

Halalan Tayyiban Food Consumption: An Understanding Level on Gender Among Fully Residential Schools' Students in Selangor

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ABSTRACT

Halalan tayyiban is the main concept of food consumption for the Muslim community. The understanding level of *halalan tayyiban* may be diverse between males and females. This study aimed to compare the understanding level of *halalan tayyiban* food consumption among students of fully residential schools in Selangor by gender. Male and female students of fully residential schools in Selangor are involved as respondents ($n=490$). A questionnaire and IBM SPSS Statistics were utilised as instruments in data collection and data analysis, respectively. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics and non-parametric inferential statistics for comparing two independent group samples, the Mann-Whitney test. Mann-Whitney test indicates that "understanding of *halalan tayyiban* concept on food consumption" in "male" shows no significant difference (mean rank: 245.55) compared to "female" (mean rank: 245.45) with $U=29856$, $p=.978$. Overall, this study indicates that the comprehension of the *halalan tayyiban* concept in food consumption among students at totally residential schools in Selangor is likely to be similar for both males and females. A different population for a group of samples regarding this matter is recommended for future studies.

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Contribution/Originality: This study is one of very few studies which have investigated the understanding of *halalan tayyiban* consumption by gender among students in fully residential schools in Selangor. This study made a valuable contribution to the formulation of initiatives aimed at promoting healthy and sustainable dietary practices among this specific demographic.

1. Introduction

Halalan tayyiban is the main concept of food consumption for the Muslim community. It starts from the farm until the very last process, where the food is prepared using the permissible ingredients in a clean and hygienic manner before being put on the table. [Mustaffa \(2019\)](#) stated that the consumption of halal food is vital to a diet because it will have an impact on personality and individual development. In the context of Islamic belief, adhering to the principles of *halalan tayyiban* holds significant importance for Muslims. This adherence can be understood as an expression of *ubudiyah*, which signifies a sense of gratitude towards what has been bestowed upon Muslims. According to the study by [Amarul et al. \(2019\)](#), halal awareness, halal certificates, marketing campaigns, and halal brands all had a beneficial impact on consumers' interest in purchasing halal products; however, food quality had a negative effect on consumers' interest in purchasing halal products in Malaysia who were not Muslims.

Consumers have their perception of the halal and haram of a product. The same goes for gender. Males and females may have varying levels of understanding of *halalan tayyiban*. Research conducted by [Md Nawati et al. \(2023\)](#) stated that a positive attitude towards Halal standards in the food industry was significantly more prevalent among male respondents than it was among female respondents. However, [Ngah et al. \(2021\)](#) found that while gender does not exhibit any significant impact, attitude and brand image positively influence the intention to buy halal cosmetics. Consequently, researchers are able to observe the ways in which various genders can or cannot result in distinct behaviours and interpretations.

1.1. Research Objective

This study aimed to compare the understanding level of *halalan tayyiban* food consumption among students of fully residential schools in Selangor by gender.

1.2. Brief Concept of *Halalan Tayyiban* in Food Consumption

Halalan tayyiban is a core tenet of Islamic principle that provides Muslims with guidance on making ethically and legally sound decisions regarding their food and beverages. The notion incorporates not only the acceptability of specific food items but also highlights the importance of consuming nourishing, uncontaminated, and advantageous food ([Pg Hj Idris et al., 2022](#)). *Halalan tayyiban* mandates that Muslims ensure their food strictly complies with Islamic dietary regulations ([Othman et al., 2018](#)). This entails following the directions outlined in the Quran and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Muslims abstain from consuming pork, blood, alcohol, and other specifically prohibited things. Furthermore, it is imperative to adhere completely to the halal way of slaughtering, which encompasses specific rites and customs intended to safeguard the well-being of the animal and guarantee the legality of consuming its meat ([Arif & Sidek, 2015](#)).

In addition, the concept of *halalan tayyiban* promotes the idea of Muslims being conscientious about the origin and quality of their food. The concept promotes the intake of food that is devoid of contamination, pollution, and detrimental elements or impurities ([Tajudeen & Abdul-Rahman, 2020](#)). This entails refraining from consuming genetically modified food, highly processed food, or food that has detrimental elements. [Mohd Nor et al. \(2020\)](#) suggest that Muslims should give preference to natural and organic food choices that are produced in a sustainable and environmentally conscious

manner. In addition, the concept of *halalan tayyiban* underscores the significance of practicing moderation and maintaining a balanced diet. Muslims are advised to practise moderation in their eating habits, refraining from excessive and extravagant behaviour. This idea advocates for a nutritious and all-encompassing diet, where individuals are conscious of their nutritional requirements and make decisions that enhance their general well-being (Alzeer et al., 2018).

Furthermore, *halalan tayyiban* promotes the practice of Muslims sharing their meals with individuals who are less fortunate, thereby cultivating a spirit of benevolence and solidarity throughout the community. *Halalan Tayyiban* primarily guides Muslims to make deliberate and ethically upright decisions regarding their consumption of food and beverages. It involves following the dietary guidelines of Islam, consuming food that is pure and nutritious, and practicing moderation and balance. Through the adherence to these values, Muslims want to foster their physical well-being, protect their spiritual welfare, and make constructive contributions to their communities.

2. Literature Review

A number of recent global research have been reviewed. The research was carried out in Indonesia (Vanany et al., 2020), China (Shahzad et al., 2021), Thailand (Mohd Nawawi et al., 2020), Tuykiye (Haque et al., 2021), South Africa (Bashir, 2020), and India (Hassan & Sengupta, 2020).

Vanany et al. (2020) suggested augmenting the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) by incorporating several supplementary elements that impact customers' intentions to purchase halal food. The elements encompass perceived awareness, habitual behaviour, religious self-identity, moral obligations, and trust. Attitudes and moral obligations of individuals greatly influence their inclination to consume halal cuisine. Musthofa & Buhanudin (2021) found that university students in Indonesia had a profound comprehension of halal principles. When the MUI halal mark is absent from a product, they depend on other considerations like as the method of animal killing and the invocation of Allah SWT.

In addition, Shahzad et al. (2021) conducted a study that revealed a robust and affirmative association between the intake of halal food and moral attitudes, behaviours, and religious self-identity among Chinese Muslim consumers. The connection was notably influenced by individualism, which acted as a mediator. The demand for halal items among Chinese Muslims has surged due to the substantial growth in the Muslim population and their escalating purchasing power (Ismail, 2019). However, there is a dearth of literature that precisely investigates the purchase behaviours of Chinese Muslims, and their particular inclinations for halal products remain mostly undisclosed. The study conducted by Hong et al. (2019) reveals that the awareness and comprehension of halal principles among Muslim consumers in China have a substantial impact on their purchasing choices of halal items.

Furthermore, Mohd Nawawi et al. (2020) confirmed that Thailand's successful tourism business, which strengthens the country's reputation for halal products, is the reason for its significant role in the worldwide halal market. Moreover, Thailand's commitment to maintaining uniform halal definitions and standards, coupled with its effective assistance to local small and medium companies (SMEs), plays a significant role in its achievements. Food restaurant operators in Thailand face challenges when it comes to obtaining halal certification, especially if they have limited IT skills (Febrimayanti,

2020). Wannasupchue et al. (2023) found three impediments: the intricacy of the certification process, the insufficient dedication of restaurant owners, and the excessively high cost of attaining halal certification.

In addition, Haque et al. (2021) determined that the desire to buy halal food has an impact on the behavioural inclination of customers in Turkey. Furthermore, they determined that religiosity did not influence awareness of halal food. They also discovered that social variables significantly contributed to the awareness of halal food. Nevertheless, the probability analysis revealed that many factors, such as gender, age, marital status, income, occupation, and educational attainment, were associated with an individual's willingness to pay a higher price for halal food (Madenci et al., 2020).

Bashir (2020) observed that non-Muslim consumers in Cape Town exhibit a positive awareness level of knowledge about halal food, including an understanding of its advantages and the manufacturing process. The study also found that the global market does not solely use the term "halal" as a commercial designation or trademark. However, the concept of halal encompasses other aspects. One of its primary features is that for non-Muslim consumers, it serves as an indicator of health and hygiene. The psychological dimension widely views the concept of halal as a symbol of trust, comfort, and safety. Consumers experience a sense of reassurance when they choose to consume food goods that bear halal certification (Alfzari & Omain, 2022).

Hassan & Sengupta's (2019) research indicates that Indian customers and the market are becoming more aware of halal items. Moreover, the market demand for these products has expanded beyond the Muslim population. Halal products have emerged as a compelling choice for customers due to their ability to meet safety and environmental considerations. The presence of this feature is crucial for the successful operation of a certification firm in India (Hassan & Sengupta, 2019).

According to this review, this study identifies the population-based gap as a research gap (Miles, 2017). The population-based research gap is all about the uneven distribution of populations across different regions or differences in population size or characteristics within a given population. Previous research projects have collectively revealed a research gap in the field of population studies. Therefore, this study focuses on the population in Malaysia, which consists of students in fully residential schools. As a preliminary study, this study starts the data collection and analysis at fully residential schools in Selangor.

3. Research Methods

3.1. Sampling

This study utilised a quantitative survey approach. Students of fully residential schools in Selangor are involved as respondents ($n=490$). This study involves several selected fully residential schools in Selangor, namely: (a) Kolej Islam Sultan Alam Shah (KISAS); (b) Sekolah Menengah Agama Persekutuan Kajang (SMAPK); (c) Sekolah Berasrama Penuh Integrasi Gombak (INTEGOMB); (d) Sekolah Berasrama Penuh Integrasi Rawang (SEPINTAR); and (e) Sekolah Berasrama Penuh Integrasi Sabak Bernam (INTESABER). The sampling frame below (Table 1) provides the sample size for each of the listed schools, as this study uses the Krejcie & Morgan (1970) technique to determine sample size.

Table 1: Sampling Frame

Schools	Gender		Min. Sample Size (K&M)	Exact Sample Size
	Male	Female		
KISAS	81	84	116	165
SMAPK	24	64	72	88
INTEGOMB	22	24	41	46
SEPINTAR	49	42	74	91
INTESABER	52	48	80	100
Total	228	262	383	490

A questionnaire and IBM SPSS Statistics were utilised as instruments in data collection and data analysis, respectively. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics and non-parametric inferential statistics for comparing two independent group samples, the Mann-Whitney test.

3.2. Questionnaire Development

The questionnaire employs a Likert scale consisting of two (2) levels to assess the respondents' understanding level of *halalan tayyiban* food consumption in research methodology. The scale has two levels: (a) 1 for not understanding, and (b) 2 for understanding. The questionnaires have been developed based on three (3) themes: (a) Islamic understanding of *halalan tayyiban*; (b) halal logo application in food products; and (c) halal certification and information. The items in the questionnaire were developed based on a literature review of past research. The Alpha Cronbach reliability test findings for the questionnaire indicate a high degree of acceptance, with a coefficient of $\alpha=0.809$.

The table below presents the sequence of content development for the questionnaires. Each statement in the questionnaire was formulated based on the related items (Table 2):

Table 2: Development Item in Questionnaire with Particular Themes: (a) Understanding on *Halalan Tayyiban*; (b) Halal Logo Application in Food Products; and (c) Halal Certification and Information.

Theme	Researcher	Context
(a)	Aziz et al. (2023)	Al-Quran and sunnah as guides in selecting halal products for food consumption.
	Salamon et al. (2021)	
	Rahman et al. (2022)	Comprehending the concept of syubhah in selecting halal products for food consumption.
	Abd Razak et al. (2022)	
(b)	Zaini & Yoyo (2021)	The capability of recognising the authentic Malaysian halal logo on food products.
	Sumpin et al. (2019)	
	Hoque et al. (2020)	The halal logo is only used for certified halal products in advertisements.
	Yarar (2020)	
(c)	Ridwan (2020)	The Halal Malaysian Portal is not only the source for checking the halal status of food products.
	Helmi et al. (2020)	
	Aziz et al. (2021)	Halal certification in Malaysia is a voluntary

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the results, as well as a discussion of descriptive statistics and the Mann-Whitney test.

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

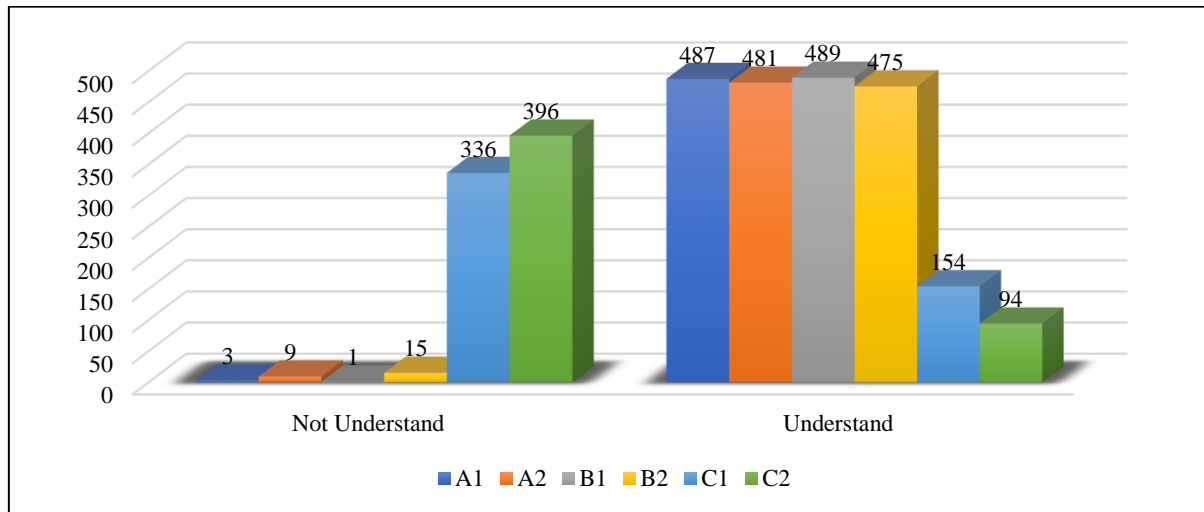
This study has utilised a descriptive statistic to indicate the level of understanding of *halalan tayyiban* food consumption among students of fully residential schools in Selangor by gender (Table 3 & Figure 1). Item C1 stated that "the Halal Malaysian Portal is not only the source for checking the halal status of food products." Only 154 students (31.4%) understood that there is another way to check the halal status of food products, such as using a phone application. The remaining number of students did not know about it. The rationale behind this is likely due to insufficient educational initiatives in the school's curriculum and a lack of accessible resources on *halalan tayyiban*.

On the other hand, item C2, which stated that "Halal certification is a voluntary basis and not an obligation," received the highest number of students who did not understand its meaning, totaling 396 students (80.8%). The students thought that the halal certification in Malaysia was mandatory, but it was not. Unlike Indonesia, halal certification in Malaysia and Singapore is voluntary rather than mandatory. Presumably, the industry's halal practitioners are the only ones who disseminate knowledge, leading to a lack of awareness among students about voluntary-basis information.

Table 3: The Frequency and Percentage of Items on Understanding Level of *Halalan Tayyiban* Food Consumption ($n=490$).

Code	Item	Frequency (Percentage)	
		Not Understand	Understand
A1	Al-Quran and sunnah as guides in selecting halal products for food consumption.	3 (0.6)	487 (99.4)
A2	Comprehending the concept of syubhah in selecting halal products for food consumption.	9 (1.8)	481 (98.2)
B1	The capability of recognising the authentic Malaysian halal logo on food products.	1 (0.2)	489 (99.8)
B2	The halal logo is only used for certified halal products in advertisements.	15 (3.1)	475 (96.9)
C1	The Halal Malaysian Portal is not only the source for checking the halal status of food products.	336 (68.6)	154 (31.4)
C2	Halal certification in Malaysia is a voluntary process and not an obligation.	396 (80.8)	94 (19.2)

Figure 1: The Frequency of the Understanding Level of *Halalan Tayyiban* Food Consumption ($n=490$).



Launched in 2019, the Halal Malaysian Portal plays a crucial role in the country's complex halal certification system, which integrates Islamic law, federal legislation, and modern administrative regulations (Midori, 2021). However, the 2014 Halal Product Guarantee Law has restricted the mainstream media's promotion of halal products (Suyono, 2020). Malaysia's commitment to enhancing its halal business and establishing itself as a worldwide centre is apparent through its rigorous halal standards and certification procedures (Yildirim, 2019). These studies emphasise the complex and diverse characteristics of Malaysia's halal certification system and the necessity for additional research on its efficacy and influence.

Various populations have different understandings of Halal certification as a voluntary practice. Amin et al. (2019) discovered that Muslim millennials in Malaysia possess a satisfactory level of awareness and knowledge regarding Halal certification, demonstrating a profound comprehension. Al Mubarak et al. (2023) highlighted the significance of Halal certification for both producers and consumers, stating that it is now obligatory for producers. This indicates an increasing acknowledgment of the need for halal certification. Abu Bakar et al. (2019) provided more evidence to reinforce this claim, highlighting that small and medium-sized business owners in Malaysia possess a comprehensive comprehension of the Halal concept and certification. Collectively, these studies demonstrate a favorable pattern in the comprehension and significance of halal certification.

4.2. Mann-Whitney Test

The Mann-Whitney test indicates that the “understanding of *halalan tayyiban* concept on food consumption” in “male” shows no significant difference (mean rank: 245.55) compared to “female” (mean rank: 245.45) with $U=29856$, $\rho=.978$ (Table 4).

This study demonstrates that both males and females have a good understanding of the level of *halalan tayyiban* food consumption. However, the table indicates that there are two items that both male and female students found difficult to understand. Perhaps it is because they do not have a deeper understanding of halal and tayyib. This study highly recommends students possess a comprehensive understanding of the notion of *halalan tayyiban*, as it directly influences the maqasid shariah, which is to safeguard the well-being and protection of the body. According to the analysis, it is necessary to establish a

robust procedure for the *halalan tayyiban* concept in Malaysia's food industry, which would train food handlers in supplying halal food in schools (Mustaffa, 2019). This would address the low understanding of halal food consumption among students.

Table 4: Mann-Whitney Test: (a) Ranks; (b) Test Statistics^a.

		Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
(a)	Understanding	Male	228	245.55	55986.00
		Female	262	245.45	64309.00
		Total	490		
(b)	Mann-Whitney U			29856.000	
	Z			-.028	
	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)			.978	

a. Grouping variable: Gender

Additionally, Kamarudin et al. (2022) propose that food enterprises, particularly in schools, should use the *halalan tayyiban* concept when it comes to food preparation and service. Deuraseh's (2019) study is in agreement with this, as it constructs conceptual frameworks for modern halal industrial products that have a worldwide impact. The primary objective of this modern halal conceptual framework is to offer substantial advantages to kids in schools by incorporating it into both academic curriculum and co-curricular activities. This can improve the comprehension of halal food intake.

The notion of *halalan tayyiban* in food consumption is strongly rooted in Islamic philosophy and the maqasid shariah, which aims to protect human well-being (Othman et al., 2018). Muslims are obligated to consume food that is both halal and thayyiban, indicating that it is of superior quality and safe for consumption (Sandra Dewi & Agustina, 2021). The concept mentioned has a profound impact on the spiritual lives of Muslims as it is intricately connected to the practice of abstaining from both eating and sexual urges (Salim & Abdullah, 2020). The notion of halal cuisine has been embraced by the Malay region, leading to the emergence of a halal food culture that incorporates local flavours and culinary traditions (Idris et al., 2019). Nevertheless, there is a dearth of comprehensive study regarding the disparities in comprehension and implementation of this notion among males and girls.

5. Conclusion

In summary, this study suggests that the understanding of the *halalan tayyiban* concept in food intake among students at fully residential schools in Selangor is expected to be comparable across boys and females. Moreover, this study suggests improving the school's educational programme to augment students' familiarity with *halalan tayyiban* eating. Every Muslim must have a thorough comprehension of the notion of *halalan tayyiban*. The significance of this understanding goes beyond Muslim students who are enrolled in secondary educational institutions in Malaysia.

Future studies on this matter should consider a different population for their sample group. This study also suggests using a cross-sectional research design to get a big picture of general progress in understanding halal food consumption among related populations. This type of research design is expected to contribute to halal education among students, which can be impacted by the behaviour of halal consumption. The Malaysian education system can enhance its curriculum by adopting the behaviour of halal consumption.

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

The researchers adhere to the research ethics guidelines established by the Research Ethics Committee of Universiti Teknologi MARA (RECUiTM). All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional research committee.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors reported no conflicts of interest for this work and declare that there is no potential conflict of interest concerning the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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