CONSUMERS' ATTITUDE, TRUST, AND PURCHASE INTENTION TOWARDS THAILAND HALAL FOOD PRODUCTS: A STUDY IN KOTA BHARU, KELANTAN

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Abstract

Muslim consumers are highly concerned about the Halal status of the foods they consume, guided by Syari'ah law. In Malaysia, incidents involving Halal food violations, widely circulated through the media, have diminished public confidence, especially among Muslims. Previous studies suggest that the Halal logo alone cannot influence purchasing decisions, as varying Halal standards across countries create differences in consumer perceptions. This study examines the impact of consumer attitude and trust on purchase intention towards Halal food products from Thailand, particularly in Kota Bharu. It employs the Theory of Planned Behavior to explain the formation of consumer intentions, focusing on attitudes toward behavior, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and actual purchase behavior. Findings reveal that consumers have a generally positive attitude and trust toward Thailand's Halal food products, with trust playing a moderate role in influencing purchase intention. Additionally, educational background significantly influences trust in Thailand's Halal food products.

Keywords: *Thailand halal food, consumer attitude, trust, purchase intention, theory of Planned Behavior*

INTRODUCTION

The global demand for Halal food has surged in recent years, driven by the growing Muslim population, which is expected to reach 2.2 billion by 2030 (Pew Research Center, 2020). Halal food, originally a dietary practice for Muslims, has gained popularity among non-Muslims as well, due to its perceived quality, safety, and hygiene (Mathew et al., 2020). The global Halal food market reached a value of US$1.4 trillion in 2017 and is projected to grow to US$2.6 trillion by 2023, reflecting a robust compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of over 11% (The ASEAN Post, 2021). Halal certification plays

a crucial role in building consumer trust, especially in the context of food quality and religious compliance (Aziz & Chok, 2020). Thailand, a non-Muslim country, has become one of the world's top ten Halal food exporters, largely due to its strong Halal food production industry (ThaiHalalFood, 2022). Despite this success, the Halal certification status of Thai food products remains unclear, particularly in markets like Malaysia, where concerns about the legitimacy of Halal certification and product labeling persist (Waijittragum, 2021). These issues are compounded by the use of the Thai language on product packaging, which may lead to confusion and lack of consumer trust (Food Regulation, 2020). In Kelantan, Malaysia, the proximity to Thailand has fostered a significant flow of Thai food products into the region, particularly through small-scale traders. While Thai food is popular among locals, the uncertainty surrounding the Halal status of these products raises concerns among Muslim consumers, especially when it comes to Halal certification and food labeling (Hanan, 2020). This situation has led to questions about the relationship between consumer attitudes, trust, and purchase intentions regarding Thai Halal food products.

Halal food is central to Islamic dietary laws, which guide Muslims in their food choices based on permissibility under Shari'ah. Halal certification assures consumers that food ingredients and production processes comply with Islamic principles (Mohamed et al., 2008). With growing concerns about counterfeit certifications, the trustworthiness of Halal certification is crucial for Muslim consumers (Balkish et al., 2017). The global Halal food market has expanded, with significant increases in demand not only from Muslim-majority countries but also from non-Muslim consumers due to the perception of Halal food as safe, hygienic, and high-quality (Oyelakin & Yusuf, 2018). As of 2019, global Halal food exports reached $486.5 billion, highlighting the widespread interest in Halal food products (ThaiHalalFood, 2019). In Islam, the concept of Halal refers to food and actions permissible according to Shari'ah, while *Haram* refers to prohibited items. Key prohibitions include alcohol, pork, and improperly slaughtered animals (Zam et al., 2014). These dietary laws, outlined in the *Quran*, emphasize health, spiritual well-being, and moral integrity. The global demand for Halal food is driven by its association with cleanliness, ethical practices, and health benefits, which appeals to both Muslims and non-Muslims alike (Oyelakin & Yusuf, 2018). Thailand ranks as a major Halal food exporter, benefiting from strong governmental support and agricultural resources. With the increasing global demand for Halal products, Thailand has positioned itself as a leader in Halal food exports, including products like rice, poultry, and seafood. The Thai government has implemented policies to promote Halal food production and export, ensuring that local producers meet both Halal and food safety standards (ThaiHalalFood, 2019). The Central Islamic Committee of Thailand (CICT) oversees Halal certification, guaranteeing that Thai food products align with Islamic principles and international standards (Mohani Abdul, 2014).

Attitudes are defined as learned predispositions that influence consumer responses, including behavior toward products like Halal food (Ajzen, 2015). The ABC model of attitudes—affect, behavior, and cognition—suggests that consumers' emotional responses (affect), intentions (behavior), and beliefs (cognition) collectively shape their attitudes. These attitudes are influenced by personal experience, cultural background, and external factors such as media (Kumra, 2006). In the context of Halal food, consumers' attitudes are heavily shaped by religious beliefs, trust in Halal certification, and cultural values surrounding food. Trust in Halal certification is a key factor influencing consumer confidence in Halal food products. Trust is built upon transparency, authenticity, and the reliability of

Halal certification bodies. Any misuse of Halal logos or inconsistency in certification standards can damage consumer trust (Balkish et al., 2017). Studies have found that Malaysian consumers, for instance, are more likely to trust Halal food products that are certified by recognized bodies like JAKIM, while food products from non-Muslim-majority countries may raise concerns about the authenticity of their Halal status (Rezai et al., 2012). Trust is therefore a major determinant of purchase behavior in the Halal food market. Trust in Halal certification is a key factor influencing consumer confidence in Halal food products. Trust is built upon transparency, authenticity, and the reliability of Halal certification bodies. Any misuse of Halal logos or inconsistency in certification standards can damage consumer trust (Balkish et al., 2017). Studies have found that Malaysian consumers, for instance, are more likely to trust Halal food products that are certified by recognized bodies like JAKIM, while food products from non-Muslim-majority countries may raise concerns about the authenticity of their Halal status (Rezai et al., 2012). Trust is therefore a major determinant of purchase behavior in the Halal food market. Purchase intention reflects consumers' willingness to buy a product, influenced by factors such as attitude, trust, and perceived quality (Jaafar, 2018). In the Halal food market, consumers' purchase intentions are strongly linked to the credibility of Halal certification and the perceived quality and safety of the product. Research suggests that consumers are more likely to purchase Halal food products when they trust the certification and when the product aligns with their religious and ethical values (Aziz & Chok, 2013). The intention to purchase is further influenced by factors such as knowledge of Halal standards, ingredient transparency, and the reputation of the certification body (Ismail et al., 2018).

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action, incorporates perceived behavioral control to predict behavior based on attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived ease of performing the behavior (Ajzen, 2020). This model suggests that an individual's intention to perform a behavior is influenced by their attitude towards it, the social pressure they perceive (subjective norm), and their perceived control over the behavior. In the context of Halal consumer behavior, TPB helps explain how attitudes, social expectations, and perceived control influence the purchase of Halal-certified products (Yunos, 2021).

Figure 1: Theory of Planned Behaviour Framework
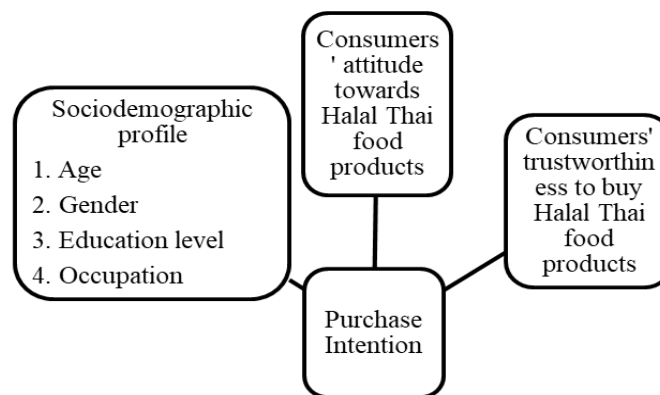
The popularity of Thai food in Kelantan, particularly in border towns like Kota Bharu, Rantau Panjang and Pengkalan Kubor, has raised questions about the Halal status of Thai food products. Despite Thailand's status as a leading Halal exporter, the lack of clear Halal certification, combined with issues such as language barriers and inadequate labeling, may undermine consumer confidence (Waijittragum, 2021). This study aims to explore how consumers' attitudes, trust, and socio-demographic factors influence their purchase intentions towards Thai Halal food products. This study will shed light on the role of consumer attitudes and trust in shaping the purchase intentions of Halal food products from Thailand. By examining the impact of socio-demographic factors such as age, education, and financial status, this research aims to provide insights into consumer behavior in the Halal food market. The findings will benefit researchers, food producers, and marketers by highlighting key factors that influence the success of Thai Halal food products in Malaysia and similar markets.

Objectives

To explore consumers' attitudes, trust, and purchase intentions towards Thai Halal food products.
To assess the relationship between consumer attitudes, trust, and purchase intentions.
To compare consumers' attitudes, trust, and purchase intentions towards Thai Halal food products across different socio-demographic groups.

METHODOLOGY

Study Area
This study was conducted in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, which was formerly known as the "City of Culture" and recently rebranded as an Islamic city to reflect its identity as "Serambi Mekah" (Hassan et al., 2020). Located near the Thailand border at the mouth of the Kelantan River, Kota Bharu is known for its rich heritage, including mosques, museums, and historic palaces with unique architecture that preserves traditional authenticity. Covering an area of 115.4 square kilometers (44.65 sq mi), the city has seen significant development in recent years, leading to increased crowds, especially during holiday seasons.

Figure 2: Location of Kota Bharu in Kelantan

Research Design

This study is categorized as social science research, focusing on human knowledge, attitudes, behavior, and practices. A non-experimental, quantitative approach was employed, using a survey to collect data from a large population, while excluding individual emotions and feelings (Rahi, 2020). The study utilized a cross-sectional design, measuring both exposure and outcomes at a single point in time. This design is cost-effective and time-efficient, often used for descriptive purposes without hypotheses, aiming to describe populations or subgroups with respect to outcomes and risk factors (Levin, 2021).

For data analysis, inferential statistics were used to make inferences about the population. A correlation coefficient test was applied to explore relationships between variables. While the data initially showed non-normal distribution, the central limit theorem was applied (sample size > 30), allowing the assumption of normality and the use of parametric tests to compare data differences across variables and sociodemographic profiles.

Sampling

Snowball Sampling Strategy

As this study was internet-based, respondents were recruited using a snowball sampling method. Initially, the researcher contacted a small group of relevant individuals, who then referred others in their network, expanding the sample (Rahi, 2020). The process, as outlined by Singh (2020), involved three steps: 1) selecting respondents based on the researcher's criteria, 2) obtaining referrals from initial contacts, and 3) conducting interviews where further referrals were made. In this study, respondents were selected from various WhatsApp communities, each with different sociodemographic backgrounds such as age, education, and occupation. The researcher established initial contact with individuals from each community to expand the sample using referrals.
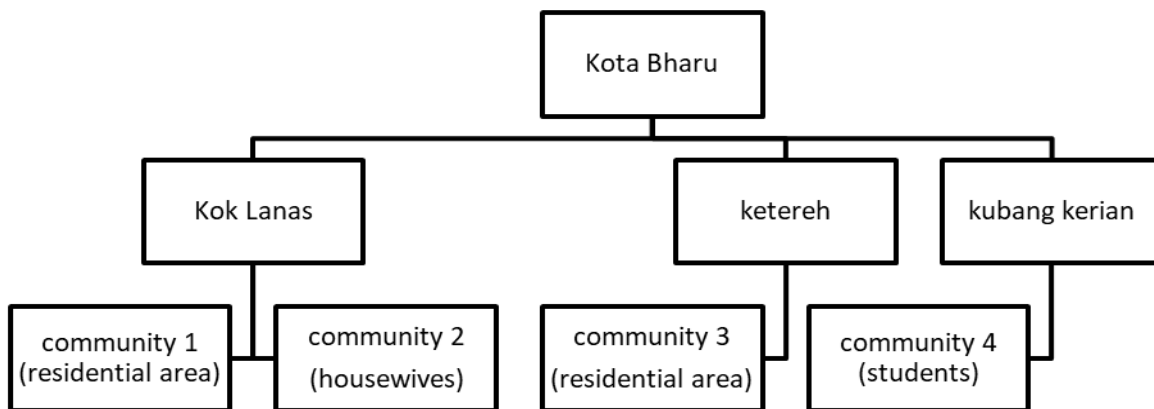

Figure 3: Sampling Framework

This internet-based research used a secured Google Form distributed via several WhatsApp communities in Kota Bharu. The communities represented diverse sociodemographic groups, including

people aged 16 to 46 and beyond, with varying educational and occupational backgrounds. To recruit participants, the researcher contacted community representatives, such as a 50-year-old chairman from Kok Lanas, a 47-year-old woman from a women's association in Ketereh, a university student from Universiti Sains Malaysia Kubang Kerian, and a 16-year-old student from Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Kubang Kerian II. These representatives either invited the researcher to join their WhatsApp groups or forwarded the survey link. Prior to filling out the questionnaire, an online Q&A session was conducted within the community to ensure clarity, particularly for older participants.

Element of sampling

The number of respondents required by using formula

$$n = \frac{N}{1+Ne^2} = \frac{577{,}301}{1+(577{,}301)(0.08)^2} = 156.2 \sim 160 \text{ respondents.}$$

n = sample size, N = population size, e = level of precision

Where n is the sample size, N is the population size, and e is the margin of error (0.08). According to Yamane (1967), with a confidence level of 92%, the required sample size was rounded to 160 respondents.

The Central Limit Theorem (CLT) states that, for large sample sizes, the distribution of sample means approaches normality, regardless of the population's distribution (Mordkoff, 2020). Studies demonstrate that as sample size increases, sample means cluster closely around the population mean and become less variable, confirming the CLT (Islam, 2021). Additionally, even highly skewed populations yield sample means that approximate a normal distribution with sufficiently large samples (Kwak & Kim, 2021). In this study, a sample size of 160 is considered large enough to apply the CLT, allowing us to safely assume a normal distribution for analytical purposes.

Research Instrument

A structured questionnaire was used to collect data on consumer attitudes, trust, and purchase intentions regarding Thai Halal food products. The questionnaire was developed based on previous research and converted into a Google Form, which was distributed via WhatsApp, a widely used social platform. The questionnaire consisted of three sections:

- **Section A**: Demographic profile, including age, gender, race, education level, occupation, monthly income, and product familiarity.
- **Section B**: Attitude and trust towards Thai Halal food products, using a 5-point Likert scale to measure consumer responses to statements about product processing and trustworthiness.
- **Section C**: Purchase intention, also assessed using a 5-point Likert scale, where respondents indicated their likelihood of purchasing Thai Halal food products.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS version 20.0. The first step was to perform a normality test to assess the distribution of the data, which was found to be non-normally distributed. However, the

Central Limit Theorem was applied, assuming the data to be normally distributed due to the sample size.

Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the data. Inferential statistics helped determine relationships between variables and compare levels based on respondents' socio-demographic profiles.

For Objective 1, frequencies were used to identify trends and patterns related to consumers' attitudes and trust towards Thai Halal food products. Objective 2 was analyzed using Pearson correlation to assess the strength of relationships between consumers' attitudes, trust, and purchase intentions (Manaf, 2021).

For Objective 3, parametric tests were used, including independent t-tests to examine gender differences in socio-demographic characteristics (Frazier et al., 2021) and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to compare attitudes, trust, and purchase intentions across different age groups, educational levels, and occupations (Sow, 2022).

Results and Discussion

Demographic Characteristics

Table 1: Demographics Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic characteristics		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	41	25.6
	Female	119	74.4
Race	Malay	155	96.9
	Chinese	3	1.9
	Indian	0	0
	Others	2	1.3
Age	15 years and below	0	0
	16-20	46	28.8
	21-25	53	33.1
	26-30	4	2.5
	31-35	2	1.3
	36-40	1	0.6
	41-45	15	9.4
	46 and above	39	24.4
Highest education level	PMR	5	3.1
	SPM	42	26.3
	STPM/ Diploma	44	27.5
	B. Degree	55	34.4
	M. Degree	11	6.9
	Others	3	1.9
Occupation	Student	89	55.6
	Full employed	32	20

Self employed	9	5.6
Retiree	13	8.1
Unemployed	17	10.6

The survey results indicate that the majority of respondents are female (74.4%, 119 respondents), while males make up 25.6% (41 respondents), suggesting that women may be more aware of Thai Halal food products. Most respondents are Malay (96.9%, 155 respondents), reflecting the demographic composition of Kota Bharu.

Age distribution shows that the largest group is 21–25 years old (33.1%), with few participants aged 36–40 (0.6%). Respondents aged 16–20 represent 28.8%, followed by those 46 and older (24.4%), 41–45 (9.4%), 26–30 (2.5%), and 31–35 (1.3%). Regarding education, 34.4% hold a Bachelor's degree, 27.5% have STPM/Diploma, and 26.3% completed SPM. Master's degree holders make up 6.9%, while 1.9% hold Doctorates or vocational certificates.

Most respondents are students (55.6%), with others being fully employed (20%), unemployed (10.6%, mainly housewives), retirees (8.1%), and self-employed (5.6%).

Consumers Familiarity with Thailand Halal Food Product

Table 1: Consumers' Familiarity with Thailand Halal Food Product

	Example of food	Frequencies	Percentage (%)
Instant Noodles	'kerabu maggi', 'Serda'	76	47.5
Sauces	Thai sweet chili sauce, fish sauce	45	28.1
Canned food	Tomyum paste, fruit cocktail, sardine	18	11.3
Frozen goods	Sausages, fish cakes	4	2.5
Beverages	Aroikah	6	3.8
Others	Rice (*beras Siam*)	11	6.9

Instant noodles are the most well-known Thai food product in the local market, with 47.5% of respondents recognizing them. Among the popular brands, 'Serda' instant noodles stand out, especially in Kelantan, where they are commonly found in supermarkets, small grocery stores, and street markets. 'Serda' is a key ingredient in kerabu maggi, a local salad made with tom yum-flavored noodles, seafood, vegetables, chilies, and fish sauce, offering a sweet, sour, and spicy flavor.

28.1% of respondents are familiar with Thai sauces, particularly Thai sweet chili sauce and fish sauce. The former is used as a dip for snacks like fish crackers, keropok lekor, and barbecued foods, while the latter is widely used in cooking and canned goods. Thai canned food also includes popular items like tom yum paste, canned fruit cocktails, and canned sardines.

A recent rumor regarding contamination in Thai canned food, specifically canned fruits, was debunked by the Thai government and the Royal Thai Embassy in Malaysia, which clarified that the claim was a hoax (The Star, 2017; UNTV, 2016). Additionally, 6.9% of respondents mentioned Thai rice under the 'others' category, while 'Aroikah,' a caramel-flavored milk drink with basil seeds and grass jelly, is a popular Thai beverage. Frozen goods, such as sausages and fish cakes, are the least recognized Thai products, often sold by street vendors and night markets.

Consumers' attitude towards Thailand Halal food products

Table 2: Mean score and Standard Deviation of Consumers' Attitude towards Thailand Halal Food Product

No	Items	Mean ± standard deviation
1	I concern about the meat and raw supply chain to make Thai Halal food product	3.94 ± 1.014
2	I concern about the processing environment in Thailand Halal food production	3.89 ± 1.0168
3	I concern about the working conditions of those who grow, make and sell Thailand Halal food product	3.94 ± 1.086
4	I concern about the origin of ingredients used to make Thailand Halal food product	4.03 ± 1.066
5	I concern about the background of brands or food company that produce Thailand Halal food product	3.91 ± 1.063

*5-point Likert Scale
Scales: 1 (strongly disagree), 3 (neutral), 5 (strongly agree)

In this study, consumer attitudes toward Thai Halal food products were measured across five statements on concerns related to product processing. A mean score above 3.00 indicates a positive attitude, with scores ranging from 3.91 to 4.03 across items, reflecting an overall positive stance. The highest concern was for the origin of ingredients ($\mu = 4.03$, S.D = 1.066), while concerns about the processing environment were lower ($\mu = 3.89$, S.D = 1.068). This aligns with research showing that ingredient concerns can be heightened by negative perceptions of specific products (Ruslan, 2020). Studies suggest that factors like religious beliefs, media influence, and social environment shape attitudes toward Halal products (Khalek, 2021). Additionally, attitudes are often context-dependent, responding to specific situational factors (Krasniqi & Krasniqi, 2021). Thus, consumer responses in this study may also be influenced by these elements.

Consumers' Trustworthiness towards Thailand Halal Food Products

Table 3: Mean score and Standard Deviation of Consumers' Trustworthiness towards Thailand Halal Food Product

No	Items	Mean ± standard deviation
1	I believe that Thailand's halal certification can be considered equivalent to Malaysia halal certification standard	3.52 ± 0.951
2	I believe that Thailand Halal standard is very reliable	3.45 ± 0.989
3	I believe that Thailand Halal Institution is unbiased in issuing halal certification to food and beverage manufacturers	3.55 ± 0.923
4	I believe that I could rely on Halal status of certain brand	3.68 ± 0.961
5	I believe the information disseminated on Thailand food packaging is factual and true	3.42 ± 0.935

*5-point Likert Scale
Scales: 1 (strongly disagree), 3 (neutral), 5 (strongly agree)

The trustworthiness level of consumers towards Thai Halal food products is positive, with mean values above 3 for all items, indicating confidence in the Halal status of these products. Respondents showed moderate trust in the information labeled on these products ($\mu = 3.45$, S.D = 0.989). This aligns

with Kamarulzaman's (2021) findings, which describe trustworthiness in Halal food as based on informational trust, institutional trust, and brand trust. Kamarulzaman explained that consumers' informational trust can be affected by contradictory messages about Halal status, but in this study, consumers generally trust the information provided on Thai Halal products. For institutional trust, respondents showed confidence in Thailand's Halal certification by the Central Islamic Committee of Thailand (CICT), perceiving it as equivalent to Malaysia's JAKIM standard. Regarding brand trust, consumers trust specific brands that consistently ensure their products meet Halal and "toyyiban" (pure) standards.

Purchase intention towards Thailand Halal Food Products

Table 4: Mean score and Standard Deviation of Consumers' Purchase Intention towards Thailand Halal Food Product

No	Items	Mean ± standard deviation
1	I will buy even if the food labelling is in Siamese syllables but with clear Thailand Halal logo patched on the food packaging	3.44 ± 1.201
2	I will buy if there is no Halal logo, only verbal Halal assurance from people	1.81 ± 1.084
3	I will buy because the Halal brand from Thailand is widely popular in my area	2.88 ± 1.199
4	I will buy because the information about Thailand halal products distributed through the information source of my choice has never been proven wrong before	3.09 ± 1.170

*5-point Likert Scale
Scales: 1 (strongly disagree), 3 (neutral), 5 (strongly agree)

Purchase intentions toward Thai Halal food products showed mixed results. While respondents generally indicated positive intentions ($\mu > 3.00$), they would only buy products with clear Halal labeling. Familiarity with certain brands positively impacted purchase intentions, even if packaging is in a foreign language, reflecting brand trust. However, respondents were less likely to purchase products based solely on verbal assurance or brand popularity. This contrasts with studies suggesting brand endorsement influences purchase decisions (Yusoff et al., 2021). The findings align with previous research that emphasizes the role of informational trust and product-specific factors, like Halal certification and ingredient quality, in shaping consumer choices (Ismail et al., 2021).

Relationship Between Consumers' Attitude, Trust and Purchase Intention

Table 5: Correlation between Consumers' Attitude, Trust and Purchase Intention

Items	r-value
Attitude	0.319**
Trustworthiness	0.607**

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

Manaf et al. (2021) noted that as the *r* value nears 1.00, the strength of the relationship increases. In this study, attitude showed no relationship with purchase intention ($r = 0.139$, $p < 0.01$), whereas

trustworthiness had a moderate positive relationship with purchase intention ($r = 0.607$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that consumer trust plays a more critical role than attitude in influencing purchase intentions for Thai Halal food products, despite positive attitudes among respondents. This finding contrasts with previous research that identified a strong link between attitude and purchase intention (e.g., Alam & Sayuti, 2021; Khalek, 2021). Respondents in this study are influenced primarily by concrete elements, like the presence of a Halal logo and credible product information. This aligns with research by Balkish et al. (2021), which confirmed a significant connection between consumer trust and purchase intention in Halal food choices.

Differences of Socio-demographic Characteristics on Consumers' Attittude Towards Thailand Halal Food Product.

Table 6: Differences of Socio-demographic Characteristics on Level of Attitude towards Thai Halal Food Product

Demographic characteristics	N	Mean ± standard deviation	t - value	F - ratio	p - value
Independent t – test					
Gender					
Male	41	3.97 ± 0.765	0.271		0.786
Female	119	3.92 ± 0.991			
Age					
Younger adults	103	3.95 ± 0.996	0.290		0.772
Older adults	57	3.91 ± 0.825			
Education level					
Lower Education	50	3.89 ± 0.837	-0.447		0.655
Higher Education	110	3.96 ± 0.987			
One-way ANOVA					
Occupation					
Full time	32	4.13 ± 0.815			
Self-employed	9	4.42 ± 0.473			
Unemployed	17	3.90 ± 0.718		1.212	0.308
Retiree	13	3.80 ± 1.029			
Students	89	3.85 ± 1.022			

*$p \leq 0.05$ indicate significant difference

The table above compares socio-demographic factors with attitudes towards Thai Halal food products. Results show no significant differences based on gender (p = 0.786), age (p = 0.772), education level, or occupation (p = 0.308). Both male and female respondents, regardless of age or education, share a positive attitude toward the product, with those employed full-time or self-employed expressing greater concern about the product's sourcing and processing. These findings contrast with Syazwani et al. (2018), who found that education and religion significantly influence attitudes toward Halal food, with Muslims and those with higher education displaying more knowledge and distinct attitudes.

Differences of Socio-demographic Characteristics on Consumers' Trustworthiness Towards Thailand Halal Food Product.

Table 7: Differences of socio-demographic characteristics on level of trustworthiness towards Thai Halal food product.

Demographic characteristics	N	Mean ± standard deviation	t - value	F - ratio	p - value
Independent t – test					
Gender					
Male	41	3.97 ± 0.765	0.271		0.786
Female	119	3.92 ± 0.991			
Age					
Younger adults	103	3.72 ± 1.098	1.468		0.144
Older adults	57	4.11 ± 0.887			
Education level					
Lower Education	50	3.28 ± 0.580	-0.249		0.014
Higher Education	110	3.63 ± 0.883			
One-way ANOVA					
Occupation					
Full time	32	4.13 ± 0.815			
Self-employed	9	4.42 ± 0.473			
Unemployed	17	3.90 ± 0.718		1.212	0.308
Retiree	13	3.80 ± 1.029			
Students	89	3.85 ± 1.022			

*p≤0.05 indicate significant difference

The table shows no significant difference in trustworthiness based on gender (p = 0.786), with male respondents (3.97 ± 0.765) displaying slightly lower trust issues compared to female respondents (3.92 ± 0.991). Both genders share similar beliefs regarding Thai Halal food products. Similarly, age (p = 0.144) and occupation (p = 0.308) do not significantly influence trustworthiness, with no differences observed between younger and older adults, or across various occupational groups, including full-time employees, self-employed individuals, retirees, and students. This contrasts with prior studies suggesting that older adults tend to have more trust issues with Halal food products (Rezai et al., 2012). However, educational level does influence trustworthiness (p = 0.014), with consumers holding higher educational qualifications showing fewer trust issues compared to those with lower education. This finding aligns with previous research, which indicated that individuals with higher education are more discerning and less likely to have trust issues with Halal-labelled food products (Rezai et al., 2020).

Differences of Socio-demographic Characteristics on Consumers' Purchase Intention Towards Thailand Halal Food Product.

Demographic characteristics	N	Mean ± standard deviation	t - value	F - ratio	p - value

Independent t – test					
Gender					
Male	41	3.97 ± 0.765	0.271		0.786
Female	119	3.92 ± 0.991			
Age					
Younger adults	103	2.87 ± 0.870	1.336		0.183
Older adults	57	2.67 ± 0.924			
Education level					
Lower Education	50	2.61 ± 0.811	-1.891		0.061
Higher Education	110	2.89 ± 0.916			
One-way ANOVA					
Occupation					
Full time	32	4.13 ± 0.815			
Self-employed	9	4.42 ± 0.473			
Unemployed	17	3.90 ± 0.718	1.212		0.308
Retiree	13	3.80 ± 1.029			
Students	89	3.85 ± 1.022			

Table 8: Differences of socio-demographic characteristics on level of purchase intention towards Thai Halal food product.

*p≤0.05 indicate significant difference

The results indicate no significant difference in purchase intention between males and females (p = 0.786), with males showing a slightly higher tendency to purchase Thai Halal food products. Similarly, age, education level, and occupational background (p = 0.308) do not significantly affect purchase intention. Despite the mean values for these variables being low (below 3.00), no significant differences were found, suggesting that respondents share similar views on Thai Halal food products and their purchasing intentions. These findings contrast with Akpinar et al. (2022), who found that socio-demographic factors, such as gender and education, significantly influence purchase intention due to differences in preferences and sensitivities to factors like taste, price, and shopping environment.

CONCLUSIONS

This study aimed to assess consumer attitudes, trustworthiness, and purchase intentions toward Thai Halal food products. It found that instant noodles were the most familiar Thai Halal food product, followed by Thai sweet chili sauce, fish sauce, tom yum paste, fruit cocktails, imported rice (beras Siam), beverages, and frozen goods like sausages and fish cakes.

In terms of attitude, consumers expressed strong concern about the Halal status of the products. They generally showed positive reactions toward the raw materials, processing environment, and the reputation of brands or food companies producing the product. Consumers also demonstrated caution when evaluating the Halal status, relying on trusted sources like the Thailand Halal Institute, product labeling, and brand reputation. However, consumers appeared skeptical of verbal Halal assurances and the popularity of brands.

Regarding purchase intention, trustworthiness was found to have a moderate relationship with purchase intention, but only a weak relationship with attitude. Unexpectedly, there was no significant relationship between attitude and purchase intention. Finally, the study found that education level significantly influenced trustworthiness towards Thai Halal food products, whereas other socio-demographic factors, such as gender, age, and occupation, showed no significant differences in attitude, trustworthiness, or purchase intention.

This study took a broad approach by asking participants to identify their familiarity with various Thai Halal food products. Future research could benefit from focusing on a specific category of Thai Halal food, such as sauces, frozen foods (e.g., surimi-based products), canned food, or instant noodles, to gain more targeted insights.

Additionally, the study mainly addressed concerns related to the food processing environment, raw supply chains, and Halal status, which may have limited the breadth of attitudes explored. This narrow focus could explain the unexpected finding regarding the relationship between attitude and purchase intention. Future studies should expand the range of attitudes considered, including other factors like taste, price sensitivity, and health considerations, to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior.

Furthermore, this study was conducted online, which may have introduced biases compared to traditional survey methods. To mitigate potential biases, future research could incorporate manual surveys in addition to online surveys to compare results and better understand how survey mode impacts responses, particularly in terms of the level of trust and relationship between the variables.

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