

Credibility of Halal Logo Design among Consumers

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Abstract

The credibility of halal logo certified by JAKIM must perform as a vital indicator in providing consumers with trustworthy components during product consumption. The recognition of halal logo will also be helping in raising potential brand awareness to avoid conflict and confusions to consumers. Previous research has indicated some point of view on the use of multiple patterns on crescent and moon applied for halal logo (Brill, Leiden, 1960), which is inconsistent to shows strong significance to consumers. The appropriateness aspect of putting correct symbols or shape for halal logo is particularly subjective, and yet has not been widely discussed. The objective of study is, i) **to examine factors influencing consumers to recognize and perceive halal logo**, and ii) **to suggest appropriate visual recognition to enhance better understanding**. Using self-administrative questionnaire as a method of gaining a result, this study has been conducted among consumers. The findings may reveal some recommendation in improving previous halal logo to grab a sense of required recognition and raise brand awareness, which significantly essential in spreading wider knowledge for halal industry.

Keywords: credibility; halal logo; visual recognition

1. Introduction

1.1 Religion, Beliefs and Halal Concepts

As the Muslim consumers become more knowledgeable of their religion, it is inevitable that they will be more particular on the type of products and services that they consume or use (Shahidan Shafie and Md Nor Othman, 2006). Hence, religion is a system of beliefs and practices by which of people interprets and responds to what they feel is supernatural and sacred (Johnstone, 1975). Sufficient indication has been provided that religion can influence consumer attitudes and behaviors in general (Pettinger *et al.*, 2004), religion plays one of the most influential roles in shaping food choice (Dindyal, 2003) and food purchasing decisions and eating habits in particular (Blackwell *et al.*, 2001). Hence, religious is extremely affecting attitude and human value the most. It teaches and guides peoples accordingly, especially if it is in a Muslim market (Alserhan, 2011). Therefore, the Muslim's belief in Islam can influence their level of awareness on halal food (Simon, 1994; Hussaini, 1993). The term of Halal needs no introduction, say Badrudin *et. al* (2012) "halalness" of product goes beyond ensuring that food is pork-free", which refers to anything that is permissible; literally means any food that is permissible in Islam (Bonne *et al.*, 2007), yet not only restricted to food items but extends to toiletries, pharmaceutical, cosmetic and even services (Lada *et. al* 2009).

1.2 Significance of Halal logo

The impact of logo/labeling as a correspondent in delivering visible meaning is crucial to be indicated. Furthermore, Thus Pittard *et al.* (2007) writes about the importance of a company's logo that they, along

with providing instant recognition, are tools for transnational recognition. Therefore, the introduction of halal logo by Malaysia's Department of Islamic Development (JAKIM) has generated more awareness among Muslim consumers especially, on the importance of consuming products or engaging in services that follow Islamic guidelines and principles (Shahidan Shafie and Md Nor Othman, 2006). Labeling/logo are a display of information about a product on its container or package that contain the extent of information about halal food or product that must be impacted by a label, which governed by the relevant safety in Muslim societies such as Malaysia (Osman, 2002), thus, by having proper labeling/logo as a mechanisms is efficient in activating Muslim's level of awareness on halal foods or products.

Literally, the credibility of halal logo is pertaining as good devices in convincing consumers to consume products and services, without any doubts. Shafie & Othman, 2006 dictated, the simplest way for Muslim consumers is by purchasing packaged food products with "Halal" certification and logo. Previous studies showed that majority Muslim consumers checked the halal logo on the product's package intentionally to ensure the products consumed were halal (Dali et al., 2007). The crucial intention to introduce halal certification is aiming to protect Muslim consumers to every single aspect involves with the process, materials, ingredients, sanitation, safety, nutrition, and the whole production aspects, concerning with the concept of "Toyyiban" or wholesomeness is a strength element applied. It is basically reflect with the permission of usage the ingredient in everyday products especially as food and beverages, cosmetics, toiletries items and medical products (Fauzan et al 2007).

Halal logo (as figure 1 below) introduced by JAKIM in 1994, is a good approach in delivering strong enforcement to manufacturers to be more conscious on the product's purity, hygiene, safety and aiming to protect consumers as been gazette by the Trade Description Act 1972. It was beginning on 1974 once issued by Research Center of the Islamic Affairs Division of the Prime Minister's Office in order to verify the status of foods and goods in the country, which meet the requires criteria. The appointed company, Ilham Daya, gave the halal certificate on 1994 and until now, all of activities have been taken over by the Halal Industry Development Corporation. (www.halal.gov.my/)



Figure 1: JAKIM halal logo

- Eight-pointed star is placed in the middle of the circle
- A word-Halal in Arabic – “حلال” is placed in the middle of the star
- It is then followed a “HALAL” word in Roman
- The circle of the logo contains, the word "Malaysia" in Roman and Arabic
- Two small five-pointed stars are placed to separate the Roman and Arabic word.

(Source: JAKIM)

1.3 Crescent moon symbol throughout Islamic cultures

It's complicated yet subjective to describe the credibility of these elements, as it has been believed as a main Islamic influence for the cultures. Therefore, many perceptions have been made in discovering the origin of these elements.

“ Islam emerged in Arabia where travel along the desert trade routes was largely by night, and navigation depended upon the position of the moon and stars. The moon thus represents the guidance of God on the path through life. The new moon also represents the Muslim calendar, which has 12 months each of 29 or 30 days. So in Islam the lunar month and the calendar month coincide, and the new moon is eagerly awaited, especially at the end of the month of Ramadan when its sighting means that the celebrations of 'Id al-Fitr can begin”.

By Linda and Phil Holmes, Cottingham, N Humberside.

“The use of the so-called crescent moon in many Islamic symbols cannot be related to the importance attached to the new moon in Islam. The moon depicted on, e.g. many Islamic flags is the old moon, the reverse shape of the new moon, which is like a letter C backwards. Again 'crescent,' implying 'increasing,' is properly applicable only to the young moon: the old moon is diminishing in phase. Presumably the moon is depicted as a crescent in Islamic, and many other, contexts as that shape is unambiguously lunar”.

By A A Davis, London SW7

“Although the crescent is indeed a very widespread motif in Islamic iconography, it is not Islamic in origin nor exclusive to that religion. The emblem has been used in Christian art for many centuries in depictions of the Virgin Mary, for example. It is in fact one of the oldest icons in human history, having been known in graphic depictions since at least as early as the Babylonian period in Mesopotamia. The stele of Ur Namu, for example, dating from 2100 BC, includes the crescent moon to symbolise the god Sin, along with a star representing Shamash, the sun god. The device seems to have entered Islam via the Seljuk Turks who dominated Anatolia in the 12th century, and was widely used by their successors, the Ottoman Turks, who eventually became the principal Islamic nation, and whose Sultan held the title of Caliph until 1922. The story that the Ottomans adopted the crescent to symbolise their conquest of Constantinople must be dismissed as mere legend, since the device considerably predates 1453. In the late 19th century the Pan-Islamic movement sponsored by the Sultan Abdul Hamid II used the crescent and star on a green flag as part of its propaganda, and from this were derived the flags of Egypt and Pakistan and many other Islamic states”.

By William G Crampton, Director of the Flag Institute, Chester.

“A detailed answer will be found in the entry 'Hilal' Encyclopaedia of Islam (second edition, Brill, Leiden, 1960). Professor Richard Ettinghausen, writer of the entry, notes that crescent moon (hilal) motif is featured with a five or six pointed star (the latter known as Solomon's shield in the Islamic world) on early Islamic coins circa 695 AD, but it carried no distinct Islamic connotation. Some 500 years later, it appears in association with various astrological/astronomical symbols on 12th century Islamic metal-work, but when depicted in manuscript painting, held by a seated man, it is thought to represent the authority of a

high court official: 'the sun [is] to the king and the moon [is] to the vizier ... ' Its use as a roof finial on Islamic buildings also dates from this medieval period but the motif still had no specific religious meaning as it decorated all types of architecture, secular as well as religious. In fact Ettinghausen argues that it was the European assumption that this was a religious and national emblem that led to several Muslim governments adopting it officially during the 19th century”.

By (Dr) Patricia Baker, Farnham, Surrey

2. Problem Statement

Significant usage of moon, star and crescent symbols furthermore doesn't be established appropriately. The impact of Islamic symbol is vital in representing good meaning as its provide. This is due to usage of moon and crescent as Islamic symbols can be concealed and inconsistent (Brill, Leiden, 1960), even been accepted and perceived as significant symbols in Islamic culture since the Umayyad and Abbasids Empire. There are many patterns of the moon can be revealed, chosen of new moon or old moon, which is going to contemporary concepts and has been used in displaying many national flags of Islamic countries (Dr Patricia Baker, Farnham, and Surrey, 1993). Even, the application of moon and star is believed as an internationally-recognized symbol of Islam not only for many national Islamic flags, but also an official emblem for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (Huda, 2017).

Unfortunately, a recent study on 2016 revealed that the elements of circle pattern which reflects moon shape and star have been widely used to non-halal product, create some sense of similarities with any other halal products (Nasiruddin, Ghazali, Khairul, 2016). Significantly, deeper understanding attributes of recognition towards halal logo design is needed to avoid confusions during product consumption. Then, previously in 2014, an article of The Star Online reported on the images conflict of Hindu deity that was placed next to the halal logo on package labels of a certain brand of mineral water. The complaints were been made by Malaysian Muslim Consumers Association's (PRIM) and due to that, the director-general of Malaysian Islamic Development Department (Jakim) Datuk Othman Mustapha said, it was clearly violated with Malaysian Halal Certification Procedure Manual under Article 6.3 Packaging and Labeling, and therefore that the company should change the image on the labels. It is concerned with the situation that might be leading to unreliable issues and variables of logo meaning may be appeared. Lack consideration with the consistency elements based on consumers perceptions and opinions towards halal logo eventually will be misjudged and underestimated by consumers during product purchase, hence the variable design of relevant Islamic symbols will arise, and this lead some misperceptions and confusions due to the variety of logo designs. Therefore, sooner or later entrepreneur will introduce many fake halal logos; then the authenticity of halal logo design and its trademarks might possibly cause doubts among Muslim peoples in Malaysia (Zailani et al., 2010).

3. Methodology

For stage one, online surveys were used as a primary tool in gaining a result which is aiming to discover the opinion of consumers on determining factors that could be used to improve recent halal logo design. Therefore, the adaptation of design grid analysis by Kristen Guthrie 2008 has been used as a reference to describe further on visual elements used. The questionnaires were randomly distributed among 116 adult peoples range at 20 – 42 years old. There were two sections of the survey, section A is the demographic profile of respondents, while section B is engaged in defining the feedback of consumers towards JAKIM halal logo. By using Google forms online assess as a medium, uploaded on 5 Nov 2017

till 12 Nov 2017 and it was successfully done.

Meanwhile on stage two, a study used a visual analysis as part of the method in order to classify the similarities of the selected worldwide halal logo which currently being practiced. It's aiming to gain the percentage of visual elements and it's similarities to prove issue discussed through images classification. A visual analysis addresses an artwork's formal elements—visual attributes such as color, line, texture, and size that also include historical context or interpretations of meaning (www.twp.duke.edu/writing-studio) and can be achieved by analysis of single images or collection of images, that may include also the analysis of text, words or images as one indivisible unit of analysis (Theo Van Leewen, Carey Jewitt, 2001).

4. Result

It resulted with Figure 2(a)(b) below showed that the most prominent visual elements for JAKIM halal logo are text (typography), followed by the images, pattern, and shape. A word-Halal in Arabic is placed in the middle of the star is clearly stand out due to its scale proportion applied, contributed to catching eyesight of respondents because 80% of respondents will check on the halal logo appeared on food packages before doing purchase decision. The green color is been chosen as most significant color preferred by respondents to apply at JAKIM halal logo and followed by black, which give huge impact and ability to influence emotions and consumers' level of recognition.

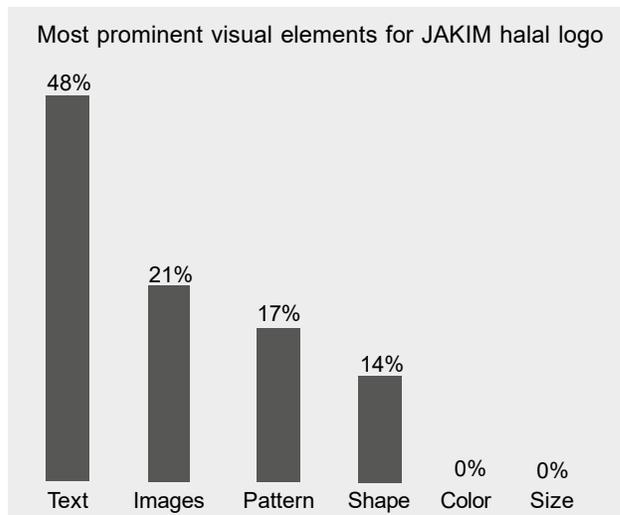


Figure 2(a): Most prominent visual elements for JAKIM halal logo

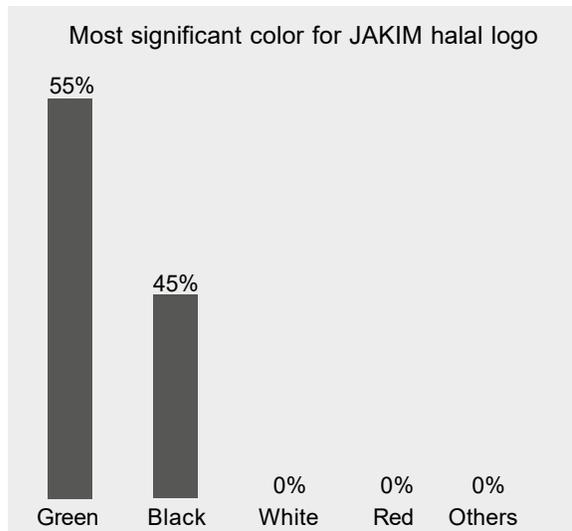


Figure 2(b): Most significant color for JAKIM halal logo

Figure 3 below show the display panel of visual analysis has been done in discovering percentages of the similar visual elements currently been applied towards all of the halal logo among 40 countries which recognized by JAKIM as of 6 Feb 2017. Based on the study, all of 59 halal logos were analyzed into display panel to find the similarities of elements usage in order to prove the issues discussed.

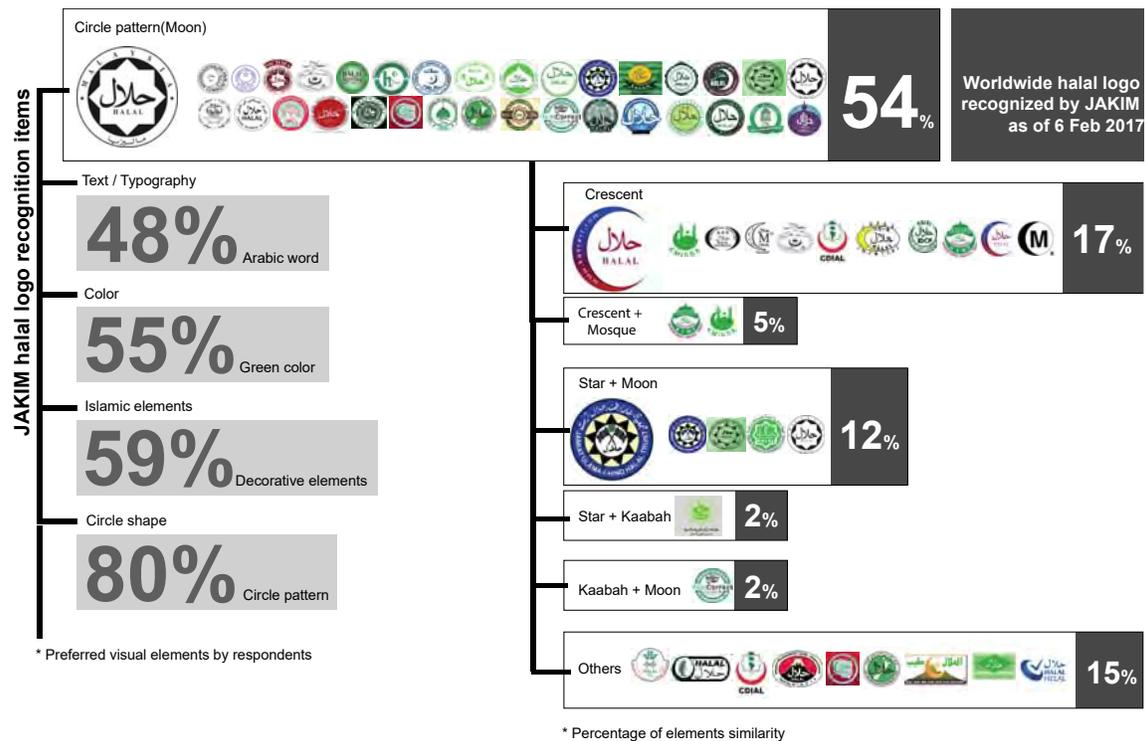


Figure 3: Visual analysis of elements' similarity

Findings also shown the reaction of peoples towards JAKIM halal logo and percentages of their preferred

halal recognition items emphasis to visual elements, revealed. Surprisingly, the element of text or typography used in Arabic word reach about 48% among any other elements demonstrated, followed by 55% green color chosen by respondents should be applied to JAKIM halal logo, 59% love to see any decorative elements reflect to Islamic influences and without doubt 80% said JAKIM halal logo must be seen in circle shape pattern. As for comparison, fortunately, there's no huge distinction arise on recent JAKIM halal logo with the recognition items revealed and furthermore, the similarity of visual elements analyzed, would be helpful as a clue in setting new design of halal logo in the future.

Figure 4 below shows the summary of study findings on the visual elements for JAKIM halal logo, which proposed by respondents. The integration understanding on the impacts of every single element contributes in order to recognize efficient halal logo not only to increase understanding and discovering consumers opinion and reaction but furthermore to reduce purchase conflicts. Then, the 4 items of visual recognition for JAKIM halal logo revealed as findings.

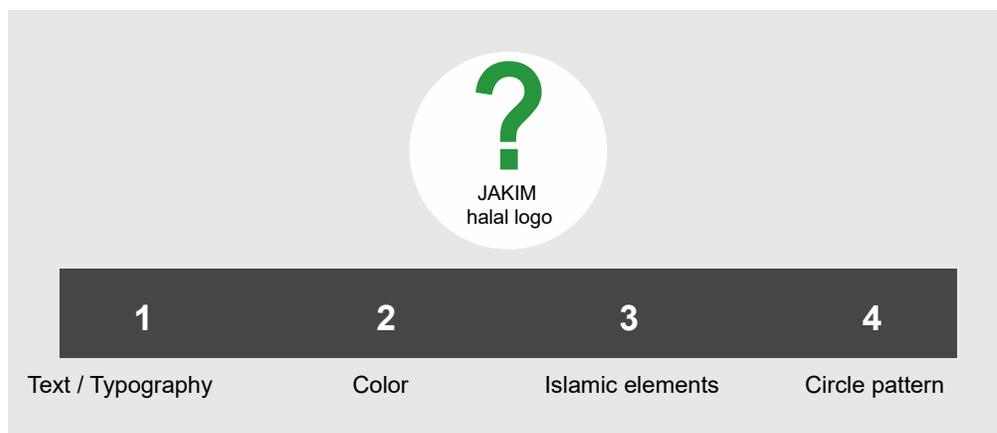


Figure 4: 4 Items of Visual Recognition for JAKIM halal logo

5. Conclusion

As for the conclusion, study managed to examine factors influencing consumers to recognize and perceive halal logo and to suggest appropriate visual recognition to enhance better understanding for setting up the new halal logo in the future. All of the data gained were collected from variable sources such as articles, journals, book, and citation which helping in collecting a useful data of issue discussed till the proposed clues of recognition. It is hoped to help a consumer with the concerned elements during product purchased. For recommendation, the study would like to enlarge a number of target respondents involved, want to clarify the visual elements revealed in detail and precisely and lastly hope to gain more authority and expert peoples to come and contribute for study in the future.

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