

“Religiosity and Muslim Consumer Behaviour towards Food Products in Maharashtra”

Shaikh Imran Ismail¹, Dr. Manik S. Waghmare², Mr. Dhawle Kalyan³, Mr. Lagad Krushna⁴
Shivchatrapati College Aurangabad. (MS) India.¹

Asaramji Bhandawaldar Arts, Commerce and Science College, Deogaon(R), Kannad.²

Abstract: Religion is an inseparable part of the culture which makes influence on the consumer behaviour of individuals as it influences the life style of people and thus it affects their buying behaviour as a consumer. It was observed that religion binds people in a particular choice of behaviour. People belonging to different religions have different buying behaviour. Thus, from the marketing perspective, the influence of religion on buying habits of people will help the marketers in developing effective strategies in advance so that they can respond in a better way for fulfilment of consumers' requirements

The present study is based on the field survey conducted with the help of a well- structured questionnaire and interviews with Muslim consumers. The study is confined to Jalgaon district in Maharashtra state and the primary data was collected from deribate sampling method 100 respondents had been selected from Jalgaon district. Secondary data has collected from various book and research journal and government agencies.

Keywords: Religiosity Muslim consumer Behaviour, Food Products

Introduction:

Religion is an inseparable part of the culture which makes influence on the consumer behaviour of individuals as it influences the life style of people and thus it affects their buying behaviour as a consumer. It was observed that religion binds people in a particular choice of behaviour. People belonging to different religions have different buying behaviour. Thus, from the marketing perspective, the influence of religion on buying habits of people will help the marketers in developing effective strategies in advance so that they can respond in a better way for fulfilment of consumers' requirements Religion is documented as an essential factor that profoundly influences consumer buying decisions. Religion can serve to link consumers to a style of life that determines consumption patterns. Studies examining the effect or influence of religion on consumer behavior are based on two aspects: religious affiliation and religiosity. Religious association is primarily explored in comparison to the denominational affiliation or religious identity of an individual (e.g., Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish). However, religiosity (in other words, religious commitment) is an important construct to identify the influence of ethical behavior on consumer consumption and buying behavior.

Islam, as a religion, provides a comprehensive way of life and regulates the behavior of Muslim buyers to obtain satisfaction in this life and the hereafter. Religious belief (for example, relating to halal food) is the best guiding principle for identifying food consumption choices for Muslims who actively follow religious guidelines because these rules are in line with Islamic principles of food consumption. represent. Address the principles. Over the next 40 years, Islam would grow more rapidly than any other major religion. If current trends continue, by 2050 there will be almost as many Muslims in the world as Christians. This rapid growth of the global Muslim population represents an opportunity for researchers to further investigate Islam and Muslim consumer behavior such as food consumption. The investigation of Islamic consumption patterns may add value to the academic literature on consumer behaviour. Among Muslim consumers, Islamic rules govern the culture, which serves as a guide in their daily lives.

Muslims should spend their money only for clear purposes like normal living, education, health and helping the poor and needy. Therefore, the concept of moderation is encouraged and Muslims are asked to base their consumption on strict observance of this practice. The Pakistani population is 97 percent Muslim, with a variety of religious beliefs, compared to the western part of the world. Despite these Islamic guidelines on proper food consumption and moderate expenditure, money spent on Western imported food is on the rise. Therefore, it is beneficial to know the consumer's perception or intention behind the purchase of western imported food. Specifically, it is a rising trend as the population grows and the general economy develops so that discretionary

personal spending for the middle and upper classes increases.

Muslim consumers are becoming the subject of interest to marketers and academicians. Global brands are waking up to the huge potential offered by Muslim markets worldwide. The Muslim market is reckoned to be the next big market opportunity after India and China. Muslims follow the Sharia (Islamic law) guidelines to decide what is allowed (referred to as Halal) and what is prohibited (referred to as Haram). There is a substantial demand for Sharia compliant products and services generated by 1.8 billion Muslims living in different parts of the world.

Review of literature

Abdul Rahaman et.al (2015) investigated the impact of religiosity, attitude and intentions of Malaysian consumers towards cosmetic and food products which are halal. Their study was based on the “Theory of Reason Action (TRA) Model”. A positive relationship was found between knowledge of halal and attitudes towards Halal food product. It was found that Malaysian consumers were highly cautious while purchasing Halal food products in comparison to cosmetic products. In contrast, insignificant relation was there between knowledge and attitude. *Ibrahim, Adham (2015)* conducted a survey of British Muslim consumers to explore the dynamics of fast-food consumption, to measure the growth of Halal fast food choices and to understand the negotiation process of identity constructs of British Muslims within the context of religious, social, and cultural forces. *Mc.William, Bruce et.al (2016)* made an attempt to investigate the people of specific religious affiliation in Israel. Their aim was to know the effects of religious intensity on the consumption of different food inputs which consisted of four types of chicken i.e., frozen cut, fresh cut, fresh whole and frozen whole.

Statement of problem

Muslim religiosity is both, the evidence and the expression of Muslim identity”. There exist huge differences about the concept of religion in Islam and Judaism and Christianity on every aspect whether it is related to the meaning and scope of religion or in the acts of worship. Islam is the only religion which covers every aspect of human existence and therefore Islam can be defined as “the way of life based on the commands of God”. Thus, the content dimension of religiosity in Islam or Islamic Religiosity is totally distinct from the Judeo-Christians traditions. “Islam is a religion that drives Muslim culture” therefore, it accordingly affects their consumer behaviour. Muslims, all over the world believes that proper way of food consumption is very important and it plays an effective role in identity creation. Though Islam is same but there exists differences in culture of Muslims, in their understanding of Islamic Principles and in world markets which leads to differences in their consumer behaviour.

Objectives of the Study

1. To know consumer buying behaviour toward food products.
2. To study the factors, influence on muslim cosumers to purchase of food products

Research Methodology

The present study is based on the field survey conducted with the help of a well- structured questionnaire and interviews with Muslim consumers. The study is confined to Jalgaon district of Maharashtra state and the primary data was collected from deribate sampling method 150 respondents had been selected from Jalgaon District. Secondary data- The data collected from various book and research journal and government agencies.

Results and Discussions

Table-1 Muslim consumer buying behaviour toward food products

Sr. No	Buying Behaviour	Always	Sometime	Never	Total
1.	Do you keep a food products list to use as you shop?	68 (45.33)	42 (28.00)	40 (26.67)	150 (100.00)

2.	Do you look for dates printed on packages to buy foods at their peak season?	65 (43.33)	46 (30.67)	39 (26.00)	150 (100.00)
3.	Do you check the expiry date of food products?	89 (59.33)	52 (34.67)	9 (6.00)	150 (100.00)
4.	Do you taste food product before buy?	22 (14.67)	66 (44.00)	62 (41.33)	150 (100.00)
5.	Do you use food labels to compare the nutrition for fresh food: produce, meat, poultry, and fish?	45 (30.00)	61 (40.67)	44 (29.33)	150 (100.00)

Source: Field Survey – 2022-23

Note: 1. Figures in parentheses indicates percentage of row total

Table 1 above shows the food purchasing behavior of Muslim consumers. Accordingly, it is observed that 45.33% of the consumers keep a list of food items while purchasing food items while 28% of the consumers sometimes keep a list with them and 26.67% of the consumers do not keep a list of any kind. Also 43.33% consumers look at the dates printed on the package while buying food items during the season, while 30.67% of the consumers sometimes look at the date on the package and 26% of the consumers do not look at the date on the package. It is also seen that 69.33% check the expiry date on the package, while 34.67% customers check the expiry date on the package sometimes, six percent customers do not check the expiry date. Also 14.67% consumers taste the food while 44% consumers sometimes taste it and 41.33% consumers do not taste the food while buying. It is also observed that 30.00% percent of consumers use food labels to compare nutrition, 40.67% consumers sometimes use it while 29.33% consumers never use it.

Table 2 Factors that influence your purchase of food products

Factors	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total	WM	Rank
	1	0.5	0	-0.5	-1			
Getting very good quality is always very important to me.	97 (64.67)	22 (14.67)	5 (3.33)	12 (8.00)	14 (9.33)	150 (100.00)	0.587	VI
The higher the price of a product, the better its quality.	102 (68.00)	26 (17.33)	8 (5.33)	7 (4.67)	7 (4.67)	150 (100.00)	0.697	III
It's fun to buy something new and exciting.	101 (67.33)	19 (12.67)	5 (3.33)	6 (4.00)	19 (12.67)	150 (100.00)	0.590	V
I buy as much as possible at sale prices.	107 (71.33)	21 (14.00)	2 (1.33)	11 (7.33)	9 (6.00)	150 (100.00)	0.687	IV

Often I make careless purchases I later wish I had not.	111 (74.00)	17 (11.33)	4 (2.67)	10 (6.67)	8 (5.33)	150 (100.00)	0.710	II
The lower price products are usually my choice.	108 (72.00)	23 (15.33)	3 (2.00)	10 (6.67)	6 (4.00)	150 (100.00)	0.723	I
The most advertised brands are usually very good choices	79 (52.67)	17 (11.33)	6 (4.00)	17 (11.33)	31 (20.67)	150 (100.00)	0.320	VIII
I look carefully to find the best value for the money.	78 (52.00)	29 (19.33)	3 (2.00)	18 (12.00)	22 (14.67)	150 (100.00)	0.410	VII

Source: Field Survey – 2022-23 Note: 1. Figures in parentheses indicates percentage of row total

In the table-2 analysed that Factors that influence your purchase of food products. It was noticed that most of respondents were strongly agree that the lower price products are usually my choice more than 72.00% of respondents agree that (0.723 WAM) it was placed on the Ist rank. Followed by Often I make careless purchases I later wish I had not placed on II rank (WAM 0.710) It is also noted that the higher the price of a product, the better its quality.given III rank (WAM 0.697); I buy as much as possible at sale prices got IV rank (WM 0.687); It's fun to buy something new and exciting got V rank (WAM 0.590); Getting very good quality is always very important to me placed on VI rank (WAM is 0.587); I look carefully to find the best value for the money given VII rank (WAM is 0.410) ; and The most advertised brands are usually very good choices placed on VIII rank (WAM is 0.320).

Factors Based and Its Influence Level to Purchase Food Products

Table -3 shown that factors based on its influence level to purchase food products, responses were collected on a five-point scale with numerical weights viz., Extremely influential (1), Very influential (0.5), Somewhat influential (0), Slightly influential (-0.5) and Not at all influential (- 1). To give the ranks to the respective parameters, weighted average mean was computed.

Table -3
factors based and its influence level to purchase food products

Factors	Extremely influential	Very influential	Somewhat influential	Slightly influential	Not at all influential	Total	WM	Rank
	1	0.5	0	-0.5	-1			
Health Consciousness	89 (59.33)	12 (8.00)	14 (9.33)	14 (9.33)	21 (14.00)	150 (100.00)	0.447	II

Religious Norms	95 (63.33)	21 (14.00)	7 (4.67)	11 (7.33)	16 (10.67)	150 (100.00)	0.560	I
Personal Norms	84 (56.00)	15 (10.00)	9 (6.00)	16 (10.67)	26 (17.33)	150 (100.00)	0.383	III
Subjective Norms	78 (52.00)	27 (18.00)	5 (3.33)	12 (8.00)	28 (18.67)	150 (100.00)	0.383	III

Source: Field Survey – 2022-23 Note: 1. Figures in parentheses indicates percentage of row total

In the table-3 analysed that respondent's opinion regarding factors based on its influence level to purchase food products. It was noticed that most of respondents were Extremely influential Religious Norms more than 63.33% of influential that (0.560 WAM) it was placed on the Ist rank; Health Consciousness placed on II rank (WAM 0.447) It is also noted that Personal Norms and Subjective Norms given III rank (WAM 0.383) it was conclude that there are many determinants of consumer behaviour for food products, like purchase intentions towards food, attitude of consumer, Knowledge of consumer about his dietary laws and food products, Subjective norms, perceived behaviour, religious sensitivity, product ingredients etc.

Conclusion

From the above discussion it can be concluded that religiosity is not only multi- dimensional concept, but it is also multi-faceted. Several attempts and efforts have been made by various authors to understand the religiosity in Islam. There are many determinants of consumer behaviour for food products, like purchase intentions towards food, attitude of consumer, Knowledge of consumer about his dietary laws and food products, Subjective norms, perceived behaviour, religious sensitivity, product ingredients etc. Muslim consumer behaviour differs from the traditional theories of consumer behaviour. "Islam is a religion that drives Muslim culture" Hence, it influences their consumer behavior accordingly. Muslims around the world believe that the proper way of eating is very important and plays an effective role in identity formation. Although Islam is the same, differences exist in the culture of Muslims, their understanding of Islamic principles, and world markets, resulting in differences in their consumer behavior.

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