

# Inspiring the Spirit of Volunteering in the Halal Industry among Youths in Malaysia

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**Abstract**— The focus of halal industry is not merely the market but it's about creating a conducive ecosystem upon approaching the market. That is the halal supply chain. Technically, the responsibilities are on the shoulder of Halal Executives (HEs). Nevertheless, most importantly is to ensure the industry players are aware and fully equipped with knowledge and skills in order to keep them at par to the Syariah law. As for today, it is crucial to make our youths as part of the team. They can make great contribution and collaboration to the entire industry by making themselves and others voluntarily energized and accessed to the halal certification matters. Unfortunately, it seems that they are not mentally and spiritually ready to adopt and adapt to the basic teachings of al-Quran specifically over the concept of halalan toyyiban. Too many of them are taking things too easily as the issue gets worst. Their concerns are more on lifestyles rather than learning styles. So, what does it takes to keep our youth updated to the reality of buying power? How can HEs be at their best to conduct their task? What drives a person to be committed and competent to the ummah? This concept paper of its kind may bring forward the famous theory of Planned Behaviour which has been practiced academically by the researchers of consumerism. By understanding it and getting the values fostered may enculture a proper, genuine and civilized volunteerism attitude among our youth.

**Keywords**— *Volunteering, youth, halalan toyyiban, theory of Planned Behaviour, halal executive*

## 1. Introduction

The fundamental of volunteering is by being honest to oneself. By being honest, an action will be carried out with values. This coincides to United State's Fair Labour Act (2004), mentioning a volunteer as an individual who performs hours of service for a public agency or organization for civic, charitable or

humanitarian reasons without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation for services rendered. While, the characteristics of volunteering as per Volunteering Tasmania (2012) are as per below:

- i) It has a direct benefit to the community and the volunteer (whether the benefit is tangible or intangible)
- ii) It is undertaken by choice, and
- iii) It is unpaid (however, the volunteer may receive reasonable or appropriate reimbursement for expenses incurred that are associated with the role, and/or may receive a monetary or other incentive/reward)

Compared to United Nation's view (2011) volunteer action is undertaken according to an individual's own free will, and not as an obligation stipulated by law, contract or academic requirement. The decision to volunteer may be influenced by peer pressure, personal values and cultural or social obligations but most importantly, the individual must be able to choose whether or not to act.

Indeed, Browne and Paylor (2013) defined volunteering as growing interest with no commitment to repeat and with minimum formality, involving short and specific actions that are quick to start and complete. Perhaps, this description may challenge our perceptions of volunteering. Whereas, European Council (2017) defines volunteering as all types of voluntary activity, whether formal, non-formal or informal which are undertaken of a person's own free will, choice and motivation, and is without concern for financial gain. On the other hand, the evident from recent research findings of Volunteer Ireland (2017) reported positive impact of volunteering such as the emerging feelings of being purposeful and valued, friendship, enjoyment, personal growth and development, connected to the community, sense of belonging, self confidence, gratitude and appreciation, more tolerant, sensitive and open to people. During focus group discussion, volunteers offered consideration of individual differences including situational, attitudinal, personal motivation and

personality factors in every experience of volunteering which has major effect on well-being.

## 2. Importance of Volunteering in Halal Industry

In Islam, volunteerism has been a phenomenon which is practiced by layers of generations. Islamic concept of volunteering happens during 'kenduri' and 'gotong-royong' to built houses or moving a house. Nowadays, volunteering has spread to help people with disabilities. Volunteering is highly demanded by Islam because it contribute towards relationship building among the Muslims. Infact, generous people will be very much appreciated and rewarded. These include contributions in the form of material, spiritual or physical.

The nature of volunteering meets the principles of al-ta'awun 'ala al-bir wa al-taqwa which explains corporation or helping on another in welfare and being at the state of taqwa is an order from Allah subhanahuwa Taala. At the same time, Allah subhanahuwa Taala prohibits corporation involving aspects of sins or invasion (crossing the line of rightousness). Volunteering is nothing less or more than sustaining the human relationship (hablun min al-nas) but above all is the relationship between a servant and Allah subhanahuwa Taala (hablun min Allah) which will bring success now and hereafter.

As per stated in Surah al-Maaidah verse 2:

وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ

And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. And fear Allah ; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty.

Allah subhanahuwa Taala described in Surah al-Imran verse 92, that the highest degree of al-bir cannot be achieved without any donation from the part of the things that we love most.

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ

Never will you attain the good [reward] until you spend [in the way of Allah ] from that which you love. And whatever you spend - indeed, Allah is Knowing of it.

As per halal industry is concern, certification and the logo reflect very much on the trust of consumer over the halalness of a product. It influences the market and consumer's purchase intention. The responsibility among stakeholders depends very much on the industry players, regulators and consumers. So, it is obvious that volunteering to apply for halal certification may affect positive response from the consumer plus it increases consumer's loyalty towards halal products.

## 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Who Are Halal Executives?

Manual Procedure for Malaysia Halal Certification (Third Revision) 2014 was developed by Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM) and Jabatan Agama Islam Negeri (JAIN) which are among the competent authority in Malaysia for the production of halal certification. The purpose of this procedure is to define the party involve upon the related regulations of a halal executive who him/her must be a Muslim, a Malaysian citizen with Islamic education background or holds a Certificate of Halal Executive and is responsible in halal compliance of the company. Halal Executives are only appointed by management of multinational companies and medium industry category. For small industry category, the management appoints a Muslim supervisor and for micro industry category, the management appoint minimum of one Muslim worker to look over the application of halal certification matters. At the same time, training providers offers courses for students aged above 18 years old.

### Reality of Buying Power Among Youth

Malaysia's National Youth Development Policy recognized youth among the age group of 15 to 40 years old. Meanwhile, the Commonwealth Secretariat (2014) categorized youth among the age group of 15 to 25 years old. That is why the global youth market is important to international marketers and advertisers because of its size, homogeneity and its growing purchasing power (2010). Therefore, youth are the most important industry player because they may act as halal executives and at the same time they are also consumers of halal product. Logically, they are conscious of the importance of halalan toyyiban and the expectation of consumers upon halal products. Although it totally depends on their in depth of knowledge and level of appreciation towards the Islamic concept (Norul & Mariam, 2016).

### Lifestyle versus learning styles

Youth demonstrate their own way of lifestyle depending on which century they were born in. In today's digitalized era, youth seems to bother less on halalan toyyiban matters (Mat Isa et al, 2015). There must be a reason behind it. For example, the revolution of social networking sites influence the lifestyle of youth so that the brands and companies can exploit the space of social networking sites to create loyalty among youth. These phenomenon have taken over the loyalty of youth towards religiosity. They are too focused on the net and simply care less over their intake of food which leads to major diseases (Raquel et al., 2017). How much chemical their food contain of and how much risk of getting sick they are taking into their body which will also determine the longevity of their lives and increase the rate of death caused by food consumption (Mohamad Hasnan, 2015).

Most of us might not be aware of what learning styles are. But, basically everybody learn through their 5 natural senses which involves 5 main organs of human body namely eyes (sight), nose (smell), ears (sound), skin (touch) and tongue (taste). Learning styles are combinations of preferences on how they are prone of perceiving and interpreting information which creates feelings through thinking (Sreenidhi & Tay Chinyi, 2017). Generally, they are 3 main characteristics of learning styles which is auditory, visual and kinesthetic. For definite, they contribute towards the effort, effectiveness and efficiency of a learning process. Effectiveness of learning influences religiosity. Similar views was shared by several researchers since 2001 (Loh & Teoh, 2017). They also help to reflect about how learning preferences vary among individuals. Learning styles approaches helps us to consider an individual's dominant or preferred way of thinking and to learn better in lesser time.

#### **The Concept of Planned Behavior Theory Upon Commitment and Competency of the Ummah**

To act voluntarily according to a specified perspective of perceiving or giving response acquires a decision of doing or not. Repetition of a subjective norm develops a sustained behaviour towards a commitment upon pursuing competency in an area of interest based on the intention of behaving, attitude from an instruction and thoughts over it.

By relating to Self Determination Theory, fulfilling psychological needs positively affect optimal individual operations, including intrinsic autonomous work motivation and willingness to volunteer spending time on work, intrinsic motivation, as well as positive attitudes and behaviors such as being energetic and contributive which was explained by the Planned Behavior Theory. This phenomenon reveals that when supervisor support satisfied employees' need for autonomy, this satisfaction can elicit employees' autonomous potentials, which then promotes them to actively engage in helping behaviors. When their need for competence is satisfied, they will be more confident in proposing a solution or solving the problems of others. When employees' need for a relationship is satisfied, stronger group identification and commitment are produced, increasing employees' desire to help others for the sake of others. Overall, satisfying employees' basic psychological needs prompts employees to freely, confidently identify with demonstrating prosocial motivation, with hopes of helping others (Jui-Chih Ho, 2017).

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

This conceptual paper emphasizes on the importance of volunteering among youth for the halal industry. Halal

certification functions not only to market a product but specifically to satisfy the psychological needs of a consumer over the product that they are purchasing. They require a guarantee of halalness from every aspects of the supply chain ecosystem. Perhaps, every action of a behaviour depends solely on a person's intention of doing it. If a person is highly motivated by extrinsic factor, then attitude will show positively by indicating positive thoughts over an action required. Most importantly, Muslims learn religiosity by adopting the intention of doing in order to please Allah subhanahuwa Taala.

For further study, future research may ponder on why JAKIM's halal certification is important? Why halal certification is not compulsory for all food manufacturer by considering market and multiculturalism factor? And most importantly, what is the best way to promote a genuine halal certification?

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