



## Consumer Preferences Towards Halal Product Purchase Decisions with Purchase Intention as a Mediating Variable

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### ABSTRACT

This study explores the factors influencing halal product purchase decisions among the Muslim community in Lhokseumawe, with purchase intention acting as a mediating variable. The research is motivated by the growing demand for halal products and the need to understand consumer behaviour in Muslim-majority regions. The main objective is to examine how product quality, halal assurance, price, and consumer trust affect both purchase intention and the final purchase decision. A quantitative method was employed, using a sample of 152 respondents selected through snowball sampling from a population of 188,888 Muslim residents. Data were analysed using Structural Equation Modelling with a confirmatory approach. The findings indicate that product quality, halal assurance, price, and consumer trust all have a significant and positive impact on purchase intention. In turn, purchase intention significantly influences actual purchase decisions. Moreover, purchase intention effectively mediates the relationship between the influencing factors and the purchase decision. The study concludes that integrated marketing strategies emphasizing quality, price competitiveness, halal certification, and trust development are essential to strengthen consumer engagement and expand the halal product market in similar demographic settings.

## 1. Introduction

The early Medieval period (476–1000 AD), commonly referred to as the "Dark Ages," was a transitional phase in Europe defined by the disintegration of the Western Roman Empire and the ascendance of religious authority, notably that of the Roman Catholic Church. This supremacy influenced not only spiritual existence but also social, political, and economic frameworks, solidifying a distinction between the sacred and the secular. Gradually, this separation established the foundation for secular reasoning, culminating in a secular viewpoint on economic activities. In the contemporary secular framework, consuming is frequently

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diminished to the satisfaction of material cravings, devoid of ethical or spiritual implications. This transition has cultivated selfish and hedonistic consumer behaviour, sometimes disregarding moral considerations such as social justice or environmental consequences. Conversely, Islamic teachings perceive consumption as a comprehensive act regulated by ethical, physical, and spiritual elements, informed by the principles of *maqasid al-shariah*, *halal*, and *tayyib*.

Islamic ethical consumerism entails refraining from things associated with injustice or oppression. Boycott movements, particularly those related to the Israel–Palestine conflict, exemplify social endeavours to synchronize consumption with ethical principles. Nevertheless, these movements frequently exhibit inconsistency, diminishing when media focus diminishes—a phenomenon referred to as “seasonal Palestine.” In Indonesia, the largest Muslim-majority nation globally, awareness of *halal* consumption is increasing, propelling the growth of the *halal* industry across all industries. Brands such as HNI HPAI, Wardah, and Safi have cultivated consumer confidence by highlighting *sharia*-compliant principles. However, obstacles persist, such as inadequate *halal* literacy, restricted access to information, and ambivalent opinions regarding the quality of local products. Comprehending buying intention is essential in this setting. This psychological concept connects attitude and conduct, facilitating the evaluation of whether ethical and religious ideals influence actual purchasing decisions. Investigating the determinants of *halal* purchasing intention is crucial for formulating effective, value-oriented marketing strategies within the *halal* economy.

Furthermore, consumer preference is a complex, multifaceted construct shaped by both rational assessment and emotional appeal. In this context, ethical considerations, brand perception, and socio-religious norms profoundly influence purchasing behaviour, especially in categories with moral or religious importance, such as *halal* products. (Byrne, 2020; Wu et al., 2021). Empirical research indicates an increasing customer readiness to pay a premium for products that reflect ethical principles, including animal welfare and environmental sustainability. Reliable ethical labeling is essential for fostering confidence and facilitating value-aligned purchase choices. (Thibault et al., 2022). In Indonesia, factors such as *halal* assurance, perceived product quality, and access to digital information substantially influence Muslim consumer attitudes and purchase intentions (Cahyani & Sumadi, 2023). Furthermore, consumers’ knowledge of product composition and benefits reinforces ethical selectivity and decision-making (Rombach & Dean, 2021).

Trust in certification authorities and brand integrity forms the foundation for sustainable consumer preferences. Notably, *halal* certification and quality assurance significantly increase willingness to pay among consumers with heightened religious and health consciousness (Wu et al., 2021; Alsubhi et al., 2022). This highlights the need for an integrated marketing strategy that combines ethical alignment, product excellence, and religious compliance—especially in Muslim-majority markets such as Lhokseumawe.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Product Quality as a Driver of Preference**

Product quality remains a central determinant of consumer choice, particularly for ethically sensitive goods like *halal* food. Conceptually, quality encompasses sensory, functional, and symbolic dimensions (Grunert, 2005; Steenkamp, 1990). While direct consumption shapes experiential quality, extrinsic cues—such as labeling, brand reputation, and digital reviews—play an increasingly influential role in shaping perceptions (Yeh et al., 2021). In *halal* contexts, quality is understood not only in terms of *sharia* compliance but also hygiene, food safety, and palatability (Rezai et al., 2012). This holistic preference structure underscores the convergence of ethical and functional expectations among Muslim consumers. For experience goods, whose quality is only apparent post-consumption (Nelson, 1970), pre-purchase credibility is critical. Thus, producers must prioritize transparent communication and consistent product standards to build long-term consumer loyalty (Hollebeek et al., 2019). In essence, product quality serves as a conduit between functional utility and ethical reassurance. Firms that effectively integrate these dimensions are more likely to command consumer trust and justify price premiums.

## **2.2 Halal Assurance: Governance Challenges and Systemic Reinforcement**

Halal assurance is vital for protecting consumer rights and upholding the sanctity of the halal value chain. Halalness spans not only ingredient legality but also the integrity of production, distribution, and service processes, ensuring freedom from haram and najis contamination (Riaz & Chaudry, 2004). However, widespread fraud—especially in meat products—remains a serious concern, as evidenced by pork DNA findings through PCR analysis in Indonesian markets (Siswara et al., 2022; Windarsih et al., 2022). These incidents expose deficiencies in monitoring and underscore the need for more rigorous halal auditing and regulatory enforcement (Alqudsi, 2014). The misuse of halal labels and false claims further erodes consumer trust, necessitating robust reporting and verification mechanisms (Halim & Salleh, 2020). Digitalizing the halal certification system emerges as a strategic imperative, enhancing traceability, institutional accountability, and public access to reliable information (Zainal et al., 2021). Strengthening forensic laboratory capacity and fostering cross-sectoral collaboration will further bolster the credibility of halal verification systems. While the implementation of Law No. 33 of 2014 marks a regulatory milestone, its effectiveness hinges on human resource readiness, laboratory infrastructure, and the capacity of Halal Product Assurance Bodies (LPH), particularly in engaging MSMEs (Solihin, 2020). A robust halal assurance ecosystem must therefore rest on scientific rigor, institutional transparency, and ethical integrity to safeguard consumer trust and elevate the global competitiveness of Indonesian halal products.

## **2.3 Price and Consumer Behavior: Integrating Economic, Psychological, and Ethical Perspectives**

Price functions beyond a mere exchange value; it serves as an informational signal and a reflection of consumers' subjective valuations. Contemporary consumer price perceptions are shaped by search costs, personalization, promotions, and ethical-social considerations. Elevated search costs diminish demand elasticity and market participation, reducing overall efficiency (Ellison & Wolitzky, 2012). Meanwhile, data-driven personalized pricing optimizes margins but raises ethical concerns regarding fairness and transparency (Chen et al., 2016). The social significance of price is evident in phenomena such as the price entitlement effect, where consumers accept higher prices linked to status or symbolic meaning; egalitarian marketing can challenge these perceptions (Lee & Winterich, 2020). Digital price promotions can enhance purchase intentions without degrading perceived quality, contingent upon framing and context (Isojärvi & Aspara, 2023). Heuristic pricing strategies demonstrate effectiveness in complex, information-limited markets (Gahler & Hruschka, 2022). Progressive pricing aligned with consumer purchasing power offers an ethical framework, albeit reliant on robust data governance and privacy (Coker & Izaret, 2021). Therefore, effective pricing strategies require a synergistic integration of economic, psychological, and ethical dimensions, leveraging data and consumer welfare to build trust amid market complexity.

## **2.4 Trust in Consumer Behaviour: A Multidimensional and Strategic Construct**

Trust encompasses social performativity, collective expectations, and risk-benefit assessments. It is fundamental to consumer loyalty, satisfaction, and institutional legitimacy (Carter, 2022). In digital settings, intuitive design and consistent service interactions bolster consumer trust (Guo et al., 2023; Uslu et al., 2020). Corporate crisis management further influences brand credibility (Zhang et al., 2023; Tong et al., 2022). At the societal level, institutional trust correlates with policy compliance, notably during crises like the global pandemic (Devine et al., 2023; Power et al., 2023). However, uncritical trust risks social accountability and governance. Consequently, trust management must prioritize transparency, consistency, and adaptive accountability, viewing trust as a collective asset vital for policy efficacy and sustainable market relationships.

## **2.5 Purchase Intention: Psychological Drivers and Marketing Strategy Implications**

Purchase intention reflects consumers' psychological readiness and is pivotal for marketing strategies. Key determinants include perceived quality, price, brand image, shopping experience, and trust (Dewi & Achsa, 2021; Mursit et al., 2022). Its dimensions span transactional, preferential, referential, and exploratory facets, with social media and digital engagement enhancing emotional connection and trust (Rohman, 2023; Beddu et al., 2022). Grasping these dynamics enables marketers to craft responsive, data-informed strategies

that align with evolving consumer values and behaviors, fostering sustained brand relevance and competitive advantage.

### **2.6 Halal Product Purchase Decisions: Interplay of Expectations, Social Capital, and Religious Commitment**

Halal purchase decisions emerge from a complex interplay of individual expectations, social networks, and religious adherence. Purchase intention mediates external factors and actual buying behavior (Jia et al., 2022). Expectations on product sustainability, certification credibility, and quality assurance significantly reinforce buying intentions (Jia et al., 2022). Social capital—including community trust and collective engagement—strengthens confidence in halal products and institutions (Rahman et al., 2024). Religious commitment is a primary motivator, often correlating with a willingness to pay premiums for Shariah-compliant products. Distribution channel preferences—online versus offline—impact perceptions of trust, convenience, and pricing. Adaptive, value-driven distribution strategies are critical for effective halal marketing (Merten et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2021). Thus, a holistic halal marketing approach integrating consumer education, credible certification, and social networking fosters loyalty and aligns consumption with religious and social values.

## **3. Methodology**

### **3.1 Research Approach and Design**

This study employs a **quantitative, descriptive-analytical** approach to systematically examine causal relationships among variables influencing Muslim consumers' purchase decisions. The design integrates **Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)**, a robust statistical technique that enables simultaneous analysis of multiple relationships and latent constructs, allowing for comprehensive testing of both **direct and indirect effects** within a conceptual model. The adoption of SEM is supported by its proven application in studies exploring consumer behavior and decision-making across various domains (Sodawan & Hsu, 2022; Guo & You, 2023).

### **3.2 Variables and Model Framework**

The study's conceptual model includes:

- **Endogenous Variable:** *Purchase Decision*
- **Exogenous Variables:** *Product Quality, Halal Assurance, Price, and Trust*
- **Intervening Variable:** *Purchase Intention*

This structure aligns with established theories such as the **Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)**, emphasizing the mediating role of intention in linking attitudes and actual behavior (Bukhari et al., 2020; Elsitasari & Ishak, 2021).

### **3.3 Data Sources and Collection**

The study utilizes both **primary** and **secondary** data:

- **Primary Data:** Collected through online questionnaires (Google Forms) and supported by structured interviews to enhance validity. Indicators for each variable were developed based on the literature and tested using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).
- **Secondary Data:** Sourced from authoritative institutions, notably **LPPOM-MUI** and related literature, to substantiate the theoretical foundation (Annis et al., 2023).

This mixed-data strategy enables triangulation, enriching both the **breadth and depth** of empirical findings while mitigating biases inherent in single-source data (Firdausy & Budisetyowati, 2022).

### 3.4 Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique

The population comprises Muslim consumers in **Lhokseumawe City** (188,888 individuals, 2020). Following Bentler and Chou’s rule (in Hasanah, 2014), the minimum sample size is 115, based on 23 indicators. A total of **152 valid responses** were obtained using **snowball sampling**, enhancing outreach and mitigating outlier effects.

### 3.5 Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis was conducted in two stages:

- **Descriptive Analysis:** Summarized respondent demographics and variable distributions using central tendency and dispersion measures.
- **Inferential Analysis:** Employed **SEM-AMOS 22**, integrating **CFA** and **Path Analysis** for model validation and hypothesis testing. SEM is particularly effective in analyzing latent constructs and complex mediational paths (Latan, 2013; Nurhasanah et al., 2017).

### 3.6 Instrument Validity and Reliability

- **Validity:** Assessed using CFA, with a factor loading threshold of >0.5.
- **Reliability:** Evaluated using **Cronbach’s Alpha**, with all constructs meeting the >0.7 benchmark, indicating strong internal consistency.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Data Description

A total of 152 respondents participated in the study. Of these, 53.95% preferred cosmetic products, while 46.05% favored health and herbal items. In terms of brand preference, HNI HPAI led with 44.08% of respondents, followed by Wardah (42.11%) and SAFI (7.24%). Other brands, such as Fabil Beauty and NASA, accounted for smaller shares, while 3.29% selected alternative products including olive oil and Nalpamara. Consumer loyalty appeared notably strong, with 77.6% identifying as long-term users of halal products and only 22.4% as recent adopters. These findings suggest not only varied consumer preferences but also a robust and sustained commitment to halal-certified goods, highlighting the sector's potential for long-term market resilience and growth.

**Table.1** Respondents’ Preferences for Halal Products and Brands

No.	Category	Subcategory	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Type of Preferred Halal Product	Cosmetics	82	53.95
		Health and Herbal Products	70	46.05
2	Preferred Brand	HNI HPAI	67	44.08
		Wardah	64	42.11
		SAFI	11	7.24
		Fabil Beauty	3	1.97
		NASA	2	1.32
		Others (e.g., Olive Oil, Nalpamara)	5	3.29

3	Loyalty to Halal Products	Long-Term Users	118	77.6
		New Users	34	22.4

Cheung et al. (2023) emphasize that in Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), a standardized factor loading of 0.50 or higher is acceptable, while values above 0.70 are considered ideal for establishing strong convergent validity. In addition, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) should exceed 0.50 to confirm that a construct explains more than half of the variance in its indicators. In this study, all indicators showed loading factors greater than 0.60, with AVE values surpassing the recommended threshold, indicating that all items are valid measures of their respective latent constructs and meet contemporary standards of convergent validity.

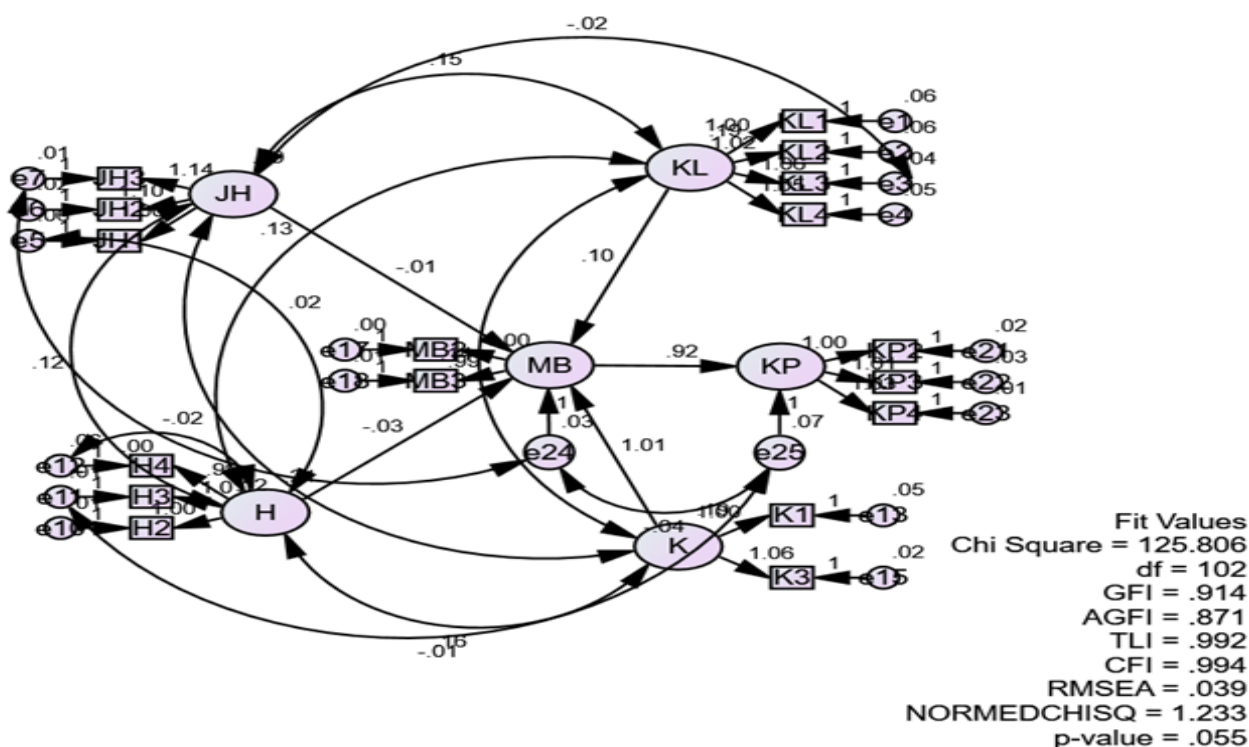


Fig 1. Model Testing Results

#### 4.2 Assumption Testing in Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Prior to conducting the structural modeling phase of SEM, it is essential to ensure that the dataset satisfies several fundamental statistical assumptions that underpin the validity of the model. Assumption testing is conducted to evaluate the appropriateness of the data for SEM analysis, which includes: (1) multivariate normality, (2) absence of multicollinearity or singularity, and (3) absence of outliers. The results of these diagnostic tests are presented as follows:

##### a. Normality Assessment

Normality is a critical prerequisite in SEM, particularly when employing the Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) method. The assessment of normality was carried out by examining the **Critical Ratio (C.R.) of skewness**. According to Byrne (2010), univariate normality is assumed when the C.R. value for skewness falls within the range of  $\pm 2.58$  at a 0.01 significance level.

The analysis revealed that all indicators exhibited C.R. values for skewness within the acceptable threshold, indicating that the data are normally distributed at the univariate level. Furthermore, the multivariate normality test did not indicate any significant deviations, thereby confirming that the assumption of normality required for CFA modeling was satisfactorily met.

#### **b. Multicollinearity and Singularity Assessment**

Multicollinearity and singularity are statistical conditions that can compromise model estimation in SEM, particularly by leading to model non-identification. A commonly used diagnostic indicator for these issues is the **determinant of the covariance matrix**. A determinant value approaching zero suggests the presence of high multicollinearity or singularity (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Ghozali, 2011).

In this study, the determinant of the covariance matrix was found to be **0.494**, which falls within the acceptable range. This indicates that the data are free from multicollinearity and singularity problems, thereby affirming their suitability for further structural modelling.

#### **c. Outlier Detection**

Multivariate outliers were identified using Mahalanobis Distance analysis, evaluated against the Chi-Square critical value corresponding to the degrees of freedom equal to the number of observed indicators (Ullman, 2006). With 23 indicators included in the model, the Chi-Square threshold at a significance level of  $p < 0.001$  is **49.728**. The results revealed that all Mahalanobis Distance values for the respondents were below this critical threshold, indicating the absence of multivariate outliers. This finding reinforces the reliability and robustness of the dataset for subsequent SEM analysis.

**Table 2.** Goodness-of-Fit Indices for the SEM Model

<b>Fit Index</b>	<b>Cut-off Value</b>	<b>Model Value</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ )	$p > 0.05$ (ideal)	125,806	[Acceptable/Good]
CMIN/DF ( $\chi^2/df$ )	$< 3.00$	1,233	[Acceptable/Good]
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	$< 0.08$	0,039	[Acceptable/Good]
Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI)	$\geq 0.90$	0,914	[Acceptable/Good]
Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI)	$\geq 0.90$	0,871	[Acceptable/Good]
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	$\geq 0.90$	0,994	[Acceptable/Good]
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	$\geq 0.90$	0,992	[Acceptable/Good]
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	$\geq 0.90$	0,997	[Acceptable/Good]
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	$\geq 0.90$	0,932	[Acceptable/Good]

### **4.3 Model Fit Evaluation**

The evaluation of model fit was conducted using a comprehensive set of goodness-of-fit indices, as presented in Table 2. The results demonstrate that the structural model meets the recommended thresholds across all key indicators, indicating a robust and well-fitting model. The **Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ )** value of 125.806, while statistically significant, is acceptable given the model complexity and sample size. More importantly, the **CMIN/DF ( $\chi^2/df$ )** ratio of 1.233 falls well below the recommended maximum of 3.00, suggesting a parsimonious model with minimal discrepancy between the observed and estimated covariance matrices. The **RMSEA** value of 0.039 further supports the model's adequacy, indicating a close fit with minimal approximation error. Additionally, the **GFI (0.914)** and **AGFI (0.871)** values reflect a satisfactory level of absolute fit, with GFI exceeding the conventional threshold of 0.90 and AGFI approaching it.

Incremental fit indices also confirm the model's strength. The **CFI (0.994)**, **TLI (0.992)**, **NFI (0.997)**, and **IFI (0.932)** all surpass the recommended cut-off of 0.90, indicating that the proposed model significantly improves upon the baseline model. Collectively, these results provide strong empirical support for the model's validity and suggest that the hypothesized relationships among constructs are well-represented by the data. The model can thus be considered both statistically sound and theoretically meaningful, justifying its use in subsequent hypothesis testing and interpretation.

**Tabel.3** hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Path	Estimate	C.R. (Critical Ratio)	p-value	Conclusion
H1	Product Quality → Purchase Intention	0,501	7,261	0,000	Supported
H2	Halal Assurance → Purchase Intention	0,432	7,714	0,000	Supported
H3	Price → Purchase Intention	0,294	5,096	0,000	Supported
H4	Trust → Purchase Intention	0,323	10,094	0,000	Supported
H5	Purchase Intention → Purchase Decision	0,522	9,677	0,000	Supported
H6	Product Quality → Purchase Intention → Purchase Decision	0.698	8.863	0,000	Supported
H7	Halal Assurance → Purchase Intention → Purchase Decision	0.815	9.462	0,000	Supported
H8	Price → Purchase Intention → Purchase Decision	0.632	8.007	0,000	Supported
H9	Trust → Purchase Intention → Purchase Decision	0.901	15.401	0,000	Supported

The hypothesis testing results confirm that product quality, halal assurance, price, and trust significantly influence purchase intention, which in turn strongly predicts purchase decision. Product quality emerged as the most influential factor ( $\beta = 0.501$ ), followed by halal assurance ( $\beta = 0.432$ ), trust ( $\beta = 0.323$ ), and price ( $\beta = 0.294$ ). Purchase intention itself showed a strong direct effect on purchase decision ( $\beta = 0.522$ ), validating its mediating role. These findings align with the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) model, emphasizing that consumer behavior is shaped by both rational evaluation and symbolic meaning. In the halal context, quality and trust are not only functional attributes but also indicators of ethical and religious integrity. Empirical support from previous studies (Satria, 2017; Utami & Saputra, 2017; Rahman et al., 2024) reinforces the importance of integrating quality, religious assurance, and brand credibility in shaping consumer intention. Price remains relevant when aligned with perceived value.

Strategically, these insights highlight the need for halal product marketers to ensure product excellence, transparent certification, fair pricing, and consistent brand communication. A value-based approach is essential to build trust, drive purchase behavior, and sustain competitiveness in the halal market. The findings confirm that product quality significantly and positively influences consumer purchase intention in the halal product context. Higher perceived quality—whether functional, aesthetic, or symbolic—strengthens the likelihood of purchase, while lower quality perceptions diminish it. This result is supported by prior studies (Satria, 2017; Utami & Saputra, 2017), which emphasize that reliability, consistency, and alignment with consumer expectations are key drivers of intention, particularly in markets shaped by Islamic consumption values. Theoretically, this aligns with Kotler and Keller's (2016) model, where perceived quality is central to shaping attitudes and behavior. In halal markets, quality also signals ethical integrity and brand credibility. Strategically, halal producers must ensure excellence across the value chain—from raw material selection and halal-compliant processes to packaging and branding. When integrated with Shariah principles, quality assurance enhances competitiveness, builds trust, and fosters long-term consumer loyalty.

#### **4.4 The Influence of Product Quality on Consumer Purchase Intention for Halal Products**

The results confirm that product quality significantly and positively influences consumer purchase intention in the halal product context. Higher perceived quality—whether functional, aesthetic, or symbolic—strengthens consumers' willingness to purchase, while lower quality perceptions reduce it. This finding is supported by prior studies (Satria, 2017; Utami & Saputra, 2017), which emphasize that reliability, durability, and alignment with consumer expectations are key drivers of intention, especially in markets shaped by Islamic consumption values. Theoretically, this aligns with Kotler and Keller's (2016) model, where perceived quality is central to shaping attitudes and behavior. In halal markets, quality also signals ethical integrity and religious compliance. Strategically, halal producers must ensure excellence across the value chain—from raw material selection and halal-compliant production to packaging and branding. When integrated with Shariah principles, quality assurance enhances competitiveness, builds trust, and fosters long-term consumer loyalty.

#### **4.5 The Influence of Halal Assurance on Purchase Intention**

The results confirm that halal assurance has a significant and positive effect on consumer purchase intention. Strong halal assurance—through certification, labeling, or brand reputation—enhances consumer confidence and increases the likelihood of purchase, while ambiguity or weak credibility may reduce trust and intention. This finding aligns with prior studies (Alfikri et al., 2019; Aminuddin, 2018), which emphasize that halal awareness and perceived Shariah compliance are key drivers of intention, particularly in religiously motivated markets. From a behavioral perspective, halal assurance reflects a brand's commitment to religious values, not merely a symbolic label. Therefore, transparent certification and consistent communication are essential to building trust and encouraging engagement. In a competitive halal market, credible halal assurance serves as a strategic differentiator—reinforcing brand integrity and fostering long-term consumer loyalty.

#### **4.6 The Influence of Price on Purchase Intention**

Hypothesis testing (Table 3) confirms that price has a positive and significant effect on consumers' intention to purchase halal products, supporting the third hypothesis. This suggests that price is not merely a financial factor but also a signal of quality, especially in the halal context where safety, hygiene, and religious compliance are critical. Interestingly, higher prices may enhance purchase intention when perceived as reflecting superior quality. Conversely, lower prices can raise doubts about product integrity. This aligns with findings by Satria (2017) and Prawira & Yasa (2014), who emphasized the role of perceived value in shaping purchase decisions. Price thus serves both economic and psychological functions. In halal markets, it may also reflect the cost of maintaining halal standards across the supply chain. Therefore, pricing strategies should align with perceived value and be communicated transparently to foster consumer trust. In essence, halal consumers are value-sensitive rather than price-sensitive. Businesses must ensure that pricing reflects not only affordability but also quality, ethics, and religious assurance.

#### **4.7 The Influence of Trust on Purchase Intention**

Hypothesis testing (Table 3) reveals that trust significantly and positively influences consumers' intention to purchase halal products, validating the fourth hypothesis. As trust increases, so does purchase intention; a decline in trust, conversely, diminishes it. Trust acts as a psychological assurance, reducing perceived risk—especially important in halal markets where compliance is not always directly observable. It fosters consumer confidence and shapes behavioral intentions. This aligns with findings by Solihin (2020) and Alwafi & Magnadi (2016), who highlight trust as a key determinant in ethically and religiously sensitive markets. Theoretically, trust reflects perceived integrity, competence, and benevolence of producers. In halal contexts, it is built through transparent certification, consistent quality, and adherence to Islamic values. Thus, cultivating trust through credible certification, ethical practices, and clear communication is essential for enhancing purchase intention and sustaining long-term consumer loyalty.

#### **4.8 The Influence of Purchase Intention on Purchase Decision**

Table 3 confirms that purchase intention significantly and positively affects the decision to buy halal products, supporting the fifth hypothesis. This indicates that strong purchase intention is a key predictor of actual consumer behaviour in Lhokseumawe. Purchase intention acts as a mediator, translating attitudes shaped by quality, price, halal assurance, and trust into real purchasing actions. It reflects a consumer's readiness and commitment to act. This finding aligns with Solihin (2020) and Assael (2004), who emphasize that higher intention increases the likelihood of purchase. In the halal context, where ethical and religious values are central, intention captures both rational and emotional motivations. Strengthening purchase intention through consistent quality, credible halal certification, fair pricing, and brand trust is essential for converting interest into action and sustaining growth in the halal market.

#### **4.9 The Influence of Purchase Intention on Purchase Decision**

Table 3 confirms that purchase intention significantly and positively influences halal purchase decisions in Lhokseumawe, supporting the fifth hypothesis. A stronger intention correlates with a higher likelihood of actual purchase. Purchase intention reflects a consumer's psychological readiness to act, shaped by perceived quality, fair pricing, halal certification, and brand trust. When these factors align, they drive purchasing behaviour. This finding aligns with Solihin (2020) and Assael (2004), who identify purchase intention as a reliable predictor of consumer action. Strategically, enhancing purchase intention through quality assurance, transparent halal certification, value-based pricing, and brand credibility is essential for converting intention into action and fostering long-term loyalty in the halal market.

#### **4.10 The Mediating Role of Purchase Intention**

The analysis confirms that purchase intention significantly mediates the relationship between product quality, halal assurance, price, and trust with purchase decision. The increased total effect values highlight its amplifying role in translating consumer perceptions into actual behaviour. When direct effects exceed indirect ones, it suggests that purchase intention not only connects but strengthens the influence of key attributes on decision-making. Consumers in Lhokseumawe are more likely to purchase when their intention is shaped by positive evaluations of quality, price fairness, halal credibility, and trust. These findings emphasize the strategic importance of cultivating purchase intention as a behavioural driver. Strengthening this mediating factor enables businesses to more effectively convert consumer attitudes into purchasing actions, enhancing responsiveness in the halal market.

#### 4. Conclusion

This study provides compelling evidence that product quality, halal assurance, price, and consumer trust significantly influence purchase intention toward halal products. Furthermore, purchase intention serves as an effective mediating variable, reinforcing the impact of these factors on actual purchase decisions. These findings highlight the necessity of a holistic marketing strategy that integrates functional excellence, religious compliance, economic value, and psychological assurance. Theoretically, the results align with the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) model, both of which emphasize the role of perceived value, symbolic meaning, and trust in shaping consumer behavior. In the context of the increasingly competitive global halal economy, product success requires more than halal certification—it demands tangible quality and a compelling consumer experience. From a managerial perspective, these insights call for comprehensive quality management—from raw material selection and halal-compliant production processes to transparent and consistent brand communication. Trust must be cultivated as a strategic asset, supported by credible certification, open information, and service that reflects Islamic values. Additionally, fair and value-aligned pricing is essential to maintain competitiveness and foster consumer loyalty. In essence, the development of superior halal products must reflect a seamless integration of functional and spiritual dimensions. A value-based marketing approach will serve as a foundation for expanding market reach, enhancing satisfaction, and building lasting loyalty among increasingly discerning Muslim consumers.

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