

## **Mediating effect of Halal image on Muslim consumers' intention to patronize retail stores: Some insights from Malaysia**

### **ABSTRACT**

Purpose – Muslim consumers' tendency to patronize stores with Halal images and purchase genuine Halal products is closely related to their effort to maintain Islamic identity, and this is further supported by many empirical data. Therefore, this paper aims to examine the relationships between attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control and Halal principle knowledge and their effect on Muslim consumers' behavioral intention to patronize retail stores. On top of that, the mediating effect of Halal image on these relationships is also investigated.

Design/methodology/approach – Data were analyzed using multiple and hierarchical regression analysis to test the model via the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software among 480 valid samples of Muslim consumers.

Findings – Empirical results of the hierarchical regression analysis and the Sobel test revealed that there is a significant mediating effect of Halal image on the relationship between consumers' attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control of consumers' behavioral intention to patronize retail stores. Consumers with high attentiveness of the stores' Halal image have a positive impression of the stores, a high motivation to patronize and, without any conditions, may follow through their intention to patronize the retail stores.

Practical implications – This research study offers guidelines to the retailers, marketers and the authorities in enhancing marketing strategies and the implementation of stricter Halal consumption laws. Hence, this research puts forward the following strategies: adopting Halal marketing strategy, promoting Halal images in retail stores and reinforcing Halal principle knowledge in the mind of consumers.

Originality/value – The main theoretical contribution relates to the insertion of the Halal image as a mediating variable in the matter of Muslim consumers' behavioral intention to patronize Halal stores in Malaysia. An inspection of the effect of Halal principle knowledge on Muslim consumers' behavioral intention to patronize retail stores is also rewarding.