

The Influence of Halal Certificate on UiTM Students' Purchase Intention

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Abstract: In this current era, Malaysia is regarded as one of the most forward-thinking nations in the world because of the government's full approval of the Halal Certification procedure for goods and services. According to the Malaysian Halal Certification Scheme, halal certification is an official document issued by the government that states whether the product and its manufacturing processes, including raw materials, ingredients, processing equipment, and other handling equipment, comply with Shariah law. This study aims to determine the factors that affect halal certificates on students' intention to purchase halal-certified products. Data was collected using an online survey involving 150 students from UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang between the ages of 18 and 26. The findings show a strong relationship between two independent variables (halal awareness and religiosity) and the dependent variable (students' intention to purchase halal-certified products).

Keywords: Halal certified, awareness, religiosity, purchase intention

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Introduction

Halal certification was created to provide Muslim customers with a comprehensive Halal Assurance System. The materials or components used throughout the product are not always the sole considerations for halal certification; the "Toyyiban" or wholesomeness idea implemented will examine all aspects of manufacturing. Additionally, sanitation and safety are key elements of the Halal certification that are equally important for Muslim and non-Muslim consumers, and these attributes have been proven to be an essential selling point to all consumer segments (Aziz & Vui, 2013). In recent years, Halal certification has become one of the standard graphic marks attached to products, foods, and beverages, regardless of whether they are suitable for use by Muslims. The halal logo in Malaysia is certified by Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM). Products that need Halal certification by JAKIM will go through a few processes because of some rules and regulations that need to be followed by a premise before they get the certification. Muslim consumers can only consume Halal-certified food and beverages, and JAKIM is the department that ensures the food will not create any doubt between them and the food they buy.

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The previous research revealed that other researchers working on the same topic tend to focus more on a general group, such as Muslim consumers. So, this research focuses more on the young generation, especially university students. This study examined how a halal certificate affects students' purchasing intention. A few will start buying products independently without their parents' concern. This is because some of the students still care about products with a halal logo, while others do not.

In addition, some young people take it easy by choosing products based on low prices. The attitude of some of the younger generation can be proven through a report from Abdul Kadir (2012) that Muslim consumers, especially teenagers, are apprehensive when they visit food premises that do not have a halal certificate. This study aims to look into the impact of a halal certificate on a student's purchasing decision. The goal was as follows: 1) To determine the relationship between halal awareness and students' intention to buy halal-certified products. 2) To study the relationship between religiosity and students' intention to buy halal-certified products.

2 Literature Review

1.1 Halal Certification in Malaysia

A halal certificate is a document that certifies that a product complies with Islam's dietary requirements. This product has undergone a Halal certification process, which has been approved. Halal certification assures consumers that Halal products do not include any Haram ingredients. According to Baizuri Badrudin *et al.* (2013), Halal certification also includes a review of the food preparation process. This certification inspection, also known as the guaranteeing process, involves providing an approved document to the consumer detailing the product's Halal status. When the packaging of the products has a halal certificate, it will directly impact the consumers, especially Muslims, to use these products. The halal certification aims to verify that the products that JAKIM guarantees are Halal. Besides, Halal certification was created to provide a thorough Halal Assurance System to Muslim consumers. The "Toyyiban" or wholesomeness concept that was implemented would investigate all parts of production, not only the materials or substances that get into the product (Wan Rusni, 2016). In Malaysia, the recognition is granted by JAKIM, a body that developed the halal logo and enforced the Halal Certification System for all food businesses. Today, JAKIM has one of the world's most distinguished halal audit systems in producing halal certification for its clients.

1.2 Halal Awareness

The word "awareness" literally implies "having a specific interest in or experiences with anything" and "being well informed on what is happening right now on all food, beverages, and products" (Randolph, 2003). According to Ambali & Bakar, Halal in this context refers to having a special interest in or experience with anything while also being up to date on halal goods. Awareness is the starting point for forming subjective thoughts about someone's experience with something. Using sensory awareness might focus on an internal state, including a visceral sensation, or even on external events or circumstances. (Nizam, 2006). All of this includes their knowledge of the distribution chain and how products are kept and moved through it. For example, how well a Muslim could tell the difference between Halal and non-Halal goods while shipping and storing them to keep them from mixing up with other things. (Ab Talib & Johan, 2012). Moreover, Muslims should know what halal products are because the failure to recognize halal products can lead to inadvertently buying non-halal products. In addition, the shipment and placement of halal products during transportation, ingredients used in food products must not originate from non-halal sources. Nowadays, many imported products may have non-halal ingredients like alcohol and gelatine because they may be extracted from pork.

1.3 Religiosity

Religiosity is the enjoyment of one's religion, encompassing symbols, beliefs, values, and even behavior affected by spiritual influences (Fatmawati & Pramintasari, 2017: 743). Each religion will have its regulations for what is and is not permissible. This is incorporated into his consumption behavior so that religion might be the foundation for his religious views. The law of Islam is mainly for the benefit of man himself, and it applies to all aspects of human existence. They have a moral and religious duty to eat halal foods even, if there are at home or elsewhere, or whether the food is simple to get by or not (Ali *et al.*, 2017). Religious convictions affect consumers' attitudes regarding's purchasing habits and social behaviors (Said *et al.*, 2014). Their religious understanding will pervade all aspects of their lives and activities. A highly religious person would evaluate the world through religious lenses and integrate his religion throughout his everyday activities (Mokhlis, 2006). As a result, this religious component might influence preferences and dislikes (Briliana & Mursito, 2017).

1.4 Purchase intention

Any industry or business has a single concern for survival: building a customer base by encouraging customers to buy their products or services. According to Omar *et al.* (2012), intention is a person's tendency to execute a specific behavior or a reflection of future behavior. A person's intention is indicated by their willingness to engage in particular behaviors (AL-Nahdi & Mohammed, 2008). Customers' propensity to acquire, use, and focus on specific brands or products is called purchase intention (Borzooei & Asgari, 2013). Customers' intent to purchase, use, and focus on specific brands or products is referred to as purchase intention (Borzooei & Asgari, 2013). Another meaning of buying intention is "what we expect to buy" (Tarkiainen & Sundqvist, 2005). Besides, according to Afendi *et al.* (2014), intentions are the preliminary process before a purchase is made and reflects future behavior. As a result, a customer's intended purpose can influence his or her purchasing decision. This is one of the cognitive-behavioral techniques consumers use to decide whether or not to buy certain things (Bashir *et al.*, 2019). Intention can be a good predictor of subsequent behavior. Purchasing decisions are based on a thorough understanding of the goods (Bashir *et al.*, 2019).

3 Methodology

The target population of this research is UiTM Cawangan Pulau Pinang's students, with qualifications that the respondent was Muslim students around ages 18-26 years old. The self-administered questionnaire was structured as a booklet with easy-to-answer questions and a professional appearance and deployed a random sampling method for the data collection. It was adopted by Jamal Abdul Nassir and Nur Shahira (2009). The sample size was determined using the power analysis technique, computed using G-power software. The questionnaire would provide places for respondents to check the circles from the Likert Scale that they prefer rather than a circle or input numbers, which may be confusing since there are many questions. As a result, to prevent any ambiguity, the questions will be written early and easily. The questionnaire was distributed via social media platforms and applications, including WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram, utilizing an online survey link from Google Forms.

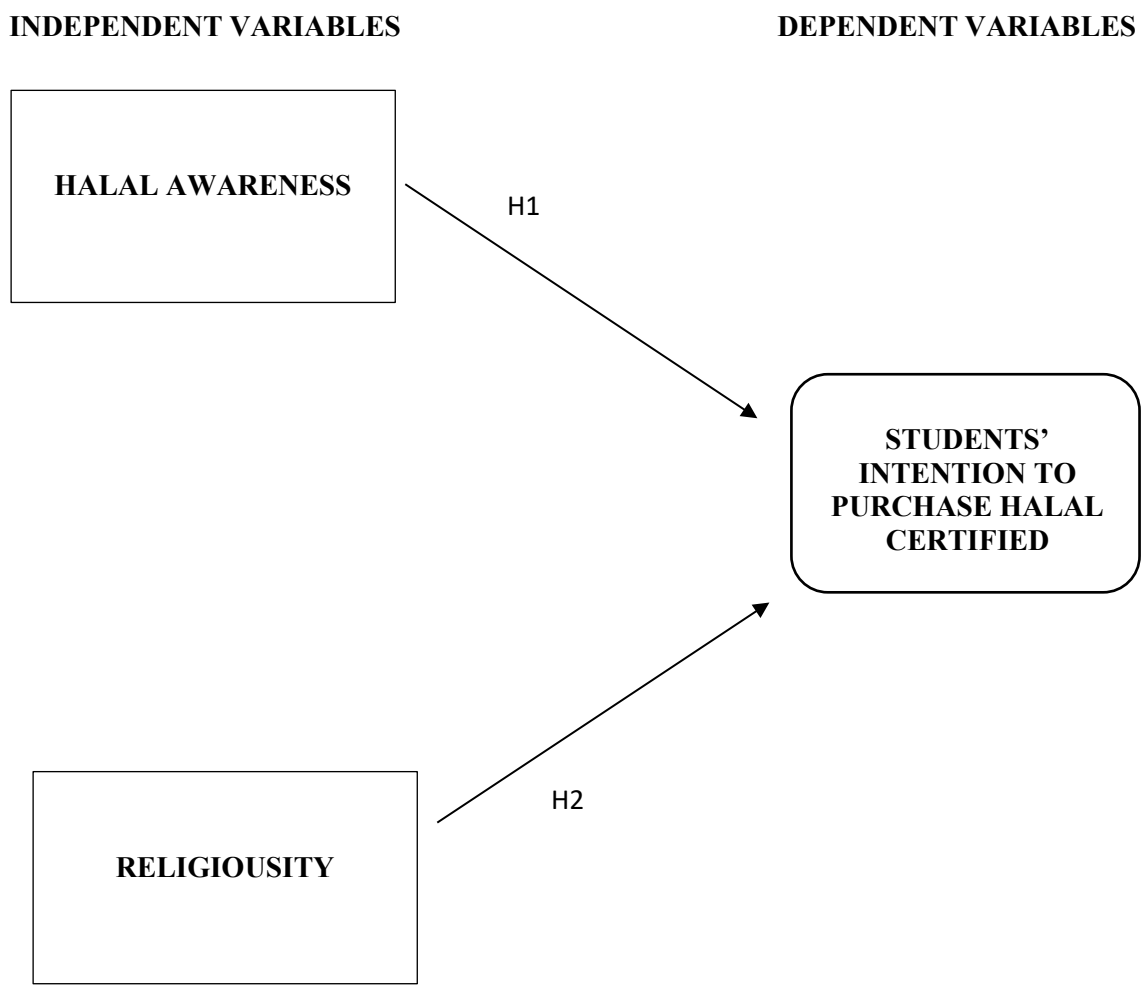
Respondents must use the five-point Likert scale to answer questions linked to each variable in order to get the information needed, ranging from one (1) for "strongly disagree" to five (5) for "strongly agree." Construct a research measurement regarding demographic data, questions regarding gender, age, and faculty were asked on a nominal scale in Section A. The study's construct assessment of the independent variable is halal awareness in Section B. The construct measurement of the research regarding the independent variable is religiosity in Section C. In Section D, the dependent variable is intentions to buy halal-certified products, and the construct measurement of the research is Muslim students' intentions to buy halal-certified products. The findings of the questionnaires are entered as data into the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software and afterward translated into statistical statistics for descriptive analysis, Pearson correlation coefficient, and multiple regressions. Previous research used halal awareness, marketing communication, and religiosity. However, in this research,

the researcher adopts two independent variables: halal awareness and religiosity. It is because marketing aspects do not necessarily improve customers' intentions when purchasing halal-certified products. The hypothesis is as follows;

H₁: There is a significant relationship between halal awareness and students' intention to purchase halal-certified products.

H₂: There is a significant relationship between religiosity and student's intentions to purchase halal-certified products

Figure 1: Conceptual framework for factors influencing students' intention to purchase halal-certified products



4 Findings

4.1 Demographic Analysis

Respondents were selected among 150 students to analyze the demographic distributions of the respondents compared with genders, ages, and faculty.

Table 4.1: Respondents' Gender, Age, and Faculty

No	Demographic variable	Frequency	Percent (%)
1	Gender		
	Male	83	55.3
	Female	67	44.7
	Total	150	100.0
2	Age		
	18-20 years old	36	24.0
	21-23 years old	56	37.3
	24-26 years old	58	38.7
	Total	150	100.0
3	Faculty		
	Hotel and Tourism Management	54	36.0
	Mechanical Engineering	25	16.7
	Civil Engineering	25	16.7
	Electrical Engineering	27	18.0
	Chemical Engineering		
	Total	150	100.0

Based on gender, 83 respondents (55.3%) are male, and 67 (44.7%) are females. It showed that the number of male respondents is higher than females. Table 4.2 shows the majority of the respondents are between 24 to 26 years with 58 respondents (38.7%), followed by between 21 and 23 years with 56 respondents (37.3%) %. Meanwhile, the minority of the respondents are between 18 to 20 years, with 36 respondents (24%). According to the faculty showed, the majority of the respondents are in Hotel and Tourism Management, with 54 respondents (36%), followed by Electrical Engineering with 27 respondents (18%), and Mechanical Engineering and Civil Engineering are 25 respondents (16.7%). Meanwhile, the minority respondents are in Chemical Engineering, with 19 respondents (12.7%).

4.2 Descriptive Analysis

The halal certificate has two impacts on a student's purchasing intention: halal awareness and religiosity. Each impact is discussed below: Table 4.2 represents the classification of halal awareness. According to the tables below, respondents demonstrated a range of responses on halal certification. The majority of participants (45.3 %) chose strongly agree with the statement "I understand the definition of Halal," followed by "I am aware of the distinction between both Halal and non-Halal" (42%), and "I am aware of the methods involved in Halal product" (36%). Additionally, participants stated to agree with the statement "I regularly read or find information regarding Halal products" (32%), "I am aware of the processes involved in Halal cuisine," and "I am aware that some food additives contain non- Halal elements" (31.3 %). The following participants were also indifferent to the statement "Will not buy Halal food if it is shown among non-Halal products" (30.7 %). Concerning halal knowledge, the highest mean shows that the respondents agreed with "I understand what Halal means" (M=4.07, SD=1.03). While the lower mean indicated that respondents were likewise indifferent to the statement "Will not purchase Halal product if it is shown alongside non-Halal products" (M=3.49, SD=1.169). In summary, when the total mean is 3.789 and the standard deviation is 0.896, the responder is neutral towards halal awareness.

Table 4.2: Halal Awareness

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation
I understand the meaning of Halal	1 (0.7%)	14 (9.3%)	26 (17.3%)	41 (27.3%)	68 (45.3%)	4.07	1.03
I am aware of the processes involved in Halal food production	3 (2%)	24 (16%)	22 (14.7%)	47 (31.3%)	54 (36%)	3.83	1.144
I am aware of the difference between Halal and non-Halal food products	1 (0.7%)	14 (9.3%)	28 (18.7%)	44 (29.3%)	63 (42%)	4.03	1.023
I actively read or search for related information on Halal product	4 (2.7%)	22 (14.7%)	38 (25.3%)	48 (32%)	38 (25.3%)	3.63	1.096
Always aware of product ingredients	3 (2%)	20 (13.3%)	38 (25.3%)	43 (28.7%)	46 (30.7%)	3.73	1.098
Know that certain food additive contains non-Halal ingredients	3 (2%)	16 (10.7%)	40 (26.7%)	47 (31.3%)	44 (29.3%)	3.75	1.055
Will not purchase Halal product, if it arranges next to non-Halal products	5 (3.3%)	28 (18.7%)	46 (30.7%)	31 (20.7%)	40 (26.7%)	3.49	1.169

Table 4.3 represents the classification of religiosity. According to the tables below, participants showed a range of attitudes toward religion. The majority of the participants (50%) chose strongly agree with the statement "Well informed that Halal topics are vital," followed by "Do not eat products containing non-Halal ingredients" (48.7%) and "As a Muslim, I am well aware of any goods I buy" (44.7%). Regarding religiosity, the highest mean indicated that participants concurred with the statement, "As a Muslim, I am well informed about every good I buy" (M=4.06, SD=1.057). While the lower mean indicated that respondents were also indifferent to the statement "Will not buy if unsure about the components" (M=3.93, SD=1.087). In conclusion, the responder agrees about religiosity when the overall mean is 3.993 and the standard deviation is 0.983.

Table 4.3: Religiosity

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation
As Muslims, we are well informed that every product that was purchased supposedly Halal	2 (1.3%)	15 (10%)	22 (14.7%)	44 (29.3%)	67 (44.7%)	4.06	1.057
Well-informed that matters of Halal are important	1 (0.7%)	17 (11.3%)	33 (22%)	24 (16%)	75 (50%)	4.03	1.114
Noticed every product that is Haram to be eaten by Muslim	1 (0.7%)	20 (13.3%)	31 (20.7%)	34 (22.7%)	64 (42.7%)	3.93	1.109
Not consume products contain non-Halal ingredients	2 (1.3%)	15 (10%)	38 (25.3%)	22 (14.7%)	73 (48.7%)	3.99	1.126
Will not purchase if not sure about the ingredients	0 (0%)	21 (14%)	31 (20.7%)	36 (24%)	62 (41.3%)	3.93	1.087
Realize that everything eaten will influence life	0 (0%)	15 (10%)	33 (22%)	37 (24.7%)	65 (43.3%)	4.01	1.03
						3.993	0.983

Table 4.4 represents the classification of purchase intention halal certificate products. According to the chart below, participants responded differently to their intention to buy halal-certified products. The majority of participants (52.7%) chose strongly agree with the statement "I might be interested in purchasing Halal products for family and friends," followed by "I plan to continue purchasing Halal food future products" (51.3%) and "It is easy to purchase Halal food in Malaysia" (48.7%). In terms of purchase intention for halal-certified items,

the highest mean revealed that the participants strongly agreed with the statement "I always intend to buy halal food products when they are available" ($M=4.17$, $SD=0.937$). While the lowest mean indicated that respondents were likewise indifferent to the statement, "I want to purchase Halal food products even if they are not sold" ($M=3.99$, $SD=1.065$). In summary, participants agreed to buy halal-certified products, with an overall mean of 4.085 and a standard deviation of 0.932.

Table 4.4: Purchase intention on halal certificate products

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation
I always intend to buy halal food products if it is available	0 (0%)	8 (5.3%)	31 (20.7%)	39 (26%)	72	4.17	0.937
I plan to buy Halal food products even if it is not sold close to me	1 (0.7%)	15 (10%)	34 (22.7%)	34 (22.7%)	66 (44%)	3.99	1.065
I intend to continue buying Halal food products in the future	0 (0%)	13 (8.7%)	37 (24.7%)	23 (15.3%)	77 (51.3%)	4.09	1.051
I would be willing to buy Halal food products for family and friends	0 (0%)	13 (8.7%)	35 (23.3%)	23 (15.3%)	79 (52.7%)	4.12	1.049
It is easy to be a buyer of halal food in Malaysia	1 (0.7%)	17 (11.3%)	28 (18.7%)	31 (20.7%)	73 (48.7%)	4.05	1.092

In order to analyze the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, Pearson Correlation Coefficient was applied using the guidelines. Table 4.5 shows the findings of the relationship between halal awareness and students' intention to purchase halal-certified products. The result ($r=0.872$, $p<0.05$) indicates a strongly significant positive relationship between them. Hence the increase of halal awareness then the purchase intention halal certified products also increases.

Table 4.5: Relationship between halal awareness and students' intention to purchase halal-certified products

		Halal Awareness	Purchase Intention Halal-Certified Products
Halal Awareness	Pearson Correlation	1	.872**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
Purchase Intention Halal-Certified Products	Pearson Correlation	.872**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150

Table 4.6 shows the correlation between religiosity and students' intentions to buy halal-certified products. Regarding results displayed ($r=0.938$, $p<0.05$) indicates that there were strongly significant positive relationships among them. Hence the increase of religiosity and the purchase intentions of halal-certified products also increase.

Table 4.6: Relationship between religiosity and students' intention to purchase halal-certified products

		Religiosity	Purchase Intention Halal-Certified Products
Religiosity	Pearson Correlation	1	.938**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
Purchase Intention Halal-Certified Products	Pearson Correlation	.938**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

Table 4.7 represents the overall sample of students' intentions to buy halal-certified goods. The R² (88.5%) of the student's intention to buy halal-certified goods is mainly due to halal awareness and religiosity, and the 11.5% indicates another factor. Based on the ANOVA test in Table 4.8, overall, students' intentions to buy halal-certified goods are significant [$F(2, 147) = 566.82, p < 0.05$]. Due to that, the researcher's model has proven that halal awareness and religiosity significantly affect the students' intention to buy halal-certified products. The variable's significant value should be continued tests under the coefficient tables.

Table 4.7: Summary Table

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.941 ^a	.885	.884	1.59077

Table 4.8: ANOVA Table

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2868.704	2	1434.352	566.816	.000 ^b
	Residual	371.989	147	2.531		
	Total	3240.693	149			

In order to address the research issue, the investigator used multiple regression analysis to examine the extent to which students' understanding of halal and religiosity affect their propensity to purchase halal-certified products. Multiple regressions were used to estimate the amount of variance described in the dependent variable by the independent variables across multiple dimensions. The researcher evaluated the Standard Coefficient Beta values to determine which element greatly influenced customers' inclination to buy halal-certified consumer goods. According to Table 4.9, halal awareness ($=0.164, p0.05$) and religiosity ($=0.791, p0.05$) strongly link students' propensity to buy halal-certified goods. The standardized beta value of 0.791 indicated that religion had the greatest impact on students' intentions to buy halal-certified products. In contrast, the least significant factor affecting halal knowledge is the standardized beta of 0.164.

Table 4.9: Multiple Regression

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		β	Std. Error	β	<i>t</i>	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.204	.572		3.854	.000
	Halal Awareness	.122	.047	.164	2.620	.010
	Religiosity	.625	.050	.791	12.626	.000

5 Conclusion

The descriptive statistics showed that the respondents are neutral about halal awareness when the mean is 3.789 and the religiosity is 3.993. Next, regarding the students' intention to purchase halal-certified products, the respondents agreed about them when the mean was 4.085. Besides that, based on the relationship between halal awareness and religiosity showed there has a strong relationship between students' intention to purchase halal-certified products ($r=0.872, p<0.005$) and ($r=0.938, p<0.05$), respectively. Regarding the multiple regression, the most impact of the student's intention to purchase halal-certified products is religiosity, with a standardized beta of 0.791. From the study's findings, the conclusion could be made that both dependent variables (halal awareness and religiosity) were significant with the dependent variable (students' intentions to buy halal-certified goods). However, the result showed that religiosity has a greater influence on students' intentions to buy halal-certified goods.

This study would like to propose several recommendations. It has demonstrated that halal awareness was not efficient enough to drive the sales of more halal consumer products among students. The halal awareness program installed by the authorities has not been effective. So, this program needs serious scrutiny and improvement. For example, advertising may influence the awareness of young consumers, such as students, through social media platforms to increase knowledge and awareness of halal products. In order to increase the credibility of the Halal certification logo, JAKIM also needs to conduct more rigorous auditing and inspection, including an assessment of ingredients, processing methods, and equipment used to include laboratory testing by the Certification Procedures Manual and Procedure. Consider the Cadbury instance, in which swine DNA was discovered in specific chocolate goods.

In order to increase the credibility of the study area, it is recommended that future research include other factors that can also influence students' intention to purchase halal-certified products. Conducting moderating tests of certain contextual or demographic variables can help researchers assess how factors shaping students' intention to purchase halal-certified products differ across environments in the real world.

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