

## HALAL LOGISTICS PERFORMANCE AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY: FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW TO A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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### ABSTRACT

Customer loyalty has become the most important goal of companies' logistics and supply chain divisions. In a Muslim country such as Indonesia, halal products have the potential power to foster customer loyalty. Halal status highly depends on halal logistics, especially with regard to halal meat products. A good halal meat product depends on good halal logistics performance. The influence of logistics performance on loyalty has been investigated in many marketing studies, but research in the field of halal logistics is rare. The research gap in this area has become the background for this conceptual paper. The main purpose of the paper is to provide a literature review of halal logistics performance and customer loyalty, thereby establishing the issues concerning both subjects. The review also provides a conceptual framework for the study, including other factors affecting customer loyalty, such as halal supplier service quality, perceived service value, and customer satisfaction.

*Keywords:* Customer loyalty; Customer satisfaction; Halal logistics; Logistics performance; Perceived service value

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Many logistics and supply chain management researchers have claimed that customer loyalty has economic and social impacts on companies (Gwinner et al., 1998; Mimouni-Chaabane & Volle, 2010). This is because loyal customers help to maintain a company's market position, and often repurchase its products, even premium ones (Ngobo, 2016). That is why establishing loyalty is important as a strategic goal in all service (Gustafsson et al., 2005; Cooil et al., 2007). Therefore, many scholars have attempted to ascertain what factors contribute to loyalty (Zeithaml et al., 1996). One of these is logistics performance. This factor is investigated by researchers such as Mentzer et al. (2004), Richey et al. (2007), Stank et al. (2003), Day (2000), and Mattila (2001).

The relationship between logistics performance and loyalty is explained by Mentzer et al. (2004), Lai et al. (2009) and Hartono et al. (2017). They state that improving product quality through improvement in the performance of logistics activities will increase customer satisfaction. This means that logistics performance, which is one of the main factors influencing customer satisfaction, will in turn affect the loyalty of customers. Stank et al. (2003) concur that good logistics performance will create value for customers. However, firms must know exactly what type of logistics is useful in the market. Muslim countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia

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require halal products, which need halal logistics to maintain their halal status. This is especially the case for meat products, which need more complex halal logistics than other products because halal meat status starts from feeding cattle with halal food, up to halal meat displays in traditional and modern markets. Good halal logistics performance will improve halal meat product quality and create greater Muslim customer satisfaction. The research of Kumar et al. (2013), Aktepe et al. (2015), Kaura et al. (2015), Islam et al. (2016) has proven that customer satisfaction has a positive and direct effect on customer loyalty.

However, because halal logistics is still a new topic for scholars and practitioners, the amount of research in this area is still limited (Jaafar et al., 2016). Research in halal logistics and marketing still concerns customer perception (Tiemann et al., 2013; Alqudsi, 2014), market analysis (Lever & Miele, 2012), and retailer behavior (Kalantari et al., 2014). In this study, other factors that influence customer loyalty are discussed in five sections. Section 1 (the introduction) discusses the conceptual frameworks of customer loyalty and halal logistics performance developed in previous studies. The remainder of the study will be organized as follows: Section 2 discusses the halal meat market; the research methodology is presented in section 3; Section 4 presents the discussion; and the study is summarized in section 5 together with the conclusion.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. The Halal Meat Market and Halal Meat Logistics Requirements**

Before discussing halal meat, it is important to understand the halal food market. The main target of halal food marketing are Muslim customers. Grim and Karim (2011) estimated that the Muslim world population by 2030 will have reached 2.2 billion, or 26.4% of the total world population. The global halal market has grown very rapidly recently, coinciding with the accelerating development of Islam (Izberk-Bilgin & Nakata, 2016). Muslim customer spending on food and beverage products is expected to have grown from \$1.17 trillion in 2015 to \$2.6 trillion by 2020 (Thomson Reuters, 2016). However, because the quantity of halal products is still limited, some Muslim countries have to import these from non-Muslim majority countries (Soesilowati, 2011). A study by Haque et al. (2015) showed that higher exports of halal food products from non-Muslim majority countries indicates that the market for halal food products in Muslim countries is growing rapidly. For example, the majority of halal meat and poultry products are currently produced by non-Muslim countries such as Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and New Zealand, with most exported to Muslim countries (Zulfakar et al., 2017). This indicates an opportunity for Indonesia, as the world's largest Muslim country and major halal market, to be also a major producer of halal products (Soesilowati, 2011).

Meat is one of the major sources of protein and has social meaning in most communities (Fiddes, 1992). For Muslims, halal status is the major requirement before making a decision to purchase meat (Nakyinsige et al., 2012). "Halal" is a term which means permitted and allowed according to Islamic jurisprudence (Omar & Jaafar, 2011), and is not only applied to physical products, but also to the process of production, distribution and sale (Kirwan, 2006). Therefore, the term halal refers to meat that is permitted to be consumed if the manufacturing process and meat quality are in accordance with Islamic jurisprudence. The process involves feeding halal food to cattle, halal slaughter processing, halal meat processing, and display in markets. Because the process is very complex, halal meat is vulnerable to becoming non-halal.

Because of this vulnerability, the demand for halal meat is high, especially from Muslim customers in non-Muslim majority areas. Jusmaliani and Nasution (2009) investigated Muslim customer behavior towards halal meat products in Jakarta and Melbourne. Their results show that halal meat availability is the only significant determinant factor in the behavior of Muslim

customers in the two cities. In non-Muslim majority areas, halal processing (halal logistics) is mostly not used as a standard in the preparation of halal products, which makes it more difficult for Muslim customers to purchase products. Stitou and Rezgui (2012) conducted research on the Muslim community in France; their results show that 56% of the 223 Muslim respondents would not purchase a product if they were in any doubt about its halal status. Otherwise, 87% of respondents were willing to pay for a product that was guaranteed to be halal. This indicates the requirement for halal logistics from Muslim customers, especially in non-Muslim majority areas, even if it is more expensive than conventional logistics.

The willingness to pay for good halal logistics performance has been investigated in research by Kamaruddin et al. (2012), Tieman et al. (2013), and Fathi et al. (2016). Customers' perception of halal meat logistics was investigated by Tieman et al. (2013). Their research compares Muslim consumer behavior in Malaysia (a Muslim-majority country) with that in the Netherlands (a non-Muslim majority country). They found that Muslim consumers in Malaysia were more willing to pay for and request a higher segregation level than Muslim consumers in the Netherlands. However, the research obtained similar results to those of Stitou and Rezgui (2012) and Kamaruddin et al. (2012), finding that Muslim consumers are concerned about and are willing to pay for halal logistics, both in a Muslim-majority and non-Muslim majority countries. Research by Fathi et al. (2016) investigated the drivers of consumers' willingness to pay for halal logistics. According to their results, halal logistics certification of 3PL provider was the key factor in this willingness. Service capability and the image of 3PL are insignificant factors in creating the intention to pay for halal logistics, which indicates that companies should educate current/potential customers on halal logistics and emphasize its importance (Fathi et al., 2016).

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The review is limited to published literature, including theses and journals from Emerald, Elsevier, Google Scholar, etc. Keywords such as *halal logistics*, *halal meat*, *loyalty*, and *customer satisfaction* were used to find related studies. A special report that includes the halal food topic was used in the study, as the academic papers published on this subject matter are still limited. Only the few studies written in English are analysed, while some publications related to the study might not have been included. The number of sources needed to develop the framework was 104, with publication years ranging from 1988 to 2017. The type of publications reviewed can be divided into two classifications: 102 academic journal articles and 2 theses. From these, the articles were differentiated according to the main themes of the study, as shown in Table 1.

#### 3.1. Developing a Conceptual Framework

Previous studies have found that the conventional factors of logistics operational performance such as product availability, product condition, delivery reliability and speed and service responsiveness positively affect customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and customers' repurchase intentions (Wang & Sarker, 2006; Yuen, 2006). Moreover, in manufacturing five components of logistics performance measurement, namely asset management, cost, customer service, service quality and productivity, are the key components that can help a firm to build customer satisfaction and loyalty (Davis, 2006; Man, 2006; Wenbao, 2007; Fawcett et al., 2008).

Halal logistics performance and customer loyalty are rare topics in marketing and halal logistics research. For the purpose of developing a conceptual framework, research by Liang (2008) and Siu and Cheung (2001) are used as the main references. Liang (2008) investigated the relationship between logistics performance and customer loyalty in tourism; however, for halal

logistics performance, this needs to be adapted by using the retail service quality measure by Siu and Cheung (2001). There are five variables: halal logistics performance; halal suppliers' service quality; perceived service value; customer satisfaction; and customer loyalty. Each variable will be discussed in the five sections below.

Table 1 Main themes of publications

Literature	Main Theme	
	Component	Antecedents
Aktepe et al. (2015)	Customer satisfaction	Customer loyalty
Islam et al. (2016)	Customer satisfaction	Customer loyalty
Kumar et al. (2013)	Customer satisfaction	Customer loyalty
Lin & Hsieh (2006)	Customer satisfaction	Customer loyalty
Kaura et al. (2015)	Customer satisfaction	Customer loyalty
Gallarza & Saura (2006)	Perceived value	Customer satisfaction
Jhandir (2012)	Perceived value	Customer satisfaction
Cronin et al. (2000)	Service quality	Perceived value
Parasuraman & Grewal (2000)	Service quality	Perceived value
Hartline & Ferrell (1996)	Personnel service quality	Service quality
Buhalis & Law (2008)	Information system availability	Service quality
Kisperska-Moron (2005)	Product availability	Service quality
Baker & Crompton (2000)	Service quality	Customer satisfaction
Lee & Taylor (2005)	Service quality	Customer satisfaction
Teh & Cabanban (2007)	Service quality	Customer satisfaction
Man (2006)	Logistics performance	Customer satisfaction and loyalty
Wang & Sarker (2006)	Logistics performance	Customer satisfaction and loyalty
Stank et al. (2003)	Logistics performance	Customer satisfaction and loyalty
Hovora (2001)	Logistics performance	Customer satisfaction and loyalty
Liang (2008)	Logistics performance	Customer satisfaction and loyalty
Davis (2006)	Service quality	Service performance
Richey (2003)	Service quality	Service performance
Stank et al. (1999)	Service quality	Service performance
Mentzer et al. (1999)	Dimension of logistics performance	Logistics performance

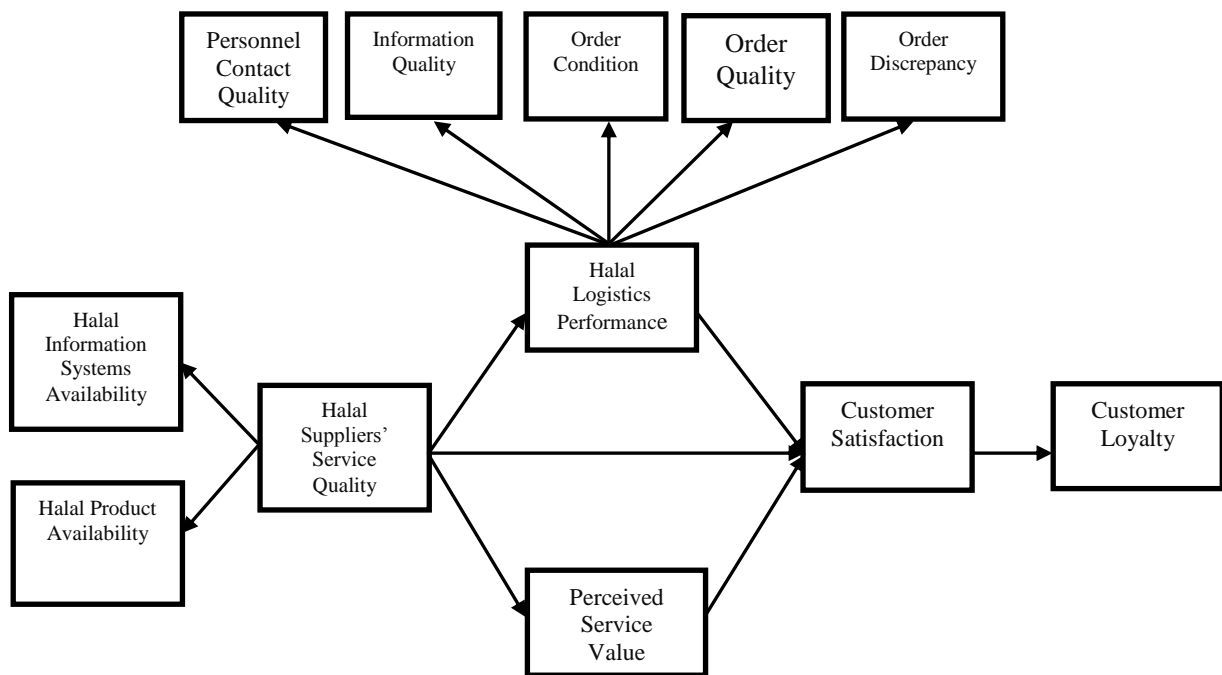


Figure 1 Conceptual framework of the factors that influence customer loyalty

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Halal Logistics Performance

Halal logistics involves five stages of logistic activities, which apply the halal concept from the point of origin to the point of consumption (Omar & Jaafar, 2011). To ensure that the halal concept is applied, halal certifiers must monitor all halal logistics activities. Examples of halal certifiers include Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) and Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM), which are both operated by their respective governments. However, some countries use private halal laws and halal certifiers from private institutions, such as the Netherlands and the United States (Dahlan & Sani, 2016). They will monitor all halal logistics activities at the breeding farms and abattoirs, and at the time when the halal meat is distributed and sold to domestic customers, halal meat importers, and the food industry (Omar & Jaafar, 2011).

To build customer satisfaction and loyalty, logistics providers need to develop good logistics performance (Liang, 2008). According to Davis (2006), competitive advantage which is built by stronger customer relationships can be generated from good logistics performance. Logistic providers' ability to handle the ordering process will be measured by logistics performance (Stank et al., 1999; Mentzer et al., 2001; Stank et al., 2003; Mentzer et al., 2004; Ketikidis et al., 2006; Man, 2006). This performance is measured by the nine parameters of logistic service quality (LSQ) developed by Mentzer and Williams (2001). These concepts are personnel contact quality; order release quantities; information quality; ordering procedures; order accuracy; order condition; order quality; order discrepancy handling; and timeliness (Mentzer et al., 2001; Stank et al., 2003; Mentzer et al., 2004; Davis, 2006; Bienstock et al., 2008).

However, the subjects of our research are the end consumers of halal meat products. That is why the concepts need to be adopted so that they can be measured by the customer. Ordering procedures, timeliness, etc. cannot be measured because the customer cannot see them. To adapt the concepts, the research of Cheung (2001) is used. Therefore, the concepts used for halal logistics performance are personnel contact quality, information quality, order quality, order condition, and order discrepancy.

Personnel contact quality refers to customers' valuation of the treatment they receive from logistics suppliers' contact staff (Mentzer et al., 1999). It also refers to customers' perspective of how disrespectful personnel may be with regard to problems and situations facing them (DeCarlo & Leigh, 1996; Hartline & Ferrell, 1996). Tieman and Ghazali (2013) state that the foundation of halal logistics and the supply chain can be identified by direct personnel contact with a non-halal or *haram* (prohibited) substance, and contamination risk of the products. Moreover, a study by Ab Talib et al. (2015) found that halal personnel are the key reference point for religious customers to decide whether to purchase halal meat products.

Information quality refers to customers' perception of information about products which they may choose (Mentzer et al., 1999). Consumers will make decisions easily if information on products is available and complete (Mentzer et al., 2001). Information quality must be accurate, reliable and complete to support good logistics performance (Jie et al., 2012; Mohammadi & Mukhtar, 2018). The halal critical points discussed by Lodhi (2010) identify that information quality in terms of complete tractability and a monitoring system of halal products throughout the entire halal meat supply chain should be available. This is in line with the findings of the study by Ab Talib et al. (2015), which shows that, similar to conventional logistics, information technology is also an important element for halal logistics performance.

Order quality refers to how well suppliers fulfil customers' needs with regard to a product and how well the products work (Novack et al., 1994; Mentzer et al., 1999). Order condition refers to the condition of products (their damage level) (Mentzer et al., 1997). The difference between order quality and order condition is that order quality assesses how well products are made,

while order condition assesses products' level of damage caused by the delivery process (Mentzer et al., 2001). An investigation by Wan Omar (2017) found that halal supply chain implementation performance is defined by the condition of the halal product as a result of the handling and delivery processes.

Order discrepancy refers to how well logistics providers handle any discrepancy after the order has reached customers (Rinehart et al., 1989). A study by Du and Tang (2014) developed a framework of how order discrepancy is one of the factors affecting customer satisfaction and loyalty. A framework and conceptual paper by Selim et al. (2018) consider order discrepancy handling as one of the drivers for successful halal logistics service quality.

#### **4.2. Halal Meat Supplier's Service Quality**

Positive service quality will generate positive word of mouth and repurchase behavior, which leads to customer loyalty (Liang, 2008). Similar findings were made by Chacko et al. (2006), who state that improving order and delivery efficiency and accuracy will improve customers' repurchase intention. The definition of service quality according to Su (2004) is how well customer needs are fulfilled by the service. Service quality can also be an accurate evaluation of all stages and operations when creating a service (Garvin, 1984). After the service is provided, a customer will measure how well it has met their expectations (Grönroos, 2000). In most service quality literature, expectation is defined as normative standards which meet future customer's needs (Boulding et al., 1993).

If a company provides bad quality service to a customer, the customer will avoid it, even if the company creates good promotions or campaigns (Berry & Parasuraman, 1991). But if customers like the service, it will be an important advantage in market competition and will have greater effects than product quality and product price (Parasuraman & Grewal, 2000). In this study, service quality refers to how well halal meat suppliers provide their service, which is measured by two dimensions: information system availability and product availability. Information system availability plays an important role in connecting suppliers with customers. It will be easier for customers to decide which products they want to buy with the help of the information system provided by suppliers (Liang, 2008). Product availability is an important element in service quality and will help to improve customer satisfaction (Mentzer & Williams, 2001; Kisperska-Moron, 2005)

#### **4.3. Perceived Value**

The concept of value was introduced in the 1990s and since then it has become a general topic in marketing research (Sánchez-Fernández & Iniesta-Bonillo, 2007). The definition of perceived value is customers' valuation of product functions based on their perception of the product price and the benefits received after using it (Zeithaml, 1988; Chahal & Kumari, 2012). Perceived value can also be an evaluation of product benefit, cost, and the efforts that are needed for further analysis of a product (Daskin & Kasim, 2016). According to Lee and Taylor (2005), a product has perceived value if: (1) its price is low; (2) it provides everything that a customer wants; (3) its price is proportional to its quality; and (4) the effort needed to buy is proportional to the product benefits. In line with this, Oh (2003) states that most consumers are concerned about price, quality, risk and the time spent when deciding to buy a product.

The perceived value of halal food consumption can be compared with the perceived value of organic food. When a consumer buys organic food, they assume that it is more delicious, healthier, and more environmentally friendly than non-organic food (McEachern & McClean, 2002). Similarly, halal food consumers assume that by choosing a halal product it will make give them more peace of mind because they have obeyed religious rules in doing so (Jamal & Sharifuddin, 2015). The interview results of their study show that Muslim customers expect suppliers to add a halal label to their halal products because it will make it easier for them to

select and buy the product. That is in line with the research results of Chahal & Kumari (2012) that show that perceived value has a positive impact on the intention to patronize a product, which leads to loyalty.

#### **4.4. Customer Satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction is an essential and a fundamental element in marketing (Brady & Robertson, 2001; Kotler & Armstrong, 2004). It is essential because it is very important for a marketer to fulfil customers' needs and desire for a product (Han & Ryu, 2009). Paul et al. (2016) define customer satisfaction as a mental state in which a customer compares expectations before the purchase with their perception of product performance after the purchase. This valuation depends on product availability, information and demand. Customers will then compare expectations and perceptions based on these three factors. If customer expectations are fulfilled by the product performance, there will be positive perceptions of customer satisfaction (Lenka et al., 2009; Jhandir, 2012). Customer satisfaction is not a guarantee of repeat business, but the most dissatisfied customers will not buy again (La, 2005). Therefore, many industries use customer satisfaction as a criterion for assessing product performance (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993). It can also serve as an exit barrier to protect customers from competitors' products (Gundersen et al., 1996). Satisfied customers tend to buy products from their chosen producer because if they switch to another product there will be the risk that it does not fulfil their expectations (Selnes, 1998).

#### **4.5. Customer Loyalty**

According to Oliver (1999), the definition of customer loyalty is the commitment to repeat purchase or patronize a product or brand consistently, although competitors or other situations could potentially cause customers to switch to other products. If the brand is not available on the market, consumers who are loyal will not instead buy another product (Patel & Desai, 2016). The implications of consumer loyalty to a company include increasing revenues; reduction in the cost of new customer acquisition; and lower costs involved in handling repeat purchasers (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). The manifestation of customer loyalty in most marketing literature is repurchase behavior (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2002; Walker & Francis, 2002; Yüksel & Yüksel, 2007; Chi & Qu, 2008; Litvin et al., 2008). However, according to Knox and Walker (2001), repurchase behavior is behavior that shows that customers repeatedly purchase products from the same company, while loyalty is more complex because it involves two components: psychology and behavior. In line with this, Liang (2008) argues that loyalty is not just a customer behavior on purchasing product, word of mouth and positive comments, but that not wanting to move to another product is also an indicator of customer loyalty (Liang, 2008).

### **5. CONCLUSION**

The relationship between customer loyalty and logistics performance for halal meat products is an uncommon topic in the marketing research and halal logistics literature. This study offers a conceptual framework developed through relevant logistics and marketing literature. It will be very interesting for other researchers to improve this framework by taking a closer look at other factors that can influence customer loyalty. Moreover, this study could be investigated in greater detail to prove and improve the factors involved. The publication from research methodology can also be explored in future studies to fill the knowledge gap in this subject.

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