

# Family Communication Patterns in Choosing Halal Food of Muslims Thailand

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to find out how the general pattern of family communication is in choosing halal food by Muslims. In Thailand, Muslims are considered as an ethnic minority and have restrictions in choosing food. The way to choose halal food is very important to Muslims. The factor in choosing halal food is assessed from the communication patterns in the family, namely parents; communication patterns in the family are important for Thai Muslims in choosing halal food. The food is not all halal, some foods are still wrong and have not been able to get halal marks from the related subjects but are also eaten by some Muslims themselves. The method used was a qualitative approach with a case study strategy. Data was collected through interview and direct observation on the research object. Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the pattern of communication of Muslim families in Thailand is very important in choosing halal food, not only in the country but also in every place, in order to be aware of choosing halal food. In every family, there are different ways of communicating with family, and there are also some families who cannot communicate well in choosing halal food.

**Keywords:** *family communication patterns, food choice, Muslim Thailand*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Changes in the world today give people the freedom to present something, including food, life, communication, and some of it without considering the scope and validity duly. Of course, that communication has an important influence on the family to present a life pattern all day, especially among Muslims in Thailand. Muslims are a minority religion ethnic which is 4.9% = 3,233,103 of the population in Thailand (data for 2019), most of whom are Muslims living in the southern part of Thailand. A small number of people who are Moslems and surely want to choose food, must be careful, because not everything that can be eaten, so that they should be able to choose food properly starting from the pattern of family communication.

Communication is very important in the parent-child interaction, especially if the parents want to find a better way to transmit to their children the important life values by which they could guide the present and especially the future [1]. The process of communication in the family is not only in childhood but also for adults who have to weigh heavily with family communication patterns to achieve the desired goals and these people can communicate good communication to the next generation.

The pattern of communication in the family in terms of choosing food for Muslim families is very important to Muslim food. Halal [2] animation generally means lawful or permitted. Halal food is the food that is prepared complying with Islamic law or also known as the Sharia law. The principle of Halal is based on the Quran (the Muslim Holy Book) and Sunnah (habitual practices of Prophet Muhammad). People nowadays should be able to distinguish the definitions between the Halal product and Halal supply chain. Moreover, the concept of Halal (especially in the food industry) has been extended to the halal value chain. Here you can say there are still many people confused with food sold in the market. There are some who say halal because many Muslims are eaten and there are some who say it is haram because they go into how to process food. For Muslim families in Thailand, it is neither easy nor difficult to choose halal food.

Muslims are much sensitive in terms of eating and drinking patterns. Given this, the subject of Halal food is very relevant and needs due attention of researchers [3]. [4] The food selecting process incorporates not only decisions based on conscious reflection, but also those that are automatic, habitual and subconscious, [5] because food is a focus of social interaction, and the consumption of “prestige” foods may become an index of social status. Halal issues and Halal food purchasing are at a nascent

stage in the context of a non-Muslim country with a sizable Muslim population in comparison with a Muslim country [3].

Thailand is a non-Muslim country that has many religions and cultures that cannot be done by Muslims and also food the Muslims cannot eat. Not only animals that are unclean but also all processes in making food and halal food can also benefit the body. Therefore, every Muslim family has its communication pattern in educating the family to make it a habit in choosing halal food.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***2.1 Family Communication Patterns Theory***

Family communication patterns theory (FCP), suggested by Mary Anne Fitzpatrick and Asian Koerner, provides a set of terms to describe family types and the differences among them. Koerner and Fitzpatrick refer to how family members as individuals think about families as schemas, or more specifically, relational schemas. Relational schemas consist of knowledge about yourself, others, and relationships, along with knowledge about how to interact in relationships. This knowledge provides an image of relationships based on your own experience and guides your behavior within relationships. A schema is an organized set of memories you use whenever you interact with other people. Since people have different experiences and remember those experiences differently, their schemas will be somewhat different. There are general social relationships knowledge of the types of relationships and knowledge of specific relationships. Here we will talk about relationships in general [6].

*Family Communication Patterns Theory*, as one of the most frequently, applied theories of family communication, reflect important values and beliefs families have about themselves and their relationships [7]. Family behavior can be placed in two different directions by FCP theory, conversation, and consistency [8]. These directions are the main beliefs predicting how families communicate. Conversation orientation is the level that families encourage open communication about a wide range of topics. The consistency orientation is the level at which the family "emphasizes on the atmosphere of consistency of attitudes, values, and beliefs".

Families [8] can range from high to low in both directions. The orientation can be used to predict how each family member will respond to certain events and how the family as a whole will cope and work together. "But helps facilitate the work of the family only not only helping to improve the general health and well-being of each family member. One phenomenon that can provide services to enhance the well-being of each family member is to maintain family relationships.

### ***2.2 Halal: an overview***

Halal is an Arabic term meaning "permissible". In English, it most frequently refers to food that is permissible according to Islamic law. In the Arabic language, it refers to anything permissible under Islam [8]. They also said [8] that its antonym is Haraam. The term halal and haram will be used strictly to describe food products, meat products, cosmetics, personal care products, food ingredients, beverage, and food contact materials. Which foods are halal or which foods are haram is decided according to the Holy Quran and the Glorious Shari'ah. Halal foods are those that are free from any component that Muslims are prohibited from consuming. The Quran (the Muslim scripture) says that all good and clean foods are halal. Consequently, almost all foods originate from plant and animal are considered halal except those that have been specifically prohibited by the Quran and the Sunnah (the life, actions, and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad) [10].

## **3. METHODS**

The method used in this research was qualitative one with descriptive data. Using sampling is an important component in qualitative research design [9], namely by making real descriptions of case studies in the form of written and oral words from several families observed, to conclude in general.

This research was conducted in Thailand, in Thailand Muslims included in ethnic minority groups, every Muslim family has a communication pattern of how to choose halal food, halal food to be food that Muslims can eat, not only see halal food but also be good food with the body. The research strategy used in this study will focus on the problem of family communication patterns in choosing halal food this study uses a family case strategy. Types of data sources used in this study were informants or resource persons, in this study there are two types of informants: the key informants including parents, children as actors related to communication patterns in the family. Data collection methods used included observation, interviews, and document analysis techniques. This article discussed the communication patterns of families in choosing food aforementioned only.

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

Indeed, 90 percent of Thais are Buddhists. However, the majority of the remainder is Muslim (about 8 percent of the total population). Gilquin provides a solid introduction to the Muslim communities of Thailand. Gilquin calls Thailand's Muslims a heterogeneous minority. Although one might imagine that Islam is limited to the provinces closest to Malaysia, the author demonstrates that this is far from true. However, 85 percent of the Muslim population lives in the south, and so their issues and concerns figure

prominently in this account. He notes that in a country noted for its fun (Sanuk) and merry-making outings, Muslims are conspicuously absent in public restaurants and bars because of dietary restrictions. Indeed, in other Muslim minority settings, such as among the Hui in China, dietary concerns also help to isolate the Muslim community [12].

Non-Muslims may have doubts about what Muslim food is. Because sometimes people hear that it is called Muslim food, Halal food, or Islamic food. What are the 3 names of these food sources? Like or different the word "Islamic food" is not called. Because Islam is a religious name, it must be called "Muslim food". Muslim food is a food that has been prepared correctly according to Islamic principles, not against Islamic law. And it also must have clean cooking methods, as to the ingredients must be clean, not rotten, or not contain germs. It is because in Islamic principles, Muslims have to consume "approved and good-value things".

Besides, Muslim food must not violate Islamic law, which does not contain prohibited ingredients such as pork, lard, or other pork products, including any kinds of animal blood, any kinds of poisonous and harmful plants and food or beverages containing alcohol or harmful and toxic components, etc.

Halal food means food that has been processed in the process of making, blending, assembling, or transforming according to the Islamic Law aforementioned in all respects above and must be certified by the authorized officer to guarantee that Muslims, in general, can consume food or consume various goods or services completely. The one, who can produce or cook "Halal food", is not necessarily Muslim.

Factors influencing the purchase intention need to be known which can be increased by some marketing activities [2]. Communication patterns within the family must not be neglected, as it exerts major influence on choosing halal food. Eating halal food is not just because Muslims are aware of it, but it is also an obligation for them. Consuming non halal food [2] means breaking one rule of Islam and is one of the bad deeds. In other words, dietary can reflect the religiosity level. The more religious the individual, the more does he/she cares about his/her diet and the higher the intention to purchase halal food.

For their children's food choices through their food attitudes, preferences and behaviors, [10] conversely, children influence their parents' food choices by expressing their preferences, negotiating, persuading, making demands and refusing to eat the foods their parents serve. Because children choose food from what they want, as a pattern of communication parents must designate a halal logo and outline with short and understandable words, so that children can understand and remember at the first that this food is edible and that food is inedible. From the first stage, a parent must give an example in

choosing to buy food properly, that is, fresh food, food ingredients, or food from packaging and drinks. To have a subconscious mind in choosing to buy and eat Halal food always, even if you are anywhere, you should be a good example of a young Muslim who chooses clean food. Choosing the right diet and good food will make your body strong, healthy, and your *Iman* (creed) strong.

Some families cannot communicate well, are not good at communicating, and do not want to communicate about choosing halal and *Toyyiban* food because the following reasons:

- (1) Unable to communicate because there are some problems, namely no one regulates how to live all day in the family to choose and to buy food. There is no principle in choosing halal food, so they do not care about halal and haram.
- (2) Not good at communicating, by not good at communicating but can make an example in choosing to buy halal food through a logo but it occurs in a family only. Many families are still not good at communicating and ignoring halal and haram.
- (3) Don't want to communicate about halal and haram; this problem is very dangerous at all. They can eat unclean food at every meal and what else with foods that are still wrong like Mister Donut, KFC, Pizza Hut, etc. (There are still ingredients at Chubahat, especially in Thailand).

With some of the problems that Thai Muslims face in their lives, of course family communication patterns are very important to distinguish halal from haram food because family communication patterns (FCP) have been recorded to influence individual decisions. Communication patterns are consistent with family and conversation orientation. There is a dimension of alignment reflecting the level of family communication emphasizing on the consistency in beliefs and attitudes. Families with consistent orientation are committed to harmonious communication, often due to their obedience and mutual understanding [11].

## 5. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis carried out above, in general, it can be concluded that regarding the communication patterns of Muslim families in choosing halal food in Thailand, some families are categorized into the group having easy communication within the family to enable some family to choose the desired food by ignoring halal and haram. As a Muslim who is obliged to obey the teachings of Islam that are choosing halal food away from haram food, every family must be able to communicate clearly and using beautiful words to be a good start for finding halal food.

Thailand as an ethnic minority country with this food in the market, in many convenience stores for Muslims, should be able to stay away from illicit food by seeing the

halal logo on the packaging. So the pattern of family communication becomes important to the initial stages in educating families to choose halal food.

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