Analysis of Halal Awareness Among Students in the Faculty of General Sciences and the Faculty of Religious Sciences (Case Study: Halal Food Court at UIN Sunan Kalijaga)

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Abstract

This study investigates the overall level of halal awareness among students at the State Islamic University (UIN) Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, compares the level of awareness between students from religious studies faculties and general studies faculties, and identifies the most dominant dimension—knowledge, attitude, or behavior—in each group. Employing a quantitative approach with a comparative design, the research collects data through a closed-ended questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert scale, complemented by documentation studies. Data analysis involves validity and reliability testing, descriptive statistical analysis, normality and homogeneity tests, and an Independent Sample t-Test. The results reveal high halal awareness across both groups, with a t-value of -0.721 and a significance level of $p = 0.472$ ($p > 0.05$), indicating no statistically significant difference between faculties. Dimension-based analysis shows that attitude is the most dominant aspect, reflecting strong positive perceptions and beliefs about the importance of halal products, while the behavior dimension records comparatively lower scores, indicating an intention–behavior gap. These findings suggest that the university's Islamic environment fosters a shared awareness of halal principles among students, regardless of academic discipline, and highlight the need for practical interventions to strengthen the consistent application of halal practices in daily life.

Keywords : halal awareness; comparative study; university students; Islamic higher education; quantitative research

INTRODUCTION

Halal awareness plays an important role in the daily life of Muslims because it relates to religious obligations, product quality, hygiene, and consumer safety. Previous studies show that the halal status of food and other products is a fundamental component that shapes Muslim consumer preferences (Putri et al., 2023). Halal awareness also shows a strong relationship with consumer purchase decisions. Chairani et al. (2021) find that halal labels and product quality play an important role in influencing consumers' choices for halal products, including female students. This finding supports the argument that students at UIN Sunan Kalijaga show a similar tendency when they consider halal values in their consumption behaviour.

Research on halal tourism shows that awareness of halal values and psychological factors such as attitude, social norms, and brand perception play an important role in shaping individual preferences and behaviour. Setyaningsih et al. (2024) find that although brand awareness and social norms are not always significant predictors, attitude becomes the main factor that influences the behavioural intention of both Muslim and non-Muslim tourists when choosing halal destinations. This finding shows that a positive attitude toward the halal concept becomes a strong driver in decision-making, even for people with different religious backgrounds. In the context of the study *Analysis of Halal Awareness Among Students in the Faculty of General Sciences and the Faculty of Religious Sciences*, this insight is relevant because it shows that the attitude dimension can also be the dominant element shaping students' halal awareness.

Students, as part of the young Muslim generation, are in a stage that shapes their future consumption patterns. However, their level of halal awareness is not always uniform and depends on educational background, exposure to religious values, social environment, and their interaction with halal products (Sari et al., 2023; Nurhayati & Hendar, 2020). At the same time, increasing national halal campaigns, halal education programs, and

the expansion of the halal industry also influence consumer behaviour in sectors such as food, cosmetics, fashion, and finance (Ardiansyah, 2024; Iranmanesh et al., 2022).

These dynamics refer to interactions between several indicators: the rapid growth of the halal industry and product availability, greater exposure to halal information among students, differences in academic experiences, and variations in daily consumption habits. For example, students in the Faculty of Religious Sciences receive formal instruction about halal and haram principles, while students in the Faculty of General Sciences focus more on scientific and technological perspectives that do not directly address halal concepts (Nurhayati & Hendar, 2020). These conditions create assumptions that differences in halal awareness may exist across faculties, but empirical evidence comparing these groups is still limited.

At UIN Sunan Kalijaga, institutional support for halal practices appears in the presence of the Halal Food Court, which provides halal consumption facilities for all students. However, the extent to which students from both academic fields general sciences and religious sciences understand, internalize, and apply halal principles in their consumption behaviour is still unclear. This situation forms the main problem statement of this study: there is no comparative research that measures differences in halal awareness between the two faculties within the same campus environment. This research gap needs attention because different levels of halal understanding may affect students' consumption patterns, consistency of halal practices, and the effectiveness of institutional halal education strategies.

The rapid growth of Indonesia's halal industry, which reaches USD 184 billion in 2022 (State of the Global Islamic Economy Report, 2023), along with mandatory halal certification policies, strengthens the urgency of this study. Students, as educated consumers and future professionals, need strong halal literacy to help maintain the integrity of the halal supply chain. Without strong literacy, their consumption decisions may rely on assumptions rather than verified information. Therefore, analysing halal awareness levels across faculties becomes relevant for designing more targeted halal education strategies.

Practical experience, family background, and technological developments such as AI and IoT also influence how students understand and verify product halalness. However, the impact of these factors has not been widely compared in Islamic university settings. Therefore, this study aims to answer the following research questions: what is the overall level of halal awareness among students, whether significant differences exist between students in the Faculty of General Sciences and the Faculty of Religious Sciences, and which dimension knowledge, attitude, or behaviour is the most dominant in each group.

In line with that, the purposes of the study include measuring the overall level of halal awareness among students at UIN Sunan Kalijaga to understand how well students recognize, internalize, and practice halal principles in their daily consumption. The study also aims to compare halal awareness between students from the Faculty of General Sciences and the Faculty of Religious Sciences to determine whether academic background and learning environment influence their understanding, attitudes, and behaviors related to halal products. In addition, the study seeks to identify which dimension of halal awareness knowledge, attitude, or behavior becomes the most dominant among the students. Identifying this dominant dimension helps the institution design more effective and targeted halal literacy strategies, ensuring that Islamic higher education equips students with accurate knowledge, positive attitudes, and consistent halal practices that align with the needs of the growing halal industry.

METODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with a comparative design to analyse differences in halal awareness levels between students in the Faculty of General Sciences and the Faculty of Religious Sciences at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. The main instrument is a closed-ended questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale that measures three dimensions of halal awareness knowledge, attitude, and behaviour as used in previous studies on halal awareness (Ahmad, Rahman, & Ab Rahman, 2015; Nurhayati & Hendar, 2020). The instrument is developed through problem identification and a review of the literature on Muslim consumer behaviour and the influence of educational environments (Suki & Salleh, 2016; Golnaz et al., 2012). The instrument is validated by experts and tested using Pearson correlation for validity and Cronbach's Alpha for reliability, following standards for social science measurement tools (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). After being confirmed valid and reliable, the questionnaire is distributed both online and offline to active students from both faculties. The collected data are tabulated and analysis using SPSS to ensure the integrity and accuracy of the research results.

Data analysis begins with descriptive statistics to present respondent characteristics and mean scores for each halal awareness dimension, followed by the Kolmogorov–Smirnov normality test and Levene's homogeneity test as prerequisites for parametric analysis (Field, 2013). The independent samples t-test is used to assess differences in halal awareness between the two faculties, following comparative approaches commonly applied in group-difference studies (Pallant, 2020). The results are interpreted based on theories of halal awareness, religiosity, and consumption behaviour discussed in previous research, particularly regarding the relationship between knowledge, attitude, and behaviour in halal consumption (Iranmanesh et al., 2022; Sari et al., 2023). Measuring the three dimensions simultaneously provides a comprehensive picture of the structure of students'

halal awareness, allowing the findings to serve as a basis for designing more targeted halal literacy strategies according to students' academic backgrounds within UIN Sunan Kalijaga.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistical analysis was employed to provide a comprehensive overview of the halal awareness levels among students at UIN Sunan Kalijaga. This analysis focused on key statistical measures, including the minimum and maximum values, which indicate the lowest and highest scores obtained by respondents; the mean, which reflects the average level of halal awareness across the sample; and the standard deviation, which measures the extent of variability or dispersion in the responses. By examining these indicators, the study aimed to capture not only the general tendencies in students' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding halal awareness but also the range and consistency of their responses. The findings of this descriptive analysis are presented in the following table to offer a clear and structured representation of the data distribution for each measured dimension.

Tabel 1. Descriptive Statistics

Faculty	Number of participants	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
General Sciences	49	98.1429	9.71682	1.38812
Religious Sciences	106	99.3396	9.56669	0.92920

The results of the descriptive analysis show that students from the Faculty of Religious Sciences have an average halal awareness score of 99.34 with a standard deviation of 9.57. This figure is slightly higher than that of students from the Faculty of General Sciences, who have an average score of 98.14 with a standard deviation of 9.72. The difference in the mean scores is minimal, amounting to only -1.20 points. The high mean scores in both groups indicate that UIN Sunan Kalijaga students, regardless of their faculty background, possess a strong awareness of halal-related issues. Furthermore, the relatively low standard deviation in both groups reflects consistency in students' perceptions regarding the importance of halal products, suggesting that there are no extreme variations among respondents.

These findings suggest that halal values are deeply embedded across the UIN Sunan Kalijaga campus environment, both among students pursuing religious studies and those from general academic disciplines. This equal level of awareness is likely influenced by the university's culture, which is grounded in Islamic principles, the availability of supporting facilities such as halal-certified food courts, and the exposure to halal-related information gained through both academic and non-academic activities. In addition, the growing trend of the halal lifestyle at both the national and global levels also plays a role in shaping students' positive perceptions of the importance of consuming halal products. This indicates that campus environmental factors and broader social trends can strengthen halal awareness beyond differences in academic background.

Tabel 2. T-Test Result

Variable	t	df	Sig.	Mean Difference
Halal Awareness	-0,721	153	0.472	-1.19677

The independent sample t-test results in Table 2 indicate a t-value of -0.721 with 153 degrees of freedom (df) and a significance level (p-value) of 0.472. Since the p-value exceeds the 0.05 threshold, the analysis concludes that there is no statistically significant difference in halal awareness between students from the Faculty of General Sciences and the Faculty of Religious Studies at UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. The mean difference of -1.19677 suggests that students from the Faculty of General Sciences have slightly lower halal awareness on average compared to their counterparts in Religious Studies, but the difference is not statistically meaningful.

These findings suggest that a student's academic background whether in general sciences or religious studies does not significantly impact their awareness of halal products. Factors such as the university's religiously homogeneous environment, exposure to halal education through academic and extracurricular activities, and frequent cross-faculty interactions may contribute to the similarity in awareness levels. This supports the conclusions of Musa and Hashim (2022) and Shah and Bakri (2024), who find that field of study and educational level do not significantly correlate with halal awareness, as halal values often become part of the shared mindset among students of diverse disciplines.

Dimension-based analysis reveals similar patterns across both faculties, with the attitude dimension being the most dominant, followed by knowledge and then behaviour. In the attitude dimension, General Sciences students achieve a mean score of 4.270, while Religious Sciences students score slightly higher at 4.349. This reflects strong and positive views about the importance of halal products, both from health and spiritual perspectives. The highest-rated item for General Sciences students is, "I feel more at ease and confident when consuming products that are halal-certified" (S2), while for Religious Sciences students it is, "I believe that choosing halal food is part of my responsibility as a Muslim" (S5).

In the knowledge dimension, General Sciences students score an average of 4.156, compared to 4.203 for Religious Sciences students. Both groups understand the broader scope of halal, including the production process and the recognition of the official halal logo issued by the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI). The top-rated statement for General Sciences students is, "I am aware of the importance of halal certification in ensuring the halal status of a food product" (P6). Religious Sciences students rate two items equally high: "I can recognize the official halal logo issued by the MUI" (P3) and "I am aware of the importance of halal certification in ensuring the halal status of a food product" (P6). This indicates that students with a religious education background tend to have both conceptual and practical halal awareness.

Behaviour scores are the lowest among the three dimensions, averaging 3.842 for General Sciences students and 3.866 for Religious Sciences students. This suggests a gap between students' knowledge and positive attitudes toward halal and their actual daily practices. While many acknowledge the importance of consuming halal products, not all consistently check halal labels or verify product status before purchase. In this dimension, the highest-rated item for both groups is, "I avoid buying products whose halal status is unclear" (Pe3), indicating a cautious approach to consumption, though still not fully optimal.

The study also identifies external influences on halal awareness, such as exposure to official sources like the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency (BPJPH) and information from social media. While social media serves as both an educational platform and a potential source of misinformation, this underscores the importance of digital literacy in the halal context, enabling students to verify information accuracy and make informed consumption choices. Family and community backgrounds further shape halal-related habits, with students raised in strict halal-practicing households showing greater consistency in halal consumption. Participation in religious activities and halal-conscious communities also strengthens these values, highlighting the role of informal education outside the university.

Overall, halal awareness among UIN Sunan Kalijaga students is high and relatively equal across faculties. This uniformity reflects effective dissemination of halal values in the Islamic university setting, supported by environmental, educational, and media influences. The dominance of the attitude dimension indicates that affective factors are essential in connecting knowledge to behavioural intentions, as explained by the Theory of Planned Behaviour. However, the lower behavioural scores reveal an intention–behaviour gap, suggesting the need for practical, experience-based interventions such as label-checking campaigns and halal verification training—to encourage consistent halal practices beyond theoretical understanding.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study show that students at UIN Sunan Kalijaga have a high and relatively consistent level of halal awareness, with no significant difference between students in the Faculty of General Sciences and the Faculty of Religious Sciences. This finding meets the objectives of the study, which are to measure students' halal awareness and to compare both groups. The pattern across dimensions is also similar, with the attitude dimension being the most dominant, followed by knowledge and behaviour. These results indicate that a positive attitude toward halal products becomes the main factor shaping students' halal awareness, while the behaviour dimension still shows a gap between understanding and actual practice.

Although the study provides important insights, it also presents several limitations, such as the use of self-report data that may introduce bias, the restricted scope limited to a single university, and the focus on only three dimensions of halal awareness. These limitations open opportunities for future research to involve more universities, apply qualitative methods to gain deeper understanding, and examine additional factors such as digital literacy, family influence, or practical exposure to the halal industry. A broader approach can offer a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that shape students' halal awareness.

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