

THE INFLUENCE OF HALAL LABELS ON IMPORTED FOOD PRODUCTS TOWARD PURCHASE DECISIONS OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AT SMA LABSCHOOL CIRENDEU

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Abstract: This study investigates how halal labels affect the purchasing decisions of 69 Muslim students from SMA Labschool Cirendeu using a quantitative survey approach. As globalization makes imported food products more accessible in Indonesia, concerns over halal certification have grown. Survey results showed that while 62% of respondents moderately understood halal labels, only 30% fully trusted their authenticity. Nonetheless, 74% preferred halal-certified products, highlighting their impact on consumer choices. This study emphasizes the importance of improving halal awareness and literacy to align with the dietary needs of Indonesia's Muslim-majority population. The findings support targeted educational initiatives to enhance students' decision-making regarding halal-certified products.

Keywords: Halal Labels, Imported Food, Consumer Behavior, Purchase Decisions, Halal Awareness

Introduction

Globalization has made it easier to exchange goods and cultures, increasing the availability of imported food products in Indonesia. As the largest Muslim-majority nation, Indonesia places significant importance on ensuring food products meet halal standards. Halal certification guarantees adherence to Islamic dietary laws, which is essential for the Muslim population. Despite regulatory progress, awareness and trust in halal certification remain inconsistent, particularly among younger people. This disconnect creates challenges in fostering consumer behaviors that align with religious dietary guidelines.

Previous studies have highlighted the limited impact of halal labels on purchasing decisions in certain contexts, such as university students (Nurohman & Qurniawati, 2019) and general populations in urban areas (Wibowo & Mandusari, 2018). However, research focusing on high school students—a segment that represents future consumers—remains scarce. Addressing this gap, the current study explores how halal labels influence the purchase decisions of Muslim high school students, with an emphasis on their understanding, trust, and preferences regarding imported food products.

This study provides novel insights into the role of halal certification in shaping the purchasing behavior of young consumers. By identifying gaps in knowledge and trust, it aims to inform targeted educational interventions to enhance halal awareness. The findings

hold implications for policymakers, educational institutions, and halal certification bodies in fostering a more informed and conscious consumer base..

Literature Review

Halal labels serve as a certification mark indicating that a product complies with Islamic dietary laws. In Indonesia, the halal certification process is governed by the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI), ensuring that products meet strict halal standards. Previous studies have extensively examined the impact of halal labels on consumer behavior. Alfiah and Muflikha (2022) emphasized the significant role of halal labels in influencing the consumption of imported instant noodles in Indonesia, demonstrating that certified products enhance consumer trust. Similarly, Nurohman and Qurniawati (2019) uncovered low levels of halal awareness among university students, suggesting the need for educational interventions to improve understanding. Setyaningsih (2019) further highlighted the critical role of awareness campaigns in promoting halal certification literacy among consumers. Wibowo and Mandusari (2018) focused on the contribution of halal labels in building consumer trust, although scepticism about authenticity remained a significant barrier.

Rahmawati et al. (2020) found a direct correlation between halal literacy and purchasing decisions in urban settings, indicating that informed consumers are more likely to prioritize certified products. Aziz and Siti (2016) explored how halal certification provides psychological comfort to consumers in non-Muslim-majority markets. Haque et al. (2015) discussed the increasing global demand for halal products, driven by cultural exchanges and the expansion of Muslim markets.

Nasution and Kartika (2021) analyzed the impact of social media on disseminating halal certification information, finding it to be a crucial tool for awareness. Zailani et al. (2017) addressed operational challenges faced by certification bodies, emphasizing the importance of maintaining consumer trust. Lastly, Hidayat and Firmansyah (2018) evaluated the economic benefits of halal certification, illustrating its potential to enhance product competitiveness in both domestic and international markets.

These investigations collectively emphasize the diverse influence of halal certification on consumer behavior, trust, and market dynamics. The present research extends these conclusions by concentrating on high school students as a distinct demographic, examining their comprehension, trust levels, and preferences regarding halal-certified imported food products. This methodology offers a novel viewpoint on the significance of halal labels in influencing the conduct of forthcoming consumers.

Method

This study employed a quantitative survey approach to explore the influence of halal labels on the purchasing decisions of Muslim high school students. The research was conducted at SMA Labschool Cirendeu with a total sample of 69 students, selected using a purposive sampling method to ensure that all participants were Muslim and had prior exposure to imported food products. Data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed via Google Forms.. The questionnaire consisted of 25 items categorized into five main indicators such as knowledge of halal labels, trust in certification, attitudes toward halal products, sources of halal information, and purchasing decisions.

To evaluate the level of understanding, a structured questionnaire was developed, namely

1. **Knowledge of Halal Labels**

Students were asked to respond to five statements such as "What is the meaning of a halal label?" and "Can you identify a halal certification logo?" Responses were scored on a Likert scale to determine understanding levels, from "Not Understand" to "Understand."

2. **Trust in Certification**

The questionnaire included items like "Do you believe that halal-certified products meet Islamic dietary standards?" and "Have you encountered uncertified products claiming to be halal?" Trust levels were assessed based on confidence in the certification process and perceived authenticity of halal labels.

3. **Attitudes Toward Halal Products**

Questions addressed preferences, such as "How important is halal certification when choosing a product?" and "Would you choose a halal-certified product over a non-certified one?" Responses indicated positive, neutral, or negative attitudes.

4. **Sources of Halal Information**

Items explored the role of various information channels, including "What is your primary source of halal-related information?" and "How reliable do you find this source?" Responses provided insight into the influence of media, family, and schools.

5. **Purchasing Decisions**

Respondents evaluated scenarios like "Would you purchase a product without a halal label?" and "How often do you check for halal certification before buying?" These questions measured how understanding and trust translated into practical purchasing behavior.

Each response was scored on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Scores were then grouped into categories of "Not Understand," "Uncertain," and "Understand" to align with predefined levels of comprehension. After calculating percentages, the results can be classified based on specific criteria on Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Percentage Criteria

Percentage	Criteria
84% - 100%	Very Good
68% - 83%	Good
52% - 67%	Sufficient
36% - 51%	Low
20% - 35%	Very Low

These criteria help researchers interpret data more clearly and provide a better understanding of survey or research results. Using descriptive percentage analysis allows the variables studied to be better understood and effectively communicated to stakeholders (Sugiyono, 2017).

Results and Discussion

Respondent Characteristics

The sample consisted of 69 Muslim students from SMA Labschool Cirendeu. The respondents were evenly distributed across genders, with 51% identifying as female and

49% as male. Most participants were aged 16 to 18 years, aligning with the high school demographic targeted in the study. Additionally, 80% reported prior exposure to halal-certified products, particularly imported food items

These characteristics highlight a diverse and representative group of high school students, enabling a deeper understanding of their behavior as consumers in a predominantly Muslim society. The balanced gender distribution ensures inclusivity in the findings, which is crucial as previous studies, such as those by Rahmawati et al. (2020), noted that gender might influence perceptions of halal certification. Furthermore, the concentration of participants in the 16–18 age range underscores the importance of targeting this demographic in educational initiatives, as they are in a formative stage of developing consumer habits.

The 80% prior exposure to halal-certified products indicates familiarity with the concept, which provides a foundation for more advanced discussions about the role of halal labels. However, this exposure does not necessarily translate into comprehensive knowledge or trust, as revealed in subsequent sections of the study. This finding aligns with Nasution and Kartika (2021), who reported that familiarity alone is insufficient to bridge the gap between awareness and application in purchasing decisions.

Knowledge of Halal Labels

The analysis of Figure 1 highlights a diverse understanding of halal labels among respondents, captured through five key dimensions. First, understanding the importance of halal labels was high, with 93% of respondents recognizing their significance and only 7% expressing uncertainty. This aligns with Alfiah and Muflikha (2022), who emphasize the role of cultural and religious values in shaping consumer knowledge, suggesting positive outcomes from existing educational efforts. In terms of the impact of halal labels on purchase decisions, 61% of respondents were uncertain about their influence, while 25% recognized their importance, and 13% were disengaged. This moderate integration of knowledge and behavior echoes findings by Nurohman and Qurniawati (2019), who stress the need for educational interventions to bridge this gap.

Awareness of halal labels on imported products was notable, with 65% of students aware of their prevalence, though 29% remained uncertain and 4% lacked understanding entirely. These findings support Nasution and Kartika (2021), who note that visual exposure to halal logos enhances familiarity. However, attention to halal labels when purchasing was less consistent, as 39% of respondents admitted to overlooking halal certification, with only 30% actively checking for its presence. This practical gap mirrors Rahmawati et al. (2020), who found that convenience often outweighs religious considerations in purchasing decisions. Finally, knowledge of certification bodies was mixed, with 52% understanding their role, 32% uncertain, and 14% lacking knowledge. This limited familiarity impacts trust, echoing Wibowo and Mandusari's (2018) findings on skepticism due to unclear certification origins. Collectively, these insights highlight areas of strength and opportunities for targeted educational and trust-building initiatives.

The findings indicate that while the majority of respondents possess a foundational understanding of halal labels, significant gaps remain in translating this knowledge into purchasing behavior. First is **awareness and recognition**. High levels of awareness about the importance of halal labels (93%) demonstrate that cultural and religious factors significantly shape knowledge. However, the moderate recognition of halal labels' prevalence on imported products (65%) suggests the need for more visual and interactive

learning tools to reinforce this understanding. Second is **behavioral impact**. The 39% of students who overlook halal labels when purchasing imported products highlight a practical gap. This behavior suggests that theoretical knowledge does not always influence real-world decisions, as also noted by Rahmawati et al. (2020). Practical workshops and real-life simulations could bridge this gap, aligning knowledge with behavior. Third, **trust and credibility**. The uncertainty around certification bodies (32%) and the lack of trust in halal labels (61% unsure) underscore the critical role of transparency. Efforts to showcase the rigor of halal certification processes through educational campaigns and collaborations with trusted certification bodies can address this issue, aligning with recommendations from Farid and Yusuf (2019).

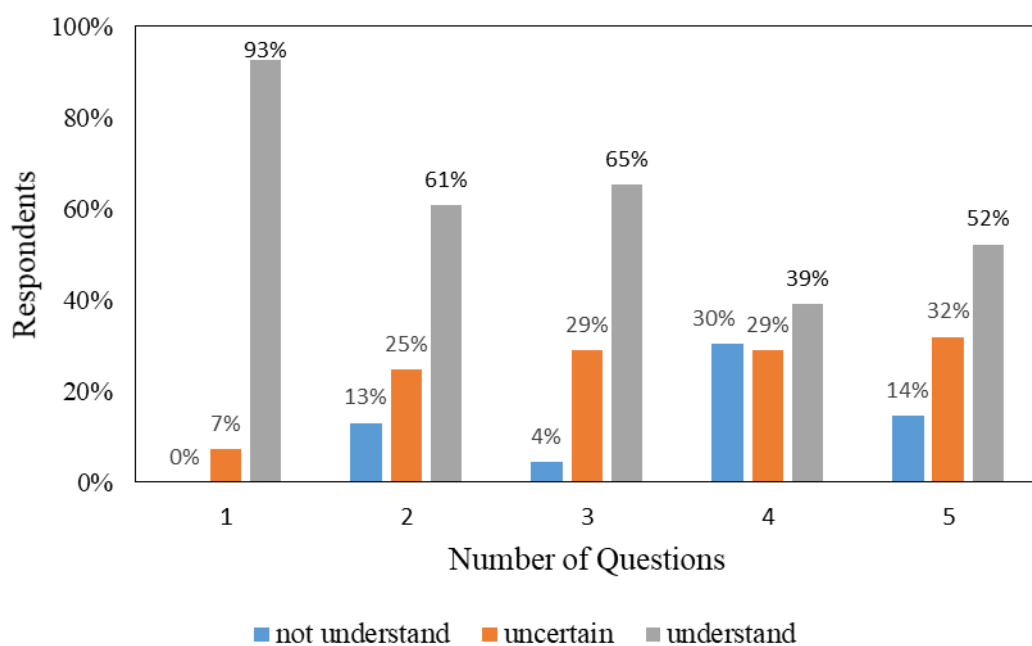


Figure 1: Consumer Perceptions and Influences on Knowledge of Halal Label Related to Halal-Labeled Imported Products

By level of understanding, the survey revealed that 62% of respondents demonstrated a moderate understanding of halal labels. They recognized the importance of halal certification in ensuring product compliance with Islamic dietary laws but lacked detailed knowledge of the certification process. While they recognized the importance of halal certification in ensuring compliance with Islamic dietary laws, only 40% could accurately describe the certification process. Furthermore, 24% of students were unsure about the significance of halal certification, indicating a need for increased education. Previous research by Nurohman and Qurniawati (2019) similarly highlighted gaps in halal literacy among younger populations, emphasized the necessity for comprehensive halal education to improve knowledge. The level of understanding can be seen on Table 1.

By analyzing the survey data on halal knowledge, it becomes evident that there is a layered complexity in the respondents' understanding of halal labels. While general awareness is relatively high, significant gaps persist in trust, the reliability of information sources, and the practical application of knowledge. Addressing these gaps requires targeted

interventions, such as educational campaigns focusing on the technical aspects of halal certification, trust-building initiatives by certification bodies, and more interactive learning opportunities in schools. These approaches will ensure that understanding translates into informed and consistent consumer behavior.

Table 1. Levels of Understanding and Criteria Across Halal Label Indicators

Indicator	Level of understanding	Percentation	Criteria
knowledge of halal labels	Not understand	12%	-
	Uncertain	24%	Very low
	Understand	62%	Sufficient
trust in certification	Not understand	44%	Low
	Uncertain	24%	Very low
	Understand	30%	Very low
attitudes toward halal products	Not understand	9%	-
	Uncertain	32%	Very low
	Understand	58%	Sufficient
sources of halal information	Not understand	24%	Very low
	Uncertain	38%	Low
	Understand	36%	Low
purchasing decisions	Not understand	14%	-
	Uncertain	27%	Very low
	Understand	57%	Sufficient

Trust in Certification

The responses to the three questions related to trust in certification, as shown in Fig. 2, provide critical insights into respondents' perceptions of halal certification. First, reliability of halal labels garnered strong confidence, with 72% of respondents trusting the reliability of halal labels on imported products. However, 23% expressed uncertainty, and 3% showed a lack of understanding, highlighting a small yet notable gap in trust. In contrast, authenticity of halal labels revealed significant skepticism, with 72% doubting whether these labels accurately reflect compliance with halal standards. Only 6% expressed confidence in the authenticity of halal labels, while 20% remained uncertain, indicating a widespread lack of trust in the certification process.

The lowest level of trust was observed regarding producers' adherence to halal standards, with only 13% of respondents believing that producers strictly follow halal guidelines. A majority of 57% disagreed, and 29% were uncertain, indicating substantial concerns about the reliability of producers' compliance with certification requirements. These findings suggest that while respondents may trust the visual reliability of halal labels, their confidence in the underlying processes and adherence by producers remains fragile. Addressing these issues will require targeted efforts to improve transparency and communication from certification bodies, as well as initiatives to hold producers accountable for maintaining halal standards.

The responses highlight a critical disparity in trust across different dimensions of halal certification. While the majority of respondents perceive halal labels as reliable, scepticism increases significantly when evaluating the authenticity of the labels, and producers' compliance with halal standards. These findings align with research by Wibowo and Mandusari (2018), who emphasized that consumers often trust the visual aspects of halal labels but question the integrity of the certification process. Similarly, Nasution and Kartika (2021) pointed out that limited transparency and communication from certification bodies contribute to public doubt, especially among younger demographics.

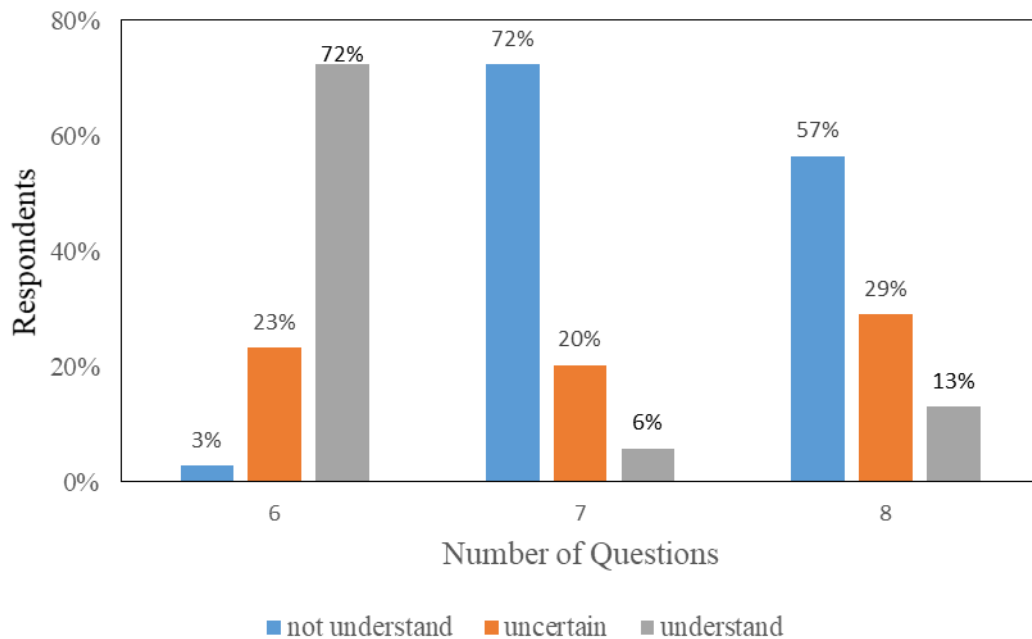


Figure 2: Consumer Perceptions and Influences on Trust in Certification Related to Halal-Labeled Imported Products

The data corresponds closely with the "Trust in Certification" section of the understanding level table (shown on table 1), which shows that 44% of respondents lack trust in halal certification, and only 30% demonstrate sufficient understanding. The strong confidence in the reliability of halal labels is contrasted by significant scepticism regarding the authenticity of certification and producer compliance. This pattern suggests that while visual trust in logos is relatively high, systemic trust in the processes and actors behind certification remains fragile.

The results also underline the multifaceted nature of trust in halal certification, with visible elements (e.g., halal logos) generating more confidence than systemic aspects like certification authenticity and producer compliance. Addressing these issues requires targeted interventions, including (1) enhanced transparency; (2) Educational Campaigns; (3) Producer Accountability. Certification bodies must actively demonstrate the rigor of their processes to build systemic trust. Collaborative initiatives between producers and certification bodies should highlight strict adherence to halal standards, reinforcing consumer confidence. While schools and communities should integrate halal certification education to foster a deeper understanding of its importance and authenticity. By addressing

these gaps, it is possible to align consumer trust with the reliability and authenticity of halal certification, promoting more informed and confident purchasing decisions among younger consumers.

Attitudes Toward Halal Products

Consumer attitudes toward halal products are a crucial determinant of their purchasing behavior. This section explores how respondents perceive the importance, relevance, and quality associated with halal-labeled products. The results provide insights into the preferences and priorities that shape consumer choices. From Fig 3. It can be seen that A strong 65% of respondents expressed a clear preference for halal-labeled products over those without halal labels, demonstrating their inclination towards products aligned with their beliefs. Meanwhile, 32% were uncertain, and only 1% disagreed (Question 9). While 57% of respondents prioritize halal labels on packaging, 30% were uncertain, and 12% agreed, reflecting a minority who disregard halal labels (Question 10). Then A majority of 52% agreed that halal-labeled products are perceived as higher quality, while 33% were uncertain, and 13% disagreed

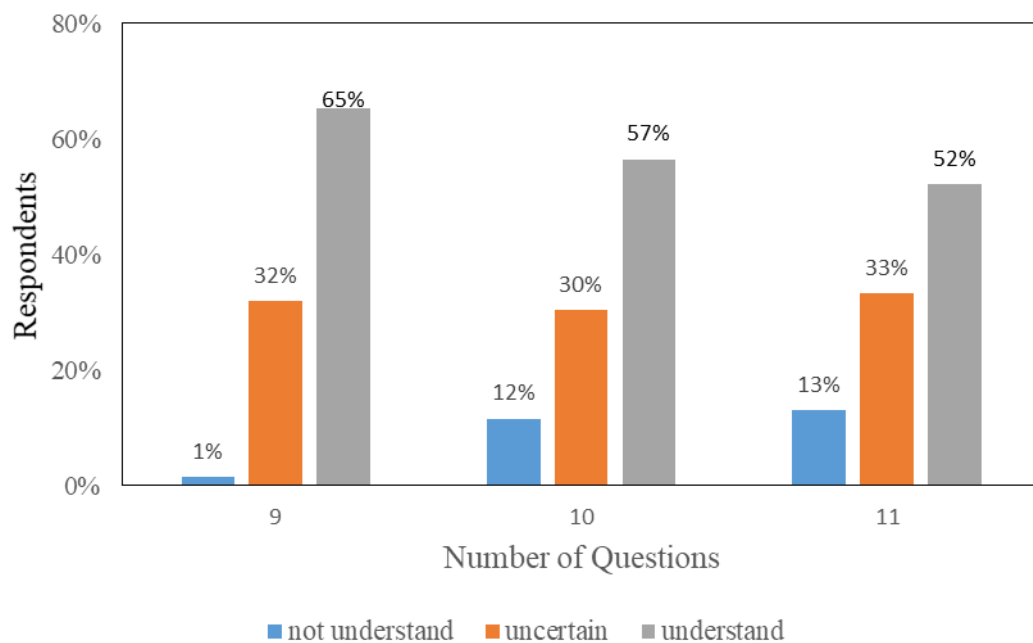


Figure 3: Consumer Perceptions and Influences on Attitudes Toward Halal Products Related to Halal-Labeled Imported Products

These findings indicate a predominantly positive attitude toward halal-labeled products, reflecting the significant influence of religious and cultural values on consumer preferences. The strong preference for halal-labeled products, aligns with studies such as Alfiah and Muflikha (2022), which emphasize the role of halal certification in fostering consumer trust and preference.

However, the uncertainty observed in Question 10 (30%) and Question 11 (33%) suggests gaps in understanding or conviction regarding the significance and quality assurance of halal labels. Rahmawati et al. (2020) noted similar findings, where theoretical knowledge about halal labels did not always translate into strong behavioral alignment.

The attitudes section in the understanding level table 1. highlights that 58% of respondents demonstrate sufficient understanding, aligning with the majority positive responses in this section. However, the presence of uncertainty (e.g., 33% in Question 11) reflects a gap in translating knowledge into conviction, suggesting the need for further education to solidify attitudes and reduce ambiguity. The results underline the positive influence of halal labels on consumer attitudes, particularly in fostering preference and perceived quality. To address remaining uncertainties, initiatives should enhance education on the quality standards behind halal labels, leverage campaigns to connect halal certification with tangible quality assurance, and address misconceptions that may lead to uncertainty, ensuring alignment between knowledge and attitudes.

Sources of Halal Information

The responses to the three questions related to sources of halal information highlight the influence of media and communication channels on consumer perceptions shown on Figure 4. A substantial 48% of respondents agreed, showing a strong reliance on social media for halal-related information. Meanwhile, 29% were uncertain, and 22% disagreed, indicating a divide in trust or access to such platforms (Question 12). A notable 38% of respondents agreed that Advertisements are often unreliable regarding the halal status of products. Additionally, 33% were uncertain, while 28% disagreed, showing varying levels of confidence in advertisements as a source of halal information. However the respondents' opinions were more divided, with 52% uncertain about media influence the perception of halal-labelled products, 33% agreeing, and 13% disagreeing. This highlights the media's ambiguous role in shaping consumer views on halal certification.

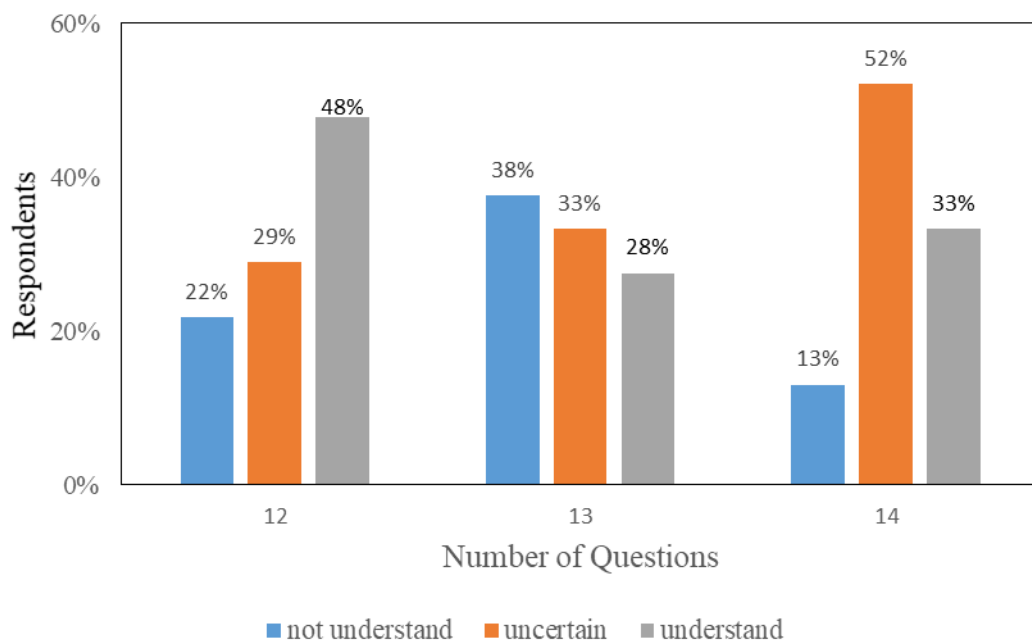


Figure 4: Consumer Perceptions and Influences on Sources of Halal Information Related to Halal-Labeled Imported Products

The findings underline the pivotal role of media, particularly social media, as a key source of halal information. The reliance on social media aligns with studies by Nasution and Kartika (2021), which emphasize the growing importance of digital platforms in shaping consumer awareness and behavior. However, the skepticism toward advertisements indicates a trust gap, reflecting findings by Rahmawati et al. (2020), who highlighted the need for greater transparency in promotional content. The uncertainty surrounding the media's influence suggests a lack of clarity on its role in providing accurate halal-related information. Similar trends were observed by Wibowo and Mandusari (2018), who noted that while media exposure increases awareness, its ability to influence trust remains inconsistent due to perceived biases.

The understanding level table shows that 36% of respondents have sufficient understanding of halal information sources, while a significant portion remains uncertain. This corresponds to the uncertainty observed in Questions 13 and 14, where respondents are unsure about the reliability and influence of media channels. The reliance on social media (Question 12) indicates an opportunity to leverage digital platforms to improve halal awareness but highlights the need for ensuring credible and accurate content.

These results emphasize the critical role of media, especially social media, in disseminating halal-related information. However, the trust gap in advertisements and the ambiguous influence of media highlight areas for improvement. To address these challenges, the halal certification bodies need to enhance their credibility by making collaborating with digital platforms to ensure accurate and transparent information is shared across media platforms. They also need to use social media to launch targeted campaigns that raise awareness about halal certification and its importance and strengthen regulations to ensure that advertisements accurately reflect the halal status of products. By addressing these issues, media can be transformed into a reliable tool for enhancing consumer understanding and trust in halal certification.

Purchasing Decisions

The influence of halal certification on purchasing decisions provides critical insights into how consumers weigh factors like certification, quality, and satisfaction in their buying behavior. This section discusses the relationship between halal labels and consumer decision-making processes (Figure 5).

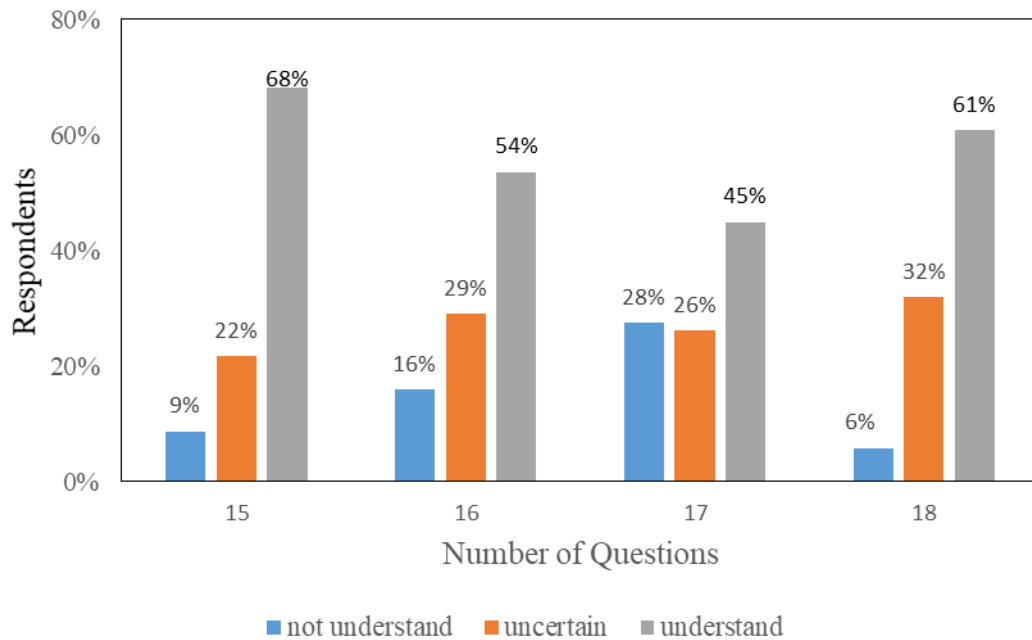


Figure 5: Consumer Perceptions and Influences on Purchasing Decisions Related to Halal-Labeled Imported Products

At Figure 5, it showed that a significant 68% of respondents strongly agreed the important to know halal certification before purchasing imported food products, showing a clear prioritization of halal certification in their purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, 22% expressed uncertainty, and 9% disagreed, highlighting a small group for whom halal certification is less of a priority (Question 15). While 54% of respondents disagreed that the halal status of imported products is not my main consideration when purchasing. It indicates that halal certification remains important, 29% agreed, suggesting a minority for whom it is less critical. Additionally, 16% were uncertain about its relevance (Question 16). A balanced 45% agreed that they tend to compare halal certification with other factors before making a purchase decision, suggesting that other factors such as price or brand may influence their decisions alongside halal status. However, 28% disagreed, and 26% remained uncertain (Question 17). And lastly a notable 61% disagreed that after purchasing, they rarely feel satisfied with halal-labeled imported food products., showing high satisfaction with halal-certified products, while 32% expressed uncertainty, and only 6% agreed.

These findings emphasize the importance of halal certification in purchasing decisions for most of respondents. The strong agreement in Question 15 aligns with studies by Alfiah and Muflikha (2022), which found that religious considerations significantly influence consumer behavior. The data also indicate that halal status is often weighed against other factors, as seen in Question 17, where respondents demonstrated a balanced perspective. Rahmawati et al. (2020) highlighted similar trends, emphasizing that consumers prioritize halal certification but still consider price and quality.

The high level of satisfaction expressed in Question 18 contrasts with the uncertainty observed in other areas, suggesting that while halal certification is valued, there may be gaps in how it meets consumer expectations. These findings align with research by Nasution and

Kartika (2021), who highlighted the role of product quality in shaping consumer satisfaction beyond halal certification alone.

The understanding level table on Table 1. reveals that 57% of respondents demonstrate sufficient understanding of purchasing decisions influenced by halal certification, aligning with the majority agreement in Question 15. However, the uncertainty in Questions 16 and 17 suggests a need to better educate consumers on how halal certification intersects with other purchasing factors.

The results underscore the critical role of halal certification in consumer purchasing decisions, particularly among young Muslim consumers. To address uncertainties and further enhance the influence of halal certification, Labschool Cirendeu need to develop targeted educational campaigns highlighting the importance of halal certification and its role in ensuring product quality and promote awareness of how halal certification aligns with other product attributes, such as quality and safety. By implementing these strategies, halal certification can strengthen its role as a decisive factor in purchasing decisions, fostering more informed and confident consumer behavior.

Conclusion

This study explored the influence of halal certification on the purchasing decisions of Muslim high school students at SMA Labschool Cirendeu, revealing that while students demonstrate a moderate to sufficient understanding of halal labels, significant gaps persist in trust, knowledge, and confidence in certification processes. Although students generally prefer halal-certified products and associate them with higher quality, skepticism toward the authenticity of labels and the reliability of information sources, particularly advertisements, underscores the need for improved transparency and educational interventions. Social media emerged as a prominent source of halal information, yet its credibility remains questionable, necessitating more reliable communication channels.

These findings suggest that SMA Labschool Cirendeu should integrate halal certification education into its curriculum, emphasizing trust-building measures, practical applications of halal standards, and critical evaluation of media sources. Collaboration with halal certification bodies and leveraging social media for accurate information dissemination can further enhance awareness. Future research should investigate the long-term impact of such educational initiatives, explore regional and demographic variations in halal perceptions, and assess the role of specific media channels in building trust in halal certification. These efforts will foster a generation of informed consumers who make responsible and confident purchasing decisions.

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