



## Deciphering the Purchase Decision of Halal products: Interplay of Halal Certification, Religiosity and Subjective Norms

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### **Abstract**

*This research study looks into influence of halal certification and halal product knowledge on consumer purchase decisions along with investigating the moderating effects of subjective norms and religiosity and mediating roles of purchase intention and halal awareness. Data collection technique employed for this purpose is quantitative survey with total 342 valid responses collected from 384 questionnaires distributed among halal food consumers in Lahore, Pakistan. Data analysis involved two-pronged approach with SPSS employed for correlation analysis and descriptive statistics and SmartPLS, for moderation, mediation and regression testing via Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Findings depicted significant direct and indirect influence of product knowledge and halal certification on consumer purchase decisions through intention and awareness. Moreover, significant moderating effect of subjective norms and religiosity on the linkage between purchase intention and actual buying behavior is revealed, emphasizing the significance of social influence and personal beliefs in consumer decision making. The findings of the research study gives valuable insights for policymakers and marketers in terms of considering religious and cultural values while strategy formulation and aligning policies accordingly. However, the results have certain limitations due to product and geographic scope. Future studies may focus on more diverse product categories and broader regions. This research established significance of enhanced consumer education and transparent halal certification to develop trust and enhance consumer engagement in halal markets.*

**Keywords:** Halal Certification, Halal Product Knowledge, Purchase Decisions, Subjective Norms, Religiosity, Purchase Intention, Halal Awareness

### **1. Introduction**

Over the past decades, unprecedented growth is observed in the global halal industry with its evolution from a religious commitment to ethical and lucrative economic sector. Currently, population of Muslims around the globe accounts for 30% of total population and it is anticipated that by 2050 this figure will surpass to three billion (Omar et al., 2024), depicting that demand for halal products will also grow accordingly. Commitment to buy halal is not just confined to food products, but this concept has now span industries including personal care, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics, signifying not only religious obligation but also spiritual and ethical lifestyle values (Usman et al., 2022). The concept of halal for Muslims is more than a dietary requirement and is indicative of moral responsibility, quality and trust. Therefore, the concept of halal certification has emerged as significant mechanism to ensure compliance of consumer products with Islamic ideology and principals. Halal certification was

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systematically employed in countries like Indonesia and Malaysia by use of digital technologies for enhancing transparency and traceability. Standardized laws including Indonesia's JPH Law No. 33 of 2014 and Malaysia's MS 1500:2009 complemented the efforts towards halal certification (Amrullah, 2023; Wibowo et al., 2020a). However, in certain countries including Pakistan, formal certification is often overlooked, although, halal consumption is religiously and culturally embedded deeply in society. The observed gap between verified and perceived halal certification of products highlighted the importance of deeper inquiry into how how halal certification and product knowledge influence consumer purchase decision. Earlier investigations often consider halal certification, halal product knowledge, religiosity, and subjective norms separately, rarely adopting integrative framework. Evidence from Indonesia and Malaysia in Southeast Asian region, stresses the role of halal awareness along with trust in certification in developing consumer purchase decision (Nurhayati & Hendar, 2020; Abutaleb et al., 2020; Audi et al., 2021). By contrast, these countries demonstrate high consumer halal awareness, stronger institutional development, and regulatory mechanisms compared to Pakistan (Usman et al., 2022; Hassan et al., 2020). Many Pakistani consumers infer halal status and authenticity from visual indicators such as Arabic text or green labels, overlooking formal certification proof (Ismail & Saeed, 2019; Ali et al., 2020).

Multiple challenges in the Pakistani halal industry lies in its framework deficiency, which incorporates non-standardized labeling practices, limited consumer knowledge, and skepticism toward certification authorities (Awan et al., 2015; Iqbal & Nasir, 2018; Aqdas & Amin, 2020). Pakistan's halal meat industry even fully compliance with Islamic guidelines, contributes merely 5% to the global halal market reveling market inefficiencies (Khan & Ali, 2018; Magsi et al., 2021). Despite extensive research, an integrated model encompassing halal certification, halal product knowledge, halal awareness, purchase intention, religiosity and subjective norms has not been used in prior research. This study addresses this gap by investigating their interactive effects on purchase decision among consumers in Pakistan. For clarity, halal certification refers to the formal validation of compliance with Islamic dietary principles, while halal product knowledge indicates consumers' understanding to evaluate and identify halal food products. Halal awareness measures the ability to identify halal attributes, purchase intention indicates their willingness of purchasing based on halal understanding, religiosity gauges commitment to Islamic values, and subjective norms captures perceived social expectations.

This research advances knowledge both academically and practically. Firstly, an integrated model is presented in this study, combining the factors such as halal certification, halal product knowledge, halal awareness, purchase intention, religiosity, and subjective norms to explain halal purchase decisions in Pakistan, as these variables were addressed separately in prior research. Secondly, geographic and contextual gap is also filled, as Pakistan, with its Muslim-majority population and large consumer base, has been largely underexplored in halal consumer behavior literature. Lastly, The study employs Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as a framework to strengthen the contribution of halal product consumption. Departing from previous literature that largely relied on Consumer Behavior Theory, this study extends the framework by integrating social and psychological dimensions, framing halal awareness and purchase intention as mediators and religiosity and subjective norms as moderators, strengthening the framework for halal purchase decisions in Pakistan. The Theory of Planned Behavior highlights three central factors: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Within this Study, attitudes are influenced by consumers' understanding of halal standards, subjective norms reflect the expectations of family and peers, while perceived behavioral control indicates the consumer's perceived ease in assessment of certified product accessibility. Collectively, these components illustrate how external pressure and internal cognition interactively determine halal purchasing behavior. The conceptual framework suggests that halal certification and halal product knowledge serve to enhance halal awareness, which then contributes to the development of positive attitudes and strengthens purchase intention. Through the integration of spiritual, cognitive and external influences, this study provides holistic framework and extends the explanatory capacity of TPB. By emphasizing on context-specific model and cultural sensitivity, the study adds comprehensive theoretical approach on halal consumption of food products.

Practically, the findings provide valuable insights for businesses, policymakers, and certification authorities aiming to foster trust and enhance engagement in the halal market. By highlighting the influence of knowledge,



beliefs, and social factors, the study supports the design of more effective marketing strategies and regulatory frameworks. In addition to contributing to academic theory, it promotes ethical, informed, and religiously guided consumer behavior within Pakistan's developing halal economy. The remainder of the paper is structured into sections covering the literature review, methodology, data collection, analysis, results and discussion, and conclusion.

## 2. Literature Review

This study contributes to the literature by applying the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to explore consumer decision-making in the context of halal product consumption. Unlike prior works focused on consumer behavior theory, this study extends TPB by integrating variables such as halal product knowledge, certification, awareness, purchase intention, religiosity, and subjective norms. The model is particularly suited to socio-religious markets like Pakistan, where religious values and social influence play significant roles. Ajzen's TPB (1991) identifies three predictors of behavioral intention: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. This study aligns these constructs with the halal consumption context. First, attitude toward behavior is influenced by knowledge and perception of halal certification. Second, subjective norms stem from family, peer, and religious expectations in a collectivist society. Third, perceived behavioral control reflects consumers' ability to evaluate and access certified halal goods. By contextualizing TPB with religious and social-cultural factors, this study proposes a model better tailored for emerging Islamic markets.

### 2.1. Halal Certification

"Halal," meaning permissible under Islamic law, extends beyond food to ethical, environmental, and logistical concerns (Haleem et al., 2020). In a globalized marketplace, halal certification ensures compliance with Islamic guidelines, addressing the complexity of modern supply chains and increasing consumer confidence (Awan et al., 2015). Certification bodies such as JAKIM (Malaysia), MUI (Indonesia), and IFANCA (USA) assess ingredients, hygiene, processing, and packaging, aligning with Islamic principles of purity ("Tayyib") and international standards like HACCP and GMP (Usman et al., 2022). From an institutional theory lens, firms adopt halal certification due to mimetic (industry imitation), normative (professional standards), or coercive (legal) pressures (Ab Talib et al., 2016). Certification not only ensures religious compliance but also supports ethical branding, sustainability, and market legitimacy, particularly in multicultural societies (Fauzi, 2023). In Pakistan, despite its Muslim majority, halal certification faces operational and regulatory gaps. Although it exports halal meat, it only accounts for 5% of the global halal market. Weak enforcement of the Pakistan Halal Authority Act (2015), consumer mistrust, and certification fraud hinder progress (Sabreen, 2021; Magsi et al., 2021). Strengthening enforcement and consumer education is essential for industry development (Akbar et al., 2025). Globally, halal certification has expanded into pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, and tourism (Azam & Abdullah, 2021). In markets like Pakistan, it plays a vital role in shaping trust, loyalty, and ethical purchasing. Strategic stakeholder collaboration is required to fully leverage its influence.

### 2.2. Halal Product Knowledge

Halal Product Knowledge (HPK) refers to the knowledge consumers have of Islamic standards defining what may be considered halal or as haram, in any of several categories (food, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, etc.) (Septi et al., 2020). It encompasses objective (factual accuracy) and subjective (perceived expertise) knowledge to influence the consumer trust and judgments (Fauziah et al., 2021). Experience, labeling, certification literacy and brand familiarity contributes to the shaping of HPK. It is especially important in the markets where meanings of halal mark are unclear or inconsistent (Wibowo et al., 2020b; Raza & Khan, 2023; Johari et al., 2025). TPB holds that the knowledge enhances the attitude and its perceived behavior as the behavioral control where it advances intention (Nurhayati & Hendar, 2020). Consumer awareness is preoccupied in the Pakistani scenario. Opinion leaders are always informed consumers and they manipulate household and social group behavior. HPK links religious obligation with ethical consumption, forming a foundation for trust in halal-certified products (Ermawati & Walyoto, 2024).

### **2.3. Purchase Decision**

The purchase decision process involves cognitive steps: problem recognition, information search, evaluation, and final selection (Kotler & Keller, 2015). In halal contexts, these decisions integrate ethical, spiritual, and cultural filters (Herindar, 2022). For Muslim consumers, purchasing is seen as a spiritual act, with halal certification and religious alignment outweighing price or brand (Azam & Abdullah, 2021). Key drivers include product labeling, prior experience, and credible certification. Trust in religious and institutional sources enhances confidence, especially in urban settings (Fadila et al., 2020; Omri, 2022; Herindar, 2022). Digital platforms and influencer marketing increasingly shape halal decision-making, particularly among youth (Mulyani & Hermina, 2023). Halal consumption thus reflects both rational evaluation and moral intent, positioning certification and brand trust as central to decision-making.

### **2.4. Halal Awareness**

Halal awareness refers to consumers' understanding of halal practices across sourcing, processing, labeling, and certification (Ali & Ahmad, 2023). It is both cognitive (knowledge of Islamic law and certification) and affective (emotional resonance with faith-based consumption) (Bashir, 2020). It acts as a mediating factor in consumer behavior, translating religiosity and product knowledge into intent and purchase (Akbar et al., 2025). Despite high religious identification in Pakistan, confusion over halal certification often leads to limited awareness (Usman et al., 2022). Higher awareness fosters brand trust and ethical engagement. Educational campaigns, digital media, and institutional efforts can enhance halal literacy, particularly among younger consumers (Rachmawati et al., 2022). Thus, awareness drives value-aligned consumption in halal markets.

### **2.5. Purchase Intention**

Purchase intention represents a consumer's readiness to engage in a specific action, serving as a key predictor of behavior in TPB (Ajzen, 1991). In halal contexts, it reflects not only religious motivations but also trust, product familiarity, and societal expectations (Nurhayati & Hendar, 2020; Saleh & Rajandran, 2025). Mediating between internal beliefs and external cues, it captures how halal awareness and knowledge translate into behavior (Pradana et al., 2020). Influenced by moral values, certification trust, and branding, strong purchase intention predicts loyalty and word-of-mouth behavior (Ristityana et al., 2025). Digital marketing, influencers, and halal campaigns enhance intention, especially among urban and tech-savvy consumers (Ustaoglu & Yildiz, 2023; Ali & Ahmad, 2023). As halal markets grow, purchase intention reflects broader ethical, health, and religious concerns, including among non-Muslim consumers seeking clean-label products (Loussaief et al., 2024).

### **2.6. Religiosity**

It is defined as the intensity of religious belief, significantly shapes ethical consumption, particularly in Islamic societies. It reflects both intrinsic dimensions (faith, moral values) and extrinsic influences (social norms) (Nurhayati & Hendar, 2020; Sujono et al., 2023). In halal consumption, religiosity enhances trust in certification, ethical accountability, and resistance to non-compliant alternatives (Hamzah et al., 2018). The Theory of Islamic Consumer Behavior frames consumption as an act of worship (Ibadah), guided by Tawhid (oneness of God) (Amin et al., 2020). In Pakistan, religiosity functions as both a private commitment and a social expectation. It moderates the relationship between halal awareness and purchase intention, strengthening the impact of knowledge on ethical decision-making (Akbar et al., 2025; Abdur-Rauf & Raimi, 2024; Salam et al., 2018).

### **2.7. Subjective Norms**

Subjective norms incorporate felt social pressures to act or not act-executed behavior (Ajzen, 1991). In the case of halal, they are family, religious leader and peer pressure, and online influencers (Kim & Hwang, 2020). There are two types of norms split into injunctive (what a person should do) and descriptive (what other people are doing) (Ham et al., 2015). They are significant in defining behavior in collectivist societies, such as Pakistan and particularly that exhibited in young people (Khan et al., 2023). These norms are escalated through social media and made through a shared story of halal consumption (Ologun & Othman, 2021; Wiganda & Barqiah, 2023). Although they are effective in community-based societies, they can change according to age, sex or social context. By understanding subjective norms, marketing can be improved as mass marketing will match the cultural and religious expectations and thus there will be high levels of acceptance of halal messages.

## **2.8. Hypotheses Development**

### **2.8.1. Halal Certification & Purchase Decisions**

Halal certification is an important cue that is fully utilized in consumer behaviour in the Muslim markets. Not just a religious label but it is considered as a stamp of quality of products, hygiene and ethical conformance. Incorporating the role of a third-party means of security in observing Islamic dietary regulations and ethical principles, halal certification decreases the level of uncertainty and enhances trust, especially in the conditions where religion and consumption combine (Akbar et al., 2025; Al Rasasi, 2025; Pradana et al., 2021). Halal certification as a variable follows the thinking of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which have a role in the consumer attitude and perceived social requirements to form a purchase intention (Ajzen, 1991). Credible halal certification practice has been identified to reduce the perceived risk and create purchase behavior in various cultural contexts such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Pakistan (Kurniawati & Savitri, 2020; Khan et al., 2022). However, its impact is contingent on consumer knowledge and trust in the certifying body. In markets with limited awareness or inconsistent standards, certification may lose its persuasive power (Ramadhan & Faizi, 2023). For highly religious consumers, logos and certification serve as decisive cues. For others, these symbols require contextual understanding to be meaningful. Therefore, halal certification is expected to exert a significant direct influence on purchase behavior.

H1: Halal certification has a significant direct effect on purchase decisions.

### **2.8.2. Halal Product Knowledge & Purchase Decisions**

HPK reflects consumers' understanding of Islamic guidelines governing product permissibility, ingredient sourcing, and processing. It provides a cognitive foundation for ethical consumption, allowing individuals to discern between halal and haram goods (Ali & Ahmad, 2023). Consumers who are more knowledgeable are better equipped to make confident, religiously aligned purchasing decisions (Fauziah et al., 2021). Prior studies consistently show that greater HPK strengthens trust and drives demand for certified products (Febrilyantri, 2022; Afendi, 2020). Consumers with adequate knowledge evaluate halal claims more critically and demand transparency, enhancing informed choice and lowering perceived risk (Bashir, 2020). Moreover, knowledge reinforces religious and moral attitudes toward halal consumption (Ozturk, 2022). Nevertheless, the quality of that knowledge matters. Misinformation or superficial understanding can lead to misinterpretation of certification or skepticism toward halal branding (Sujono et al., 2023). Strengthening public awareness and product labeling standards is vital for converting HPK into actual purchasing behavior.

H2: Halal product knowledge has a significant direct effect on purchase decision.

### **2.8.3. Mediation of Halal Awareness and Purchase Intention between Halal Certification & Purchase Decisions**

Halal certification's influence on purchase decisions is often indirect, operating through the mediating effects of halal awareness and purchase intention. Certification improves consumer recognition of halal standards, reinforcing awareness of permissible products (Kristin et al., 2024; Usman et al., 2022). With repeated exposure, consumers internalize the significance of logos, authorities, and compliance mechanisms, deepening their halal awareness. This awareness, in turn, shapes purchase intention—the consumer's psychological readiness to act. As knowledge becomes emotionally and morally integrated, intention becomes stronger (Darmalaksana, 2023). Confidence in the legitimacy of certification and institutional backing (e.g., JAKIM, PSQCA) increases willingness to buy (Awan et al., 2015). Furthermore, intention acts as the immediate antecedent of behavior, particularly when moral or spiritual values are at stake (Loussaief et al., 2024; Johari et al., 2025). Thus, the path from certification to behavior is not linear but flows through cognitive awareness and motivational intention.

H3: Halal Awareness and Purchase Intention serially mediate the relationship between Halal Certification and Purchase Decision.

### **2.8.4. Mediation of Halal Awareness and Purchase Intention between Halal Product Knowledge and Purchase Decisions**

Similarly, halal product knowledge affects purchasing behavior via halal awareness and purchase intention. Knowledgeable consumers are more capable of distinguishing halal from non-halal, leading to deeper awareness



of Islamic consumption norms (Nurhayati & Hendar, 2020; Syed et al., 2023). This heightened awareness fosters clarity, trust, and emotional alignment with halal values. Such awareness directly contributes to purchase intention. Consumers who understand halal requirements are more motivated to seek certified products that meet their standards (Ali & Ahmad, 2023). Evidence from various Muslim-majority countries confirms this sequential effect, validating the role of halal product knowledge in purchase decisions (Firdaus et al., 2023; Rachmawati et al., 2022).

H4: Halal Awareness and Purchase Intention serially mediate the relationship between Halal Product Knowledge and Purchase Decision.

#### **2.8.5. Moderating Role of Religiosity between Halal Awareness and Purchase Intention**

Religiosity, defined as the strength of one's commitment to religious values and practices, serves as a critical moderator in the halal consumption process. Highly religious individuals are more likely to act on their halal awareness, turning cognitive recognition into intentional behavior (Fauziah et al., 2021; Muslichah et al., 2020). Awareness of halal products becomes more meaningful when it aligns with deeply held beliefs. According to TRA and TPB, religious commitment shapes behavioral intentions by reinforcing personal norms and moral duties (Ajzen, 1991; Junaidi, 2021). Religiosity thus amplifies the moral significance of halal choices, making them not only preferable but obligatory (Sujono et al., 2023). Empirical research shows that religious consumers place greater trust in halal certification and marketing messages rooted in faith-based values (Ustaahmetoglu, 2020). This spiritual and ethical lens transforms halal awareness into purchase intention more effectively among devout consumers, making religiosity a powerful moderator in the decision-making process.

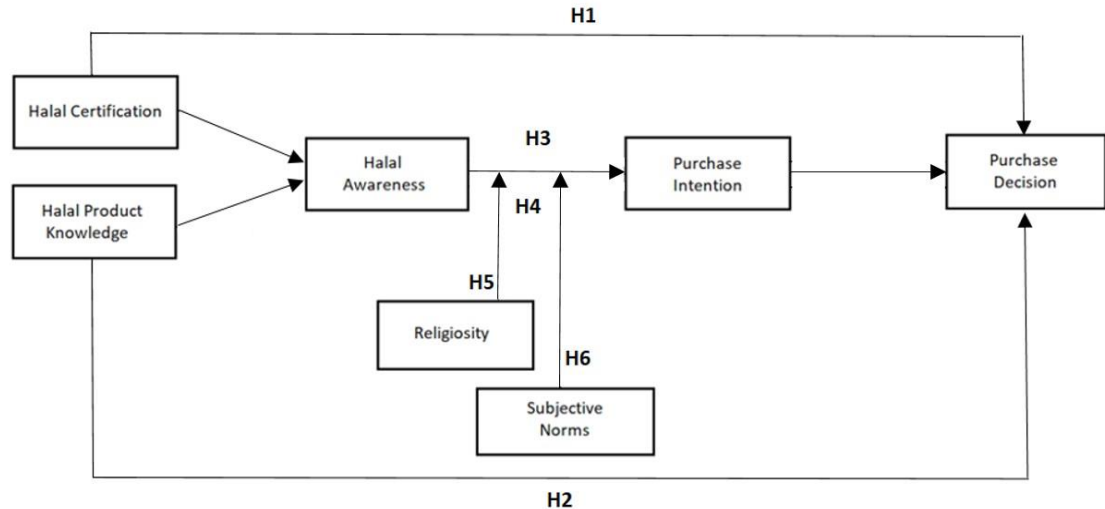
H5: Religiosity positively moderates the relationship between Halal Awareness and Purchase Intention.

#### **2.8.6. Moderating Role of Subjective Norms between Halal Awareness and Purchase Intention**

Subjective norms refer to the perceived expectations of others; family, friends, religious authorities, or peers—regarding appropriate behavior. In halal contexts, these social influences play a major role, particularly in collectivist societies like Pakistan (Amalia et al., 2020). Even when individuals are aware of halal standards, their intention to act on that awareness is often shaped by how others view or practice halal consumption. Online networks and digital influencers (Ali & Ahmad, 2023), in particular, influenced younger and urban consumers. The social pressure only, on the one hand, supports the attractiveness of halal products; on the other hand, communal approval of halal decisions justifies those (Khan et al., 2022). With the influence of Islamic beliefs, as a personal and societal norm, subjective norms enhance the translation of halal awareness into intention by supplying outside support (Memon et al., 2020). Therefore, they were very significant social machines through which they guided halal behavior.

H 6: Subjective norms will moderate the effect between Halal Awareness and Purchase Intention in a positive way.

Theoretical Framework



3. Methodology

This Research follows a deductive approach. The purpose was to test rigorously the hypothesized relationships through a systematic statistical analysis. Employing a quantitative cross-sectional survey design, to evaluate the hypothesized relationships systematically. The target population comprised urban Muslim Consumers with emphasize on metropolitan areas where halal certification and consumption are prominent. Data were collected primarily from Lahore region, given its demographic diversity, commercial activity and high population density. Respondents were adult Muslim consumers (aged 18 or above), with an active role in purchasing decisions and expected to have awareness of halal certification or packaging. In addition, surrogate consumers were acknowledged in the study, who play a significant role in shaping household purchase decisions like students and family members. The sampling approach was non-probability, applying a convenience-based strategy for respondent selection. Questionnaires were distributed via online and in-person approaches, 365 was returned out of 384 questionnaires and 342 were deemed valid, producing an effective response rate of 89.1% suitable for inferential statistical and conducting SEM. The study gather data between March and June 2025. Ethical standards were upheld with confidentiality assured and by securing informed consent. Prior to final analyses, responses underwent screening to detect potential bias and outliers in the data.

A structured questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) was used to collect data. The instrument was segmented into seven constructs: Halal Certification (HC) was measured using nine items adapted from Shaari and Arifin (2009), originally based on Hayati (2008). Example: "I choose Halal food products based on the Halal logo on the packaging." Halal Product Knowledge (HPK) was measured using five items adapted from Awan et al. (2015) and Nurhayati & Hendar (2020). Example: "I have sufficient knowledge about food products that are prohibited in Islam." Halal Awareness (HA) was measured using six items from Pramintasari and Fatmawati (2017). Example: "I consume Halal food products as a demonstration of my religious commitment." Purchase Intention (PI) was assessed using five items derived from Alagöz & Demirel (2017), Paly (2021), Abd Rahman et al. (2015), and Widyanto & Sitohang (2021), as cited in Aslan (2023). Example: "I want to continue purchasing Halal food in the future." Purchase Decision (PD) was measured with six items adapted from Rafiki et al. (2024). Example: "My Halal purchasing decisions are influenced by family teachings and practices." Religiosity (REL) included six items adapted from Rafiki et al. (2024) capturing the extent of Islamic adherence. Example: "My religious beliefs shape my values, decisions, and daily life." Subjective Norms (SN) were measured using four items based on Alagöz & Demirel (2017), adapted from Aslan (2023). Example: "The important people in my life support my decision to purchase Halal-certified food."



#### 4. Analyses & Findings

The analysis was conducted using SPSS (version 23) for data cleaning and descriptive statistics and SmartPLS 4 for advanced inferential analysis. The study provided an overview of respondent's demographic (Table 4.1b) and sample characteristics (Table 4.1a) using descriptive statistics, drawing on 342 valid responses for the final analyses. The gender distribution comprised 28.7% (n = 98) males and 71.3% (n = 244) females. The female dominance in the sample was confirmed by the calculated mean of 1.71 (where 1 = male and 2 = female), while the low standard deviation (0.45) reflects little dispersion.

The age profile of respondents dominated by younger participation, aged 18–30 years were 74.0% (n = 253) of the total population. Among the other respondents, 18.7% (n = 64) belonged to the 31–45 age group and 7.3% (n = 25) were 46 years or older. The computed mean age of 1.33 based on the coding (1 = 18–30, 2 = 31–45, 3 = 46+), reveals a skew towards the younger respondents. Distribution of education level showed diverse results as 38.9% held postgraduate degrees, 26.3% had attained graduate-level education, and 34.8% of the participants were undergraduates. Considerable diversity in education level was evident from the mean value of 2.04 and a standard deviation of 0.86.

**Table 4.1 (a): Descriptive Statistics**

Statistic	Gender	Age	Education
Mean	1.71	1.33	2.04
Median	2.00	1.00	2.00
Mode	2.00	1.00	3.00
Standard Deviation	0.45	0.61	0.86
Variance	0.21	0.37	0.74
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	2.00	3.00	3.00

**Table 4.1(b): Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	98	28.7
	Female	244	71.3
Age	18–30 years	253	74.0
	31–45 years	64	18.7
	46 years and above	25	7.3
Education Level	Undergraduate	119	34.8
	Graduate	90	26.3
	Postgraduate	133	38.9

The study evaluated the consistency and reliability of the measurement scales through Composite Reliability (CR), rho\_A and Cronbach's Alpha shown in the Table 4.2. The measurement scales reflected strong reliability and stability of the constructs, as evidenced by the Composite Reliability (CR) values ranged from 0.827 to 0.872. Further, strong internal consistency was supported by rho\_A coefficients (0.730–0.827) that is considered more robust in PLS-SEM. With Cronbach's Alpha estimates (0.720 to 0.818), values met the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory reliability. These values confirm that the constructs used are both statistically and theoretically sound.

**Table 4.2: Construct Reliability**

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability ( $\rho_a$ )	Composite Reliability ( $\rho_c$ )
HA	0.745	0.748	0.840
HC	0.790	0.814	0.854
HPK	0.720	0.730	0.827
PD	0.793	0.799	0.856
PI	0.815	0.819	0.872
REL	0.818	0.827	0.867
SN	0.794	0.817	0.865

Pearson’s correlation was employed to investigate the strength and direction of the relationships among the key constructs. HPK and HA ( $r = 0.612$ ), SN and PI ( $r = 0.671$ ) and HA and PI ( $r = 0.673$ ) revealed strong positive correlation among them and correlation matrix as shown in the Table 4.3 also highlights the substantial positive correlation between SN and HA ( $r = 0.623$ ), REL and PI ( $r = 0.620$ ) and HA and REL ( $r = 0.601$ ). The significant positive correlation indicates meaningful and coherent interrelationships among the constructs aligning with the hypothesized theoretical relations.

**Table 4.3: Correlation Matrix**

Variables	HC	HPK	HA	PI	REL	SN	PD
HC	1						
HPK	.388**	1					
HA	.461**	.612**	1				
PI	.318**	.555**	.673**	1			
REL	.351**	.573**	.601**	.620**	1		
SN	.408**	.521**	.623**	.671**	.580**	1	

Note: All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

#### 4.1. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesized relationships was investigated by employing SmartPLS, with bootstrapping set to 5,000 subsamples. As anticipated by the theoretical model, all hypothesized paths including direct, indirect and moderation relationships were found to be statistically significant shown in Table 4.5(b). Table 4.5a presents the outcomes of the path analysis. The results show that halal certification (HC) significantly and positively influences consumers’ purchase decisions (PD) ( $\beta = 0.317$ ,  $t = 6.078$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Likewise, halal product knowledge (HPK) has a significant direct effect on PD ( $\beta = 0.157$ ,  $t = 2.607$ ,  $p = 0.009$ ). In addition to these direct effects, both HC and HPK also has indirect influences on PD through the serial mediation of halal awareness (HA) and purchase intention (PI). In particular, the serial indirect effect of HC via HA and PI is significant ( $\beta = 0.015$ ,  $t = 2.374$ ,  $p = 0.018$  and same in the case of HPK. Further, HA has a positive effect on PI ( $\beta = 0.339$ ,  $t = 5.810$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), thus significantly determines PD ( $\beta = 0.295$ ,  $t = 5.030$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Additionally, moderation results highlights that religiosity and subjective norms strengthens the relationship between HA and PI ( $REL \times HA \rightarrow PI$ :  $\beta = 0.122$ ,  $t = 2.440$ ,  $p = 0.015$ ), ( $SN \times HA \rightarrow PI$ :  $\beta = 0.118$ ,  $t = 2.269$ ,  $p = 0.023$ ). Collectively, these findings determines the significant role of halal certification and product knowledge in shaping halal consumer behavior, mediating through awareness and intention while being influenced by religiosity and subjective norms in Pakistan.

**Table 4.5 (a): Regression Analysis**

Path	Type	$\beta$	T-Statistics	p-Value
HA → PI	Direct Effect	0.339	5.810	0.000
HC → HA	Direct Effect	0.149	3.100	0.002
HC → PD	Direct Effect	0.317	6.078	0.000
HPK → HA	Direct Effect	0.532	11.946	0.000
HPK → PD	Direct Effect	0.157	2.607	0.009
PI → PD	Direct Effect	0.295	5.030	0.000
REL → PI	Direct Effect	0.204	3.993	0.000
SN → PI	Direct Effect	0.367	6.205	0.000
REL × HA → PI	Moderation Effect	0.122	2.440	0.015
SN × HA → PI	Moderation Effect	0.118	2.269	

**Table 4.5 (b): Moderated Mediation Analysis**

No.	Hypothesis Path	$\beta$	T-Statistics	p-Value	Hypothesis Result
1	HC → PD	0.317	6.078	0.000	Supported
2	HPK → PD	0.157	2.607	0.009	Supported
3	HC → HA → PI → PD	0.015	2.374	0.018	Supported
4	HPK → HA → PI → PD	0.053	3.629	0.000	Supported
5	REL × HA → PI	0.122	2.440	0.015	Supported
6	SN × HA → PI	0.118	2.269	0.023	Supported

Empirical results derived from both SPSS and SmartPLS demonstrated high internal consistency, collectively reinforce the validity of the model, absence of multi-collinearity, and significant relationships. Significance testing confirmed that all proposed direct and indirect paths alongside moderation hypotheses were statistically significant. Moreover, the whole analyses validates the role of halal certification and product knowledge in influencing halal consumer behavior, further shaped by mediating i.e., halal awareness and purchase intention, as well as moderation effect i.e., religiosity and subjective norms.

### 5. Conclusion

The research has given a thorough account of cognitive, as well as normative factors that determine Halal consumption among the urban Muslim consumers in Pakistan. Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) the results support the view that constructs like Halal Certification, Halal Product Knowledge, Halal Awareness and Purchase Intention give a significant influence in Purchase Decision. Religiosity and Subjective Norms, that provide major contextual and cultural contributions, which enhances empirical and theoretical strength of the model. The strong positive impact of Halal Certification on Purchase Decisions is the most significant finding of this study. Observable signs of religious compliance guide consumer behavior and enhance consumer trust. For Pakistani Muslim consumers, halal certification not only assures religious legitimacy but also signals product safety, hygiene, and authenticity. This aligns with past studies and adds localized depth by confirming that in Pakistan, certification signals are critical in both religious and secular consumer trust-building. The effect of HPK was also found to be profound. Consumers with better knowledge regarding Halal principles and practices exhibit



greater clarity, confidence, and intentionality in their purchasing behavior. This relationship further emphasizes the importance of transparency, labeling, and educational outreach. Knowledgeable consumers are more likely to convert awareness into action, indicating that marketers and regulators must focus on enhancing public understanding of Halal standards. One of the study's central contributions lies in the serial mediation effects observed, HC and HPK influence PD via HA and PI. These results support TPB's robustness and confirm that awareness is not just a by-product but a critical mediator in behavioral outcomes. Purchase Intention, likewise, acts as a cognitive endpoint of consumer reflection, bridging beliefs to actions. Regarding moderation, Religiosity emerged as a strong moderator, reinforcing the link between awareness and intention. This finding indicates that for religious consumers, Halal consumption is seen as a moral obligation rather than a lifestyle preference. Thus, awareness in such individuals naturally translates to intention and action. In contrast, Subjective Norms played a more limited and inconsistent role. While they influence certain groups, such as youth or those in socially connected communities, their impact is situational and less universal. These findings reflect the complexity of consumer behavior in collectivist yet religiously motivated societies. Although social pressure has an influence, intrinsic motivation driven by religiosity has a stronger, more consistent impact. These distinctions suggest the need for differentiated marketing and policy approaches for various demographic groups. Theoretically, the study extends TPB by incorporating serial mediation and moderation, offering a more nuanced model for behavioral prediction in Islamic contexts. It introduces Halal Awareness as a decisive factor, often neglected in other models. Furthermore, it contextualizes the TPB in Pakistan, an underexplored market in Halal research, thus expanding the geographical and cultural relevance of prior findings that were mainly focused on Indonesia and Malaysia.

### 5.1. Future Research Directions

Building upon the identified limitations, several avenues for future research are recommended to enhance the depth and scope of halal consumer behavior studies. Firstly, scholars should consider incorporating additional mediators and moderators. Variables such as Perceived Behavioral Control, which captures how access and affordability influence consumer choices and could provide a more nuanced understanding of decision-making processes. Similarly, Trust in Certification Bodies may significantly affect both halal awareness and purchase intention, while constructs like Perceived Quality and Moral Obligation may serve as psychological mechanisms that link religiosity to behavior. Secondly, future research should aim to broaden demographic comparisons. Studies comparing urban versus rural populations and younger versus older consumers could offer valuable insights into behavioral variability. Additionally, cross-cultural comparisons, for instance, between Muslim-majority countries like Pakistan and Muslim minority contexts such as the UK or USA can enhance the global applicability of halal-related findings. Thirdly, there is a need to adopt diversified methodological approaches. Longitudinal studies can help track changes in consumer perceptions and behaviors over time, while qualitative methods such as focus groups or in-depth interviews may capture emotional, cultural, and spiritual dimensions that quantitative tools might overlook. Experimental research designs could also be employed to establish causal relationships between variables under controlled conditions. Lastly, future studies should extend their scope beyond food products. Sectors such as Islamic finance, halal cosmetics, halal tourism, and pharmaceuticals also involve ethical and religious considerations and would benefit from similar behavioral frameworks. Investigating these areas can contribute to a more holistic understanding of halal consumption in diverse domains.

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