



# Impact of Halal Awareness, Personal Intrinsic Religiosity and Country of Origin on Halal Buying Behaviour: A moderation and Mediation Analysis

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#### **Abstract**

This study aimed to know the impact of halal awareness, personal intrinsic religiosity and country of origin on consumers' halal buying behavior. In this study, consumer attitude plays the role of the mediating variable and halal certification is used as a moderating variable. This study tells about the imported halal products importance in the Pakistan and people halal buying behavior to buy it. The Halal certification plays a role in identifying the consumer attitude toward the imported halal products with the help of halal awareness, personal intrinsic religiosity and country of origin. Research was conducted using the survey-based questionnaire and collected responses from consumers of halal imported products. The data was collected from a total of 316 respondents, which was used in data analysis. The tools used to test the research were SPSS and AMOS. The study's conclusions stated that halal awareness, personal intrinsic religiosity and country of origin impact the consumer attitude towards purchasing halal products. Personal intrinsic religiosity does not have significant on consumer halal buying behavior. Consumer attitude has mediated the relationship between halal awareness, personal intrinsic religiosity and country of origin and consumer halal buying behavior. The study also proved the role of halal certification as moderator between the relationship of personal intrinsic religiosity, country of origin and consumer attitude. The study's implications stated that it was conducted to know the halal buying behavior of Muslim consumers of Pakistan. Marketers can use the study to enhance the halal awareness, personal intrinsic religiosity and knowledge about country of origin to persuade Muslim consumers to buy halal imported products.

Keywords: Halal awareness, personal intrinsic religiosity, country of origin, consumer attitude, consumer halal buying behavior

# 1. Introduction

#### 1.1. **Background**

In Islam, the word Halal means anything that was permitted or allowed. The word Haram was the opposite of Halal, which means anything prohibited and not allowed in Islam (Mohamed et al., 2020). Many businesses are focusing on making products Halal and Shariah-compliant. Many demands of consumers have moved towards Halal food and the certified Halal financial services, hospitality, and cosmetics. The products with the label of Halal assume by consumers that this particular product was according to their religious guidelines (Aoun & Tournois, 2015). The consumer market that wants Halal certified products was expanding with time. Many researchers have suggested that Muslim consumers usually consume Halal products (A. Khan et al., 2020). Halal-certified products ensure the quality and safety of the consumption of products. However, many non-Muslim consumers also show interest in buying Halal products. Many studies show that the branding of Halal products was the least interesting in research. However, they contain a vast potential to grow in the future (Haque et al., 2015).

In 2016, the Halal food market gave \$1.2trillion by providing Halal products to consumers. The overall Halal food market was expected to produce \$1.93trillion in 2022 (Ahmadova & Aliyev, 2020). The population of Muslim communities all over the world was 2 billion. So, it showed a huge market that needs recognition for choosing halal products and services (Tuhin et al., 2020). However, Halal products do not get that recognition and appreciation among Muslim consumers. Significantly few developed Muslim and Non-Muslim countries have shown an increasing demand for Halal products and services. The most populated Muslim countries like Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Bangladesh consumers still prefer buying non-Halal products (Khan et al., 2019). The marketers have used traditional marketing and advertisement tactics to promote Halal products and services but still get no results.

Within the previous two decades, the halal business has become one of the most appealing industries for marketers. Its expansion was regarded as one of the fastest-growing markets in the world said by Asnawi et al. (2018), with an anticipated value of US\$2.1 trillion in 2017. Previously, halal was solely a religious problem, but it has become one of the global emblems of quality assurance and a healthy lifestyle for customers (Lada et al., 2009).

The word halal was frequently connected with food. However, it may also refer to various items such as hygiene, cosmetics, and medicines (Lada et al., 2009). Food was one of the halal industries expected to continue developing.

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Recently, there has been a surge in demand for new halal foreign products. Unlike ordinary food items, imported halal products were not permitted to contain porcine by-products, derivatives, and alcohol (Wilson & Liu, 2011).

About 90 percent of the halal, cosmetic and medicinal food business was dominated by transnational firms from non-Muslim countries, who were progressively gaining influence in the Muslim market (Wilson & Liu, 2011). Because there were some beliefs and ideals that link all Muslim customers together, the Muslim market was seen to be highly homogenous (Alserhan & Alserhan, 2012).

The worldwide homogeneity of Muslim customers must be a huge asset for marketers. As the Muslim population in most countries develops, it was more beneficial for manufacturers and merchants in the proper places to apply different types of marketing strategies centered on Islam. It was thought that 70 percent of Muslims globally observe halal requirements (Alam & Sayuti, 2011). According to the Islamic worldview, not all lucrative things may be offered to the market. Only halal and clean commodities may be sold, and illicit products must not be sold. In terms of law, Pakistan was serious about controlling the issue of halal goods via legislation such as Law No. 33 of 2014 on Guaranteed Halal Products. Muslims globally demand halal purity in food, non-edible, and service items.

The Muslim community was rapidly growing and already accounts for over a quarter of the global population. According to Rajagopal et al. (2011), a few sources revealed that by 2025, the Muslim population will have increased to 30%. This growing tendency will significantly influence the corporate environment and, as a result, change the requirements of economies all over the world. Notably, the notion of halal will acquire much traction worldwide (Zailani et al., 2018).

In Pakistan, the nation with the biggest Muslim population and where halal ideals were highly respected in practically every area of life, no research has been performed expressly on imported halal items from outside the country. So this study was focusing on the elements that impact customers' propensity to purchase halal products and the need for halal certification. (Awan et al., 2015). Pakistan, an Islamic nation where many people were concerned about halal goods and services, was the focus of this research. First in Pakistan, this study focuses on origin and certification, which contributes to the existing literature on halal purchasing and certification. In recent years, halal certification in the food manufacturing business has acquired a lot of popularity. It has become a market leader in terms of innovation and performance. In an effort to increase their profit line, several companies were resorting to halal certifications.

For more than half a century, the influence of COO has been a constant subject in worldwide marketing. Despite this, it was sometimes depicted as a part of literature in which the available set of research have to be improved getting addition from further research (Suhartanto, 2019). (Ishak et al., 2016; Rios et al., 2014) have all addressed challenges in creating an excellent theoretical foundation for comprehending COO, including questions about the conditions required for effect to arise. Consumers typically have trouble precisely recognizing the origin of products and brands, according to Vargas-Sánchez and Moral-Moral (2018) raising the issue of whether COO deserves the scholarly attention it has gotten. The definition of "origin" was a crucial issue in the management relevance of COO, as it relates to the essential circumstances for COO.

To know the purchase behavior of Muslim consumers was essential for the brands of Halal products and services to help them acquire the market. Many researchers have researched the Halal buying behavior of consumers in developed countries. However, the study on Muslim developing countries was scarce (Memon et al., 2019). So, this study was done to know the direct and indirect factors which can significantly strengthen Halal buying behavior. Also, this study will get Muslim consumers of developing economies in the light of their perception towards Halal buying. Many previous pieces of research have shown that motivation, knowledge, norms, and attitudes are the main factors that influence Halal buying behavior.

# 1.2. Objectives

The objectives of the current study that highlight the importance for the conducting the research are:

- To understand the importance of halal buying and consumer attitude.
- To consider the halal awareness as a module to sell the halal imported products.
- To know about whether personal intrinsic religiosity affect the halal buying behavior or not.
- To consider the COO as the part of the packaging of the halal imported products.
- To investigate the halal certification as a necessity on the halal imported products importing from the other countries.
- To know the consumer attitude affecting the halal awareness, personal intrinsic religiosity and country of origin.

## 1.3. Significance of the Study

The significance of the current study was to know the potential Muslim consumers who buy the halal imported products. Halal certification was known as the element to provide assurance to the consumers about the halalness of the products. To make consumer buy the product it was necessary for the consumers to have the halal awareness, have personal intrinsic religiosity and should consider country of origin as an element was buying of halal imported products. Consumer attitude provide a way to make the intention of consumers changing to buying the products.

## 2. Literature Review

#### 2.1. Halal Buying Behavior

The hook that characterizes an individual's attitude, style, and action was their behavior. The Theory of Reasoned Action was therefore employed to explain human behavior better. According to TRA, human behavior was influenced by purchasing purpose, subjective standards, and the consumer's attitude (Tuhin et al., 2020). Any individual's conduct was defined by their positive or negative associations with making purchases. It was geared at a person's desire to purchase goods. The societal pressure on any individual to do the action was the second determinant. This wasreferred to as the subjective norm (Lada et al., 2009). Purchase behavior was described as a consumer's ability to judge what items and services to buy on the market (Baran, 2020).

While Jamal and Sharifuddin (2015) argued that consumer segmentation might be weakened in multicultural cultures as subjective standards alter due to marketing impact, Muslim residents of mixed-faith communities, say Mukhtar and Butt (2012), are more concerned with a product's permissibility or halalness.

According to Becker and Gibson (1998) theory of reasoned action TRA, the purpose was a crucial aspect of the link between attitude and conduct. The purpose of TRA was to learn more about the link between attitudes, intentions, and behavior. Attitudes, subjective norms, and reference groups were the three factors of TRA-compliant conduct. Behavioral beliefs, which refer to one's inner views about the consequences of adopting specific activities, will alter attitudes toward actual activity, according to the theory of planned behavior TPB (Ajzen, 1991).

#### 2.2. Consumer Attitude

An individual's attitude was a clear or unfavorable pattern of behavior toward any item. Consumer attitude and intention to buy items were often disputed in the preceding literature in both halal and non-halal contexts, according to Ajzen (1991), who defined attitude towards a behavior as the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable judgment of behavior in issue. As a result, it was worth investigating the impact of customer attitudes on purchase intent and intent to purchase halal items in the future. Khan and Azam (2016) discovered that attitude was the most critical factor in predicting halal-certified goods purchasing intentions. Customers' attitudes regarding halal cuisine significantly predict intention. Similarly, Lada et al. (2009) discovered that one's attitude toward halal meals was linked to one's desire to consume halal foods. Other research has found that customer attitudes regarding halal cuisine have a significant and favorable impact on purchase intent.

Many studies have already examined the purpose in both Halal and Non-Halal scenarios. According to Tuhin et al. (2020) and many other studies, consumer attitude has a favorable impact on consumer behavior. According to the findings, when people have a more positive mindset, they were more likely to buy Halal items. According to the Reasoned Action hypothesis, consumer attitude directly influences consumer buying behavior, which has been researched by numerous researchers in past studies (Tuhin et al., 2020). Although attitude has been utilized as an independent variable in some research, it was employed as a mediator in this investigation.

## 2.3. Halal Awareness and Consumer Attitude

An insight or knowledge of a particular subject or circumstance was awareness. Halal awareness, which was related to halal items, was an educational process that aims to raise awareness of what Muslims were permitted to eat, drink, and use (Ambali & Bakar, 2014). The fact that they were aware of a product's halal certification was thought to impact their attitude toward cosmetics. According to Kurniawati and Savitri (2019), awareness impacts attitude. Furthermore, Shahid et al. (2018) researched a new direction, namely the impact of product attitude on halal awareness.

The amount of awareness influences consumer behavior. When customers believe they have a high degree of knowledge about a product or brand, they were more likely to buy it and spend more money (Akın & Okumuş, 2020a). Consumers who were more knowledgeable about a product were more likely to identify it. Furthermore, their decision-making abilities may improve, resulting in more favorable ratings (Akın & Okumuş, 2020a). Furthermore, Bashir (2019a) discovers a favorable relationship between halal food awareness and the desire to buy halal food produced by non-Muslim businesses (Khan & Azam, 2016).

Halal awareness, according to Mutmainah (2018), has a positive and substantial effect on customer intents to purchase halal food. Furthermore, customers understanding of halal influences their decisions to purchase halal cuisine. Similarly, Hamdan et al. (2013) discovered that Their level of awareness influences Muslim customers' decisions to buy halal food. Other research Katuk et al. (2020) has demonstrated that consumer awareness has a favorable impact on intent. As a result, previous research shows that consumer awareness of halal meals positively impacts purchase behavior.

Thus that state the hypothesis was as follows:

H1: halal awareness has a significant influence on consumer attitude.

# 2.4. Personal Intrinsic Religiosity and Consumer Attitude

Several studies have looked at the relative role of religion and other factors in determining whether or not to buy halal cuisine. According to Katuk et al. (2020) the most relevant element in Muslim customers' purchase decisions was their awareness or familiarity with halal cuisine. Similarly, Muhamad et al. (2016) found that the influence of religion on

purchasing choices was mediated by factors such as religious commitment, motivation, affiliation, and understanding of the social ramifications of religious practice.

According to Mukhtar and Butt (2012), religion influences consumer behavior and attitudes about acquiring goods and services. Religion was fundamental in determining individual cognition and behavior. As a result, it was thought that religion was an essential element in Muslim consumer behavior. According to previous research, consumers with high degrees of religiosity behave differently than those with low (Ariffin et al., 2016). The same may be said for Halal consumption studies. Because Muslims eat according to Islamic teachings, their level of religiosity determines their behavior, including how Muslim travelers consume Halal cuisine (Worthington Jr &Langberg, 2012). The effect of religion in influencing a consumer's intention to purchase Halal cuisine was considerable Shaharudin et al. (2010) point out that religious beliefs and levels of religiosity influence consumer purchases. The hypothesis stated was:

H2: personal intrinsic religiosity has a significant influence on consumer attitude.

# 2.5. Country of Origin and Consumer Attitude

COO studies in the past equated provenance to the nation specified by "made-in" labels. Under country-of-origin labeling, this debate continues. Surprisingly, the relevant study focuses primarily on food items and service categories where brands have little impact on customer preference development, such as food (Newman et al., 2014). As reflected by the "made-in" label, the COO was still relevant to consumers in product categories subject to scandals or health risks (Schnettler et al., 2008). So the COO was still important to customers who were concerned about product scandals or health hazards because of the "made-in" label. However, it has grown increasingly difficult to objectively determine the origin of commodities with industrial value chains that span many countries. (Esmaeilpour & Abdolvand, 2016). As a consequence, the "made in" label does not necessarily reflect the consumer's impression of the place of origin. It was widely accepted that the iPhone was an American product, even though it was manufactured in China. According to most COO research, "brand origin," or the region where the brand was believed to have originated, was the most common definition of origin (Brodowsky et al., 2018).

According to Magnusson et al. (2011), a company's COO may not always come from the nation where the brand was created. As a result, misidentification of a brand's origin does not always imply the absence of the COO effect. Thus the hypothesis was:

H3: country of origin has a significant influence on consumer attitude.

#### 2.6. Halal Awareness and Halal Buying Behavior

According to Ambali and Bakar (2014), halal awareness was described as having a specific interest or experience with halal meals, drinks, and goods or being well educated about them. As a result, halal awareness refers to the process of instructing Muslims about what they were permitted to eat, drink, and use Ambali and Bakar (2014). A person's "degree of awareness" was what the phrase "level of awareness" alludes to. People's levels of consciousness vary widely. According to one psychologist, one's "degree of awareness" relates to one's awareness of one's own internal and external experiences when confronted with stressful or traumatic circumstances. (Kurniawati & Savitri, 2019).

Wibowo et al. (2020) investigated the amount of halal food sector knowledge in Malaysia and halal concerns and potential. According to the findings, people were still dubious about halal emblems and certificates. Some small and medium businesses have trouble adhering to halal regulations and gaining halal certification. Thus the hypothesis state from the above discussion that:

H4: Halal awareness has a significant influence on halal buying behavior.

## 2.7. Personal Intrinsic Religiosity and Halal Buying Behavior

Religion was a fascinating issue for social scientists who wish to learn more about people's consumption patterns, well-being, and public lives (Raggiotto et al., 2018). As a way to assess how firmly individuals believe and practice religious beliefs and concepts, the term religiosity has been used. There were many facets to the notion of religion, including one's core values, the way one lives their life, the things one knows, and the experiences one has (Abou-Youssef et al., 2015). One sort of religiosity was intrinsic, which was defined as a devotion to a religion that one considers to be their ultimate purpose in life; the other was extrinsic, which was defined as using religion as a means to attain self-centered objectives (Nurhayati & Hendar, 2019). PIR, in particular, was consistent in carrying out his religious instructions as to his ultimate objective; religious conduct was at the core of one's psyche, adjusting one's demands and goals. Six hundred nine of life with religious standards that he believes were true, pledges to comprehend each ceremonial practice by God's instruction, and takes his religious beliefs seriously throughout his life (Handriana et al., 2020). The framework of a human relationship with Allah as muslim and the framework of human interactions, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, shall be the foundation of his desirable behavior. PIR, also known as hab-lum-minallah, was proven to have a substantial favorable influence on halal food purchasing intention (Handriana et al., 2020). It indicates that consumer religious and worship information, attitudes, and practices positively favor establishing consumer inclinations to purchase halal branded items.

Thus, the above discussion states the hypothesis that:

H5: personal intrinsic religiosity has a significant influence on halal buying behavior.

### 2.8. Country of Origin and Halal Buying Behavior

According to COO research, consumers generate impressions of a product's quality depending on a country's acknowledged talents and competence (Papadopoulos et al., 2018). Abraham and Patro (2014), history, and experience in specific product manufacturing processes, were found to have significant effects on the perceived quality of products made in certain countries. According to the COO literature, consumers can utilize COO information in a halal logo to assess a logo's reliability and affirm the halal-ness of a product (Muhamad et al., 2017). A logo's provenance might be used by Muslims to evaluate a certification's quality and standard (Muhamad et al., 2017).

Theory of Planned Behavior TPB was used as a theoretical foundation for this research. Fischbein's Expectancy Theory was the basis for TPB, a well-known motivational paradigm. One's actions were impacted by one's behavioral intentions, which were affected by one's attitude toward a certain conduct, the expectations of others, and one's perceived control over the behavior, according to the TPB model of behavioral action (Muhamad et al., 2016).

Thus the hypothesis was:

H6: country of origin has a significant influence on halal buying behavior.

## 2.9. Consumer Attitude and Halal Buying Behavior

Consumer behavior was a complex structure influenced by various cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors. As a psychological factor, one of such attitudes was acquired via learning, doing, and purchasing (Kotler & Armstrong, 2016). An attitude was an individual's positive or negative response to a person, thing, or event. A customer's perception of a product, brand, or company was influenced by their overall evaluations and the major structure of their behavior. (Yeo et al., 2017). In this study, halal product attitudes were defined as the level of neutral or taught beliefs and feelings regarding halal meals, beverages, and meats. When it comes to the eating of halal food, a positive attitude about halal cuisine should have an impact on a person's decision to eat it (Adnan Ali et al., 2018). Attitude has been studied in many studies since it was regularly included in consumer behavior models.

Shahid et al. (2018) investigated Muslim students' understanding and perceptions of halal cuisine in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia. Abd Rahman et al. (2015) investigated people's attitudes and intentions about buying halal products. TRA views the intention of a person as an essential component of the theory, and it happens just before to the actual conduct of the person. This timing was crucial to the theory. Similarly, Abu-Hussin et al. (2017) found that attitude, subjective norm, and PBC influence specific behavioral intents. Furthermore, intention was the trait that motivates people to participate in their behavior. Even though many faiths have severe food restrictions, the degree to which their adherents obey these laws varies Shah et al. (2019), and behavioral variables influence this difference. Thus, the above discussion leads to the hypothesis that is:

H7: consumer attitude has a significant influence on the consumers' halal buying behavior.

# 2.10. Consumer Attitude as a Mediator

Consumer attitudes play a mediating influence. The earlier discussion established direct relationships among the constructs. According to the TRA, previous research has shown a direct link between favorable customer attitudes and purchasing behavior (Vidyanata et al., 2018).

Furthermore, Ahmadova and Aliyev (2020) claimed that religion and attitude and norms and attitudes have a significant association. Furthermore, Selim et al. (2019) found that the mediation role attitude exists in the halal purchasing setting. These direct interactions highlight the importance of indirect relationships, which aid in establishing a mediating variable to mediate the relationship between the constructs.

Furthermore, Jaiyeoba et al. (2019) discovered that halal knowledge and ingredients substantially impact customers' intentions to purchase halal food made by non-Muslim producers. Even though various research has been conducted in this field, it was clear that such studies were still inadequate in Nigeria. In the context of halal food, halal drinks, and other halal products, the word "awareness" literally means "a feeling of having a special or experienced interest in something and obtaining information about what was going on right now about halal food, halal drinks, and other halal products." (Ambali & Bakar, 2014). Furthermore, halal awareness refers to the familiarity and comprehension of information concerning halal items (Shahid et al., 2018).

So, the hypothesis stated is:

H8: consumer attitude mediates the relationship between halal awareness and halal buying behavior.

Religious consumers were more disciplined in their everyday routines. Hence they were less likely to make impulsive purchases (Hwang, 2018). Consumers who have a strong internal religious drive will need to hold on to their religious beliefs in order to solve their worries about the meaning and purpose of life. According to Ilter et al. (2017), To express halal's perceived importance to Muslims, the Muslim community uses the halal paradigm.

Every decision-making process that leads to legal and ethical conduct was heavily influenced by religion (Ramakrishnan et al., 2015). The word halal was often associated with Muslim devotion. Halal food must be

consumed according to Islamic law. As a result, religion has a significant role in determining individual behavior when eating halal cuisine. Religion plays a significant role in halal purchasing decisions (Razzaq et al., 2018). Thus the above discussion states the hypothesis as follows:

H9: consumer attitude mediates the relationship between personal intrinsic religiosity and halal buying behavior. According to Rezvani et al. (2012), customers evaluate products based on their country of origin. Due to the limited information and understanding about the goods, Lee and Lee (2009) emphasized that the country of origin is the first indication for buyers. Consumers regard nations like the United States, Japan, and Germany manufacturing high-quality goods, but emerging countries were linked with low-quality or inferior goods (Abedniya & Zaeim, 2011). Negative customer views in countries of origin will influence buying behavior and may even boycott the items. As in the Danish cartoons, which prompted the Muslim world to boycott Danish goods (Alserhan, 2010).

According to Alserhan (2010), Sharia-compliant, originating in an Islamic country, and aimed at Muslim customers were all requirements for a "true Islamic brand." One-size-fits-all categorization has harmed the country's perception of Arabs and Muslims. However, the majority of Muslims in the UK come from Pakistan and India. In the United States, just 16% of Muslims were Arab, with the rest being African Americans (44%), South Asians (28%), Africans (3%), and others (16%). The fact that there were several schools of Islam, such as Sunni and Shiite, further complicates things (Rios et al., 2014). Thus, the hypothesis was:

H10: consumer attitude mediates the relationship between country of origin and halal buying behavior.

#### 2.11. Halal Certification

According to Zannierah Syed Marzuki et al. (2012), an efficient halal certification system uniform across the country must be established and implemented. According to Khan and Callanan (2017), a fundamental problem of Islamic tourism was the function of certification in ensuring travelers and the absence of uniformity of halal certification in the United Kingdom.

Nonetheless, Muslim customers in the Pakistan were concerned about the halalness of the products they consume or use. In reality, Haque et al. (2015) found that large abattoirs in Nigeria's northern region have several flaws. It was because of this lack of consistency that the halal supply chain was frequently overlooked in Nigerian halal beef manufacturing (Annabi & Ibidapo-Obe, 2017).

## 2.12. Halal Certification as a Moderator

Halal certification was becoming more popular in today's marketplace as Muslim customers worldwide have a better understanding of the Islamic economic philosophy and principle, as well as its tools and goods (Salindal, 2018). This has contributed to the halal market's exponential rise, which even non-Muslims recognize since they believe halal food items were better, more hygienically handled, and produced (Halimi et al., 2021). In the halal marketplace, the halal food product links advertisers and their target audience or customer. To join this enormous developing market, many companies were co-branding their products or services as halal. The acquisition of a halal certificate has been recognized as an excellent marketing technique for enhancing consumer loyalty, strengthening an organization's image and reputation, and raising profit margins. Consumer trust in purchase decisions was also boosted by Halal certification (Yunos et al., 2014). According to Nawawi et al. (2019), halal certification was a significant symbol for Muslim consumers because it serves as an essential guide for a product that was halal in terms of manufacturing, processing, storage, transportation, provision, maintenance, cleanliness, quality, and halal status based on Islamic principles. Thus the hypothesis stated was:

H11: halal certification moderates the relationship between halal awareness and consumer attitude.

To ensure that there were no haram components in the product, a laboratory and ingredient list were necessary. To verify that no haram products were maintained, handled, or handled, and that the product is not polluted, the manufacturing facilities must be checked (Linzag, 2011). Once the company has gotten a halal certificate, it may use it as a formal basis for establishing a halal logo. In order to educate and convince their target market that their goods were halal and Sharia compliant, manufacturers and marketers were compelled by accident to use halal certification and branding on their products (Ahmed et al., 2018). Producers and marketers use halal certification and trademarks on items to inform and persuade their customers that their products were halal and comply with Islamic law (Shafie & Othman, 2006). Thus the hypothesis from the above discussion was:

H12: halal certification moderates the relationship between personal intrinsic religiosity and consumer attitude.

A product with a halal certificate will have the halal emblem on it, indicating that it was made from halal materials, processed halal, and distributed halal (Bashir, 2019b). The literature has stated that when it comes to purchasing selections, Muslim customers were more concerned with the halal certification label (Jaiyeoba et al., 2019). According to Shaari et al. (2019), The halal certification emblem is seen as trustworthy and noteworthy by Malaysia's generation Y customers. This certification shows restaurant managers to be knowledgeable about Muslims' religious and dietary restrictions as well as the distinguishing features of halal certified establishments. Attitudes toward halal labeling and subjective standards have a positive effect on customer buying choices. According to Borzooei and Asgari (2016) the halal certification mark may help businesses prosper in the marketplace since it signifies confidence

and reflects the organization's beliefs. Similarly, (Majid et al., 2015) find that religious belief, halal-certified brands, and cosmetic product awareness impact female customers' purchasing decisions in Pakistan. So, the hypothesis stated

H13: halal certification moderates the relationship between country of origin and consumer attitude.

#### 2.13. **Conceptual Framework**

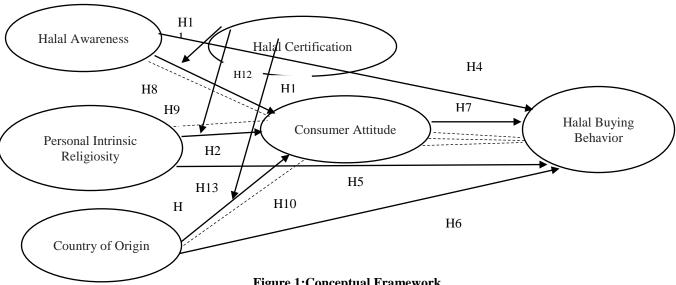


Figure 1:Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework states that there were three independent variables in the current study: personal intrinsic religiosity, halal awareness, and country of origin. The dependent variable of the study was the consumers' halal buying behavior. The present study has one mediator, consumer attitude, and one moderator, which was halal certification. The present study happens on the young consumers of Pakistan who buy foreign imported halal products. As Pakistan was a Muslim majority country, people were much aware of the concept of halal and also contain knowledge about the things or ingredients they can eat or not. The halal imported products that come from another country contain the knowledge about the products and their validity to be halal. To check this, the present study focuses on the importance of personal intrinsic religiosity, halal awareness, and country of origin.

Consumer attitude can change the whole perspective about the products of the consumers. So, in this study, it was used as the mediator to put its influence in increasing the consumer's attitude towards halal imported products. Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between the personal intrinsic religiosity, halal awareness, country of origin, and halal buying behavior of young consumers of Pakistan. In the present study, halal certification was used as the moderator, moderates the relation between personal intrinsic religiosity, halal awareness, country of origin, and consumer attitude. Many previous studies have shown that halal certification was the reason behind the change in the consumer attitude of people.

## 3. Methodology

The current research was based on the positivism research philosophy. In this researcher collects data, analyze it and then postulate the results and conclusion on it. The study has a deductive approach and depends upon quantitative research. The deductive approach checks the literature available on these variables with new practical implementations. The current study depends upon quantitative research. Quantitative research can help understand the practical stance of the variables proposed in the above section. This study was explanatory in nature since it offers explanatory data. In explanatory studies, research hypotheses characterize the existence and course of interactions between variables.

The research strategy for the study has been conducted based on a survey. The survey was used because the population was vast, and targeting all of them was a big problem. There were two data collection methods for the current study, and they were primary and secondary. For secondary purposes, different websites, books, and journals were consulted. The literature about these variables was collected from the journals where the papers related to these variables were published. The primary research uses a questionnaire to get the consumers' responses. The questionnaire was closed-ended and contains the items of the variables used in the study. The questionnaire items were adopted from the other researchers who used these variables. This study used three items to learn about consumer halal buying behavior Tuhin et al. (2020), the dependent variable. For the independent variables for personal intrinsic religiosity, there were six items from Putrevu and Swimberghek (2013) to measure it. For halal awareness, Ngah et al. (2016) used three items in his study, which the researcher in the present study further modified. The third independent variable was the country of origin from Steptoe et al. (1995), have contained three items adapted by the researchers. The four items were adapted for consumer attitude, which was the mediator (Briliana & Mursito, 2017). The current study has one moderator, which was halal certification and contains the items (Ahmadova & Aliyev, 2020). The sample size chosen for the current study was 326 participants. It means that the target population was vast in number (Whitley & Ball, 2002). The sampling technique used for the research was the convenient sampling technique to collect the consumers' responses to halal imported products (Shahid et al., 2018). The tools used in the study were SPSS and AMOS. They were used to analyze the data collected from the usage of the questionnaire. This study has used cross-sectional data in which the respondent had to answer the questions only one time. The replies were kept private and were only used for research purposes. Their personal information has not been shared with anyone else, and there have been no data breaches throughout the research (Suki & Salleh, 2016).

## 4. Data Analysis

## 4.1. Respondents' Demographic Profile

The gender of the responders was the first question on the questionnaire. There were two options: one for men and one for women. The present survey included 178 male respondents and 148 female respondents. As a result, there were 326 total replies. The male and female percentages were then computed. Males account for 54.6 percent of the population, while females account for 45.4 percent.

**Table 1: Demographic Profile (Gender)** 

			Gender		
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	178	54.6	54.6	54.6
	female	148	45.4	45.4	100.0
	Total	326	100.0	100.0	

According to the table, the possibilities were less than 18 years, 18 to 22 years, 23 to 26 years, and more than 26 years. There were 104 respondents under the age of 18, 131 respondents between the ages of 18 and 22, 76 respondents between the ages of 23 and 26, and 15 respondents beyond 26. The total number of respondents was 326. The computed age percentages were 31.9, 40.2, 23.3, and 4.6.

**Table 2:Demographic Profile (Age)** 

		A	ge		
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Less Than 18 Year	104	31.9	31.9	31.9
	18 to 22 Years	131	40.2	40.2	72.1
Valid	23 to 26 Years	76	23.3	23.3	95.4
	More Than 26 Years	15	4.6	4.6	100.0
	Total	326	100.0	100.0	

In the demographic profile, the next wasthe religion of the respondents. There were four options: Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, and others. The 302 respondents selected Islam, ten selected Christianity, 12 selected Hinduism, and 2 selected the others. Their percentage calculated is 92.6, 3.1, 3.7, and .6.

Table 3:Demographic Profile (Religion)

		Tubic 3.Demo	grapine r rome	(Iteligion)	
			Religion		
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Islam	302	92.6	92.6	92.6
	Christianity	10	3.1	3.1	95.7
Valid	Hinduism	12	3.7	3.7	99.4
	Others	2	.6	.6	100.0
	Total	326	100.0	100.0	

The next step was to research young customers' educational backgrounds. As a result, there were two options in the demographic profile: public and private sector. There were 198 students in the public sector and 128 in the private sector. According to the percentages estimated, they were 60.7 and 39.3 percent, respectively.

**Table 4: Demographic Profile (Sector)** 

			Sector		
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Public	198	60.7	60.7	60.7
Valid	Private	128	39.3	39.3	100.0
	Total	326	100.0	100.0	

The following demographic on the questionnaire was education. There were four options: college/inter, bachelors, master's, and Ph.D. These alternatives yielded the following results: 101, 129, 90, and 6. As a result, 31.0 percent of them have a college/inter degree, 39.6 percent have a bachelor's degree, 27.6 percent have a master's degree, and 1.8 percent have a Ph.D.

**Table 5:Demographic Profile (Education)** 

		]	Education		
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	College/ Inter	101	31.0	31.0	31.0
	Bachelors	129	39.6	39.6	70.6
Valid	Master	90	27.6	27.6	98.2
	PhD	6	1.8	1.8	100.0
	Total	326	100.0	100.0	

The respondents' household income comes next. The present study's young participants indicated their household income in one of four categories: 20000-30000, 31000-40000, 41000-50000, and 51000-60000. The options chosen by the respondents among these were in numbers 46, 144, 105, and 31. These possibilities have percentages of 14.1 percent, 44.2 percent, 32.2 percent, and 9.5 percent, respectively.

**Table6:Demographic Profile (Income)** 

			Income		
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	20000-30000	46	14.1	14.1	14.1
	31000-40000	144	44.2	44.2	58.3
Valid	41000-50000	105	32.2	32.2	90.5
	51000-60000	31	9.5	9.5	100.0
	Total	326	100.0	100.0	

# 4.2. Descriptive Analysis

Halal awareness was the first variable. The minimum and maximum values for halal awareness were 1.00 and 5.00, respectively. The mean statistic value was thus 3.2556, whereas the standard deviation was 1.15356. The skewness statistic was -.333, while the standard error was.135. Personal intrinsic religiosity was the second variable. The minimum and maximum values for personal intrinsic religiosity were 1.00 and 5.00, respectively. Then the mean statistic value was 3.4949, and the standard deviation was 1.15979. The skewness statistic was -.534, while the standard error was.135.

The country of origin was the following variable. The country of origin has a minimum value of 1.00 and a maximum of 5.00. The mean statistic value was thus 3.5470, while the standard deviation was 1.18322. The skewness statistic was -.421, while the standard error was.135. The customer attitude was the next aspect to consider. Customer attitude has a minimum value of 1.00 and a maximum value of 5.00. The standard deviation was 1.18322, while the mean statistic was 3.3482. The skewness statistic was -.389, while the standard error was.135. The next category was halal certification. Halal certification has a minimum value of 1.00 and a maximum of 5.00. Then the mean statistic value was 3.2776, while the standard deviation was 1.06843. The skewness statistic was -.182, while the standard error was.135. The halal buying behaviorwas the following variable. The halal buying behavior has a minimum value of 1.00 and a maximum of 5.00. The mean statistic value was thus 3.3211, while the standard deviation was 1.14602. The skewness statistic was -.364, while the standard error was.135.

**Table7: Descriptive Statistics** 

	Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ske	wness			
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error			
HalalAwer	326	1.00	5.00	3.2556	1.15356	333	.135			
PerIntRel	326	1.00	5.00	3.4949	1.15979	534	.135			
CountryOrign	326	1.00	5.00	3.5470	1.18322	421	.135			
CustAttitude	326	1.00	5.00	3.3482	1.01714	389	.135			
HalalCert	326	1.00	5.00	3.2776	1.06843	182	.135			
HalalBuyBeh	326	1.00	5.00	3.3211	1.14602	364	.135			
Valid N listwise	326									

## 4.3. Reliability Analysis

With a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.969, Consumer attitude shows a high level of dependability 0.942, while the personal intrinsic religiosity and country of origin have a solid internal consistency with an alpha value of 0.938. 0.934. Halal awareness was likewise acceptable which 0.889 was. Cronbach's alpha values of 0.925, 0.914, respectively, were found for halal certification and halal buying behavior.

**Table8: Reliability Analysis** 

	_ 22.5 _		
Sr#	Variables	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha
1	НА	3	0.889
2	PIR	6	0.938
3	CO	3	0.934
4	CA	4	0.942
5	HC	4	0.925
6	HB	3	0.914

# 4.4. Convergent and Discriminant Validity

The composite reliability values for the variables HC, HA, PIR, CO, CA and HB were 0.925, 0.889, 0.938, 0.935, 0.942, and 0.914, respectively. As a result, all of the variables were found in the composite reliability. The AVE cutoff value was 0.50. 0.754, 0.727, 0.716, 0.828, 0.802 and 0.780 were the values of the variables. As a result, the dataset has convergent validity. The MSV was the next test 0.316, 0.677, 0.396, 0.367, 0.358 and 0.677.

In the fourth column of the table, the HC has the highest value of 0.869. In the fifth column of the table, the HA has a high value of 0.852. Among the other variables, PIR has the most significant value of 0.846 in the sixth column of the table, CO has the highest value of 0.8910 in the seventh column, and CA has the highest value of 0.896 in the eighth column, and in the ninth column, it is HB 0.833.

**Table9:Convergent and discriminant Validity** 

	CR	AVE	MSV	НС	НА	PIR	CO	CA	HB
	0.925	0.754	0.316	0.869					
HA	0.889	0.727	0.677	0.415	0.852				
PIR	0.938	0.716	0.396	0.534	0.601	0.846			
CO	0.935	0.828	0.367	0.513	0.432	0.606	0.910		
CA	0.942	0.802	0.358	0.562	0.463	0.531	0.556	0.896	
HB	0.914	0.780	0.677	0.525	0.823	0.629	0.576	0.598	0.883

# 4.5. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The value of CMIN in the table below was 2.307, indicating that it was legitimate. The value of GFI in the table was 0.877, which was correct. The current table value of CFI was 0.953, which was correct for the data. The table's IFI current value was 0.953. The evidence supports this. The value of RMSEA in the table was 0.063, which was less than 0.08. As a result, it was legitimate, and the confirmatory factor analysis in the table was accurate.

Tah	61	n٠	Mod	el	Fit	Indice	c
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Indicators	Threshold range	Current values
CMIN/DF	Less or equal 3	2.093
GFI	Equal or greater .80	.893
CFI	Equal or greater .90	.966
IFI	Equal or greater .90	.966
RMSEA	Less or equal .08	.058

#### 4.6. Measurement Model

The values written in the model were seen not to have any value less than 0.3. That makes it valid and standard to consider as the measurement model. In the table, the values were CMIN/DF 2.093, GFI 0.893, CFI 0.966, IFI 0.966, and RMSEA 0.058. The model fit indices were all in their threshold range, making it authentic to conduct the study.

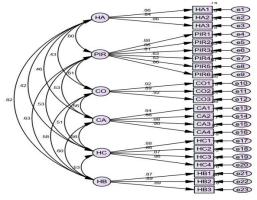


Figure 2: Measurement Model

### 4.7. Structural Equation Modeling

First study's hypothesis was the significant relation between halal awareness and customer attitude. The result shows three \*\*\* which means that H1 was accepted and halal awareness significantly impacts the customer attitude. It was the same as that, it was seen as personal intrinsic religiosity, and country of origin also has the three \*\*\*, which means their hypotheses were also accepted. Personal intrinsic religiosity and country of origin significantly impact the customer attitude, which were the H2 and H3 hypotheses of the study. The below table shows that halal awareness and halal buying behavior have shown \*\*\* three stars, which means they have a significant relationship. So, it means the H4 hypothesis was accepted. The result shows that it has a value of .026, meaning they have no significant relation. So, the H5 hypothesis was rejected, meaning both personal intrinsic religiosity and halal buying behavior have no significant impact on each other. The country of origin and halal buying behavior have the \*\*\* three stars, which means there was a significant relationship between them. So, the H6 hypothesis shows that country of origin and halal buying behavior were related to each other. The other direct relation was between the customer attitude and halal buying behavior. The table shows to have \*\*\* three stars in their path relation. That means customer attitude and halal buying behavior have a significant impact, and H7 was accepted.

**Table 11: Structural Equation Modeling** 

				0		
	Path		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
CustAttitude	<	HalalAwer	.180	.047	3.373	***
CustAttitude	<	PerIntRel	.208	.052	3.483	***
CustAttitude	<	CountryOrign	.340	.047	6.258	***
HalalBuyBeh	<	HalalAwer	.546	.040	13.697	***
HalalBuyBeh	<	PerIntRel	.099	.044	2.222	.026
HalalBuyBeh	<	CountryOrign	.167	.041	3.946	***
HalalBuyBeh	<	CustAttitude	.182	.046	4.466	***

#### 4.8. Indirect Effects

The table shows the value of .033\*\*, which means that the hypothesis H8was accepted. The value in the below table was .038\*\*, meaning that the hypothesis H9 was accepted and customer attitude mediates the impact on personal intrinsic religiosity and halal buying behavior. The value in the below table was .062\*\*, which means the hypothesis H10 was accepted, and customer attitude mediates the relation between the country of origin and halal buying behavior.

**Table 12: Standardized Indirect Effects** 

	CountryOrign	PerIntRel	HalalAwer	CustAttitude
CustAttitude	.000	.000	.000	.000
HalalBuyBeh	.062**	.038**	.033**	.000

#### 4.9. Moderation Analysis

The below table shows the \*\*\* three stars in the significant value, which means the hypothesis H11 was accepted. The below table has a significance value of .004 which means the hypothesis H12 was accepted. The significance value of the relation was .046, which means that this hypothesis H13 was also accepted.

**Table 13: Moderation Analysis** 

	Path		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	
ZCustAttitude	<	HAxHC_Int1	.155	.043	3.316	***	
ZCustAttitude	<	PIRxHC_Int2	136	.044	-2.904	.004	
ZCustAttitude	<	COxHC_Int3	.070	.042	1.492	.046	

#### 5. Discussion

According to the theory of reasoned action, the theoretical model has been used to better explain consumer attitudes and halal buying behavior. It helps to construct all direct and indirect relationships in the study to conclude variables that strengthen the consumers' halal buying behavior. The present study has been conducted on Muslim consumers of Pakistan who were in the majority of the country (Akın & Okumuş, 2020b). The study was done to know the impact of halal awareness, personal intrinsic religiosity, and country of origin on consumers' halal buying behavior by using intervene variable consumer attitude and halal moderator certification. This study has stated that halal awareness and country of origin play an essential role in identifying the consumer halal buying behavior and influencing the consumer attitude. This study rejects the impact of personal intrinsic religiosity and halal buying behavior. The study of Muslim consumers in Malaysia has shown religiosity to play a crucial role in buying behavior of Muslim consumers in halal cosmetics. Abd Rahman et al. (2015)Tuhin et al. (2020) both researchers conclude that religiosity substantially impacts consumer attitude and buying behavior.

Halal awareness and country of origin significantly relate to consumer attitude and consumer halal buying behavior. That was also discussed by Tuhin et al. (2020) in their study that personal intrinsic religiosity does not positively affect consumer halal buying behavior. That also means the moral values of the consumer of Pakistan were not strong enough to make them persuade in buying halal imported products. It can be that Pakistan was a developing country, and people have meager incomes. That means individuals barely fulfill their basic needs and were not attracted to buying halal imported products. Many researchers have used customer attitude as an independent variable in previous studies to understand its impact on purchase intention. However, in this study, it will be studied as a mediator. Garg and Joshi (2018) have also used consumer attitude as the mediator in their research. However, consumer buying behavior has only been used by Tuhin et al. (2020) in their study. He examined the relation of consumer attitude and its impact on consumers' buying behavior.

So, in this study, both customer attitude and halal buying behavior were collectively used. The factors like halal awareness, personal intrinsic religiosity, and country of origin have indirect relationships with customer attitude and consumer halal buying behavior. The connections have a mediating effect on the consumer attitude. In this study, halal awareness, personal intrinsic religiosity, and country of origin affect the consumer attitude. The consumer attitude further affects the consumer halal buying behavior. However, personal intrinsic religiosity impacts consumer attitude and has no significant effect on consumer halal buying behavior. The country of origin was studied by Afzaal Ali et al. (2018) to know the impact on the consumer attitude. The study showed that Muslim consumers were conscious of their country of origin, and it has a strong effect on consumer attitudes. After that, this consumer attitude relies on its impact on consumer halal buying behavior.

By understanding the previous literature on EVT and TRA, the present study has given a valuable insight into halal awareness, personal intrinsic religiosity, and country of origin to add to the consumer halal buying behavior (Amin et

al., 2014). By reviewing the literature, the constructs like halal awareness, personal intrinsic religiosity, and country of origin were known as the determinants of consumer attitude. These variables were used to know the predictive role of these constructs and attitudes on the consumer halal buying behavior. Halal certification was the moderator, which impacts halal awareness, personal intrinsic religiosity, country of origin, and customer attitude. The halal certification in the current study shows no impact on the personal intrinsic religiosity, country of origin, and customer attitude. The literature on TRA has suggested that customer attitudes were necessary to understand halal buying behavior (N. Khan et al., 2020). However, the researchers have postulated that religiosity can also be used to understand halal buying behavior. However, the study showed that personal intrinsic religiosity does not significantly impact buying behavior. However, other determinants like halal awareness and country of origin have significantly affected consumer halal buying behavior (Annabi & Ibidapo-Obe, 2017).

The impact of halal awareness has been shown in results more than the personal intrinsic religiosity on the consumer halal buying behavior. The consumer attitude adds as the mediating factor in the study. It was shown that consumer attitude intervenes in the relation of the halal awareness, personal intrinsic religiosity, and country of origin in the consumer halal buying behavior. Consumer attitudes have helped create an impact on the consumer halal buying behavior by variables like halal awareness, personal intrinsic religiosity, country of origin, and consumer halal buying behavior (Hong et al., 2018). The current study shows that halal certification moderates the relationship between halal awareness and customer attitude. However, it cannot have a moderation effect on the personal intrinsic religiosity and country of origin. That means the Muslim consumers of Pakistan do not get influenced by the halal certification regarding their intrinsic religiosity and country of origin. The halal imported products having the halal certification cannot affect their decision based on their intrinsic religiosity and country of origin to build the customer attitude (Khan et al., 2017).

## 6. Conclusion

To conclude this study, it was indicated that consumer attitude shows favorableness towards halal imported products, which happened due to halal awareness. Halal awareness was considered the most significant predictor to know about consumers' buying behavior in Pakistan. The personal intrinsic religiosity, though, has not significantly impacted the consumer attitude and halal buying behavior of consumers of Pakistan (Bashir, 2019b). So, it was insignificant in the study. However, the country of origin shows that it directly impacts consumer halal buying behavior, just like halal awareness affects consumer buying behavior. Consumer attitude has mediated the relation between halal awareness and consumer halal buying behavior, personal intrinsic religiosity, consumers' halal buying behavior, and country of origin and halal buying behavior. This indicates that the marketers of halal imported products should target high halal awareness individuals and be interested in knowing the country of origin. That can help to increase the sales of imported halal products (Abd Rahman et al., 2015). However, halal certification was used as a moderator, which moderates the relation between halal awareness and consumer attitude but does not moderate the relation between personal intrinsic religiosity, country of origin, and consumer attitude.

However, the marketers of halal imported products have to consider the variable of personal intrinsic religiosity because they have shown the effect on the consumer halal buying behavior (Rizkitysha & Hananto, 2020). The marketers have to target the buyer of halal imported products by enhancing their knowledge about the country of origin. Managers of these halal imported products should depend upon the personal intrinsic religiosity of the consumers. The country of origin has demonstrated that marketers have to focus on making individuals believe in their product superiority and increase consumers' buying behavior (Hanafiah & Hamdan, 2020). The halal imported products depend upon the attitude to increase sales and make consumers feel the making of halal imported products.

The theoretical contribution of the study was that future researchers will know that consumer attitude plays a vital role in enhancing consumer halal buying behavior. However, personal intrinsic religiosity has not shown any significance. So, it does not have any impact on consumer halal buying behavior (Othman et al., 2017). The consumer attitude impacts halal buying behavior due to which the consumers have a positive attitude toward the halal imported products. Halal certification was considered an essential aspect of selling halal imported products and plays a role in moderating the relationship between halal awareness and consumer attitude.

The future suggestions for further study were that researchers can also consider the variables like the image of products and experience. This study can further expand by targeting a large sample size for data collection. This study was done on Muslim consumers of Pakistan, but in the future, we can use the cross-country for analysis (Tuhin et al., 2020). As we know, the behavior of consumers was also get affected by their income. The income can be used as the moderator in the current model for further studies.

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