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## **SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CHOICE OF HALAL- LABELED FOOD AND BEVERAGES AMONG MUSLIM GENERATION Z: A Case Study of FEBI UINSU Students**

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**Abstract:** *This study explores how social and economic factors simultaneously influence the choice of halal-labeled food and beverages among Muslim Generation Z, with a particular focus on students of the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra. Previous research has largely examined these factors in isolation, leaving limited attention to their simultaneous effects in shaping halal consumption. Employing a quantitative survey of 100 respondents analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), the study reveals that social factors, such as family and peer influence, serve as the strongest drivers of halal choices, while economic factors, including price and accessibility, function as moderating conditions. The findings contribute to the halal consumption literature by integrating social and economic dimensions within the context of Islamic higher education, thereby addressing a gap concerning young Muslim consumers. Practically, the study suggests that policymakers and halal certification bodies should enhance community-based halal literacy, while businesses may strengthen market engagement through price affordability strategies and the utilization of family and peer influence.*

**Keywords:** *Halal Consumption Behavior; Generation Z Students; Social Influence; Economic Factors; Islamic Consumer Studies.*

## INTRODUCTION

Generation Z refers to individuals born between 1997 and 2012 (Investopedia). Growing up during the era of digital transformation, this generation is characterized by a high level of proficiency in using modern technology. Another distinctive trait is multitasking, which reflects the tendency to engage in multiple activities at the same time (Harahap et al., 2024). Beyond technological competence, Generation Z demonstrates adaptability, creativity, and a strong interest in innovative activities and the creative economy. However, this creativity is often accompanied by a consumerist orientation (Aisyah et al., 2023).

Food and beverages constitute fundamental human needs. For Muslims, consumption must align with the principles of halal and *thayyib* (nutritious and wholesome). In Bangladesh, for example, halal awareness has been shown to influence consumption behavior, although price remains a significant consideration (Ashraf, 2019). This principle is consistent with the Qur'anic guidance in Surah An-Nahl (16:144), which emphasizes the importance of consuming what is both halal and good:

فَكُلُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمْ اللَّهُ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَاشْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ كُنتُمْ لِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ

*"So eat of what Allah has provided for you as lawful and good, and be grateful for the favor of Allah, if it is indeed Him that you worship."*

This verse underscores that consumption should not only be lawful according to religious law but also beneficial for health (Imsar et al., 2024). Recent studies further demonstrate that halal awareness strengthens the relationship between religiosity and halal purchase intention (Albra et al., 2023; Putri, 2025). In line with these developments, the concept of halal has expanded not only to ensure integrity across the production and supply chain (Soon et al., 2017) but also to include services, consumption, and consumer behavior (Ngah et al., 2023).

Cross-country studies affirm the role of social factors. In Malaysia, Amarulzaman et al. (2020) found that family and peer influence significantly affect young consumers' choices of halal products. Research in the Middle East (A. Ismail, 2025) and Europe (Yüksel, 2022) highlights that although Generation Z tends to be independent and technology-oriented, religious values, social norms, and family influence remain important in consumption decisions. This indicates that social and religious influences are not diminished by modernity but instead adapt to digital and global contexts (Hakim, 2023). A study in Belgium also emphasizes that Muslim consumers' trust in halal status is strongly linked to control systems and certification authorities (Bonne & Verbeke, 2008).

Social influence on consumer behavior can be explained through Social Influence Theory, which states that individuals tend to align their choices with reference groups such as friends, family, or trusted public figures (Kulviwat et al., 2009). For students, social media and peer environments serve as primary references, making popular or recommended products more likely to be accepted without critical evaluation of their halal status (Rokhmah, 2025). At the same time, economic considerations remain crucial because higher prices or limited accessibility of halal products create dilemmas for students, most

of whom lack stable income. Consumer purchasing decisions are not solely determined by internal motivations but are also significantly shaped by cultural, social, and personal characteristics (Radianti & Aslami, 2022). Consumer Behavior Theory asserts that purchasing decisions are shaped by the interaction between personal motivations and external conditions, including financial constraints (Kotler & Keller, 2012). In this regard, Maslow's motivation theory suggests that the basic need for halal food represents deficiency motivation, while adherence to religious values and self-actualization reflect growth motivation (Maslow, 1943).

Students' perceptions of halal labeling are also shaped by personal experiences, knowledge, and social interactions, as explained by Perception Theory (Bulte & Stremersch, 2004). The halal label is not only viewed as a religious symbol but also as an indicator of quality, safety, and personal identity. Experimental studies show that halal certification and product attributes significantly affect purchase intention (Bhutto et al., 2023). Interviews with FEBI UINSU students revealed a practical compromise. Some opted for non-halal products because they were more affordable, while others consistently chose halal products despite higher costs, influenced by social pressure or religious values. This phenomenon highlights that Muslim Generation Z's consumption decisions are shaped simultaneously by social, economic, and religious factors, rather than by a single factor in isolation.

For Muslim Generation Z students in Indonesian universities, the interaction between social and economic factors is evident: they actively engage in digital ecosystems that reinforce social group influences, while at the same time facing financial constraints that limit their consumption choices. This condition has received little scholarly attention, particularly in the context of Islamic higher education. Recent bibliometric reviews also highlight the scarcity of studies that simultaneously examine the social and economic dimensions of Muslim consumer behavior (Putera et al., 2023); Pradana & Elisa, 2024).

Accordingly, the novelty of this study lies in its effort to integrate these two dimensions, which have mostly been examined separately in previous research. Beyond enriching the literature on Muslim consumer behavior, this study also offers practical contributions in the form of recommendations for consumer education strategies, halal policy formulation, and halal product marketing designs that are more relevant to the dynamic, digital, and critical nature of Generation Z. Based on this background, the present study aims to analyze the perceptions of FEBI UINSU students as representatives of Muslim Generation Z in selecting halal-labeled food and beverages, with a specific emphasis on how social and economic factors jointly influence their consumption decisions.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a quantitative approach with a focus on students of the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business, State Islamic University of North Sumatra (FEBI UINSU), as the unit of analysis. The selection of FEBI UINSU is based on two main considerations. First, students in this faculty represent Muslim Generation Z who are

directly engaged in an Islamic educational environment, making their perceptions of halal products highly relevant to both religious and academic contexts. Second, the majority of FEBI UINSU students come from middle-income backgrounds and remain financially dependent on allowances, which makes social and economic considerations in halal consumption decisions more apparent. Accordingly, the focus on FEBI UINSU students is not intended to generalize findings to the entire population of Muslim Generation Z in Indonesia, but rather to serve as a contextual case representing particular socio-economic and religious dynamics.

The research instrument was a Likert-scale questionnaire with four response categories: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, and 4 = strongly agree. The questionnaire items were developed based on social and economic factors identified in previous literature. Prior to distribution, the instrument was tested for validity and reliability to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the items.

The sampling technique applied was non-probability sampling, specifically a combination of purposive and quota sampling. The inclusion criteria required respondents to be Muslim Generation Z students (aged 18–25 years) enrolled at FEBI UINSU. A total of 100 respondents were successfully collected. The limitation of this method lies in the potential for selection bias, as not all members of the population had an equal chance of being selected. Therefore, the findings of this study are not intended for broad generalization but rather to provide an in-depth understanding within the FEBI UINSU context.

Data were analyzed using SPSS software. The analysis was conducted in stages, beginning with validity and reliability testing to confirm the adequacy of the instrument. This was followed by descriptive analysis to present the characteristics of respondents and the tendencies of their responses. A normality test was then performed to verify the data distribution, while confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was employed to assess the suitability of indicators in forming the social and economic constructs. In addition, correlation tests were conducted to examine the extent to which social and economic factors contribute to students' perceptions of halal products. Through these stages, the study aims to provide a comprehensive empirical overview of how social and economic dimensions interact in shaping the halal consumption behavior of Muslim Generation Z.

With this design, the study positions FEBI UINSU students as a focused quantitative case. In this sense, the term case study refers to the concentration on a specific socio-economic and religious context, rather than a qualitative case study approach. The findings are expected to provide an empirical illustration of how social and economic factors influence Muslim Generation Z's perceptions of halal products within the context of Islamic higher education in Indonesia.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Data Description**

The research data were obtained through the distribution of questionnaires to 100

Muslim Generation Z students at the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business (FEBI), UINSU. The characteristics of respondents include gender and age, recognition of halal labels, motivations for consuming halal food, primary sources of halal products, and the means by which they ensure halal status.

**Table 1. Profile of Respondents**

Variable	Category	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	54
	Female	46
Age	≤ 20 years	37
	21–25 years	55
	≥ 26 years	8

Source: Primary data, processed

The sample was dominated by male respondents (54%), with the majority aged between 21 and 25 years (55%). This composition reflects the characteristics of FEBI UINSU students, most of whom are pursuing undergraduate studies during early adulthood, a productive life stage in which perceptions and consumption behaviors are shaped within the context of the transition toward social and economic independence.

**Table 2. Halal-Related Characteristics of Respondents**

Variable	Category	Frequency (%)
Recognition of Halal Label	Arabic word “halal”	62
	Logo/barcode	20
	Ingredients	18
Motivation to Consume Halal Food	Religion	83
	Personal awareness	12
	Family influence	5
Source of Halal Products	Supermarket/minimarket	80
	Traditional market	10
	Street vendors	10
Assurance of Halal	Basmallah sign	39
	Environment condition	33
	Seller’s appearance	28

Source: Primary data, processed

Regarding halal consumption behavior, most respondents recognized halal products

through the Arabic word “halal” (62%), indicating a preference for simple and direct symbolic identification. Religion emerged as the primary motivation (83%), reinforcing the relevance of this study within the Islamic educational setting of FEBI UINSU, where religious values play a central role in consumption decision-making. The most common source of halal products was supermarkets/minimarkets (80%), reflecting the accessibility of modern retail outlets for urban students, compared to traditional markets or street vendors.

In terms of assurance of halal status, the most frequently relied upon indicator was the presence of the *Basmallah* inscription at the point of sale (39%). This finding demonstrates that Gen Z students at FEBI UINSU do not rely solely on formal certification, but also associate religious conviction with social and cultural cues in their surroundings. These insights are important because they emphasize that halal consumption behavior among Muslim Gen Z students is not merely the outcome of formal regulation, but also a reflection of the internalization of religious values in everyday life.

## Data Analysis Results

### 1. Validity Test

The results of the validity test of the research data are presented in the following table.

**Table 3. Validity Test of Data (100 Respondents)**

Variable	Item Code	R-Calculated	R-Table	Description
Social Factor	1	0,809	0,196	Valid
	2	0.803	0.196	Valid
	3	0,582	0,196	Valid
Economic Factor	1	0,817	0,196	Valid
	2	0,730	0,196	Valid
	3	0,783	0,196	Valid

Source: Research Data (processed with SPSS)

As shown in Table 3, all questionnaire items have an r-calculated value greater than the r-table value (0.196), meaning all items are valid. This indicates that each item successfully measured the intended construct and is suitable for further analysis.

### 2. Reliability Test

The results of the reliability test are presented in the following table.

**Table 4. Reliability Test of Data (97 Respondents)**

Variable	Cronbach' Alpha	Reliability Value	Description
Social Factor	0,796	0,60	Reliable

Economic Factor	0,814	0,60	Reliable
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Source: Research Data (processed with SPSS)

The results show that the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for social (0.796) and economic (0.814) exceed the reliability threshold of 0.60. This indicates that the research instruments are reliable, meaning the responses are consistent in measuring halal consumption behavior in relation to social and economic factors.

### 3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The CFA was conducted to test the suitability of indicators with the constructs analyzed. The analysis focused on two key variables shaping halal consumption behavior: social factors and economic factors.

#### a. Confirmatory Factor Analysis for the Social Variable

The social construct was developed through indicators such as role, status, and family, measured using several questionnaire items.

**Table 5. Frequency Table Data of the Social Variable for Generation Z**

No	Statement	STS		TS		S		SS		Total
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
P1	I consistently choose halal food products recommended by prominent public figures whom I trust.	5	5	23	23	39	39	33	33	100
P2	The halal food products I purchase are also bought by my circle of friends.	6	6	19	19	38	38	37	37	100
P3	I am reluctant to buy halal food if the vendor does not wear religious attire, such as a headscarf or cap.	14	14	16	16	34	34	36	36	100
L1	I will only buy food if I receive a recommendation from my family that the product is truly halal.	8	8	13	13	30	30	49	49	100
L2	I refuse to buy food that my family considers not halal.	1	1	12	12	24	24	63	63	100
L3	Even if I really like a particular food, I will stop consuming and purchasing it if my family states that it is not halal.	4	4	8	8	20	20	68	68	100

Source: Primary data, processed

The distribution in Table 5 indicates that family influence is the most dominant indicator shaping halal consumption behavior among Gen Z FEBI UINSU students.

Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that family recommendations and judgments are the primary reference in halal consumption decisions.

b. Confirmatory Factor Analysis for the Economic Variable

The economic variable is constructed through two main indicators: lifestyle and price. These indicators are formulated based on several statements obtained from the distributed questionnaires.

**Table 6. Frequency Table Data of the Economic Variable for Generation Z**

No	Statement	STS		TS		S		SS		Total
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
G1	I will not consume food whose halal status is unclear, even if the food is currently popular.	3	3	9	9	21	21	67	67	100
G2	Even if a food brand is trending, I will still verify its halal status before making a purchase.	1	1	1	1	28	28	70	70	100
G3	I am only willing to consume food that has official halal certification from MUI.	2	2	5	5	21	21	72	72	100
H1	I tend to choose halal food even if the price is relatively higher.	2	2	2	2	29	29	67	67	100
H2	I still refuse to buy non-halal food even when offered at a discount.	7	7	2	2	12	12	79	79	100
H3	I am more inclined to purchase halal food if it is available at a discounted price.	29	29	17	17	28	28	26	26	100

Source: Primary data, processed

Table 6 shows that most respondents maintain halal consumption despite price considerations. For example, 79% refused to buy non-halal food even when discounted. However, 26% strongly agreed that discounts on halal food increased their purchase interest, indicating that economic considerations remain relevant, though not dominant.

#### 4. Normality Test

The normality test was conducted to assess whether the data for the dependent variable follows a normal distribution. This test was applied using the One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) method. The decision criterion in this study stipulates that if the Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) value exceeds the 5% significance threshold (0.05), the data is assumed to be normally distributed. The results of the test are presented as follows:



**Table 7. Normality Test**  
**One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test**

		<b>Social Factor</b>	<b>Economic Factor</b>
N		100	100
Normal Parameters <sup>a</sup>	Mean	19.1800	20.5500
	Std. Deviation	3.14749	2.66050
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.138	.177
	Positive	.064	.097
	Negative	-.138	-.177
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.384	1.772
Asymp.Sig. (2-tailed)		.433	.376

The significance values ( $>0.05$ ) indicate that the data are normally distributed. Thus, parametric analyses such as regression, correlation, and CFA are methodologically justified.

Although the data in this study have met the criteria of validity, reliability, and normality, several limitations need to be acknowledged. First, the sampling technique employed a combination of purposive and quota sampling, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of Muslim Generation Z in Indonesia. Second, the use of a self-report questionnaire as the data collection instrument may have introduced measurement bias and non-response bias. To minimize these risks, the study ensured respondent anonymity, provided clear instructions, and employed items that had been tested for validity and reliability.

The sample size of 100 respondents is considered adequate for confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), following the guideline of Hair et al., (2010), which recommends at least five respondents per questionnaire item. Given the number of instrument items, this sample size satisfies the standard requirement. In addition, the results of the normality test confirmed that the data were normally distributed. This supports the subsequent use of parametric analyses such as regression, correlation, and CFA, thereby ensuring that the interpretation of the results is methodologically sound.

## 5. Descriptive Analysis

**Table 8. Descriptive Statistics**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Minim um</b>	<b>Maxim um</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Social Factor (Gen	100	7.00	16.00	13.1600	2.24390

Z)					
Economic Factor (Gen Z)	100	12.00	24.00	20.4000	2.41593
Valid N (listwise)	100				

Source: Primary data, processed

The descriptive analysis shows that the social factor had a mean of 13.16 with relatively low variation, reflecting a moderate response toward social influences. In contrast, the economic factor had a mean of 20.40, indicating a stronger agreement regarding the role of lifestyle and price in consumption decisions.

## 6. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Results

The results of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) on the variables shaping consumer behavior indicate that social and economic factors significantly influence consumer purchasing patterns. The indicators representing these two factors include social class, status and roles, family influence, lifestyle, and price considerations in shopping decision-making.

**Table 9. Factor Analysis KMO and Bartlett's Test<sup>a</sup>**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.687
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx.Chi-Square	81.149
Df	6
Sig.	.000

Source: Primary data, processed

The KMO value ( $0.687 > 0.50$ ) and Bartlett's significance ( $p < 0.05$ ) confirm the suitability of data for factor analysis.

**Table 10. Anti-image Matrices**

	Cultural Factor	Social Factor	Economic Factor
Anti-image Covariance Economic Factor	-.270	.555	-.172
Economic Factor	-.002	-.172	.764
Anti-image Correlation Social Factor	.664 <sup>a</sup>	-.414	-.003
Social Factor	-.414	.643 <sup>a</sup>	-.264
Economic Factor	-.003	-.264	.764 <sup>a</sup>

Measures of Sampling Adequacy (MSA)

Source: Primary data, processed

Both factors exceed the minimum threshold (0.50), indicating adequacy for further factor analysis.

**Tabel 11. Communalities**

	Raw		Rescaled	
	Initial	Extraction	Initial	Extraction
		n		
Social Factor	9.857	7.573	1.000	.768
Economic Factor	7.148	2.678	1.000	.375

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Primary data, processed

The social factor shows a stronger explanatory power ( $>0.50$ ), while the economic factor contributes less.

**Table 12. Total Variance Explained**

Component	Initial Eigen values <sup>a</sup>			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Rawr Social	7.498	21.961	77.373	2.127	53.169	53.169
Economic Factor	4.289	12.564	89.938			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

When analyzing a covariance matrix, the initial eigenvalue sare the same across the rawand rescaled solution.

Source: Primary data, processed

The social factor explained 53.17% of the variance, highlighting its dominance.

**Tabel 13. Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>**

	Raw	Rescaled
	Componen	Component
	t	
	1	1
Faktor Sosial	2.752	.876
Faktor Ekonomi	1.636	.612

Extraction Method : Principal Component Analysis.

component sextracted

Source: Primary data, processed

The higher loading of the social factor confirms its stronger role in shaping halal consumption behavior among Gen Z students.

## Discussion

The findings indicate that social factors, particularly family influence and the religious environment, serve as the primary determinants in the decision-making of Muslim Generation Z students at FEBI UINSU when choosing halal-labeled food and beverages. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) reinforces this result, with social factors showing the highest loading factor (0.876) and explaining 53.17% of the data variance. The dominance of family influence can be understood through Social Influence Theory (Kulviwat et al., 2009), which emphasizes that individuals tend to align their choices with significant reference groups.

Although Generation Z is widely recognized as independent, digital-savvy, creative, and multitasking (Harahap et al., 2024; Aisyah et al., 2023), emotional and religious attachments to family continue to serve as a guiding reference in determining the appropriateness of halal consumption. Moreover, the influence of the religious environment is also significant, indicating that students not only rely on family recommendations but also on religious symbols in their surroundings, such as the presence of *Basmallah* signage or the seller's religious attributes. This pattern aligns with Perception Theory (Van den Bulte & Stremersch, 2004; Purnasari et al., 2023).

This phenomenon contrasts with Generation Y or young consumers in Western societies, where individualistic values dominate and family influence is weaker (Kotler, 2022). Similar patterns are evident among Generation Y consumers in Indonesia, who are more strongly influenced by lifestyle orientations than family norms (Endri et al., 2020). In the international context, the results align with Shah Alam & Mohamed Sayuti, (2011) in Malaysia, who found that social factors such as family and peer influence significantly affect young consumers' halal choices. Studies from the Middle East (Ismail, 2025) and Europe (Yüksel, 2022) also confirm that, despite Generation Z's independence and digital exposure, religious values, social norms, and family influence remain central to their consumption behavior.

Accordingly, these findings support the global view that social embeddedness continues to shape consumer decisions even in the digital era. However, in contrast to Bonne & Verbeke, (2008) study in Belgium, which highlighted the importance of formal certification as a source of halal trust, FEBI UINSU students place stronger reliance on social and religious cues, such as *Basmallah* signage or sellers' attributes. Similarly, these results diverge from Wilson & Liu, (2011) perspective on Islamic branding, which frames halal primarily as a marketing symbol. In the Indonesian context, family and religious norms dominate more strongly, reaffirming a form of cultural-religious embeddedness in which trust is transferred through social and family networks rather than formal institutions.

Beyond social influences, economic factors also play a significant role. Descriptive analysis shows that the average score for economic factors (20.40) was higher than that for social factors (13.16), indicating that students pay considerable attention to price, promotions, and product accessibility. This can be explained through Consumer Behavior Theory (Kotler & Keller, 2012), which underscores the interaction between personal motivation and external conditions. These findings are consistent with Ashraf (2019) study in Bangladesh, which demonstrated that price remains a consideration even among consumers with strong halal awareness.

Thus, this study offers a distinct contribution by emphasizing the simultaneous interaction between social and economic factors in the context of Islamic higher education in Indonesia, an area that has rarely been explored. The findings not only enrich the literature on Muslim consumer behavior but also demonstrate that halal consumption among Generation Z is guided by both the internalization of familial and religious values and adaptation to economic conditions and modern trends. Social factors dominate the initial decision-making stage, while economic factors moderate subsequent behavior, shaping a more complex and contextualized consumption pattern compared to previous studies.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the halal consumption behavior of Muslim Generation Z students at FEBI UINSU is simultaneously influenced by social and economic factors. The results of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) confirm the dominance of social factors, particularly family influence, with a loading factor of 0.876 explaining 53.17% of the variance. The data show that 68% of respondents stopped consuming a product if their family declared it non-halal, establishing the family as the primary normative authority. However, economic factors remain significant in moderating behavior: 79% rejected non-halal products even when offered at a discount, while 26% were attracted to halal products when price promotions were available.

In practical terms, producers and marketers need to strategically integrate social and economic aspects, for example by leveraging family influence in halal campaigns while maintaining price affordability. Government and certification bodies should expand access to certification and enhance halal literacy through community-based initiatives and social media. The limitation of this study lies in the homogeneity of the sample, which consisted of urban religious students, making the findings less generalizable. Future research is recommended to broaden the geographical scope and incorporate additional variables such as religious awareness, popular culture, and digital exposure. Thus, this study affirms that social factors, especially the family, are the main determinants of halal consumption, while economic factors act as catalysts that shape the consistency of choices within the dynamics of modern lifestyles.

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