

Exploring the Role of Student Exchange Programs in Fostering Halal Understanding among South Korean Non-Muslims

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Abstract: One of the challenges in halal is the acceptance among non-Muslims of the values, due to their lack of appreciation in understanding its concept. Media bias, culture, personal beliefs, racism and Islamophobia are some of the common causes. Past studies concluded that the concept of misjudgment could be realigned to a positive attitude by providing the appropriate information and education. Therefore, the study was conducted with the aim, of assessing how the provision of halal knowledge through the concept of a student exchange program could change a group of non-Muslims' attitude, acceptance and behavior towards halal. A research experiment was administered that involved a group of university students from a private university in South Korea, who voluntarily took part in a 7-day halal program in Malaysia. The study involved 1) a pre-test assessment, 2) participation in the student exchange heutagogy program and 3) a post-test assessment. Based on the paired sample test results, overall, there was a significant increase in the halal understanding among non-Muslims of South Koreans. The novelty of the study stems from the need to understand non-Muslims' perception of halal, specifically from the learning and cultural perspectives.

Keywords: *Halal acceptance; halal behavioral change; non-Muslims; effectiveness; halal program.*

1. Introduction and Background

The word "halal" from the religious context, refers to products and services permissible to be used and consumed by Muslims. In a broader definition, halal indicates compliance with the standards related to health, hygiene and quality. Even though halal is a concept in Islam, yet, its application can also be embraced among non-Muslims. Its wholesomeness and emphasis on quality is appropriate to all, regardless of spiritual beliefs, cultural practices, social norms and national identity. Nonetheless, since halal is always introduced and regarded as a Muslim-exclusive identity, its understanding among non-Muslims has received mixed reactions. The primary challenge of halal acceptance among non-Muslims is consumer racism and Islamophobia (Wilkins, Butt, Shams & Pérez, 2019). Likewise, Wahab (2019) added, that the misconception about Islam is a reason for halal product boycott. Furthermore, there are, non-Muslims who stand by the principle of animal rights and welfare, and ban animal consumption, despite much scientific evidence that approve better quality of meat and hygiene standard, through halal slaughtering (Hosseini, Rahban & Moosavi-Movahedi, 2021).

However, attitude, behavior and acceptance are dynamic and could be changed. People's attitudes and behavior are driven by motives (Westaby, 2005), knowledge and perception. Belief is a trait that psychologically links to behavior, and this is what Azjen's Theory of Planned Behavior posits. Therefore, relating to the discussion on halal acceptance among non-Muslims, the concept of misjudgment could be realigned to a positive attitude by offering an opportunity for them to learn and understand halal. Past research has suggested knowledge and attitude about halal play an important role in consumer decisions, as purchasing halal is an uneasy task for non-Muslims (Wibowo, Permana, Hanafiah, Ahmad & Ting, 2020). As consumers become knowledgeable about halal, their awareness, understanding and attitude will improve (Nurhayati & Hendar, 2020; Kurniawati & Savitri, 2020, Derasit et al., 2020). Halal attitude is the interest, experience or consciousness of having to consume halal products and services (Kurniawati & Savitri, 2020).

From the lens of the theory of planned behavior and behavioral reasoning theory, attitude and intention form an acceptance, towards certain behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Westaby, 2005). Past studies suggest knowledge influences intention (Pradeep, Amshala & Kadal, 2021; Shah, Zhongjun, Sattar & Xin Hao, 2021), even within the halal setting (Marzuki & Nurdin, 2020). Eventually, past studies have been conducted to assess the relationship between halal knowledge, attitude, and intention, and they were designed as correlational

studies, in a single setting and focused on Muslims. Nevertheless, this study was conducted to assess how the provision of halal knowledge could change non-Muslims attitudes, acceptance and behavior towards halal. The study was conducted as a two-stage process. First, an exploratory assessment was performed on a group of non-Muslim South Koreans' profiles and perceptions of halal. Then, a halal program was designed to suit the needs and expectations, and the changes in the behavior towards halal were analyzed.

The paper is arranged as follows. The next section reviews halal acceptance and discusses the social and psychological factors of behavioral change. Then the research methodology sections explain the research procedure and method of data collection. Next, a discussion of the findings is offered and finally, the implications and future research agenda are discussed.

2. Literature Review

Halal Products and Services: "Halal" is an Arabic term from the Qur'an, and according to Islamic doctrines, the word implies "permissible" (Wilson, 2014). The understanding and acknowledgment of halal are fundamental to every Muslim's belief system (Wilson & Liu, 2010). Halal is a term used to refer to the Islamic laws that regulate the slaughter of animals, as well as the use of products and services governing Muslims' daily life. These include food and beverages, fashion, media and communication, tourism, pharmaceutical, cosmetics, banking and finance, sports, recreation and other lifestyles. On the other hand, "haram" refers to food that is forbidden or illegal, such as pork and alcohol. Undeniably, other components of haram may relate to financial products and services including those that have the elements of interest, uncertainty and gambling. More importantly, halal food is explicitly labeled or certified by recognized certifying authorities (Jamal & Sharifuddin, 2015). To obtain halal certification, strict regulations must be followed throughout the food manufacturing process, including slaughtering, storage, preparation, presentation, and general hygiene (Haque et al., 2015).

Another component, *Tayyib*, denotes purity and cleanliness (Omar et al., 2013). As a result, the concept of *Halalan Tayyiban* emphasizes that every product consumed or used must be deemed permissible, as well as conforming to Islamic law's standards of quality, safety, and cleanliness (Omar et al., 2013). In terms of food, halal means that the food ingested must be permissible under Islamic law (Bujang et al., 2018), nonetheless, *tayyib* means that all food must be clean, nutritious, and safe to consume (Bujang et al., 2018; Department of Standards Malaysia, 2010). Therefore, *halalan-tayyiban* can be denoted as the assurance and guarantee that both elements are integrated into holistic and balanced criteria that satisfy the condition, situation, and application requirements of the halal industry. Indeed, the *halalan-tayyiban* concept is viewed as a more thorough approach that aims to attain compliance through international standards, making it widely accepted universally (Abdullah, 2007).

Numerous reasons have contributed to the explosive development in demand for halal products and services in non-Muslim countries. To begin, the Muslim population has increased at a rate twice that of non-Muslims, owing to higher birth rates in those non-Muslim countries (Pew Research Centre, 2016). Secondly, the Pew Research Centre also stated that in the last five years, over half of the growth in Muslim populations is in the United States, as well as European countries, which has been attributed to emigration and migration. Thirdly, younger Muslims are more prosperous and educated than previous generations, nonetheless, they seem to be embracing the Islamic principles, even if they are living in areas of cosmopolitan and zealously engaging in consumerism (Izberk-Belgin & Nakata, 2016). Fourth, while halal food products have always been sold by individual stores and restaurants, Muslims are increasingly interested in mainstream brands. As a result of Muslims' desire to consume mainstream brands, prominent Muslim figures and organizations have urged corporations operating in non-Muslim nations to produce halal products (Carney, 2013). However, while major food producers such as Nestlé and Unilever have been offering halal products for several years, it has slowed the entrance of restaurant and fast-food chains into the halal market (Wilkins et al., 2019).

On that note, *halalan tayyiban* is not only meant for Muslims, as there is an increased awareness of non-Muslims on halal food consumption since it is considered a platform of quality and wholesomeness (Golnaz Renai et al., 2012). Furthermore, Bergeaud-Blackler (2006) stated that the intention of non-Muslims to purchase halal products is contingent on a variety of important elements including religious beliefs, and animal welfare.

Similarly, Abdullah (2007) revealed that non-Muslims in France strongly believe that halal goods are not only more delicious and hygienic but also provide the best treatment for animals, as the Islamic slaughtering procedure is significantly less painful for animals. Moreover, Golnaz et al. (2010) discovered that non-Muslims in Russia are adamant that Muslim food producers always adhere to their religious beliefs when producing food. Additionally, non-Muslims may consume halal items, currently, as it is easily available and convenient in the market (Ismail et al., 2017).

Indeed, there are many studies discussing the issues of halal among non-Muslims. Consumers in Taiwan place a higher premium on the environment of butchers' stalls, the freshness of meat (slaughter date), and the packaging of halal meat products (Nugraha et al., 2022). Besides, the halal certification logo does not influence the willingness to purchase Malaysian mineral water in the eyes of Japanese consumers, which appears to be acceptable, given the Japanese lack of concern about certification and religion (Kawata et al., 2018). On the other hand, Ayyub (2015) investigated non-Muslims' views on halal food in the UK and discovered that non-Muslims generally favor halal products and services. It was revealed that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control are the major determinants for Malaysian non-Muslims in buying halal food goods (Haque et al., 2015). Conversely, Wilkins et al. (2019a) reported that the non-Muslims may respond undesirably, if they accidentally consume halal products, as they feel betrayed for not being informed about the products. Eventually, consumer cosmopolitanism and non-Muslim religious individuals were shown to be positively associated with halal product judgment, whereas consumer ethnocentrism and national identity were found to be negatively associated with the decision-making of halal products (Wilkins et al., 2019b).

Characteristics Affecting Halal Consumption Behavior

Cultural Perspectives

Acculturation Orientation: Globalization has aided in the acculturation of halal goods and services worldwide (Halawa, 2018). According to Jamal (1996), acculturation is the process through which a minority group, whether racial or ethnic, adopts the host culture's cultural patterns, such as language, beliefs, and religion. Food is regarded as a critical factor in the acculturation process (Hartwell et al., 2011; Choudhary et al., 2019). Previously, studies on acculturation concentrated on the process of acculturation in minority ethnic groups; nevertheless, emphasis has recently evolved to include characteristics of acculturation in majority groups within populations (Ayyub, 2015b). Indeed, current studies have provided some frameworks in this regard. According to Berry (1997), the changes may occur in the dominant culture, the subculture or both groups, but more practically, acculturation tends to produce more substantial changes in one of the groups involved. According to some academics, such as Kim (1985) and Keefe (1980), changes in the host culture are generally minimal in comparison to changes in the minority culture, because it is natural for immigrants to integrate into the host community. These findings, however, are contradictory to those of several recent researchers (e.g. Luedicke, 2011; Kipnis et al., 2013), who assert that mainstream consumers are exposed to a varied spectrum of local, global, and foreign cultural experiences in multicultural marketplaces. Undoubtedly, Cleveland and Xu (2019) state that acculturation requires modification of attitudes, values, behaviors, and identity between two cultures. Simultaneously, food acculturation and adaptation are developed through knowledge interchange, based on formal and informal education, media exposure, and interpersonal interactions across various ethnic groups (Mahdzar et al., 2021).

Self-Identity: One of Islam's primary precepts is to eat only food and consume other products and services based on procedures embedded within Islamic principles, thus, halal can be considered a symbol of identity and culture, especially food as an integral part of any cultural identification (Fischler, 1988). Koctürk-Runefors (1990) referred to the tenacious bond between food and cultural identity as a "value" bond. Consequently, Halal products and services are one of these "values" embraced by Muslims worldwide, bearing a major symbol for both their Islamic faith and identity. Nevertheless, individuals have multiple identities, including family, religious, regional, and national (Béji-Bécheur et al., 2012). Religious institutions provide social, economic, and psychological benefits, in addition to spiritual requirements (Peek, 2005). To cope with existential discomfort and make sense of life, religion is vital (Greenberg et al., 1997). Accordingly, religious consumers will behave in ways that sustain and strengthen their religious self-concept (Hollenbeck and

Kaikati, 2012). People with high faith are more prone to adopt religious views, ideals, and practices (Delener, 1994; Minton et al., 2015), thus, religious identity and religiosity influence choices of consumer products and services (Rahman et al., 2015).

Subjective Norms: Subjective norms are defined as perceived social pressure exerted on normative ideas about a certain type of behavior as exhibited by a specific referent, such as family members, spouses, close friends, close workplace associates, or other significant groups (Ajzen, 1991, 2015). The attitudes of reference groups regarding a certain behavior are portrayed by an individual, which will result in social pressure, driving the individual to continue presenting the behavior, whenever it is practiced by the reference group as a norm, or vice versa.

Rezai et al. (2010) demonstrated a significant positive relationship between subjective norms and non-Muslim consumers' intention to purchase Halal food products in Malaysia. As non-Muslims are concerned about their health, the reference group (important persons in a connection such as family members and close friends) plays a large and favorable effect on the behavior to consume healthy food. Apart from the factors related to attitude, this awareness significantly influenced non-Muslims' intention to purchase Halal food products (Aziz & Chok, 2013; Haque et al., 2015; Elseidi, 2018; Jamal & Sharifuddin, 2015; Akhtar et al., 2019).

Nonetheless, a study indicated that subjective norms are irrelevant and have no moderating effect on non-Muslim Thailand consumers (Sukhabot & Jumani, 2021). This demonstrates that subjective norms (family members and Muslim friends) do not influence their choice of Islamic brands. According to Bai and Bai (2020), a person's behavior might change in response to the reactions of individuals around them. Similarly, Muslim friends do not persuade non-Muslims to consume Islamic brands due to their religious and cultural differences (Johan et al., 2020).

Personal Factors

Personality: Human personality has been studied for decades in psychology and other fields of study. The term "personality" refers to the "proclivity to exhibit cohesive forms of cognition, affect, and conduct" (Costa and McCrae, 1998b, pp. 103-121). Additionally, it has been defined as "the totality of an individual's reactions and interactions with others" (Stephen & Robbins, 2007, p. 106). A similar, but more detailed, definition of personality has been given as "the unique blend of emotional thought and behavioral patterns that influence how an individual reacts to situations and interacts with others" (Stephen & Robbins, 2008, p. 307). Additionally, personality is "the systematic description of qualities" regarding human characteristics (McCrae & Costa, 1987, p. 81).

Human psychology and theories of consumer behavior play a critical part in the formation of a brand's personality (Heding et al., 2009; Pradhan et al., 2020). Attributing human characteristics to a brand is called brand personality. Through anthropomorphism, brands are endowed with a personality to increase their appeal, personalization, and attractiveness, leading to their value. Buyers' choices are influenced by their close fit with the brand personality, and consequently, they express themselves by purchasing things that are a match for their personality (Foscht et al., 2008; Zogaj et al., 2021).

Table 1: Dimensions of Brand Personality

Author(s)	Dimensions of Islamic Brand Personality
Zaki et al. (2021)	Simplicity, fame, modesty, Islamic-righteousness
Ahmed & Ali (2020)	Competence, trustworthiness, cooperation, excitement, humbleness, sincerity
Hendratmi & Laksana (2019)	Siddiq (honest), Amanah (trustworthy), Fatanah (professional), Tabligh (communicative)
Ahmed et al. (2019)	Sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, trustworthiness, shari'ah compliance, Justice
Ahmed et al. (2018)	Sincerity, competence, moderation, trustworthiness, justice
Ahmed & Jan (2015b)	Sincerity, excitement, competence, trustworthiness, justice, cooperation, humbleness
Ahmad (2015)	Purity, excitement, safety, sophistication, righteousness

Ahmed & Jan (2015b) Sincerity, competence, moderation, simplicity, trustworthiness
Adopted: Zaki et al. (2021).

Self-Concept: By purchasing and utilizing halal-certified products, people can define, maintain, and strengthen their Islamic identities. Congruence between one's Islamic self or identity and a brand's halal characteristics is a prerequisite of being a Muslim. The significance of Islamic values to a brand can be determined by the convergence between the consumers' Islamic identities and the brand's halal attributes. Muslim customers can express their Islamic identity through halal products and services, and they can choose products and brands that are believed to be compatible with their Islamic self-concept (Choi & Rahman, 2018).

Religion shapes how people view the purpose of life and their obligation to themselves, others, and God. Thus, the religious motivations of an individual include both internal and external elements (Allport & Ross, 1967; Mokhlis, 2008). Individuals have an internal religious identity, religious growth goals, and religious attitudes, values, and beliefs. Externally, religion can be exhibited through religious affiliation, worship services, community membership, and attendance at religious gatherings (Allport & Ross, 1967). Muslims are required by this command, and one of them is to consume halal food and abstain from haram food. When someone profoundly internalizes religious teachings, the morals and values within the individual self, ultimately, become a dominant factor in shaping the individual's identity and self-concept (Nurhayati & Hendar, 2020).

Psychological Factors

Motivation towards Halal Consumption: Physical, and psychological demands and wants are categorized as motivations (Sthapit et al., 2021). They encompass the capacity to motivate, direct, and integrate a person's behaviors and actions (Pearce, 2013). Consumption of halal is gaining popularity among non-Muslim customers as a result of worries about animal welfare and the notion that halal food is healthier and safer (Rezai et al., 2012). Additionally, research indicates that the primary reasons for non-Muslims to consume halal cuisine are safety, hygiene, food quality, and health-related concerns (Abd-Latif et al., 2014; Haque et al., 2015). According to studies, non-Muslim consumers place a premium on food quality due to worries about health, food preparation ethics, and being green and environmentally friendly (Damit et al., 2018). Mathew et al. (2014) discovered that non-Muslims are drawn to features of the halal food idea, particularly hygiene and cleanliness, which are mirrored in the quality of halal food. Consumption experiences with halal food can also influence a positive perception of halal eating (Damit et al., 2018). Understanding consumers' fundamental purchasing motives, values, and aspirations through psychographic segmentation adds useful insights for product creation, marketing, and behavioral change interventions (Gunter & Furnham, 1992).

Belief and Attitude towards Halal Consumption: The theory of planned behavior by Ajzen (1985) is one of the most prominent social psychology theories that help understand and predict human behavior. The consumer's intent to acquire a product is determined by three variables: attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. TPB defines intention as the immediate predicate of a given action. The purpose is also determined by three types of beliefs. First, a person's behavioral beliefs relate to the predicted repercussions of their actions, both positive and bad, as well as their subjective values. Thus, easily accessible behavioral beliefs in memory produce the attitude towards a behavior. The second factor is the referent's motivation to conform to the perceived expectations and behaviors of significant persons. Normative ideas are stored in memory and provide an apparent social norm to perform specific behaviors. However, control beliefs are the third aspect, which is the perceived presence of circumstances that influence a person's ability to behave. The perceived control of the attitude and subjective norms affects the intention to perform certain behaviors. Finally, intentions lead to actions when people are capable of achieving them. Table 2 illustrates some studies related to the adoption of halal consumption.

Table 2: The Adoption of Halal Consumption

Authors	Findings
Rezai et al., (2012)	Non-Muslim consumers are aware of Halal food in Malaysia. In general, non-Muslims' comprehension of Halal principles is influenced by social variables including interacting with Muslims and the existence of its marketing promotion. The studies also show that non-Muslims understand Halal principles' concerning Food safety and environmental concerns.
Ayyub (2015)	In terms of quality, non-Muslims generally approve of Halal products and services. These interviews revealed topics of quality, Halal knowledge, acculturation, and animal welfare.
Sherwani, et al. (2018)	Positive personal attitudes regarding halal meat consumption, influential people and institutions' opinions, as well as perceived behavioral control, were indicators of non-Muslim intention to eat halal meat.
Kawata, et al. (2018)	The halal logo has little effect on non-Muslim consumers. However, since the Japanese accept halal products with certification logos, this would encourage more foreign Muslim visitors to their country.
Bashir (2019)	The study found that all elements influence international consumers' inclination to buy halal food and thus, their shopping behavior. The survey indicated that non-Muslim customers have more positive sentiments and halal awareness than Muslim consumers. Although the survey focused on halal food customers, most of the respondents were Christians.
Wilkins, et al. (2019)	Many non-Muslims do not mind eating halal food, but they may react strongly if they mistakenly consume it
Wahab (2019)	Four constructs were found to significantly predict non-Muslims' intentions to boycott halal purchases.
Bashir (2020)	The survey concluded that non-Muslims in Cape Town are favorable to halal cuisine, its benefits, and the production techniques. The analysis showed that Halal is not just a global brand. However, halal is a symbol of health and hygiene for non-Muslims. In terms of its psychological values, halal is associated with trust, security, and comfort. It gives consumers peace of mind when they consume halal food products.
Ramli et al. (2023)	Two themes emerged as potential impediments to non-Muslim customers accepting halal food. A lack of food safety awareness and weak intention were the major factors, whereas perceived low food quality, halal logo/brand, lack of halal awareness, religious belief, animal welfare and consumer motive were minor factors.
Rahman et al. (2021)	Trip quality has a greater impact on satisfaction and trip value. The perception of a halal tourism site affects satisfaction and trip value. Trip value is correlated with satisfaction but not with Word-of-mouth (WOM). Tourist satisfaction affects WOM towards a specific destination

3. Research Methodology

Quasi-Experimental Research: The study was conducted as quasi-experimental research to study the effect of the halal intervention program on Korean students. Some of the characteristics of the method are non-random assignment, pre-existing groups, treatment or intervention and observation and measurement (Privitera & Ahlgrim-Delzell, 2019). The number of participants in the study was 20 and according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), it meets the minimum requirement of 15 samples in an experiment or single case design.

The study involved a group of university students from a private university in South Korea who voluntarily took part in a 7-day halal program organized in Malaysia. First, they were asked to take part in a short survey that contained 10 items, using the 5-point Likert scale. The survey was intended to assess their halal acceptance, measured as attitude, knowledge and intention to share halal experience. Assessing the acceptance will become the basis of the priory model. The approach is common in education studies as depicted in research conducted by Ali, Kassim, Shahrom, Humaidi and Zamzuri (2020). It will further be used for the identification of the best approach to educating halal for the students. The results of the survey are depicted in Figure 1.

This study adopts items that gauge knowledge, attitude and behavior on halal, easy, good, part of life, trust, knowledge, sharing of halal information, pride, as well as encouraging friends, which have been certified for evaluation purposes. They were taken from Aziz and Chok (2013), Haque et al. (2015) and Matthew (2014).

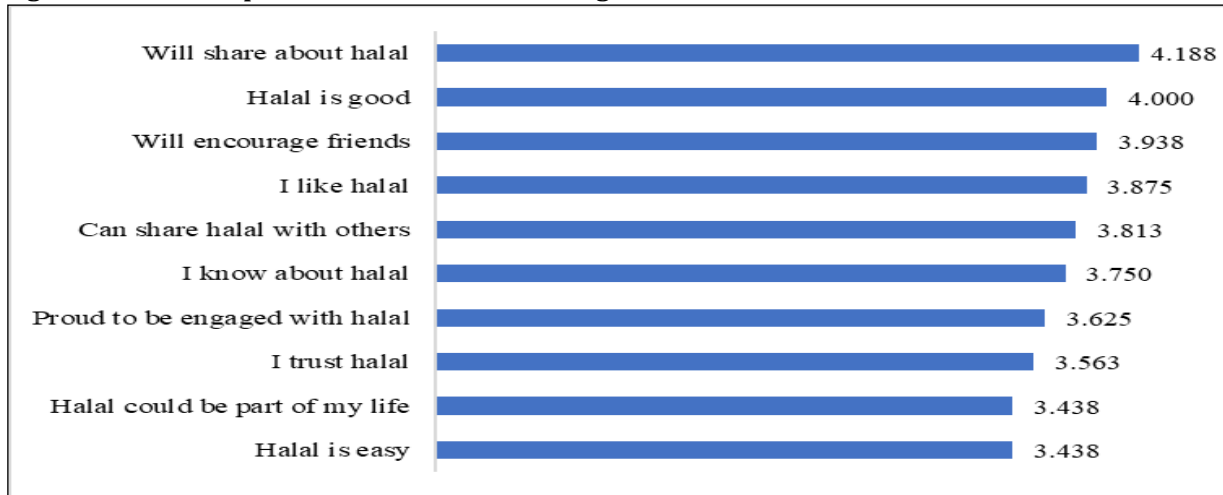
This program and its effectiveness in promoting halal acceptance became the second part of the study, which is the intervention program. Four main activities were formulated; 1) halal excursion, 2) homestay experience, 3) interactive halal classes and 4) halal buddy. In the halal excursion, the students were taken on a guided 2D1N trip to Penang. Penang which is located in the northern region of Peninsular Malaysia is a favorite tourist location that offers many charms; from food to sandy beaches, historical buildings, and arts and culture.

During the tour, students were taken to only halal eateries, in compliance with the program objectives. The homestay experience allowed the students to witness how Muslims live their lives. The program also offered the opportunity to cook halal meals and to observe halal food preparation. Both the excursion and the homestay focused on two main areas of halal which were food and tourism. Meanwhile, in the interactive halal classes, the students were taught about halal business processes, procedures, standards and halal international product outreach. In this module, students were allowed to visit a company that specializes in in-flight catering services, a visit to Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM), which is a government institution that governs halal in Malaysia, and Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE), which is a national trade promotion agency under the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI). In addition, the students were also taught on halal essentials of cosmetics and pharmaceuticals, tourism, modest fashion, media and recreation, Islamic finance and, food and beverages. In the modest fashion class, the students were also taken to boutiques that sell Muslim clothes and the female students were free to try the headscarf as they wished. Finally, to promote halal trust, a program named halal-buddy was organized where the students were paired with Muslim students.

4. Results and Discussion

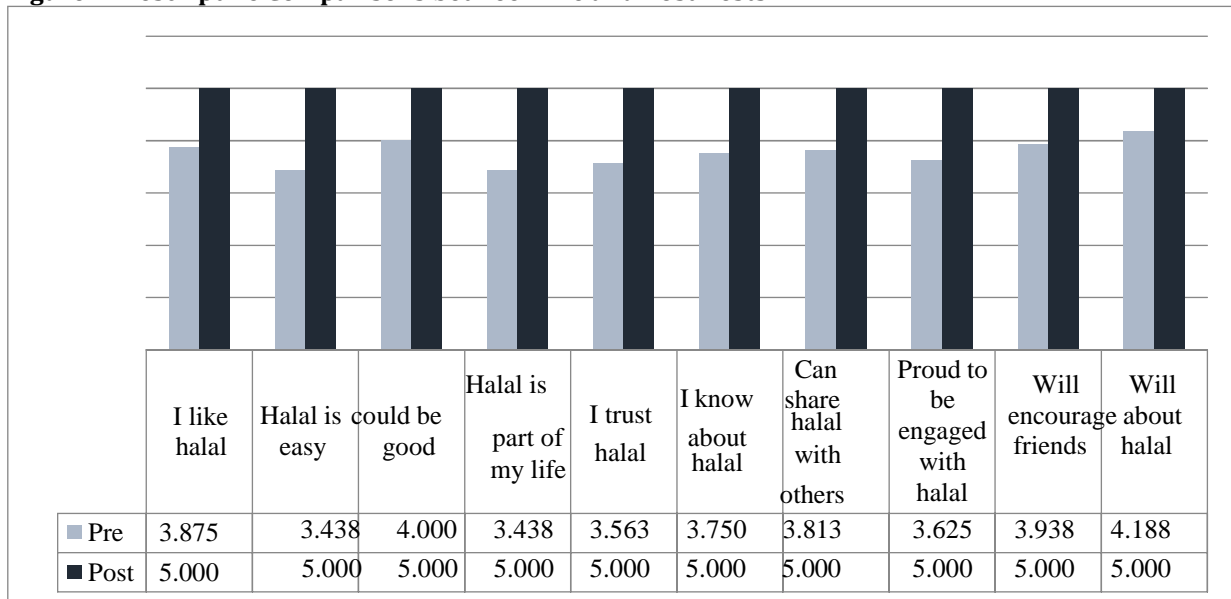
There were 20 of them; 5 male and 15 female students. Their educational background varied, which included tourism study, language, business management, and pharmaceutical and cosmetic study. The first part of the study involved understanding their background and exploring their perception of halal. Based on a casual conversation with the students, it could be concluded they have had a misconception about halal. When asked about what they could relate halal to aspects of human life, their responses were 'covering heads for women', 'al-Qaeda', 'terrorism' and 'men marrying more than one wife'. In addition, when asked if they had any experience or opportunity in immersing halal as a lifestyle, all of them had had no prior involvement then, a paired-sample t-test was performed to analyze for the mean differences. The descriptive differences between the pre & post-tests are illustrated in Figure 2, while the results of the statistical differences are shown in Table 1.

Figure 1: Halal Acceptance before Halal Knowledge



The survey results suggest the student had a perception that halal was not an easy part of life, and they had some doubts about taking halal as part of their life. In addition, how they trust halal was not weighted highly. Therefore, in designing the halal program as a strategy to improve the student's understanding, knowledge and attitude, it was important to address the issues. Based on the initial discovery of the acceptance, the program was then designed as an experiential learning by focusing on actual immersion of field experience and interactive simulations.

Figure 2: Descriptive Comparisons between Pre and Post Tests



The paired-sample t-test was used to compare the mean score of the pre and post-tests. For this test, several assumptions are required which are the data must be both an interval or ratio scale, the data is normally distributed and the mean difference is also normally distributed (De Winter, 2013). De Winter further added a sample size of 20 or less is appropriate for the test of mean differences.

The results suggest overall, there was a significant increase in halal acceptance among non-Muslim South Korean students. Referring to the measure, there was a significant difference in how the subjects liked halal as the results from the pre-test ($M = 3.875$, $SD = .806$) and post-test ($M = 5.000$, $SD = 0.000$) indicate the program on halal knowledge provision through the experiential learning resulted in an improvement in halal

acceptance, $t(15) = -5.582, p < .001$. Likewise, after taking part in the program, the subjects perceived that halal was easy, as the results from the pre-test ($M = 3.438, SD = .963$) and post-test ($M = 5.000, SD = 0.000$) show a significant difference in $t(15) = -6.484, p < 0.001$. There was also a significant increase in trusting halal after immersing themselves in the experiential program ($M = 5.000, SD = 0.000$) compared to before the program ($M = 3.563, SD = .727$), $t(15) = -7.904, p < .001$. Furthermore, there is a positive sign on the tendency to share halal with others as the results suggest there was a significant increase in the item 'will encourage friends to know halal', $t(15) = -5.506, p < .001$, and will share halal information, $t(15) = -5.975, p < .001$.

Table 3: Paired Sample Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Significance	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
				Lower	Upper				
Like halal	-1.12500	.80623	.20156	-1.55461	-.69539	-5.582	15	<.001	<.001
Easy	-1.56250	.96393	.24098	-2.07614	-1.04886	-6.484	15	<.001	<.001
Good	-1.00000	.81650	.20412	-1.43508	-.56492	-4.899	15	<.001	<.001
Halal part of life	-1.56250	.81394	.20349	-1.99622	-1.12878	-7.679	15	<.001	<.001
Trust	-1.43750	.72744	.18186	-1.82512	-1.04988	-7.904	15	<.001	<.001
Knowledge	-1.25000	1.12546	.28137	-1.84972	-.65028	-4.443	15	<.001	<.001
Can share halal info	-1.18750	.98107	.24527	-1.71028	-.66472	-4.842	15	<.001	<.001
Proud	-1.37500	.80623	.20156	-1.80461	-.94539	-6.822	15	<.001	<.001
Encourage friends	-1.06250	.77190	.19298	-1.47382	-.65118	-5.506	15	<.001	<.001
Will share halal info	-.81250	.54391	.13598	-1.10233	-.52267	-5.975	15	<.001	<.001

In this paper, the pre-and post-survey evaluation has been performed. Results were demonstrated to compare the pre and post-test behavioral change. Based on the results, the program that was designed based on the background and understanding of the needs has resulted in better halal acceptance. The items that measure the knowledge, attitude and behavior on halal, easy, good, part of life, trust, knowledge, can share halal info, pride, encourage friends, and share halal information have been qualified for evaluation purposes. Moreover, the other elements of respondents have been evaluated to demonstrate better results in using the same questions for post-survey.

The findings suggest there is a positive impact on halal acceptance, specifically on improving the perception of halal, increasing the trust in halal and willingness to share information. Similar findings were discovered by Farhan and Sutikno (2022) that knowledge of halal is significant in influencing halal acceptance. Ramli, Abd Razak and Jaafar (2023) concluded lack of halal awareness was one of the barriers to halal acceptance, which shows shaping the attitude and behavior towards halal is crucial. Education and information campaigns have been effective in improving knowledge. A study by Abdul Rahim et al. (2016) in Malaysia demonstrated that non-Muslims who received educational interventions had significantly improved knowledge about halal products. The research also shows that participants became more inclined to share halal-related information and encourage others to learn about halal. This suggests a positive social impact of the program.

In conclusion, the research findings suggest that the experiential learning program had a significant and positive impact on halal acceptance among non-Muslim South Korean students. These findings have implications not only for the commercial aspect of halal industries but also for fostering cross-cultural understanding and trust-building, which are essential in promoting halal products and principles among diverse populations, including non-Muslims. These results will be beneficial from the commercial point of view and the customer's point of view. Indeed, producers can gain consumers' trust by initiating effective

internal procedures, as well as promoting their image and reputation, generally. Entrepreneurs and consumers must be taught the Halal principle and get a deeper grasp of Halal production, from the selection of raw materials through the consumption of the final product. Various avenues can be utilized to increase their expertise; advertising can reach the general public, and courses and training in product pricing and marketing assist businesses in concentrating on the most alluring aspects of their product. Consumer education should be a top priority when promoting Halal-certified products. Educating non-Muslims about Halal can be difficult, but altering the thinking of Muslims towards Halal items is a whole different story. It may provide better insight regarding halal products, halal lifestyle, and consumption of halal products. Thus, this study is deemed important because it may secure and gain more customer trust and beliefs towards halal product consumption, specifically for non-Muslims.

5. Managerial Implications and Recommendations

The findings of this study provide several valuable insights that can help halal sector providers, halal food and clothes manufacturers and Islamic tourism to better manage their relationship with the customers, especially prior, to as well as after a service has occurred. Halal has become the lifestyle of today's global customers (Hassan, 2000), therefore it is not just for Muslim consumers, but it is also prevalent for non-Muslims. Non-Muslim consumers desire halal products and services for reasons of health and convenience. Based on the outcome of the study, a considerable amount of attention to halal is required to educate non-Muslims on how halal could be part of their life. More importantly, the understanding of halal among the non-Muslims and the knowledge they grasp after the program should not be neglected. In general, people's beliefs and behavior could be changed based on how they feel, including the feeling of safety, security and trust.

Likewise, from the practical point of view, programs that act as interventions to change beliefs, attitudes and behavior should be carefully designed based on the recipient's or the end user's culture, norms and values. Similar viewpoints are also expressed by Mahdzar et al. (2021) who concluded adaptations are developed through formal or informal knowledge interchange, exposure and interpersonal interactions. Furthermore, the programs should also encompass human connectivity including self-personality, the surroundings and the industry players.

Conclusion: Firstly, the present study has shed light on various aspects of halal acceptance experienced by non-Muslim South Koreans in behavioral change. Furthermore, the current study only focused on the level of understanding of the students specifically in a Muslim-majority country. Thus, future researchers may consider covering a larger group of students to obtain more generalizable results. The future researcher is also suggested to conduct the study in other geographical location settings such as conducting the programs in other non-Muslim countries. Secondly, another limitation of this study is perhaps the sample size. In addition, we suggest adding more measures on acceptance, testing the program on a larger sample size and running the program in non-Muslim cultural settings. It is suggested possible moderating variables could be further explored to enhance the study. Thirdly, the scale used to measure behavioral change needs to be further examined. This needs to be carried out through the understanding of halal towards increasing awareness and promoting acceptance, as well as providing comfort and assurance. Significantly, halal education needs to have the element of reinforcing and reminding, or "refreezing" individuals in their new habits so that they become responsive to the new behavior, and foster positive behavioral change. Hence, future research could use other behavioral change measures such as culture and belief.

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