



Faculty of Resource Science and Technology

**Relationship Between Awareness, Knowledges And Attitudes Towards  
Halal Food Among University Students In Sarawak**

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Bachelor of Science with Honours  
(Resource Biotechnonology)  
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**Relationship Between Awareness, Knowledges And Attitudes Towards  
Halal Food Among University Students In Sarawak**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the Requirement of The Degree Bachelor of  
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Programme of Resource Biotechnology  
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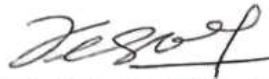
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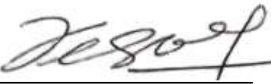
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Relationship Between Awareness, Knowledge, And Attitude Towards Halal Food  
Among University Students

Dyrren Oswell Anak Dyuos

Resource Biotechnology Programme  
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**ABSTRACT**

Halal food has been known by the Malaysian public of Malaysia as the food that complies with the ruling of Islamic Law. The food itself is safely consumed as defined in the halal context. However, it can be seen nowadays that many food products that are being made or imported inside Malaysia have triggered the concern on its halal wise in some Muslims. This indicates the necessity of taking measures when reviewing certain products during purchasing with the correct way of assessing. The study was conducted to analyse the perspectives towards halal foods among the youngsters. The approach of the study was made through a survey of questionnaire module via Google form that had been disseminated randomly. A total of n=200 respondents had taken part on answering the questions on awareness of halal foods, knowledge of halal foods, attitude towards halal food and sociodemographic profile that available in this survey. Descriptive analysis and Pearson correlation were used to analyse and evaluate the data. Through this study, the findings show that most respondents highly aware and have good knowledge, but inconsistent attitudes were practiced. This indicate that there is relationship between awareness and knowledge of halal foods however, both awareness and knowledge were not significance into attitudes towards halal food.

Keywords: halal food, halal concept. awareness, knowledge, attitudes

## **ABSTRAK**

*Makanan halal telah dikenali oleh masyarakat Malaysia di Malaysia sebagai makanan yang mematuhi ketetapan dalam hukum Islam. Dalam konteks halal, makanan itu sendiri ditakrifkan sebagai selamat untuk dimakan. Namun begitu, dapat dilihat pada masa kini banyak produk makanan yang dibuat atau diimport ke dalam Malaysia telah mencetuskan kebimbangan terhadap dalam aspek halal sesebuah makanan itu di kalangan umat Islam. Ini menunjukkan keperluan untuk mengambil langkah semasa menyemak produk tertentu semasa pembelian dengan cara penilaian yang betul. Kajian ini dijalankan untuk menganalisis kefahaman tentang makanan halal di kalangan pelajar melalui kesedaran, pengetahuan dan sikap yang ada pada diri mereka. Pendekatan kajian dibuat melalui tinjauan modul soal selidik melalui “Google Form” yang telah diedarkan secara rawak. Seramai n=200 responden telah mengambil bahagian dalam menjawab soalan berkaitan kesedaran tentang makanan halal, pengetahuan tentang makanan halal, sikap terhadap makanan halal dan profil sosiodemografi yang terdapat dalam tinjauan ini. Analisis deskriptif dan korelasi Pearson (Pearson Correlation) digunakan untuk menganalisis dan menilai data. Melalui kajian ini, dapatan kajian menunjukkan kebanyakan responden mempunyai kesedaran tinggi dan mempunyai pengetahuan yang baik, tetapi sikap diamalkan tidak konsisten. Ini menunjukkan bahawa terdapat hubungan antara kesedaran dan pengetahuan tentang makanan halal namun, kedua-dua kesedaran dan pengetahuan tidak signifikan kepada sikap terhadap makanan halal.*

*Kata kunci : makanan halal, konsep halal, kesedaran, pengetahuan, sikap*

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATION

**CDC** – Center for Disease Control

**JAKIM** – Department of Islamic Development Malaysia

**HTRMP** – Halalan Toyyiban Risk Management Plan

**SPSS** - Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Study Background

Halal food had become a general understanding that the food adheres to specific criteria following the law of Islamic rule. Muslims around the world practise halal food considering it is a must as of their religion teaching. With the halal recognition, the food itself is categorized as safe to be consumed, healthy and hygiene (Aziz and Chok, 2013). In Malaysia, it can be observed that halal food can be obtained easily as there are diverse products that being showcased or available in the many stores or supermarkets are certified and obliged to the halal ruling. As Malaysia is a diverse community country of different religions, the non-halal food that had been identified is yet to be imported inside too however there is not an issue encountered considering these products are placed separately in its own specific sections in most stores and supermarkets. With this application, the public, especially Muslims would not have any trouble choosing the item on the store or supermarket shelf hesitantly.

## 1.2 Problem Statement and Objectives

Recently it can be seen in the market itself that the import of food products from various sources such as Korean food has become a sensation in Malaysia. The hype of this import product is mainly due to the public itself that advertises and promotes it well. The hype is also contributed by the manners of many youngsters nowadays that successfully attract the public of different ages to reach out the food products. Just like the Korean food, growing demand leads in number of Korean foods to be establish inside Malaysia (Mohd Amin et al., 2020). This however gave concern on its validity to be halal as mentioned that the products came from different sources such as foreign products or handmade or homemade products. There could possibility that the food may not been recognized as halal. The concern is strongly visible as if public yet still acknowledge the halal feature when purchasing the products.

With this study, it will be aiming to analyze the perspective related to halal food generally among the youngsters. The study has been performed among the students at Sarawak Universities as public representatives.

Through this study, the halal acknowledgement of the youngsters was defined well and reflect the view of public on halal foods that available today. Therefore, this study objective was focusing on:

1. To analyze the understandings on the halal food basis among students
2. To relate awareness, knowledge and attitudes which define the student understandings

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### 1.3 Conceptual framework And Hypotheses

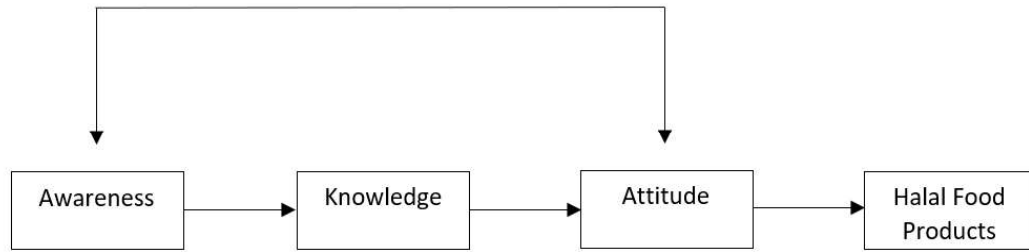


Figure 1: Conceptual framework. Adopted from Hashim et al. (2020)

#### Hypotheses

$H_{0AW}$ : There is no relationship between awareness and knowledge towards halal food among university students in Sarawak.

$H_{aAW}$ : There is a relationship between awareness and knowledge towards halal food among university students in Sarawak.

$H_{0K}$ : There is no relationship between knowledge and attitude towards halal food among university students in Sarawak.

$H_{aK}$ : There is a relationship between knowledge and attitude towards halal food among university students in Sarawak.

$H_{0AT}$ : There is no relationship between awareness and attitude awareness towards halal food among university students in Sarawak.

$H_{aAT}$ : There is a relationship between awareness and attitude towards halal food among university students in Sarawak.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Halal food concept

The term halal is an Arabic word which gives the meaning of “allowable” and “legal” (Fischer, 2016). The concept of halal in food products has been known in general that the food products are recognized and adheres to the criteria based on Islamic practice and rules. The food that is entitled to be halal is permissible and legal to be consumed especially for those Muslims. In Islamic view, food can be categorized as halal and the opposite, haram. It indicates the food product to be permissible to be eaten or cannot be eaten by Muslims (Arif and Sidek, 2015). The food that is unlawfully to the Islamic rule which significantly vice versa to halal food is called haram. This type of food is recognized in that term as it is believed to cause harm to the consumer that would consume it. Other than that, the food is termed ‘unclean’ in Islamic perspective as it correlates to the term ‘najs’ in Arabic. In Islamic law, ‘najs’ is defined as ritually unclean due to its own condition (Ahmad and Shariff, 2016). In the context of food that is categorized as ‘najs’, it mostly comes from the animal that is not clean in Islamic view such as pig and dog, and the slaughtering process of the animal that does not adhere with the Islamic practices.

To understand the reason on concept of halal existed in the Muslim community, one must refers to the Islamic teaching which based on Sunnah and Al-Quran. Fischer (2016) stated that Muslims were forbidden to consume animals such as pork, reptiles and others that have been consecrated to any being other than God himself in the Al-Quran. Besides, the slaughtering process also must be adhere to the teaching of Islam which includes on the way of the slaughtering, the position of the animal faced during slaughter and how the meat will be processed and managed after the slaughter (Abdullah et. al., 2019). The concept of halal in food products is not only known to Muslims but to the non-Muslims community around the globe as well due to increasing awareness over the years. Besides, the non-

Muslims recognize halal food products as consistent with the correct ethics and practice in food management for the food and beverages related business (Noordin, 2009). Typically, the food products that are indicated as halal will have the logo of 'HALAL' printed on the packaging. The food products that had the logo are permissible to be purchased. With this indication also, there will be no trouble on purchasing and the public could choose without any hesitation. The recognition of halal in the food product usually was regulated by the Islamic bodies from respective countries. These bodies were responsible for issuing the permits of the halal logo in the food products.

### **2.1.1 Halal food concept in Malaysia**

In Malaysia, the halal concept in food product is not a new thing since Islam is recognized as the official religion of the Federation based on the Constitution of Malaysia. There are around 61.3% of Muslim in Malaysia as recorded in 2010 (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2011).

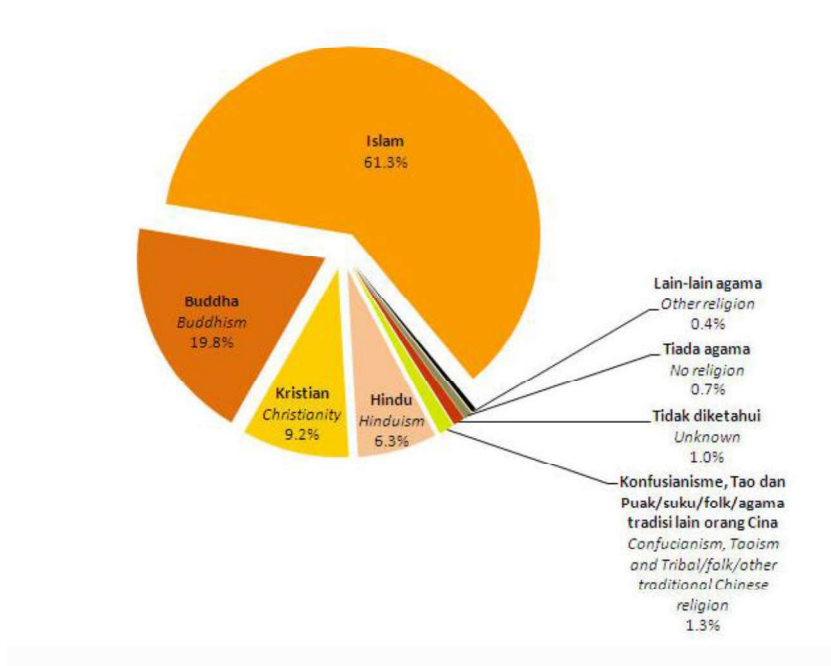


Figure 2 : Percentage Distribution By religion In Malaysia, 2010. Adopted from Department of Statistics Malaysia (2022)

As there were higher population of Muslim in Malaysia, the awareness of halal food concept is not a major issue among Malaysian. Most of the halal food products can be easily obtained in hypermarkets and even smaller grocery stores around Malaysia as most of the food products in Malaysia had the halal logo with it. This enables the ease of access on halal food products among Muslims in Malaysia.



### 2.1.2 Halal certification

Halal printing on food packaging products is a criterion that should be made available to indicate that the products is halal. With the printing available, the food is to be said following the characteristics of halal-certified properties. The ingredients of the food products playing a major role in making the final product is to be considered as halal making the food can be consumed especially for Muslims. The logo is the most crucial part for the Muslims, that it will be a guidance for them to only select halal food for their own.

In Malaysia, obtaining halal certification is to be made in many processes and requested to specified authority which is the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia or called as JAKIM (Department of Islamic Development Malaysia, 2015). The issuance of Halal certificates for any manufacturer can be made by the owner itself request to the JAKIM.



Figure 3 : Malaysia Halal Logo certified by JAKIM. Adopted from Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (2015)

Specified requirements should be followed by applicants such as their products have the ingredients that are considered halal, the workplace of the manufacturing is clean, and the work method possesses in halal way. The issuance of Manual Procedure for Halal Certification by JAKIM gives a view for those who need to obtain the halal certificate which contains the detailed procedure to be followed (Department of Islamic Development Malaysia, 2015). Most of the food products in the hypermarket and any food and beverages (FnB) franchise must be certified by JAKIM for the owners to be able to serve food products to the Muslims. Although the imported food products, produced from other countries around the globe may be certified halal, JAKIM only recognized the halal certification from several countries in the world. As reported by Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (2019), JAKIM only recognized the halal certifications from 45 countries around the world for its food products. The imported halal food products that are not recognized by JAKIM are not safe or the status of halal in the food products may be in doubt to be consumed by Muslims in Malaysia.

## **2.2 Halal and Food Safety**

### **2.2.1 Food Safety**

Food safety refers to the food itself being managed well in avoidance related to foodborne pathogens and illness. The factor on emergence of those foodborne illnesses mainly on the way of food preparation, handling, and storage to be done that could affect the food itself. Food safety is threatened by numerous types of pathogens that can cause foodborne diseases (Borchers et al., 2009). As recorded by the US Center for Disease Control (CDC), there are 48 million foodborne illnesses estimated each year which include 9.4 million caused by known pathogens just in the United States (Scallan et al., 2011). These statistics show that the occurrence of food contamination is in a danger state which triggers the insecurity on obtaining food. Another emerging threat in food safety is the use of nanomaterials. The nanomaterials frequently used in food packaging materials contribute in creating toxic that could affect the food however the research on its toxicity remains to be unexplored (Borchers et al., 2009).

The key factor in maintaining food safety came from the act of how the food will be handled. Improper food handling could initiate cross contamination making the pathogen available inside the food. The consumption of this food could harm the body which results in disease. The consumption of this food could harm the body which results in disease.

### **2.2.2 Relationship between Halal and Food safety**

Halal definition in food products shows that the food is safely available. With this act, the public, especially Muslims can consume the food. The concept of producing halal foods safely is closely related to the halalan-toyyiban. The Halalan-toyyiban concept emphasizes on the food products to be pure, clean and hygienic especially during the handling of food which to avoid any contamination to occur. Considered the contamination had occurred, the context of food safety will be questioned and affect the halal status of the food itself. As to prevent this from occurring, the food handling practice shall be spectated well to follow the Halalan-Toyyiban concept.

In Malaysia, the concern on halal food is less worrying however, the next step on maintaining the halal prospect of the product giving a glimpse on unsure thoughts (Omar et al.,2013). Therefore, JAKIM introduce the Halalan-Toyyiban Risk Management Plan (HTRMP) which is usable for those manufacturers that keen on keeping their product to stay halal. The HTRMP that is in MS 2400:2010 is a plan that will help the manufacturer company in terms of halalness from the early stage to the end user of their food products (Farhana et al.,2016). This shows that the product will be ensured to be stayed in halal possession from the making of product until the exportation to the consumer. To initiate the HTRMP, halal authority will be assigned to control and manage the supply as mentioned according to MS 2400:2010 (Saleh et al., 2019). It can be foreseen that the HTRMP do help in providing a food safety perspective that should be made inside the production of halal food products.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

#### **3.1 Study Design**

Quantitative method being made to initiate the study. Survey type approach is the most appropriate for a large population assessment. The questionnaire was created using Google Forms.

#### **3.2 Recruitment Procedure**

A total of 200 respondents had taking part into this survey. The surveys were disseminated randomly throughout media social platform. Other than that, the criteria eligibility was made for participants specifically only university students of any institutions that were in Sarawak. The survey also was made to collect respondents of various side of background ignoring the religion and nationality matter.

#### **3.3 Study Instrument**

The survey questionnaire consists of four main part which were 1) socio-demographics; which include the age, gender, and the University attended, 2) awareness; observation of food products that available in market 3) knowledge; understandings on halal concept towards food product and 4) attitudes; the measures taken on selection of food product that is halal.

### **3.4 Statistical Analysis**

The collected data will be analysed by using the software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis on the data were made on descriptive statistics, and Pearson correlation for analysed the relationship between the component of this study which were the awareness, knowledge, and attitude. The Microsoft Excel was also used as the data collection and functioning for several mathematical calculations.

### **3.5 Data Analysis of Variable**

The collected variable data through the survey will be recognized by introducing scoring level which were the awareness level, knowledge level and attitudes level. For awareness level, the score was divided into two type which were high awareness with those respondents that score 6 to 10 while low awareness with score 0 to 5 which both types were dependent on the 'Yes' answer. For knowledge level, the score was divided into two type which were adequate knowledge with those respondents that score 6 to 10 while inadequate knowledge with score 0 to 5 which both types were dependent on the 'Yes' answer. For attitude level, the score will be divided into two type which were favourable attitude with those respondents that score 31 to 50 while unfavourable attitude with score 10 to 30 which both type are depend on the Likert-scale answer of the highest was 5 while the lowest was 1.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

#### 4.1 Sociodemographics Profile

Table 1 shows the details on the sociodemographic background of whom that had participated in this survey. A total of 200 respondents recorded with the amount of female was at 60.5% (121 respondents) followed by male with 39.5% (79 respondents). Based on the table 1 below, the most age respondent that take part was from the age of 21-23 years old with 70.0 % (140 respondents), followed by 18-20 years old, 22.0% (44 respondents), 24-26 years old with 6.5% (13 respondents) and from the age of 27-29 years accounted for 1% (2 respondents). The least respondent with 0.5% (1 respondent) was from the age of above 30.

Majority of respondents were students that currently taking Degree in their own University with 77.5% (155 respondents) followed by 15% (30 respondents) were taking Diploma. Pre-University/Matriculation respondents accounted for 5.5% (11 respondents) from all of respondents. Both respondents that taking Master and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) had the same number of respondents which were 1.0% (2 respondents each). From the table, students from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) were the most respondents with 60.0% (120 respondents) followed by respondents from Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Kampus Samarahan with 30.0% (60 respondents) of total respondents. The remaining were respondents from Swinburne University of Technology Sarawak Campus with 9.5% (19 respondents) and another 0.5% (1 respondents) from other institution.

**Table 1 : Sociodemographic Profile**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<i>Age (years)</i>		
18-20	44	22.0
21-23	140	70.0
24-26	13	6.5
27-29	2	1.0
Above 30	1	0.5
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	79	39.5
Female	121	60.5
<i>Latest education level</i>		
Pre-University/Matriculation	11	5.5
Diploma	30	15.0
Degree	155	77.5
Master	2	1.0
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	2	1.0
Others	0	0
<i>University/College Attended</i>		
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)	120	60.0
Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) (Kota Samarahan)	60	30.0
Swinburne University of Technology Sarawak Campus	19	9.5
Others	1	0.5
<i>Monthly Expenses (RM)</i>		
≤RM 300	91	45.5
RM301-RM600	75	37.5
RM601-RM900	21	10.5
≥RM901	13	6.5

On the detail of monthly expenses, most respondents were spending with below RM 300 with the number of respondents was 45.5% (91 respondents), followed by 37.5% (75 respondents) had their monthly expense on average RM 301-RM 600. Respondents with monthly expense range of RM 601-RM 900 was recorded with 10.5% (21 respondents) while, expense of above RM 901 with 6.5% (13 respondents) from overall total respondents.