

## Non-Muslim Consumers Attitude and Repurchase Behaviour Towards Halal Food: An Application of Buyer Behaviour Model

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*Abstract:* - Halal food is widely recognised for its exceptional quality assurance and wholesomeness which attracts both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers. Previous studies have shed some light on the Muslim consumer attitude-behaviour interactions with halal products. However, studies of similar topic focusing on non-Muslim consumers as respondents are uncommon. Therefore, this study aims to examine the determinants of non-Muslim attitude and their repurchase intention on halal food product using the Buyer Behaviour Model. Data were collected through self-administered questionnaire survey involving 444 non-Muslim consumers. The structural equation analyses revealed that lifestyle, consumers past purchase experience, and religion adoption positively influenced the non-Muslim consumers' attitude towards halal products. The findings also revealed a significant relationship between the attitude of non-Muslim consumer towards halal product and their repurchase intention of the halal product. Finally, several recommendations for future research consideration are presented in the final part of this paper.

*Key-Words:* Non-Muslim consumer, halal awareness, lifestyle, consumer's past purchase experience, religion adoption, attitude, repurchase intention, halal product

# 1 Introduction

According to the Islamic teaching, the Arabic word halal is defined as “permissible” or “lawful” (Afzan, 2016). In general, halal is deemed to have a close relationship with the Muslims society; the concept governs all aspect of their lives, from proper conduct to food consumption (Rezai, Mohamed & Shamsudin, 2015). Halal food, in the context of Muslim’s dietary regulation, refers to all food that is permissible under the code of Islamic law. Bonne et al. (2007) noted that the concept of Halal food convey the idea of the food being hygienic and wholesomeness for human consumption. A product credibility is essential in proving its Halal status, thus, it is widely recognised that a certified halal food product connotes a guaranteed quality assurance (Mohd Ghazali & Nitty, 2014). Similarly, the halal food producers in Malaysia are required to abide by various standards of the halal requirement to ensure a quality halal product (Yuhaniz and Nyuen, 2013).

Recent developments in the halal market supported the need to investigate the consumer behaviour towards a halal product. Moreover, previous studies (e.g. Vloreen, Ardiana & Siti, 2014; Ismail & Nasiruddin, 2014; Yuhanis & Nyen, 2013) suggested future studies emphasize more on non-Muslim consumers’ view and their behaviour towards halal products. Hayat, Ahmad, and Siddiquei (2015) pointed out the importance of entrepreneur to leverage their efforts in order to understand the consumers’ behaviour towards halal food products. Additionally, Ismail and Nasiruddin (2014) encouraged researchers to explore the consumption pattern of the non-Muslim consumer and examine the influencing factors of their purchasing behaviour towards halal products. Understanding the consumer future behavioural intentions and the determinant factors of their intention will benefit many parties, especially business entities; and to direct their marketing strategy and enhance their market capacity (Yuhanis & Nyen, 2013). Thus, recognising the importance of understanding the non-Muslims consumers’ attitude and behaviour towards the halal issue, this study aims to investigate and understand the determining factors of non-Muslim consumers’ attitude and repurchase intention of the halal product.

## 2.0 Literature Review

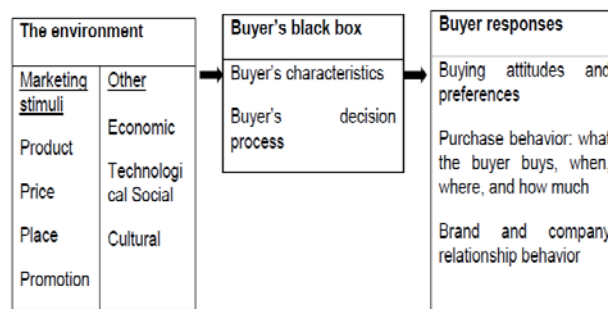
### 2.1 Theoretical foundation

There are numerous theories and models available to explain the basis of consumer behaviour and one of the most prominent concepts in the consumer

behaviour area is the Buyer Behaviour Model or sometimes known as the buyer black box (Joshua, 2011; Kotler, 2004). The mind of the consumer, as described by the buyer behaviour model or stimulus-response model, comprises the interaction of stimuli, consumer characteristics, decision-making processes, and consumer responses (Sandhusen, 2000). The buyer behaviour model explains what happens within the consumer between his or her exposure to the marketing stimuli and the actual decision to purchase (Keegan et al., 1992; Kotler, 2004). In order to understand consumer behaviour, Kotler and Armstrong (2004) established an exceptional basic stimulus-response model of buyer behaviour that comprises three major components: 1) marketing and other stimuli (these act as stimuli), 2) the buyer’s black box (these are related to the consumer influence), and 3) the buyer responses (this is the response part). Thus, to understand the buyer behaviour, marketers should concentrate on the buyer’s black box as it represents the buyer characteristics and buyer psychology (Yusniza and Nor Khalidah, 2016) as well as the buyer’s decision process, before attempting the next component of buyer behaviour model. Despite the widely available Halal food in the market and the substantive research on the halal food market, theory-driven research on halal food purchasing is still insufficient (Syed Shah Alam & Nazura, 2011). The buyer behaviour model (see figure 1) in the marketing context explicates the interaction between the determining factor of the non-Muslim consumers’ attitude towards the halal product and their attitude in determining their intention to repurchase Halal certified product.

**Figure 1**

The theoretical foundation model of Buyer behaviour Model



Source :Kotler and Armstrong (2004)

## 3.0 Research framework development

### 3.1 Buyer Factor

Buyer factors were set as the external variables that influence the consumer evaluation of their product

preference and adoption (Sridhar et al., 2012). In general, the consumer attitude and behaviour are triggered by four types of factors: cultural factors, social factors, personal factors, and psychological factors (Keisidou et al., 2011). Personal factors or sometimes refers to as the buyer factors play an important role in influencing the consumer buying behaviour (Yuniza & Nor Khalida, 2016; McDaniel et al., 2011). Grounded on the idea that buyer factors might trigger buyer responses, the above discussion represents the buyer factors of this study (Halal awareness, consumer's past purchase experience, lifestyle and religion adoption), which influence the attitude towards the halal food product particularly among the non-Muslim consumers.

### 3.1.1 Halal awareness

Sheldon (1996) suggested that awareness exhibits the person familiarity of the social construct and culture around them and realisation of problems or issues that are faced by groups of people in the society where the persons belong. Based on the notion, the key point of awareness is translated as the person ability to be conscious to a stimulus; accordingly, the study undertakes the stimuli concept to pursue halal awareness. Hence, it is reasonable to highlight that the consumers' knowledge influences their belief towards a product (Simanjuntak & Dewantara, 2014). Concurrent with the above notion, Razak et al. (2015) mentioned that the halal products and services awareness is not only prevalent among Muslim consumers; even some non-Muslim consumer preferred buying halal products and services. Yuhanis and Nyen (2013) acknowledged the role of Halal awareness and Halal certification in triggering the non-Muslim consumers' purchase intention. It was evidenced that non-Muslim consumers have a notable awareness towards the Halal products. Golnaz et al. (2012) mentioned that the majority of non-Muslim consumers are aware of the existence of halal principles. The marketing tools used to disseminate halal information are one of the sources contributing to their awareness on the principles of Halal. Based on these arguments, it is assumed that halal awareness is a positive attitude towards halal product among non-Muslim consumer. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Halal awareness positive influence the attitude of non-Muslim consumers towards halal food

### 3.1.2 Consumer's past purchase experience with Halal product

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, p. 14) argued that the more positive a person's past experience about an object, the more positive beliefs he or she hold against the object. In other words, beliefs and attitudes are predominantly created based on a person's personal experience of a given object. Tah and Ghazali (2012) examined the causal relationships among experience, personality, and attitude and the scuba divers' behaviour. Their findings revealed that the divers' past experience is the most significant factor in explaining the divers' underwater behaviour, followed by the divers' attitude and personality. Furthermore, the scholars believed that the divers' past experience is mainly related to the skill and knowledge they acquired before the diving activity transpired as well as their past involvement with similar activity. The argument is further corroborated by Armstrong and Kotler (2011), who suggested that the consumer can obtain valuable information about a product and service that they intended to acquire from experimental sources (handling, examining using the product). The study stated further that prior to a purchasing experience, non-Muslim consumers engagement with the halal products can lead to favourable attitude towards the product. Therefore, the study proposes the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Consumer past experience positively influence the attitude of non-Muslim consumers towards the halal product

### 3.1.3 Lifestyle

According to the marketing perspective, lifestyle distinguishes people into groups on the basis of the things they favour to do, how they like to spend their leisure time and how they choose to spend their disposable income (Krishnan, 2011). Consumer lifestyle plays a very significant role in influencing one's purchase behaviour or purchase intention (Shaari et al., 2014). Sungkar (2009) claimed that a consumer who opted to consume a halal product is seeking for sharia compliance, healthy, wholesome, and a hygienic lifestyle. Rezai et al. (2012) agreed that lifestyle has a positive impact on the consumer's awareness of the halal principles of food product in Malaysia. Thus, this provides a bigger pictures that the consumer lifestyle plays a significant buyer factor that influence the consumer purchase judgment in many ways. One of the critical areas that necessitate further investigation is the lifestyle impact on attitude particularly with regard to the halal product. Therefore, this study seeks to extend this current knowledge by understanding the impact of lifestyle

on non-Muslim customers' attitude towards halal food. Based on the discussion, the following research hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: Lifestyle positively influence the attitude of non-Muslim consumers towards halal product

### 3.1.4 Religion adoption

In regards to the role of religion in the context of food consumption, Bonne and Verbeke (2008) argued that the disposition of people dietary may be shaped by their religious practice and their degree of adherence to their religious teachings. Correspondingly, religion is one of the most influential factor in food selection in many societies (Nur Aniza et al., 2013) as well as in product acceptance behaviours (Nazahah & Sutina, 2012). Numerous studies indicated that religion can influence the consumer attitude and behaviour (Delener, 1994; Pettinger et al., 2004) as well as the food purchasing decision and eating habits. In some religion, for example Christianity, certain foods are prohibited; Judaism and Islam forbid the consumption of pork; Buddhism and Hinduism prohibit the consumption of beef (Sack, 2001; Ahmed et al., 2014). Nur Aniza et al. (2013) highlighted an interesting finding from a comparative study of the Muslim and non-Muslim Malaysian student behaviour in selecting halal foods. In addition, Ateeq-ur-Rehman and Muhammad (2010) addressed the impact of religious commitment on most of the consumers' orientation as well as consumers' likes and dislikes about the subject. In a nutshell, these studies highlighted the significant values of religion in the social life of human beings. Based on the discussion, this study aims to examine the effect of religion adoption among the non-Muslim consumer on their attitude towards the halal product. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 4: Religion adoption positively influence the attitude of non-Muslim consumers towards the halal product

### 3.2 Attitude on Halal product

Understanding the consumers' attitude is essential as it affects their behavioural intentions (Kraft et al., 2005). Attitude refers to a person's general feeling towards a particular subject (Kendrick & Olson, 2012). Engel et al. (1995) stated that a strong attitude towards a product is a good predictor that the products will be bought by the consumers. However, in the context of halal studies, the exploration of the factors that might influence the

consumer's attitude and purchase intention are expected to be slightly different (Mahiah & Faridah, 2014) due to the classification of halal food products which utterly differ from non-Halal products. Based on the preceding discussion, the current research posited that the non-Muslim consumer's attitude towards halal foods is the driving force of their intention to repurchase halal product.

### 3.3 Repurchase intention of Halal product

The present study also attempts to understand the repurchase intention of halal foods among non-Muslim consumers. Based on the prominent theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), the attitude is one of the factors that prompted a person's intention. Similarly, the buyer behaviour model (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004) asserted that attitude is capable of triggering a person's intention to perform certain behaviours. An individual who holds certain attitude towards an object most probably will exhibit a behaviour that correspond with the attitude (Hiram et al., 2015). Past studies (e.g. Yuhanis & Nyen, 2013; Maisarah et al., 2013; Ismail & Nasiruddin, 2014; Alam & Sayuti, 2011) on the phenomenon of halal exploration focused on the domain of purchase intention; however, the repurchase intention area was neglected. Thus, the gap is the focus of this study. In a business context, Roos and Gustafsson (2007) argued about the importance of a company to put extra consideration on the issue of repurchase intention in order to cope with the market stiff competition. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 5: The attitude of the non-Muslim consumer towards Halal food positively influence their repurchase intention of halal food.

### 4.0 Proposed research model

A conceptual framework was developed based on the extant literature on the theoretical foundation of the buyer factors. As this study emphasizes on the structural relationship between attitude and the repurchase intention of non-Muslim towards halal food, it is important to understand the buyer factors which influence attitude before the actual repurchase. Specifically, this study examines the role of buyer factors – halal awareness, lifestyle, and consumers past purchase experience on the halal product – which serve as the three main exogenous variables that influence the non-Muslim consumers' attitude towards the halal product. In particular, this study has two specific objectives:

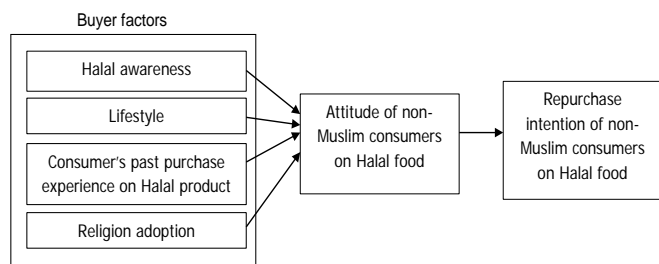
1) To identify the direct influence of buyer factors (Halal awareness, consumer past purchase experience, lifestyle and religion adoption control

on the attitude of non-Muslim consumer towards Halal food;

2) To examine the influence of non-Muslim attitude towards halal food upon their repurchase intention to halal food.

Therefore, the following conceptual framework, as illustrated in Figure 2, is proposed.

Figure 2: Conceptual model of the proposed research



## 5.0 Methodology

The present study employed a descriptive research method using cross-sectional data via a survey, in Malaysia. Respondents' recruitment was based on a (non-probability) quota sampling technique drawn from the shopping malls in four states, namely Pahang (representing the East Coast region), Penang (representing the Northern region), Selangor (representing the Central region), Johor (representing the Southern region), and Sabah (representing East Malaysia). The core reason for this study in choosing the above-mentioned states is because these states have a fair distribution of Indian population, as well as two other races, namely the Malay and Chinese (Amran et al., 2016). Thus, the states serve as an appropriate target location for this study. Several screening questions were employed to ensure all respondents' evaluations are based on their prior experience of purchasing and consuming halal food products. The questionnaire items to assessed the proposed variables were represented by a 5-point Likert-scale to illustrate the respondent's degree of agreement; scale point "5" indicates "Strongly Agree", point "4" indicates "Agree", point "3" indicates "Slightly Agree", point "2" indicates "Neither Disagree nor Agree", point "1" indicates "neither agree nor disagree", point 2 indicates "Disagree" and lastly, point "1" indicates "Strongly Disagree". The items used to measure the proposed constructs were adopted and modified from past scholar works. Similarly, the attitude and the repurchase intention construct in this research were measured by items taken mainly from past studies of Yuhanis and Nyen (2013); Aiedah and Sharifah (2015); Azmawani (2015); and Ahasanul et al. (2015). A total of 444

set questionnaires were gathered for further analysis. Data obtained from the survey were analysed using SmartPLS 3.0 under the Partial Least Square Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM).

## 6.0 Analysis and result

### 6.1 Demographic profile

The respondents consisted of 444 Malaysian non-Muslim consumers, which were drawn from various ethnicities and religious beliefs. The majority of the respondents (48.5 percent) were in the age group of 18-25 years, 52 percent female, 38.5 percent Chinese ethnicity and 48 percent Christian. All selected respondents have prior purchase experience including consuming or purchasing a halal product.

### 6.2 Assessment of Measurement Model

The Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis was incorporated using SmartPLS 3.0 software (Ringle et al., 2015) to examine the research model. Table 2 describes the assessment of construct reliability and convergent reliability of the study. It is apparent from table 2 that the composite reliability for halal awareness construct is 0.872; lifestyle construct is 0.906; consumer's past purchase experience is 0.908; religion adoption construct is 0.897; while attitude and repurchase intention construct values of CR are 0.918 and 0.940, respectively. All the above-mentioned CR values indicate that the constructs have an internal consistency. Correspondingly, these constructs also exhibit an adequate convergent validity suggesting no item were deleted due to low loadings issue. Additionally, the assessment of measurement model also reveals that all construct achieved the minimum value of average variance extracted (AVE) implying that the items loaded to the respective constructs can explain more than 50% of the constructs' variance (Hair et al., 2014).

Table 2

Internal Consistency and Convergent Validity

Constructs	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Halal awareness	I know what Halal is about	0.771	0.807	0.872	0.631
	The process in producing halal food products must be free from the element of hog and alcoholic substances	0.835			
	The importance of Halal food cannot be neglected	0.857			
Lifestyle	I consumed Halal product because it is environmental friendly	0.854	0.843	0.906	0.762
	Consuming safe product for example Halal product is important for me	0.857			
	Consuming Halal food product represent a natural way of living	0.907			
Consumer's past purchase experience on Halal product	I choose halal food product based on my personal experience	0.820	0.865	0.908	0.711
	I know about Halal food product through my personal consumption	0.829			
	Halal food product was good for me	0.863			
	I am satisfied with the quality of the Halal food product	0.861			
Religion adoption	Religious practice is my concern when I purchase food products	0.756	0.857	0.897	0.636
	I consumed foods that are permitted from my religious practice	0.810			
	Food products that are Halal is approved in my religion	0.749			
	My religious practice influences all my dealings in life	0.832			
	Food product that is halal are compatible with my religious values	0.834			
Attitude	I sometime prefer to purchase Halal food products	0.808	0.880	0.918	0.736
	I like to choose food products that is Halal	0.866			
	Generally speaking, buying Halal food product can benefits the consumer	0.861			
	Generally speaking, buying Halal food products is a better choice	0.895			
Repurchase intention	Most probably I'll continue to choose Halal food products	0.870	0.921	0.940	0.759
	Most probably I'll will repurchase Halal food product in the future	0.889			
	Choosing Halal food product is a good idea	0.862			
	I intend to repurchase halal food product in the future	0.870			
	The probability that I would consider buying halal food product is high	0.864			

Following Fornell and Lacker (1981) and Henseler's heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) (2015), the assessment of measurement model was performed to assess the discriminant validity. Table 3 illustrates the Fornell and Larker criterion. The result shows that the square root of AVE for each construct is larger than the correlation estimate of the construct; it is noted that the constructs contrast from one another following the principle of Fornell and Lacker (1981).

**Table 3**  
Fornell and larker Criterion

Construct	Attitude	Consumer's past purchase experience	Halal awareness	Lifestyle	Religion adoption	Repurchase intention
Attitude	<b>0.858</b>					
Consumer's past purchase experience	0.691	<b>0.843</b>				
Halal awareness	0.456	0.573	<b>0.794</b>			
Lifestyle	0.585	0.630	0.512	<b>0.873</b>		
Religion adoption	0.411	0.362	0.371	0.507	<b>0.797</b>	
Repurchase intention	0.761	0.656	0.496	0.527	0.396	<b>0.871</b>

Note: Diagonal elements highlighted in bold represented the square root of AVE

Additionally, Table 4 demonstrates that all constructs are distinctively different at HTMT0.90 following the threshold set by Henseler et al. (2015).

**Table 4**  
Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Construct	Attitude	Consumer's past purchase experience	Halal awareness	Lifestyle	Religion adoption	Repurchase intention
Attitude						
Consumer's past purchase experience	0.788					
Halal awareness	0.516	0.662				
Lifestyle	0.677	0.737	0.600			
Religion adoption	0.464	0.409	0.434	0.590		
Repurchase intention	0.843	0.730	0.558	0.598	0.440	

Criteria: Discriminant validity is established at HTMT<sub>0.90</sub>

**7.3 Assessment of structural Model**

Table 6 illustrates the results of path coefficient assessment using bootstrapping procedure for the hypothesised relationships. It was found that the following direct relationship were significant: (H2: Lifestyle→Attitude, β=0.187, t=3.251, p=0.001; H3: Consumer's past purchase experience→Attitude, β=0.517, t=10.976, p=0.000; H4: Religion adoption: β=0.121, t=2.553, p=0.005; H5: Attitude→repurchase intention, β=0.761, t=22.006, p=0.000). On the other hand, the result reported an insignificant result of H1: Halal awareness→Attitude; β=0.023, t=0.518, p=0.302.

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std. Beta	Std. Error	t-value	P Values	Decision
H1	Halal awareness -> Attitude	0.023	0.045	0.518	0.302	NOT SUPPORTED
H2	Lifestyle -> Attitude	0.187	0.058	3.251*	0.001	SUPPORTED
H3	Consumer's past purchase experience -> Attitude	0.517	0.047	10.976**	0.000	SUPPORTED
H4	Religion adoption -> Attitude	0.121	0.047	2.553*	0.005	SUPPORTED
H5	Attitude -> Repurchase intention	0.761	0.035	22.006**	0.000	SUPPORTED

\*\*p<0.01,\*p<0.05

In addition, the assessment of coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) for attitude is 0.526. The results suggested that the role of halal awareness, lifestyle, consumer's past experience, and religion adoption explains 52.6% of the role non-Muslim consumer attitude on the halal product. While the assessment of coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) for repurchase intention is 0.578, signified the effect of non-Muslim attitude towards halal product, explains

57.8% of the repurchase intention of the non-Muslim consumer towards halal food.

## **7.0 Discussion**

The following sections present the discussion and conclusion of this study.

### **7.1 Halal awareness**

Empirically, the result of this study showed that hypothesis 1 was not supported. This finding suggested that halal awareness did not significantly influence the non-Muslim consumer attitude towards halal product. The results contradict the findings by Yuhanis and Nyen (2013) in which they revealed that halal awareness plays a significant role in inducing the consumers' intention to acquire halal product. Golnaz, Zainalabidin, Mad Nasir, and Eddie (2010) revealed that non-Muslim consumers are aware of the existence of halal food, and generally, understand the halal principles. The present study found that non-Muslim consumer awareness on halal principle did not influence their viewpoint on the halal product. Furthermore, although the respondents in this study were aware of the basic meaning of halal, the awareness did not become the ultimate basis for favoring the halal product. A study by Bozoglu et al. (2016) pertaining to the effect of environmental awareness on university student's environmental attitude and behaviour, argued that although the respondent has a higher environmental awareness which they obtained from the environmental courses, it has no effect on their environmental attitudes and behaviour. In other words, the authors suggested that environmental awareness is not sufficient that the student would practice awareness in their daily life. The argument clearly reflects this study findings; the halal awareness is not a critical element of the buyer factor in influencing the attitude of non-Muslim consumer towards halal product.

### **7.2 Lifestyle**

Evidently, the results of this study revealed that the consumer's past purchase experience positively influence the attitude of non-Muslim consumer towards halal product. Sungkar (2009) suggested that consumers who opted to consume halal product are convinced that they adopted a healthy, wholesome, and hygienic lifestyle. Similarly, Rezai et al. (2012) found that lifestyles impacted the consumer's awareness on halal principles of food product in Malaysia. The current trend is the non-Muslim community viewed halal food as part of a lifestyle choice (Yuhanis & Nyen, 2013).

Interestingly, halal concept has become an excellent choice for some consumers who are looking for a healthy and hygienic lifestyle (Kasmarini et al., 2015; Tahir, 2011). Berry (2008) mentioned that recognising the consumer positive perception of the halal products as representing a healthier, safer, and animal-friendly treatment, has prompted the growing demand for the halal product from non-Muslim countries. A noteworthy fact is that the respondents are more likely to favor a halal product as it indirectly supports their lifestyle. Their positive feeling towards halal products depends on how closely those products reflect and support their approach in life. Therefore, considering the study significant finding on consumer lifestyle and their positive attitude towards the halal product, the marketers should take note on the importance of consumer lifestyle as the influencing factor of non-Muslim consumer beliefs towards halal product.

### **7.3 Consumer's past purchase experience**

The present study findings also validated the significant relationship between consumer's past purchase experience and the attitude of non-Muslim towards the halal product. Therefore, hypothesis 3 is supported. The study found that consumer who had a previous pleasant experience in consuming and buying the halal product is more likely to engage a favorable attitude towards the product. This notion was supported by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975, p. 14) who claimed that a person will hold positive beliefs towards a product if they had a positive past experience with the product. The present research also revealed that off all buyer factors observed in this study, the consumer's past purchase experience is the most important determinant in the consumer belief of the halal product. The reason for this significant finding seems to be rooted in the fact that a consumer who has a positive feeling for a product is more likely to have a favorable feeling towards the product. One possible reason is because the non-Muslim consumer prior experience towards a halal product affects their memory; thus, their good experience in dealing with the product led to a good memory towards the product. Halal products are well-known for their favorable image of having an exceptional quality (Aiedah and Sharifah, 2015), thus, they appeal to the consumers who consider the halal product for their consumption. The halal market is experiencing an amazing trend as many consumers reported having good and satisfying experience with the halal products and services available in the market (Maisarah et al., 2013).

### **7.4 Religion adoption**

The most intriguing aspect of this study was found in the analysis of religion adoption. It was evidenced that religion adoption positively affects the attitude of non-Muslim consumer towards halal product. Therefore, hypothesis 4 is empirically supported. Interestingly, despite the fact that halal purchase is closely associated with Muslim consumers in view of their strong religion sentiment, the study found that the favorable attitude of the non-Muslim towards halal product reflected their religion adoption; in other words, their attitude is religiously motivated. In a similar vein, Nur Aniza et al. (2013) and Dindyal (2003) highlighted the importance of religion in shaping food choice in many societies and product acceptance behaviour (Nazahah and Sutina, 2012). Moreover, religion is an important element in the cultural context as it stand as the most universal and influential social institution that have a significant influence on people's attitudes, values, and behaviour at both the individual and societal levels (Mokhlis, 2009). Although the role of religion dictates the Muslim consumer to engage with the halal product, the present study revealed that religion sentiment imposed positive effects on the attitude towards halal product among non-Muslim consumers in Malaysia. Jamal (2003) highlighted that the individuals attempt to convey their sense of religious engagement are sometimes manifested through their feeling and attitude towards food consumption. Simultaneously, the likelihood of religion adoption in affecting the non-Muslim attitude towards halal product may also depend on the motivation to comply (religious belief).

### 7.5 Attitude leads to repurchase intention

The study depicted that non-Muslim consumer attitude towards halal product can positively affect their repurchase intention on the halal product in future. Therefore, hypothesis 5 of this study is supported. The finding is corroborated by Syed Shah Alam and Nazura (2011) who highlighted the importance of attitude in influencing consumer intention to purchase halal food products; individual with high positive attitude appeared to have greater intention to purchase halal food products. Past studies on the construct of attitude-behaviour suggested that consumers who hold positive or favorable attitudes towards an object will greatly lead to a positive behavioural outcome. Likewise, the finding of this study proved that a favorable feeling (attitude) towards halal product among the non-Muslim consumer is likely to affect their intention to repurchase halal product. Accordingly, it was empirically proved that the more the non-

Muslim favors halal product, the higher the possibility of them to repurchase halal product in the future. In a nutshell, the findings of this study indicated that more attention should be given to understand the attitude-behaviour relationship. In fact, business entities today should not overlook the importance of enhancing the repurchase intention among consumers as it can become the ultimate driver in improving the business profitability and sustainability (Wangwiboolkij, 2012).

### 8.0 Conclusion

The finding of this research provides a solid reason for the halal food producers to consider expanding their target market to non-Muslim consumer, as this group of consumer evidently displays a favorable attitude towards halal food. Accordingly, the halal product manufacturers should take heed and pay greater attention to the importance of making the halal product appeal to all types of consumer. Acknowledging that halal product is no longer exclusively tied to religious concept, more effort is required to capitalize all resources and to engage effective marketing strategies in promoting halal product and services, making them more attractive for both consumer and industry players.

In regards to the theoretical context, this research is one of the first attempts to develop and empirically test a conceptual model on a halal repurchase intention by assessing the component of buyer factors (Halal awareness, consumer past purchase experience, lifestyle, and religion adoption) of non-Muslim consumer attitude towards a halal product, which then reflects their repurchase intention of the halal product. The present study may also serve as a guide to other researchers who wish to adopt the Buyer Behaviour model in their research design.

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