

## **Halal Food Consumption Intention by Turkish Immigrants**

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**ABSTRACT** :Individuals, families or communities who leave their own country to settle in another country are called immigrants. The study of immigrants is rooted in many disciplines. Recently immigrants as consumers are started to be studied by the marketing researchers. Immigrants with different needs, wants and consumption patterns constitute big consumer groups in various parts of the world. Immigrant consumers when immigrated to another country may maintain their original consumption culture, adopt the home country's consumption culture or express a hybrid consumption culture. This study is to explain the determinants of Muslim immigrants in consuming halal food. Theory of Planned Behavior is used as a theoretical framework component which are attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. A quantitative approach was used to collect data. This study contributes to an understanding of the halal food consuming behavior of immigrants.

**Keywords:** Halal Food, Immigrants, Theory of Planned Behavior

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Migrants cross the boundaries by carrying cultures bilaterally along with them and help the enhancement of diversity of global consumer culture. The presence of Mexican restaurants, Indian clothes, African jewelries and world music all over the world shows the people the existence of other options and offers the opportunity also for their use. Further, encountering different identities of each other by these people as global persons, constitutes a dynamic struggle of differences and similarities [1]. Immigrants bring along many beliefs and experiences they hold when they come to their new homes. Religious beliefs and religious experiences are one of most important. Migration and living in a new country is really a difficult experience and religion is one of the biggest assistance and motivation for immigrants in this experience. Religion is able to assist immigrants in handling the pressure of adaptation to the culture they are faced with and depression of departing from their home countries, and coping with this experience in general. In general, all religions proposal certain prohibitions and freedoms. The influence of religion especially on the consumption. Muslim consumers consume halal food for the sake of complying with religious rules. The Islamic food rules are built on the “halal and haram” concepts, all foods except those that are characterized as haram in the Quran as accepted to be halal [2].

This paper examines the role of attitudes towards halal food, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control in the intentions of Muslims immigrants when consumption halal foods. There are approximately 2 billion Muslims in the world [3]. There are around 13 million Muslims in Western Europe. The origins of this population are North Africa, Turkey, the Balkans and South Asia. The Muslim population is over 10% in certain European cities. Therefore, Muslim immigrants are creating an important market [2]. Immigrant consumers tend to display different consumption behavior. The immigrants have especially been addressed in this study because the halal food perception is low among the populations of the origin country. It is especially important for Muslims immigrants to consume halal food. Halal is an Arabic term meaning “permissible”. And it refers to anything that is permissible under Islam. Most foods are halal unless Islamic law specially prohibits them [4]. The halal industry is considered as one of the fastest growing industries and is estimated to accelerate further in the world market [5]. There are two reasons, the halal food market is the fastest growing in the world. First, it can be linked to religious beliefs that it is clean and healthy. Second, for the acceptance of halal within the global population through the process of assimilation [6].

### **II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES**

In this study is to research the intentions of the halal food consumption in the frame of the Theory of Planned Behavior within Muslims originating especially from Turkey living in Germany. Theory of Planned Behavior is the intention of an individual to carry out a certain behavior. There are three determinants of intention in the Planned Behavior Theory. The first two of these are constituted by the attitude and subjective norm variables, and the third predecessor of intention is the perceived behavioral control over the behavior. As a general rule, the more favorable the attitude and subjective norms aimed for a behavior are and the higher the perceived behavioral control over the behavior is, the stronger will be the intention of the individual to carry out that behavior [7].

### **Attitude**

Attitudes express the degree that the individual evaluates a queried behavior as positive or negative. Alam and Sayuti (2011) have found a positive and important relationship between the attitudes and intentions developed by an individual to purchase halal food. In the same research, the Planned Behavior Model has explained the intention to purchase halal products by 29.1%. Attitude is regarded as an important element influencing the consumer's intention, because consumers who have a high level of positive attitude towards halal food also develop a high level of intention to purchase halal food [6]. This finding reinforces the position of Ajzen (1988) on that attitude may be defined as an important element in predicting and defining human behavior. In this research, attitude can be seen as a positive relationship to choose halal food, thus our first hypothesis is:

*H1: There is a positive relationship between attitude of Muslim Turkish immigrants and their intentions in consuming halal food.*

### **Subjective Norm**

Subjective norm is a belief on whether certain individuals or groups will approve of the behavior or not [8]. If purchasing halal food is a socially desired behavior, the individual who takes the opinions of the other members of the society into account will have a higher probability to purchase halal food. Subjective norm is the social pressure perceived by the individual in his decisions to purchase halal food [6]. Bonne et al. (2007), in their research examined the attitudes of Muslims living in France purchase of halal meat according to the Planned Behavior Theory. They found out that attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control are important in the intention to consume halal meat [9]. Lada et al. (2009) have demonstrated that subjective norm is important in influencing intention. In their research, Lada et al. (2009) found that subjective norms are a function of the beliefs of individuals, who feel that they belong to a certain group and act by accepting a certain behavior that conforms to the norms of that group, as is the case of consuming halal food [4]. Bonne et al. (2007) have found a positive and important relationship between subjective norm and intention [9]. In relation to the above, our second hypothesis is tested as follow:

*H2: There is a positive relationship between subjective norms of Muslim Turkish immigrants and their intentions in consuming halal food.*

### **Perceived Behavioral Control**

Perceived behavioral control expresses how easy or how difficult a behavior is perceived by an individual. It is the individual's belief on how much a certain behavior is under his control [10]. The level of perceived behavioral control is evaluated by grading as based on the occurrence frequency of factors that facilitate or suppress the performance of the behavior. These are internal control such as knowledge, personal and external control such as opportunities, dependence on others factors. The more resources and opportunities an individual has and the fewer obstacles he encounters, the higher the perceived control of the individual will be on that behavior. In their research, Omar et al. (2012) have demonstrated that the higher the individual's perceived control over purchasing halal food is, the higher is the intention of that individual to purchase halal food [11]. Based on the framework above, our third hypothesis is:

*H3: There is a positive relationship between perceived behavioral control of Muslim Turkish immigrants and their intentions in consuming halal food.*

In conceptualizing the predicting halal food consumption in this research, attitude towards behavior is referred to the respondents to consume halal food. Secondly, the subjective norm is a perceived social pressure for immigrant consumers in consuming halal food. The third determinant is perceived behavioral control which defined as a belief about individual control of the opportunities and availability of halal food in Germany. Therefore, attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control are believed to be influential in the intentions in consuming halal food.

## **III. METHODS**

### **Participants**

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the halal food consumption behavior of Muslim Turkish immigrants living in Germany. This survey was conducted in Cologne, Germany where is considered as the high rate of Turkish immigrants living. A group of 550 Turkish immigrants living in the city of Cologne in Germany, drawn through convenience sampling methods, was approached to participate in the present study. Four hundred (51.9% males and 48.1% females) did actually participate through the completion and return of a

self-report questionnaire. 14,8% of the immigrants participating in the research are in the 18-24 age group, 10,1 % in the 25 - 30 age group, 14,3 % in the 31 - 35 age group, 31,7 % in the 36 - 45 age group, 19,1 % in the 46 - 55 age group, 7 % in the 56-65 age group and 3 % in the 66 and above age group. When the average monthly incomes of the respondents are examined; it is seen that 25,8 % have an income of 1500 € and less, 51,2 % between 1501 - 3000 €, 17,9 % between 3001 - 4500 €, 3,3 % between 4501 - 6000 € and finally 1,8 % 6001 € or more. In addition to these characteristics; it is observed that 47,5 % of the Turkish immigrants participating in the survey have studied in education institutions in Turkey and 52,2% in education institutions in Germany.

#### IV. FINDINGS

Before the hypotheses testing, this study was assessed using the factor analysis and also reliability test. The questionnaire included items measuring the components of the based on the Theory of Planned Behavior which consists of behavioral intention, attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control [9], [6], [12]. A five-point scale was used to measure, ranging from “totally disagree” to “totally agree”.

**Table 1.**Factor Analysis Results for the Halal Food Purchase Intention of the Respondents

Factors	1	2	3	4
<b>Factor 1: Subjective Norm</b>				
My friends would think that I should choose halal food	0.81			
Most people who are important to me prefer thehalal food	0.80			
My family supports me about halal food consumption	0.76			
My family consume halal food	0.72			
My friends always eat halal food	0.69			
<b>Factor 2: Attitude</b>				
Choosing halal food is a good idea		0.86		
Eating halal food is important for me		0.84		
I am willing to pay more for food that has halal logo on it		0.84		
<b>Factor 3: Perceived Behavioral Control</b>				
Price of halal food is reasonable			0.93	
It is easy to find halal food in Germany			0.92	
<b>Factor 4: Behavioral Intention</b>				
I will buy halal food				0.79
I am likely to buy halal food in future				0.78
I plan to buy halal food in the forthcomingdays				0.75
<b>Eigenvalue</b>	7.95	1.66	0.56	1.06
<b>Explained variance (%)</b>	30.05	22.40	19.40	14.58
<b>Cronbach's alpha</b>	0.91	0.93	0.87	0.98
<b>KMO</b>	0.90			
<b>Bartlett's Test of Sphericity</b>	6187.74			

Sampling adequacy needs to be taken into consideration in application of Explanatory Factor Analysis to the Halal Food Purchase Intention Scale and Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO) test is utilized to determine adequacy. In this research, KMO was 0.90 and this rate is adequate for the application of factor analysis. Bartlett Test for Sphericity (BTS) 6187.74 ( $p = 0.01$ ) shows that variance hypothesis and covariance matrix of variables have been rejected as the determinant of a matrix is and that it is suitable for conducting a factor analysis [13]. Four factors within the framework of the Theory of Planned Behavior. When Table 1 is examined four factors related to the halal food purchase intention of the participants stand out. The first of these is the “Subjective Norm”, the second is “Attitude”, the third is “Perceived Behavioral Control” and the four is “Behavioral Intention”. Reliability of the total of 13 expressions divided into factors as a result of the Factor analysis Cronbach's alpha has been found as  $\alpha = 0,94$ . As shown, the reliabilities of the constructs are acceptable. Nunnally (1978) recommends that the instruments used in research have reliability of minimum 0,70 [14]. As can be seen in Table 1, Cronbach's alpha scale each variable reaches the minimum alpha of 0,70.

**Table2.** Descriptive Findings for the Major Variables

Variables	Mean	SD
PerceivedBehavioralcontrol	4,64	0,540
Attitude	4,23	1,118
Subiectivenorms	4,26	0,888
BehavioralIntentions	4,29	1,066

Table 2 shows the mean scores and standard deviations for the major variables used in this study according to Theory of Planned Behavior. Mean scores are presented based on five point Likert scale (1- 5). Respondents' perceived behavioral control was rated at 4,64, attitude at 4,23, subjective norm at 4,26 and behavioral intention in consuming halal food at 4,29. perceived behavioral control was identified with the

highest mean for score at 4,64. The mean of behavioral intention to consume halal food is considerably high (4,29) which is between agree and strongly agree.

**Hypotheses Testing**

The three hypotheses were tested using correlation analysis and the result for correlation is presented in the Table 3.

**Table3.ResultofCorrelationAnalysis**

		<b>PBC</b>	<b>ATT</b>	<b>SN</b>	<b>BI</b>
<b>PerceivedBehavioralControl(PBC)</b>	PearsonCorrelation	1	,221**	,292**	,216**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000	,000
<b>Attitude(ATT)</b>	PearsonCorrelation	,221**	1	,662**	,697**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000	,000
<b>Subjectivenorms(SN)</b>	PearsonCorrelation	,292**	,662**	1	,824**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000		,000
<b>BehavioralIntention(BI)</b>	PearsonCorrelation	,216**	,697**	,824**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	,000	

Table 3 indicates positive relationship among each variable. Table 3 shows the correlation coefficient between subjective norms and the intentions to consume halal food is significant, and the strongest at (0,824; p<0.01). This followed by correlation coefficient between attitudes and the intentions to consume halal food (0,697; p<0.01). The correlation between perceived behavioral control and intentions to perform the traditions is also significant at (0,216; p<0.01) but lower compared to the other two factors. Therefore, all the three hypotheses of this study were supported.

**V. CONCLUSION**

The consumption behaviors of immigrants, who cross borders and live by migrating to different countries, may vary depending on the people, environment, culture, language and religion they are in and are exposed to. Examination of how these factors, which cause changes, influence the consumption cultures of individuals or communities emerges as an important problem. Muslims, who live in multi-cultural countries with cultural, ethnic and religious differences, are faced with numerous obstacles concerning consumption. The consumption sensitivities of Muslims, developing as based on environmental obstacles, display differences depending on their levels of religious belief, in other words their devoutness. While certain Muslims do not see any harm in consuming at restaurants that also sell alcohol or pork; some others solely shop from supermarkets or grocery stores that sell halal food. Nowadays Muslims are demanding halal food and therefore marketers, certifying bodies and politicians are required to analyze halal food consumption better. All these developments have guided enterprises especially operating in the food sector to receive halal certificates. However, only the receipt of a halal certificate is not adequate to be able to compete in this sector. It is very important to examine the behaviors of the consumers in this market and develop marketing strategies as aimed for those results.

This study contributes to an understanding of the halal food consumption of immigrants. And this paper provides valuable implications for halal foods marketing which has become a very popular marketing practice. Our results have demonstrated that the Theory of Planned Behavior is a valid model that can be used to predict intention to consumption halal products. It was also shown that attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control are good predictors of intention, with subjective norm being the more influential. A possible explanation for the strong presence of the subjective norm effect could be found in the societal characteristics of Muslim Turkish immigrants living in Germany.

The findings of this paper can provide implications for entrepreneurs. Especially Turkish and European entrepreneurs who want to target Turkish immigrants in Germany will have a better understanding of the specific characteristics of halal market. The findings may be used by retailers for producing and promoting halal products. There is much more work to be done to uncover all aspects of immigrant halal food buying behavior.

Some limitations in the study should be acknowledged. The main limitation of the study is that the sample for field survey was selected just from Cologne. Other limitation, the study was only conducted among Turkish immigrants. Therefore, cross-cultural validation is needed to compare the findings of this study to other cultural groups.

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### NOTES

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