insights to policymakers, certification bodies, and companies involved in halal markets.

Although the global market of halal agri-food has grown at a very fast rate, there is still an empirical knowledge gap about how halal integrity mechanisms can be converted into actual consumer behaviour. In the 3 studies done before, the majority of researchers have only addressed the issue of religiosity, trust, or risk perception separately, with little or no combination of lifestyle components into a single theoretical model. Using the Theory of Planned Behaviour, the current paper aims to address this gap by creating and experimenting with an integrated framework that can assess the direct and

mediating influences of the dimensions of halal integrity on halal consumption behaviour. Placing the analysis in the context of the agri-food economy and the case of MAK Halal, the study can be listed as both a theoretical and empirical advance to consumer decision-making and supply-chain credibility in the halal markets.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Religiosity and Halal Consumption

The study will examine how religiousness affects Halal Consumption.

Religiosity is well known to be a primary determinant of halal consumption as a normative belief system and a guiding principle. The previously conducted research proves that the greater the religiosity, the more likely the adoption of halal food and adherence to the values of Islam^[16, 18]. Theoretically, religiosity is viewed in the light of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), where religiosity is assumed to be a kind of normative belief that influences behavioural intentions^[12]. These normative beliefs have a significant impact on the real consumption behaviour in situations where the value of religion is very salient.

To Muslim customers, purchasing halal is never based on functionality values but is woven into faith, spiritual duty, and the sense of belonging^[19]. This opinion is supported by the recent studies that indicate that religiosity is the predictor of increased adherence to halal consumption despite the economic or convenience considerations that could otherwise deter such decisions^[20, 21]. Religiosity, therefore, does not just educate moral decision-making, but it also offers some strength against alternative non-halal consumption. The hypothesis of this study is thus that the effect of religiosity on the consumption of halal will be very strong and positive, both directly and indirectly via the lifestyle practices.

2.2. Halal Labeling and Certification Credibility

Halal labeling offers apparent confirmation that the products are in compliance with religious requirements, which removes ambiguity and perceived risk in consum-

ing food. Awan et al.^[21] proved that halal logos and certification symbols serve as a signal of credibility and determine consumer confidence and buying behaviors. Certification assists in reducing the information gap between the producer and consumers when dealing with globalised markets, where the supply chains are long and usually opaque.

Recently, Finucane and Holup^[9] pointed out that the harmonised certification frameworks are crucial in establishing trust and accountability. Equally, Aziz and Chok^[22] claim that labeling minimizes uncertainty and decreases the risks of non-compliance, making halal choices easier and more dependable. This is in line with the notion of perceived behavioural control of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), wherein certification minimizes external constraints and enhances the comfort of selecting halal products.

In addition to the direct impact, labeling also becomes a part of the routine: consumers who tend to see and trust the symbols of certification on a regular basis tend to normalise the halal practices as part of their lifestyle. The mediation of lifestyle by labeling credibility to sustained behaviour is emphasised by this indirect pathway.

2.3. Trust and Supply Chain Integrity

Halal markets are based on trust, which is a manifestation of consumer confidence in the producers, the certification bodies, and the regulators. Lada et al.^[23] point out that trust has a direct effect of boosting eagerness to buy halal products by restricting doubt and boosting credibility. Trust is essential in highly fragmented and globalised supply chains in order to help limit scepticism about the legitimacy of halal claims^[24].

Recent research establishes that trust plays a leading role in both the emerging and developed markets. As an illustration, Rather^[25] discovered that the lack of confidence in certification institutions undermines the adoption of halal by young customers, whereas Lundin and Kindström^[26] established that having information about the supply chain openness can greatly increase purchase intentions. In TPB, trust is in line with attitudinal beliefs that determine the way consumers consider the consequences of halal consumption. Trust will make

consumers feel that halal products are not only compliant but safe, ethical, and credible as well.

This paper puts trust as a direct predictor of halal and indirect through the Muslim lifestyle. Consumers who believe in the certification bodies and manufacturers will be more prone to continue practicing halal on a regular basis, thus boosting the value-based characteristic of consumption.

2.4. Muslim Lifestyle as Direct and Mediating Factor

Lifestyle is the expression of beliefs in life practices and thus a key facet of halal consumption. Wilson and Liu^[24] note that a Muslim lifestyle plays the role of cultural and social mediator of values and consumer behaviour. Lifestyle is not just the expression of what consumers buy; it shows how consumers incorporate religious identity in the decisions they make about what they eat, wear, engage in recreational activities, and live their social life.

In theoretical terms, TPB usually identifies attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control as direct antecedents of intention^[12]. Nevertheless, lifestyle augments this model since it is a mediating mechanism that operationalises values and beliefs into regular practices. That is, religiosity, credibility of labels, and trust might influence attitudes and norms, although lifestyle defines how such abstract constructions are translated into day-to-day consumption behaviour.

Recent literature has reinforced the argument of lifestyle as a mediator. Maminirina Fenitra et al.^[27] demonstrated that the Muslim way of life determines the choice of food in addition to the general ethical consumption, whereas Jannah and Al-Banna^[28] have revealed that lifestyle is an important mediating factor between religiosity and halal purchasing among young consumers in Southeast Asia. The concept of lifestyle is realised as both a predictor and a mediator in the current model, which confirms that halal consumption is integrated into the overall practices that are based on identity.

2.5. Risk Perception and Consumer Caution

Risk perception is defined as the worry of consumers about contamination, fraud, or non-compliance

in halal supply chains. According to Ahmad and Mohd Salleh^[29], the apprehension of being mislabeled or not properly certified is still an obstacle to consumer confidence. The same findings were observed by Bonne et al.^[18], who also indicated that the perception of risk encourages vigilance and caution, thus consumers become more selective of certified products.

Based on the TPB, risk perception may be linked to control beliefs, which refer to the degree to which consumers believe that there exist some external barriers or uncertainties hindering compliance with halal consumption. Perceiving risk in the form of high risk may make consumers more restrictive in their habits; they would use uncertified products, be more careful with labels, or visit confident retailers.

This role is supported by empirical studies. According to Rizqi Febriandika et al.^[30], the perceived risks have a negative impact on consumer willingness when purchasing a vendor who is not certified, and Chairy et al.^[31] identified a positive relationship between perception and desired greater certification enforcement. The risk is not always the strongest determinant, but still, it is applicable because it is one of the background factors that can influence the creation of cautious behaviour and reinforce dependence on certification and lifestyle practices.

2.6. Halal Agriculture and Economic Linkages

Other than consumer behaviour, there is a growing appreciation of the halal ecosystem that is based on primary production and agricultural value chains. The agricultural sector has a central role to play in the maintenance of the integrity of halal because livestock, feed, water sources, and processing standards are supposed to meet the requirements of Shariah. According to economic research, halal agriculture investment helps to create jobs, increase the efficiency of the value chain, and diversify exports^[1, 20]. In addition, halal agricultural certification leads to sustainable utilization of the resource, including ethical animal treatment and environmentally friendly farming, which is compatible with the principles of Islamic stewardship^[32].

Halal agriculture facilitates inclusive economic growth through economic inclusion; small and medium

farmers are incorporated into certified supply systems. This connectivity lowers the transaction costs and improves market accessibility by means of collaboration models and traceability technologies, such as blockchain and IoT-enabled monitoring^[15]. Thus, the convergence of agricultural economics and halal integrity shows that the first steps are transparency of the farm and production efficiency, which would retain consumer trust.

2.7. Perceived Price and the Boundaries of Cost Considerations

Price is often at the centre of the purchase decision in the traditional consumer behaviour models^[11]. However, in situations where the values, identity, or ethics are the guidelines, price sensitivity can be reduced. Empirical studies of organic and fair-trade products suggest that consumers are ready to pay a higher price when they make a purchase with strongly integrated values^[18].

Empirical evidence is still heterogeneous in the context of the halal. Rejeb et al.^[16] have conducted a study indicating that purchase decisions are moderated by price, but Hong et al.^[20] have also indicated that consumers can be motivated by trust and certification credibility, rather than cost. This implication is that the cost-benefit logic of conventional models is not always applicable to halal consumption.

In the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the price might be linked to the perceived behavioral control since affordability is an enabling or constraining factor. Nonetheless, at the time when religiosity, labelling, and trust are overriding, considerations of price might be back-burner. On this basis, the study hypothesizes that the perceived price will predict halal consumption and expects the effects of the same to be limited, which would mirror the boundary conditions of economic rationality in the markets based on values.

2.8. Summary of Literature Review

The literature reviewed establishes religiosity, labeling of halal, trust, Muslim lifestyle, risk perception, and perceived price as important determinants of halal consumption. The most influential factors are always religiosity, labeling, and trust, as the attitude, norms, and

confidence in the halal practices develop. The Muslim way of life also serves as a direct determinant and mediating mechanism, which strengthens the fact that values are translated into actual behaviors. Risk perception is a preventive force that can develop vigilance, whereas perceived price seems to be less definitive with reference to the limitations of the cost-driven decision-making in the context of value.

By incorporating these constructs into a single framework (**Figure 1**), the current study advances the TPB in three important aspects: (1) it brings religiosity to the center as a normative belief upon which the behaviors of halal behavior occur; (2) it places lifestyle in the middle, where values and behaviour are mediated; and (3) it places trust and certification credibility in the institution of influencing attitudes and practices.

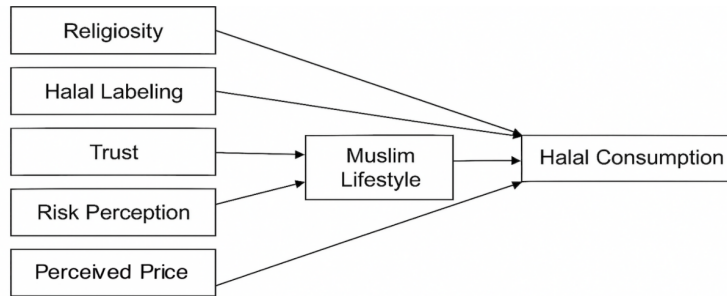


Figure 1. Research Framework.

3. Methodology

This research took a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design in researching the predictors of halal consumption and the intervening variable of Muslim lifestyle. This design was appropriate to test hypothesized correlations between several constructs and to obtain standardised data, which can be subjected to structural equation modelling (SEM). Since the study is in a predictive mode and the pathways of mediation exist, Partial Least Squares SEM (PLS-SEM) was used since it is specifically targeted at exploratory and predictive models containing a complicated structure^[33].

The group that was targeted consisted of Muslim consumers who had experience in the purchase of certified halal products. The data gathered in Malaysia were in the form of empirical data involving the consumers (urban) in the area of Klang Valley, comprising Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. The reason behind selecting this region is that it is the most developed halal agri-food market in Malaysia, which has high consumer awareness of halal certification, good regulatory enforcement, and an established chain of halal-certified food chains. Malaysia is globally known as a world standard of halal governance and certification, therefore, forming a relevant setting to study the issue of halal integrity and con-

sumer behavior in the agri-food economy.

There were online and paper-based surveys that were used to collect the data. Using purposive sampling, the respondents were mostly recruited in cities by using a mixture of online surveys and face-to-face distribution, with the main focus being on the Muslim consumers who had prior experience purchasing halal-certified food products. There were 400 questionnaires sent out, out of which 293 valid responses were obtained after they had been filtered on completeness, which gives a response rate of 73.2%. The sample had a variety of demographic factors, such as age, gender, education, and income levels, which increased the representativeness and generalizability of results.

All the constructs were operationalized based on reflective indicators based on earlier validated scales, but modified to fit the situation. The answers were scaled on a 5-point Likert scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Religiosity was assessed based on items modified by Rejeb et al.^[16] and Bonne et al.^[18]; the items concerning halal labeling were inspired by Soebahar et al. and Awan et al.^[8, 21]. The levels of trust were measured using scales of trusting producers, regulators, and certification bodies^[23, 24]. The risk perception items were modified based on Bonne et al.^[18] and Ahmad and Mohd Salleh^[29] as they are contamination,

fraud, and compliance-related. The measure of the perceived price was based on the items of Alhanatleh et al.^[11], which represent fairness and affordability. The mediation variable, Muslim lifestyle, was modeled after Wilson and Liu^[24] and Jannah and Al-Banna^[28], who outlined how strongly Islamic values are reflected when it comes to everyday consumption practices. Halal consumption was the dependent variable measured based on the items modified by Rejeb et al.^[16]. To achieve content validity, the survey instrument was pre-tested on 25 people and has been subject to review by the academic experts.

The analysis of data was performed using the two-step method that is suggested by Fornell and Larcker^[33]. The measurement model was tested in stage one for reliability and validity. To measure reliability, the Cronbach alpha and composite reliability were used, and they were above 0.70. Average variance extracted (AVE) was used to test convergent validity, which was found to be sufficient, with the values being greater than 0.50. The Fornell-Larcker criterion and the heterotrait-monotrait Hetero Trait Monomethod ratio (both show a satisfactory separation of the construct) were used to test discriminant validity. The second stage involved bootstrapping the structural model with 5,000 resamples and generating path coefficients, *t*-values, and *p*-values. *R*² of the endogenous construct was used as a measure of explanatory power of the model, whereas effect sizes (*f*²) and predictive relevance (*Q*²) were used to provide further evidence of model strength. The model fit was evaluated using standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), normed fit index (NFI), and RMS_0, which were within

recommended ranges.

Based on this, the respondents of the survey represent halal food consumers who are conducting business within the Malaysian halal agri-food system and have experience in purchasing halal-certified food chains like MAK Halal.

Table 1 has summarised the demographic profile of the respondents and given the necessary background to the interpretation of the findings made in the study. The sample is rather gender balanced, with males (55.3) and females (44.7) being sufficiently represented, which suggests that halal consumption behaviour is not gender specific. Most of the respondents fall within the age range of 26–35 years (36.9) and 36–45 years (27.0) age brackets, which are the age brackets that make the most food buying decisions at the household level, thus increasing the applicability of the findings to the agri-food market of halal. The sample education level of more than 80% bachelor's degree holders implies a consumer base that is more prone to evaluate the halal integrity, certification credibility, and supply chain transparency. Also, the majority of the middle-income respondents (47.4) contributes to the lack of significance of the effect of perceived price in the structural model because decisions on halal consumption are based on religious values, trust, and lifestyle aspects rather than price consideration. All in all, the demographic features prove the assumption that halal consumption in the agri-food economy is mostly value-oriented, which further supports the implications of the research to the producers, certification agencies, and policymakers in agriculture.

Table 1. Demographic Variables.

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	162	55.3
	Female	131	44.7
Age	18–25 years	64	21.8
	26–35 years	108	36.9
	36–45 years	79	27
	Above 45 years	42	14.3
Education Level	Secondary or below	58	19.8
	Bachelor's degree	171	58.4
	Postgraduate degree	64	21.8
Monthly Income	Low	87	29.7
	Middle	139	47.4
	High	67	22.9

4. Results

In this section, the results of the empirical analysis are provided, and it is divided into four steps: (1) measurement model evaluation, (2) structural model evaluation, (3) mediation analysis, and (4) the overall summary and interpretation. The result of the analysis was based on the PLS-SEM model, which is the most appropriate when the model is complex, in terms of mediation and predictive orientation^[33].

The reliability and validity of the constructs were checked before the hypothesised structural relationship was tested. The results of reliability and convergent validity are provided in **Table 2**. The internal consistency of all constructs was very high, with Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) values much higher than the minimum requirement of 0.70^[34]. Convergent validity was also validated by the fact that the average variance extracted (AVE) values were above the recommended value of 0.50^[35].

Table 2. Reliability and Convergent Validity of Constructs.

Construct	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE	Loading Range
Religiosity	0.87	0.91	0.66	0.72–0.88
Halal Labeling	0.88	0.92	0.68	0.74–0.89
Trust	0.90	0.93	0.71	0.75–0.91
Risk Perception	0.84	0.89	0.65	0.70–0.87
Perceived Price	0.82	0.88	0.60	0.69–0.84
Muslim Lifestyle	0.86	0.91	0.67	0.72–0.88
Halal Consumption	0.91	0.94	0.73	0.77–0.92

Items ranged in factor loadings, with 0.69 as the lowest and 0.92 as the highest loading, which are above the 0.60 threshold, and this means that the individual items were sufficient to explain the latent constructs. The findings indicate that the measurement items were strong and in line with the previous literature.

The findings confirm that the scales were reliable and suitable for structural analysis. This stage provides confidence that subsequent results on structural relationships are not biased by measurement error.

Discriminant validity was assessed using both the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) ratio. The Fornell–Larcker criterion requires that the square root of AVE for each construct be greater than its correlations with other constructs. As presented in **Table 3**, this condition was satisfied, with diagonal values in bold exceeding the inter-construct correlations.

To further validate, HTMT ratios (**Table 4**) were calculated. All values were below the conservative threshold of 0.85^[36, 37], indicating discriminant validity.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity (Fornell–Larcker Criterion).

Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Religiosity	0.81						
Halal Labeling	0.52	0.82					
Trust	0.50	0.48	0.84				
Risk Perception	0.39	0.42	0.41	0.81			
Perceived Price	0.31	0.34	0.36	0.33	0.78		
Muslim Lifestyle	0.47	0.46	0.44	0.37	0.35	0.82	
Halal Consumption	0.55	0.51	0.52	0.44	0.29	0.49	0.85

Table 4. Discriminant Validity (HTMT Ratios).

Construct Pair	HTMT
Religiosity–Halal Labeling	0.63
Religiosity–Trust	0.61
Religiosity–Lifestyle	0.58
Halal Labeling–Trust	0.57
Trust–Lifestyle	0.55

Table 4. Cont.

Construct Pair	HTMT
Risk–Lifestyle	0.52
Lifestyle–Halal Consumption	0.67

Together, the Fornell–Larcker and HTMT results confirm that each construct is distinct, and multicollinearity concerns are minimized.

The hypothesized paths were then tested using the bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples. Results are presented in **Table 5**. Religiosity ($\beta = 0.31, p < 0.001$),

halal labeling ($\beta = 0.29, p < 0.001$), and trust ($\beta = 0.27, p < 0.001$) emerged as the strongest predictors of halal consumption. Muslim lifestyle also had a direct effect ($\beta = 0.24, p < 0.001$), while risk perception showed a smaller but significant influence ($\beta = 0.18, p = 0.001$). In contrast, perceived price was not significant ($\beta = -0.09, p = 0.068$).

Table 5. Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing.

Path	β	<i>t</i> -Value	<i>p</i> -Value	Result
Religiosity → Halal Consumption	0.31	5.12	<0.001	Supported
Halal Labeling → Halal Consumption	0.29	4.87	<0.001	Supported
Trust → Halal Consumption	0.27	4.25	<0.001	Supported
Risk Perception → Halal Consumption	0.18	3.42	0.001	Supported
Perceived Price → Halal Consumption	-0.09	1.82	0.068	Not supported
Muslim Lifestyle → Halal Consumption	0.24	4.01	<0.001	Supported

The model explained 68% of the variance in halal consumption ($R^2 = 0.68$), a substantial level^[33]. Predictive relevance was also confirmed with $Q^2 = 0.42$, indicating that the model had strong out-of-sample predictive capability.

To better understand the relative contribution of each predictor, effect sizes (f^2) were computed. As

shown in **Table 6**, religiosity, labeling, and trust all had medium effect sizes, lifestyle had a small effect, risk perception had a smaller yet noticeable contribution, and price had a negligible influence.

Predictive relevance (**Table 7**), measured using Q^2 , was strong for halal consumption, further validating the model.

Table 6. Effect Sizes (f^2) of Exogenous Variables.

Predictor → DV	f^2	Effect Size
Religiosity → Halal Consumption	0.18	Medium
Halal Labeling → Halal Consumption	0.16	Medium
Trust → Halal Consumption	0.14	Medium
Muslim Lifestyle → Halal Consumption	0.10	Small
Risk Perception → Halal Consumption	0.08	Small
Perceived Price → Halal Consumption	0.02	Negligible

Table 7. Predictive Relevance (Q^2).

Construct	Q^2	Predictive Relevance
Halal Consumption	0.42	Strong

Model fit indices were also computed to assess how well the structural model captured the data. **Table 8** shows that SRMR was below the 0.08 benchmark, NFI exceeded 0.90, and RMS_theta was below the 0.12 threshold, confirming a good overall fit.

Finally, mediation analysis was conducted to examine the indirect role of the Muslim lifestyle. As shown in **Table 9**, lifestyle partially mediated the effects of religiosity, halal labeling, and trust on halal consumption. This indicates that while these predictors directly influ-

ence halal consumption, their impact is also reinforced through lifestyle practices. Risk perception exhibited a weak mediation effect, whereas perceived price was non-significant.

Table 8. Model Fit Indices.

Fit Index	Value	Benchmark
SRMR	0.061	<0.08 (Good)
NFI	0.91	>0.90 (Acceptable)
RMS_theta	0.09	<0.12 (Acceptable)

Table 9. Indirect Effects.

Path	Indirect Effect (β)	t-Value	p-Value	Mediation Result
Religiosity → Lifestyle → Halal Consumption	0.12	3.10	0.002	Partial mediation
Halal Labeling → Lifestyle → Halal Consumption	0.07	2.21	0.027	Partial mediation
Trust → Lifestyle → Halal Consumption	0.09	2.65	0.008	Partial mediation
Risk Perception → Lifestyle → Halal Consumption	0.05	1.94	0.052	Weak mediation
Perceived Price → Lifestyle → Halal Consumption	-0.02	1.01	0.310	Not supported

The findings of the mediation highlight the centrality of the Muslim lifestyle in mediating between the beliefs, institutional guarantees, and real behaviours. The direct and indirect impacts of religiosity and trust, in particular, point to the fact that halal consumption is not a cognitive decision, but one that is entrenched in the daily practices and life patterns.

The findings give a holistic understanding of the determinants of halal consumption. Three constructs, namely, religiosity, halal labeling, and trust, proved to be the most powerful drivers, and they were backed by Muslim lifestyle and, to a lesser degree, risk perception. However, on the contrary, price was not significant, which implies that belief-based motivations like faith, authenticity, and certification are more important than costs.

The mediation analysis also clarified the translation of the abstract beliefs into the habitual practice by the Muslim lifestyle, which supports the association between religious values, institutional trust, and actual behaviour. The high explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.68$) and the magnitude of prediction relevance ($Q^2 = 0.42$) of the model testify to its greatness. The suitability of the framework is also confirmed by model fit indices.

All in all, these findings affirm that halal consumption should be interpreted as an act of value-focused, being influenced more by religiosity, institutional guarantees, and lifestyle accommodation than by an act of straightforward trade-offs, more of an economic nature.

5. Discussion

The current research provides an in-depth discussion on the factors that determine halal consumption behaviour. By using a structural equation modelling (SEM) framework, the results were developed to provide insight into the theoretical and practical significance of the influence of religiosity, trust, labeling, lifestyle, and risk perception on a consumer decision-making process, whereas perceived price does not have a significant effect (**Tables 1–9**).

The main results are structured into a discussion, after which theoretical contributions, managerial implications, and future research directions are discussed. Religiosity has become the best predictor of halal consumption ($\beta = 0.31$, $f^2 = 0.18$). Such a conclusion is consistent with the prior studies, which emphasize that religious commitment is at the center of determining consumption patterns in Muslim settings^[16, 18]. The great role of religiosity proves that the issue of halal consumption is not only the question of food preferences but also the expression of identity and belief in religious principles. This is in line with the Theory of Planned Behaviour^[12] in which religiosity can be conceptualised as some form of normative belief that guides intention and behaviour.

This study, in addition to the existing literature, supports the point of view that religiosity is still an influential explanatory variable in even more globalised

and diversified consumer markets. There was also a significant influence of Halal labeling on consumption behaviour ($\beta = 0.29$, $f^2 = 0.16$), which verified that visible assurance mechanisms, including certification logos, have a decisive impact on consumer choice. The findings are congruent with Soebahar et al. and Awan et al.^[8, 21], who hold that labels give credibility and provide less uncertainty in markets where people do not trust food supply chains. Labeling in the current scenario is a physical indication of genuineness, and it actually helps to bridge the gap between the producers and the consumers. As a policymaker, this highlights the importance of harmonised and clear certification frameworks that would help boost consumer confidence and expand the market.

Trust was also discovered as a strong determinant ($\beta = 0.27$, $f^2 = 0.14$), which highlights its key role in consumer confidence. This observation is reminiscent of Lada et al.^[23], who have presented the argument that the belief in certification agencies, regulators, and manufacturers goes directly to how much more people are willing to spend on halal products. Considering the growing sophistication of supply chains all over the world, the element of trust may be regarded as a mediating and reinforcing variable uniting the impacts of labeling and religiosity. From a managerial perspective, companies are not only required to adhere to the halal requirements, but also present their supply chain integrity and availability to consumers so that they can assure and generate additional consumer confidence.

The effect of lifestyle ($\beta = 0.24$, $f^2 = 0.10$) implies that the influences of religiosity and labeling often get internalised within the everyday habits and consumption patterns. This goes in line with Wilson and Liu^[24], who highlighted that the Muslim lifestyle is an important mediator between values and behaviour. Therefore, lifestyle is a mediator of abstract beliefs to concrete actions, and thus, it is a cultural and social aspect of halal consumption. The discovery adds to the existing literature by showing that halal decisions are not individual ones but are ranged within broader consumption patterns and identity-based practices^[37].

The smaller in magnitude, but statistically significant, risk perception ($\beta = 0.18$, $f^2 = 0.08$) im-

plied that fears in respect of contamination, fraud, or non-compliance are stimulating cautious consumer behaviour. This finding is in agreement with the earlier literature^[29] that shows perceived risks, which are not predominant, still influence vigilance among consumers. The implication of this is that ensuring halal compliance does not only involve making assurances but also reducing anxieties by the use of traceability, monitoring, and constant enforcement of standards.

On the contrary, perceived price did not average a substantial impact ($\beta = -0.09$), which is nevertheless contrary to traditional consumer-behaviour theories that consider foreground considerations of costs when making purchases^[11]. This implies that authenticity, trust, and conformity with religious and lifestyle values are more important to the consumers of halal products than the economic factors. The same results have been reported in the case of a scenario where ethical or identity-based consumption prevails (e.g., organic food, fair-trade products). The fact that the result was non-significant contributes positively to the debate because it emphasizes the fact that in the halal context, the values have supremacy over the cost, thus indicating that a premium price can be charged as long as trust and credibility of the certification are not compromised.

5.1. Theoretical Contributions

This research paper makes a number of substantive theoretical contributions. First, it builds upon the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) by showing that religiosity acts as a strong normative belief, which has a direct influence on the intentions and behaviours of halal consumers. Through this, the study shows the extent to which ingrained values can be used as predictors of identity-based consumption in the long run. Second, the study provides Muslim lifestyle as a mediating construct, which explains how abstract values like religiosity, labeling credibility, and trust are internalised and reinforced by quotidian practices. This provides a more delicate insight into the transition of normative beliefs to real behaviour, thus filling out TPB with a lifestyle-based mechanism to make the transitions between faith, credibility, and action. Third, the results point to trust as a direct determinant as well as an in-

direct reinforcement of halal consumption. The placement of trust with respect to religiosity and lifestyle, the study extends the consumer-behaviour theory to explain the institutional and relational trust in the system of certifications and supply chains. Lastly, the paper establishes price sensitivity boundary conditions on value-based consumption. The non-significance of perceived price suggests that in areas where ethics, religion, or identity-based factors prevail, the trade-off in economics can be insignificant, and this can be used to extend the current models of consumer behaviour to help understand that non-significant variables can be used to explain the boundaries of traditional cost-benefit reasoning to make a choice.

5.2. Practical Implications

Practically, the results are of salient implications to the policymakers, producers, and retailers. Regulators should focus on the harmonisation of the systems of halal certification in order to curb confusion and enhance consumer confidence. Companies should invest in a transparent supply chain, visible certification, and lifestyle-based marketing strategies that appeal to consumer identity. Retailers are encouraged to understand that halal consumers are not necessarily price-conscious but focus on authenticity, certification, and a lifestyle fit. This observation has strategic implications for pricing policy, promotional campaign, and product development

5.3. Illustration from M.A.K. Halal

The case of M.A.K. Halal, a UK-based fast-food chain based in Birmingham in 2016, serves as an example of such dynamics. The brand spread to 13 stores across the country and obtained the title of the Best Brand within a decade, and became the winner of the British Muslim Awards 2023. Its developmental approach, based on halal authenticity, ethical conduct, and inclusive dining, is similar to the results of the study. In line with **Table 4** and **Figure 1**, M.A.K. Halal shows that consumer trust in certification and lifestyle resonance has a stronger determination than price sensitivity. The company has incorporated religiosity, certification credibility, and risk

assurance into the model of its business, and thus the company experienced long-term growth and consumer loyalty, thus demonstrating how theoretical knowledge can be converted into practical achievement.

The implications of the study are applied to the agricultural economy. Focusing on the authenticity, credibility of trust, and certification offers the idea that the consumption patterns of halal can foster the upstream agricultural reforms. Where consumers trust the supply chains that are verified, producers are motivated to use certified farming, ethical slaughtering, and traceable logistics. This pressure of demand turns agricultural businesses into economic agents of value, which increases productivity and export possibilities. This is why policy-makers are advised to enhance the connection between the halal certification agencies and the agricultural ministries to ensure that the rural farmers comply with the religious and quality standards. This kind of coordination contributes to rural labour, agri-tech investment, and makes the halal food sector an instrument of sustainable economic development and food security, especially in economies that are diversified beyond hydrocarbons or manufacturing.

In addition to consumer behaviour, the strong impacts of trust, certification, and religiosity highlight that the pattern of consumption of halal can have a direct impact on the upstream production. Based on the need to ensure consumer confidence in verified halal integrity, farmers and primary producers will be encouraged to embrace certified practices, ethical slaughtering, and traceable supply chains. This pressure of demand stimulates investment in compliant production of livestock, including feed quality and monitoring systems, which increases the cost of production in the farms but enhances accessibility and marketability. In the case of agricultural ministries and rural development agencies, strengthening of halal certification systems and facilitation of their adherence amongst the small farmers can lead to rural income, agri-food value chain modernization, and sustainable agricultural development.

5.4. Limitations and Future Research

Although the research is well-grounded, the shortcomings remain. It was also restricted in generalisabil-

ity because the sample was selected from one national setting. The future studies must use cross-country comparisons to understand the cultural and regulatory variations. The longitudinal designs would be more successful in monitoring the shift in the consumption behaviour of halal among the people over time, especially when the certification systems are changing. Lastly, qualitative methods can give a more in-depth understanding of consumer motivation and experience that is more in-depth than survey-based data.

6. Conclusions

The determinants of halal consumption were determined in the current analysis, and the incorporation of religiosity, halal labeling, trust, Muslim lifestyle, risk perception, and perceived price in a structural model was made. Using the PLS-SEM on the data gathered among 293 respondents, the model showed a high level of reliability, validity, and explanatory power, and explained 68% of the variance of halal consumption. The findings highlight the fact that religiosity, labeling, and trust are the most significant predictors, which reinforces the fact that identity, credibility of certification, and institutional confidence are conclusive factors in consumer behaviour. The way of life among Muslims proved to be the direct determinant and the mediator of the highest order, and it strengthened the notion that halal consumption is not only determined by beliefs, but also by everyday practice and routines triggered by identities. Risk perception provided a less significant but still significant impact, which implies that consumer caution moderates decisions, and perceived price did not have any direct or indirect impact, which proves the value of consumer perceptions to be more significant than the cost factor.

Theoretical development comes as a result of the expansion of the Theory of Planned Behaviour by incorporating lifestyle as an intermediate mediating variable and placing trust as an institutional trust system. In addition to that, the research explains the boundaries of price sensitivity in value-based consumption, and it adds to more general discussions concerning ethical and religious consumption. In a real-life sense, the research results reiterate the importance of open certification

protocols, credential-building processes, and lifestyle-based marketing plans that appeal to consumer identity.

The empirical study is limited in a number of ways. Mainly, the research is grounded in one contextual situation, the MAK Halal food chain that exists in the Malaysian halal agri-food sector, especially in the urban regions of the Klang Valley. Even though the case offers a sound environment, given the developed halal certification environment in Malaysia, the results cannot be entirely extended to countries that have different regulatory or cultural environments.

To sum up, halal consumption is a value- and trust-based phenomenon, where religiosity, lifestyles, and credibility are the main determinants of behaviour as opposed to economic considerations. Through renewed certification, instilling values in everyday activities, and focusing on authenticity, the producers and policymakers will be able to promote sustainable consumer trust and loyalty in the halal economy.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, Y.S. and S.A.M.; methodology, S.A.M.; software, Y.S.; validation, S.A.M. and Y.S.; formal analysis, S.A.M.; investigation, Y.S.; resources, S.A.M.; data curation, Y.S.; writing—original draft preparation, S.A.M.; writing—review and editing, S.A.M. and Y.S.; visualization, Y.S.; supervision, S.A.M.; project administration, S.A.M.; funding acquisition, Y.S. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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