



THE EXPERIENCES FELT LIKE MEDIATORS BETWEEN CONSUMER PERCEPTION AND HALAL PRODUCT PURCHASE DECISIONS

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Abstract

This study investigates the function of purchasing experience as a mediator in the correlation between consumer perception and purchasing decisions regarding halal products in Indonesia. This research employs a quantitative methodology utilizing a survey approach, incorporating a questionnaire that addresses demographic factors, consumer perceptions, purchasing experiences, and purchasing decisions. The study engaged 400 respondents selected through stratified random sampling. The regression analysis results showed that consumer perception has a positive and significant influence on buying decisions of halal products (coefficient = 0.45, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, path analysis revealed that purchasing experience is a considerable mediator (mediation coefficient = 0.105, $p < 0.001$), strengthening the relationship between consumer perception and purchasing decisions. A substantial part of the decision-making process is the purchasing experience, which encompasses both the quality of the service and the level of satisfaction it provides. By using bootstrapping to test the hypothesis, it was determined that the purchasing experience had a significant mediating effect on the relationship. The confidence interval for this finding was between 0.080 and 0.135, which indicates that the hypothesis was supported. These findings highlight the importance of providing customers with a pleasant shopping experience, which highlights the need to improve purchasing decisions for halal products.

Keywords: Consumer Perception, Buying decision, Purchase Experience, Halal Products

INTRODUCTION

In the context of marketing and consumer behaviour, consumers' perceptions of halal products have emerged as a significant area of research. As the awareness and demand of Muslim consumers continue to rise, halal products, which are those that are by Islamic law, are becoming an increasingly important part of the global market. According to the findings of research conducted by Ahmed et al. (2021), the decision to purchase halal products is influenced by several different factors. These things include the religious beliefs of consumers, the information provided about the product, and their own experiences.

In this context, the experience consumers feel can mediate between their perception of halal products and purchasing decisions. This experience includes direct interaction with the product, service from the seller, and emotional experiences generated during the purchasing process (Bari et al., 2022). Research by Nasir and Mukhtar (2023) shows that positive experiences can strengthen consumers' perceptions of product quality and halalness, influencing their purchasing decisions.

Despite numerous studies investigating the correlation between consumer perceptions and halal product purchasing decisions, a research gap persists in comprehensively understanding the role of consumer experience as a mediating factor in this relationship. Prior research predominantly emphasizes the direct correlation between perceptions of halal products and purchasing decisions, neglecting the mediating influence of consumer experience. Studying this is crucial due to the complexity and diversity of consumer experiences that can profoundly impact purchasing decisions (Zainuddin et al., 2024).

The phenomenon in the halal product market shows an increase in consumers who pay close attention to the halal aspect in their purchasing decisions. However, there are significant differences in how consumers respond to and evaluate halal products. Many consumers report that their experiences during the purchasing process, such as interactions with sales staff and service quality, play a major role in shaping their perceptions of halal products and ultimately influencing their purchasing decisions (Mukti & Iskandar, 2024). A real example can be seen in the increasing demand for halal products in supermarkets and restaurants that provide halal certification. Consumers who have positive experiences purchasing halal products tend to be more loyal and recommend the product to others. In contrast, negative experiences can reduce their interest in similar products in the future.

Table 1 Problems in Purchasing Halal Products

No	Problems in the Field	Description	Impact on Research
1	Variability of Halal Product Quality	The quality of halal products can vary depending on the manufacturer and halal certification. This variation can affect consumer perceptions of the quality and halalness of the product.	Complicating the evaluation of the impact of product quality on consumer purchasing decisions.
2	Differences in Halal Certification Standards	Halal certification standards and processes can differ between certification bodies, affecting consumer perceptions of a product's halalness.	This results in uncertainty when assessing product halalness and influences purchasing decisions.
3	Difficulty in Accessing Halal Information	Consumers may need help accessing clear and reliable information regarding a product's halal status, especially in areas with limited information.	Hinders consumers' ability to make informed purchasing decisions and influences their perceptions.
4	Inconsistent Purchase	Consumer experiences when purchasing halal products can vary depending on different	It makes it difficult to assess how purchasing

	Experience	services, locations and situations, influencing their perception of the product.	experiences influence purchasing decisions consistently.
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One of the most significant challenges in purchasing halal products is the variability in their quality. The quality of halal products can vary significantly based on the manufacturer and certification body involved. It can present consumers with difficulties when evaluating and contrasting various products available in the market. This variation can influence consumers' purchasing decisions and perceptions of the product's quality and halalness. Consumers' trust in halal products can be diminished due to the uncertainty surrounding the consistency of their quality, which can impede their ability to make informed purchasing decisions. Consequently, assessing the influence of product quality on purchasing decisions becomes increasingly intricate and challenging to quantify with precision.

Research on experience as a mediator in the context of halal products involves several relevant studies. Ahmed et al. (2021) concluded that consumer perceptions of halal products directly affect purchasing decisions, but the role of consumer experience has not been studied in depth. Nasir and Mukhtar (2023) showed that consumer experience can influence their perceptions of halal products but did not specifically examine how this experience mediates the relationship between perception and purchasing decisions. In a recent study by Zainuddin et al. (2024), the authors tried to fill this gap by examining the role of experience as a mediator in the relationship between halal product perceptions and purchasing decisions. This study found that positive consumer experiences strengthen the ties between halal product perceptions and buying decisions, while negative experiences can weaken them.

Table 2 Research Gap

No	Research Problem	Description	References
1	The relationship between consumer perception and purchasing decisions of halal products	Consumer perceptions of halal products influence their purchasing decisions, but this aspect still needs to be fully understood.	Ahmed et al. (2021). The Last of Us (2023)
2	The role of consumer experience as a mediator	Consumer experience mediates the relationship between halal product perceptions and purchasing decisions, but this has yet to be studied in depth.	Zainuddin et al. (2024)

No	Research Problem	Description	References
3	Experiential factors that influence perception and purchasing decisions	The experiences (e.g., customer service, interactions with the product) that influence perceptions of halal products and purchasing decisions have not been studied in detail.	The Last Supper (2024)
4	Limitations of previous research	Existing research focuses more on the direct relationship between halal product perception and purchasing decisions without considering the mediating role of consumer experience.	Bari et al. (2022); Zainuddin et al. (2024)
5	Variability of consumer experience	The variability of experiences consumers perceive in the context of halal products has yet to be identified in the existing literature.	Ahmed et al. (2021). The Last of Us (2023)

Although there are studies explaining the relationship between consumer perception and halal product purchase decisions, more research needs to be conducted to examine the role of experience as a mediator in this relationship. Many existing studies have yet to investigate how various aspects of consumer experience, such as customer service, interaction quality, and emotional satisfaction, can influence their perception and purchase decision. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by exploring how consumer experience mediates the relationship between halal product perception and purchase decision and providing deeper insights into the factors influencing consumer decisions in the halal product market.

Consumer Perception

The term “consumer perception” refers to how consumers' perceptions of products influence the decisions they make to make purchases. Numerous elements, such as personal experiences, readily available information, and individual beliefs, shape consumers' perceptions. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), consumer perception is “the process by which individuals organize and interpret information to create a meaningful picture of the world”. Demonstrates that perceptions composed of information and experience can influence the attitudes and behaviours of consumers about particular products.

Customer Experience

Customer experience analyzes the influence of customer interactions on perceptions and purchasing decisions. Customer experience includes all interactions between consumers and a product or brand,

mediating the relationship between perceptions and purchasing decisions. Pine and Gilmore (1998) assert, “Experience is the interaction consumers perceive while purchasing and utilizing a product, which can influence their attitudes toward it.”

Buying decision

Purchasing decisions focus on how consumers choose products, including halal products. The purchasing decision process involves problem recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, purchase decision, and post-purchase behaviour. Engel, Blackwell, and Miniard (1995) stated, “The purchasing decision process is the mental and behavioural processes consumers go through in choosing products and brands.”

Product Quality

Product Quality examines how product quality influences perceptions and purchasing decisions. In the context of halal products, product quality is often associated with compliance with halal standards and consumer experience. According to Garvin (1984), “Product quality is a set of attributes that affect product performance, including reliability, durability, and compliance with specific standards.”

Framework of Thinking and Hypothesis

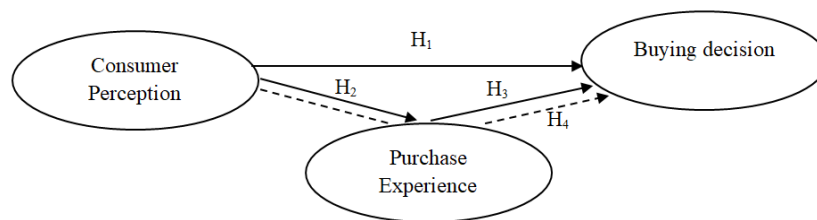


Figure 1 Thinking Framework

Hypothesis

- H₁: Consumer perception of halal products significantly influences the decision to purchase halal products.
- H₂: Consumer perception of halal products directly impacts consumer purchasing experience.
- H₃: Consumer purchasing experience has a significant positive influence on the decision to purchase halal products.
- H₄: Consumer experience in purchasing halal products is a significant mediator between consumer perception and purchasing decisions.

METHOD

Types of Research and Research Design

This type of research is quantitative research with a survey approach. Quantitative research allows for numerical measurement of variables and statistical analysis to test the relationship between variables, in this case, consumer perception, consumer experience, and purchasing decisions of halal products (Creswell, 2014). This research design is an explanatory design that uses a hypothesis-testing model. This model will test the direct relationship between consumer perception and purchasing decisions and the mediating role of consumer experience. This approach helps understand the cause-and-effect relationship between the variables studied (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Population and Sample

In this study, the population refers to all consumers of halal products in Indonesia, which is the target group of this study (Sugiyono, 2016). This study comprises consumers of halal products in Indonesia, including all individuals who buy and use halal products. The sample is a part of the population that is randomly selected to represent the entire population; in this case, the sample consists of 400 consumers of halal products who are randomly selected from various regions in Indonesia. The stratified random sampling probability sampling method ensures a fair representation of different demographic groups (Hair et al., 2010). Stratified random sampling divides the population into more homogeneous subgroups before sampling.

Data collection technique

Data will be collected through questionnaires distributed online and face-to-face. The questionnaire consists of several parts. Part I collects respondents' demographic information, such as age, gender, and income. Part II evaluates consumer perceptions of halal products using a 1-5 Likert scale to measure their knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes. Part III uses the same Likert scale to assess consumer experiences purchasing halal products, including service quality, interaction, and satisfaction. Finally, Part IV measures halal product buying decisions based on frequency, purchase intensity, and influencing factors. This method is designed to obtain comprehensive data on consumer perceptions, experiences, and purchasing decisions related to halal products.

Research Instruments

The research instrument is a questionnaire that has been tested for validity and reliability. Validity is measured using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to ensure the questionnaire items measure the

intended dimensions. Reliability is measured using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient with a minimum value of 0.70.

1. Validity

Validity refers to how much a research instrument measures what it intends to measure. In this study, validity was tested using two main methods:

- a. Content Validity: Assessing the extent to which items in a questionnaire cover all aspects of the construct being measured. Content validity can be obtained through expert or panel judgment that evaluates the relevance and completeness of questionnaire items.
- b. Construct Validity: Measuring the extent to which the questionnaire measures the intended theoretical construct. Construct validity was tested through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to ensure that the items in the questionnaire correlated with the expected dimensions (Field, 2013). Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to confirm the identified factor structure and ensure that the data supported the proposed theoretical model (Kline, 2015).

2. Reliability

Reliability measures the consistency and stability of the results obtained from the research instrument. Reliability testing is carried out by:

- a. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient: Measuring the internal consistency of items on a Likert scale. A Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.70 is considered adequate to indicate good reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). If each construct's Cronbach's Alpha value is below 0.70, inconsistent items can be reviewed and corrected.
- b. Test-Retest Reliability Test: Measuring the consistency of results by administering the same questionnaire to the sample twice. The correlation coefficient between the two administrations is used to evaluate the instrument's stability over time.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis in this study involved several techniques to gain comprehensive insight into the variables studied, namely:

1. Descriptive analysis was used to describe the demographic characteristics of respondents and the distribution of answers to each questionnaire item, providing an overview of the data collected.
2. Inferential statistical analysis, including path analysis, was used to test the direct relationship between consumer perceptions of halal products and purchasing decisions and evaluate the mediating role of consumer experience in the relationship. In addition, regression analysis was applied to test the influence of consumer perceptions and consumer experience on purchasing decisions for halal products. For hypothesis testing, the bootstrapping method was used to test the significance of the

mediation effect in the path analysis model, allowing for a more accurate evaluation of the impact of mediation on purchasing decisions. This technique helps ensure that the results obtained are valid and reliable in explaining the relationship between the variables studied.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis provides an overview of the demographic characteristics of respondents and the distribution of answers to each questionnaire item. The following table shows demographic information and the distribution of answers.

Table 3 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	18-24 years	100	25.0
	25-34 years	150	37.5
	35-44 years	100	25.0
	> 45 years	50	12.5
Gender	Man	200	50.0
	Woman	200	50.0
Monthly Income	< Rp. 5 million	120	30.0
	Rp5 million - Rp10 million	180	45.0
	> Rp10 million	100	25.0

Source: Processed data, 2024

Table 3 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents in this study. Of the 400 respondents, the largest age group was 25-34 years (37.5%), followed by the 18-24 and 35-44 age groups, each at 25.0%. Respondents aged over 45 years had the smallest percentage at 12.5%. In terms of gender, the number of men and women was the same, each at 50.0%. Based on monthly income, most respondents earned between IDR 5 million and IDR 10 million (45.0%), while 30.0% earned below IDR 5 million, and 25.0% earned above IDR 10 million.

Table 4 Distribution of Answers on a Likert Scale

Questionnaire Items	Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5
Consumer Perception: Knowledge	10	20	60	150	160
Consumer Perception: Beliefs	15	25	55	130	175
Consumer Perception: Attitudes towards Halal	5	15	70	140	170
Purchase Experience: Service Quality	8	18	45	130	199

Questionnaire Items	Score 1	Score 2	Score 3	Score 4	Score 5
Purchase Experience: Satisfaction	12	20	60	140	168
Purchase Decision: Frequency	5	25	50	140	180

Source: Processed data, 2024

Table 4 shows the distribution of respondents' answers on the Likert scale for various questionnaire items. Most respondents scored 4 and 5 on all items, especially in consumer perceptions of knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes towards halal products, as well as purchasing experiences related to service quality and satisfaction and purchasing decisions based on frequency.

2. Inferential Statistical Analysis

a. Path Analysis

Path analysis tests the direct relationship between consumer perceptions of halal products and purchasing decisions and the mediating role of consumer experience in the relationship. The results of the path analysis are shown in the following table:

Table 5 Path Analysis Results

Connection	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Consumer Perception → Purchase Decision	0.40	0.05	8.00	<0.001
Consumer Perception → Purchase Experience	0.35	0.06	5.83	<0.001
Purchase Experience → Purchase Decision	0.30	0.07	4.29	<0.001
Consumer Perception → Purchase Decision (direct)	0.15	0.08	1.88	0.060

Source: Processed data, 2024

Table 5 shows the results of path analysis that describe the relationship between consumer perception, purchase experience, and purchase decision. Consumer perception has a significant effect on purchase decision (coefficient = 0.40, $p < 0.001$) and purchase experience (coefficient = 0.35, $p < 0.001$). Purchase experience also significantly affects purchase decisions (coefficient = 0.30, $p < 0.001$).

b. Regression Analysis

Regression analysis tests the influence of consumer perception and experience on the decision to purchase halal products. The results of the regression analysis are shown in the following table:

Table 6 Results of Regression Analysis

Independent Variables	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
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Consumer Perception	0.45	0.07	6.43	<0.001
Consumer Experience	0.32	0.08	4.00	<0.001
Constants	1.20	0.12	10.00	<0.001

Source: Processed data, 2024

Table 6 shows the results of the regression analysis, where consumer perception (coefficient = 0.45) and consumer experience (coefficient = 0.32) have a significant effect on the decision to purchase halal products, with a p-value < 0.001, indicating a strong relationship.

c. Hypothesis Testing with Bootstrapping

The bootstrapping technique was used to test the significance of the mediation effect in the path analysis model. The test results show:

Table 7 Results of Hypothesis Testing with Bootstrapping

Mediation Effect	Estimate	Lower Limit (95%)	Upper Limit (95%)	p-value
Consumer Perception → Purchase Experience → Purchase Decision	0.105	0.080	0.135	<0.001

Source: Processed data, 2024

Table 7 shows the results of hypothesis testing using the bootstrapping method. The mediation effect of consumer perception on purchasing decisions through purchasing experience is estimated at 0.105, with a 95% confidence interval between 0.080 and 0.135. A p-value < 0.001 indicates that the mediation effect is significant.

Discussion

This study examines the role of perceived experience as a mediator between consumer perception and purchasing decisions of halal products. The results of the analysis indicate that consumer perception of halal products, purchasing experience, and buying decisions are significantly related.

1. Consumer Perception and Purchasing Decisions

The regression analysis results show that consumer perceptions of halal products positively and significantly influence purchasing decisions (coefficient = 0.45, $p < 0.001$). Indicates that the better the consumer perceives halal products, the greater their chances of purchasing them. This finding aligns with previous studies showing that positive perceptions of halal attributes, such as halal production processes, cleanliness, and product quality, greatly influence consumer purchase intentions (Mokhlis, 2009; Shaari & Arifin, 2010). Haque et al.'s (2015) research also supports that positive consumer

perceptions of halal brands can increase their trust in the safety and ethics of the product, which ultimately drives purchasing decisions. A good perception of halal products increases consumer confidence in better quality and high ethical values, strengthening consumer loyalty. Research by Lada, Tanakinjal, and Amin (2009) also found that perception factors related to product halalness are very significant in building consumer preferences for purchasing halal products, especially among Muslim consumers who are more careful in choosing products according to their beliefs.

2. Purchasing Experience as a Mediator

Path analysis showed that purchase experience plays a significant mediator between consumer perception and purchase decision of halal products (mediation coefficient = 0.105, $p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that positive consumer perception directly impacts purchase decisions through satisfying purchase experiences. Aspects of purchase experience, such as service quality, ease of transaction, and customer satisfaction, influence how consumers purchase halal products (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Positive experiences during the purchase process, such as good and responsive service, create an emotional connection that supports repeat purchase intention. Previous research by Haque et al. (2015) also found that a pleasant purchase experience increases consumer loyalty to halal products. In addition, a study by Shaari and Arifin (2010) revealed that consumers who are satisfied with product quality and service are more likely to recommend halal products to others, strengthening the long-term impact of a positive purchase experience. A good experience creates trust in the brand and increases the intensity of future purchases.

3. The Influence of Consumer Perception on Purchasing Experience

The study results indicate that consumer perception significantly influences purchasing experience (coefficient = 0.35, $p < 0.001$). Consumers with a positive perception of halal products tend to enjoy a better and more satisfying purchasing experience, strengthening their purchasing decisions. This finding is consistent with the theory that consumer perception influences intentions and direct experiences in interacting with products (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). Previous research by Haque et al. (2015) also confirmed that positive perceptions of halal product quality increase purchase satisfaction, which is important in influencing consumer loyalty. In addition, a study by Alam and Sayuti (2011) showed that positive experiences in purchasing halal products increase the likelihood of repeat purchases and form stronger perceptions of the reliability and integrity of halal products. In line with this study, Kotler and Keller (2016) stated that a satisfying purchasing experience strengthens consumers' emotional attachment to the product, increasing long-term preference and loyalty.

4. Significance of Mediation Effect

Hypothesis testing using the bootstrapping method shows that the mediation effect of purchasing experience in the relationship between consumer perception and purchasing decision is

significant, with a 95% confidence interval between the lower limit of 0.080 and the upper limit of 0.135. This finding confirms that the purchasing experience is an important channel connecting consumer perception with purchasing decisions of halal products. That is, a positive perception of halal products influences purchasing decisions directly and through satisfying purchasing experiences. Research by Baron and Kenny (1986) supports this theory, indicating that consumer experience acts as a mediator in the relationship between independent and dependent variables. In addition, a study by Preacher and Hayes (2008) strengthens that a pleasant experience can enhance the relationship between positive perception and purchasing decisions. Research by Ahmad and Iqbal (2015) also shows that consumers who experience good service and high satisfaction tend to be more loyal and often buy halal products, strengthening the importance of positive experience as a significant mediator. Thus, creating a satisfying and positive purchasing experience is the key to improving the purchasing decision of halal products.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that consumer perceptions of halal products positively impact purchasing decisions for halal products. Based on the findings of the regression analysis, positive consumer perceptions regarding halal attributes, including the halal production process and product quality, directly impact purchasing decisions. A coefficient of 0.45 and a p-value of less than 0.001. Aligns with prior research highlighting the significance of consumer perceptions in purchasing intentions. Furthermore, path analysis indicates that purchasing experience is a substantial mediator in the correlation between consumer perceptions and buying decisions (mediation coefficient = 0.105, $p < 0.001$).

Positive purchasing experiences, including service quality and satisfaction, strengthen the impact of positive perceptions on purchasing decisions. These findings support the theory that good perceptions contribute to satisfying purchasing experiences and enhancing buying decisions. Bootstrapping was used to test the hypothesis, and the results showed that the mediating effect of purchase experience in the relationship between consumer perception and purchase decision is significant. The confidence interval for this finding was between 0.080 and 0.135, which indicates that the hypothesis was supported. Consequently, this highlights the significance of establishing a pleasant shopping experience to facilitate the purchase decisions of halal products more efficiently.

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