International Journal of Social Science Research and Review

http://ijssrr.com
editor@ijssrr.com
Volume 5, Issue 9
September, 2022
Pages: 31-46

# The Role of Immigration and Colonization in the Acculturation of Halal Food in European Countries: An Evidence-Based Systematic Review

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http://dx.doi.org/10.47814/ijssrr.v5i9.425

***Abstract***

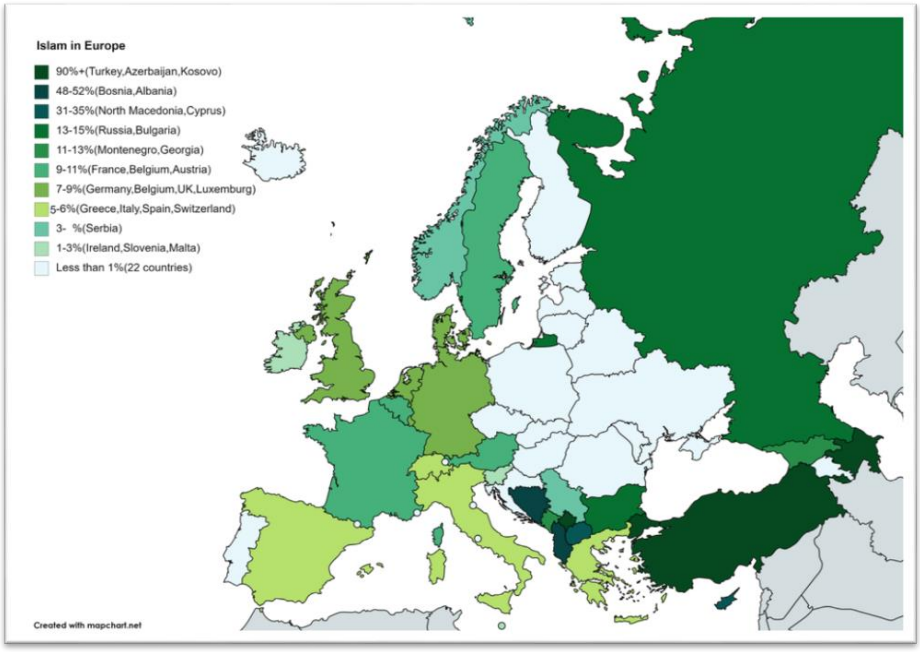
Halal food consumption and the halal market economy in Europe have been steadily growing among both Muslim and non-Muslim populations. This growth has been propelled by the rising number of Muslim immigrants in European countries. The purpose of the present study was to systematically review and synthesize a multitude of existing scholarly findings extracted from peer-reviewed research and reliable web-based sources on the role of Muslim immigrants in the acculturation of halal food in European countries. An electronic database search in the available literature was conducted to identify and select data from cognate studies. The collected data were examined and analyzed employing a systematic review methodology. The combined findings of Muslim immigrants' role and contributions to halal food acculturation in Europe are discussed. A systematic search of major electronic bibliographic databases, printed books, verified fact-based newspaper articles, and credible web-based sources was conducted. A cross section of a total of sixty-four data sources was included in this review. Findings suggest that the acculturation of the halal food process in European countries has been effective and facilitated by waves of Muslim immigrants, centuries of colonization of Muslim countries by many former European colonizers, adhering to religious requirements to consuming halal food, cultural and peer influences on halal food consumption, perceived control over consuming halal meat, developing a bicultural identity in the host country, as well as the increasing acceptance of the non-Muslim European consumer to consuming halal food as a healthier alternative to fast food and processed food products. There is a need for further research to better understand the economic and socio-cultural impact of the acculturation of halal food on the behavior of non-Muslim European consumers. This might serve as a paradigm for conducting future research to better understand what influences halal food product consumption in non-Muslim European countries and globally.

***Keywords:*** *Acculturation; Halal Food; European Countries; Colonization; Non-Muslim Consumers; Muslim Immigrants*

## *Introduction*

Whereas the world's total population is predicted to grow by (32%) in the forthcoming decades, the number of Muslims is estimated to increase by (70%) from 1.8 billion in 2015 to nearly 3 billion in 2060. In 2015, the global Muslim population constituted nearly (24.1%) of the total global population. Forty-five years later, they are expected to increase to nearly (31.1%), or more than three in ten of the world's people. The presence of Muslim immigrants and halal food traditions in Europe countries is not a new phenomenon. Incipiently, halal food traditions in Europe can be dated back to 711-1492 AD through the conquest and colonization of the Muslim territorial army comprised of Arab and Amazigh (Berber) troops in North Africa of the western Mediterranean seaboards. After the conquest, Muslims under the Umayyad Caliphates' rule established a Muslim-governed Emirate and Caliphate mainly in the Iberian Peninsula, present-day Spain, which was then called by Muslims (*Andalusia*, Arabic: *Al-Andalus*, الأَنْدَلُس). The peninsula is located in the far corner of southwestern Europe bordered by Portugal from the west and the Mediterranean Sea from the southeast (Khader, 2019; Halilović, 2017; Kaegi, 2010; BBC. 2009; Nagy, 2008). European Muslims are not a homogenous monolithic group. They are a vastly diverse mélange of nationalities, ethnicities, religious affiliation, philosophical beliefs, Islamic schools of thought (Islamic jurisprudence) known as (*madhab*: Arabic: مذهب), secular leanings, sociocultural, and languages traditions. Muslims constitute the second-largest religious group in Europe's multi-faith and multi-ethnic society (Figure 1). However, despite their inherent contextual differences, universally, they all adhere to following the religion of Islam, including the Qur'an and Sunna (European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia, 2006). For millennia, there have been Muslim communities living throughout Eastern European countries and regions, including in the Balkans, Caucasus, Crimea Peninsula**,** Volga-Ural Tartar Region of Russia**,** as well as Slavic Muslims, Albanians, Greeks, Romani, Turks, Pomaks, Bosniaks, Yörüks, and, Kazakhs (Clayer, 2017; Cesari, 2014; Popović & Rashid, 1997; Encyclopedia Britannica, 2014).

Figure 1. *Distribution of Muslim populations in Western and Eastern European counties.*
*Note: Adapted from Islam in Europe, posted by u/Azhoor5000 (2021)*

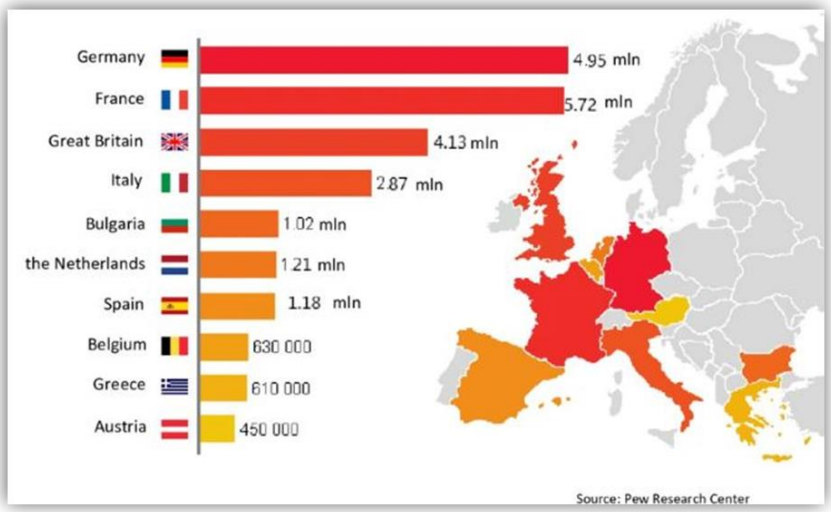



The presence of Muslims in Europe has been documented at different stages and fluctuated throughout history. Kettani (2010) quantified that the total European population grew from 281 million in 1870 to 547

million in 1950, then to 742 million by 2020. In contrast, the Muslim population in European countries has grown from (2%) between 1870 and 1950 to (6%) by 2020.

The projected Muslim population growth is not only based on Muslims growing in numbers but because the non-Muslim population in Europe is expected to decrease by around (10%). Historically, Muslim immigration to Europe countries can be traced back to the era of colonization of Muslim countries in North and Western Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia by European countries. At the pinnacle of the colonization era, European empires reigned over most of the territories of the Islamic world, including the French, British, Dutch, Russian, and German colonialists (Motadel, 2012). However, Muslim immigration to Europe from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East started to proliferate in recent years due to a record influx of asylum seekers and refugees fleeing conflicts in Syria and other predominantly Muslim countries (Pew Research Center, 2017). After a period of post-World War II baby boom, birth rates in European countries have plummeted to an average of 1.45 children per couple. This rate is far below the 2.1 needed to maintain population growth at natural replacement levels. With this low birthrate, Europe has no option but to take on more immigrants to make up the difference in the population gap (Pew Research Center, 2005). After World War II which lasted from 1939 to 1945, Muslim immigrants constituted the predominant immigrant group among other non-European immigrants. As a result of the destructive effect of the war coupled with historically low fertility rates, there was an exigent need for workers to rebuild the ravaged European infrastructure and the economy that was increasingly short of manpower. In the 1980s, more Muslim immigrants headed toward Europe seeking refuge on political and humanitarian grounds. As a result of globalization in the 1990s, an influx of Muslim immigrants arrived in Europe searching for jobs and economic opportunities seeking a better life (Ahmed, 2013). There has been a symbiotic relationship between Muslim immigrants and the host European countries. Caldwell, (2010) described this relationship as while Europe needed an inexpensive workforce, Muslim immigrants needed job opportunities. More recently, in Germany, according to a study by Pew Research Center (2017), between 2010 and 2016, the number of Muslim immigrants in Germany grew from 3.3 million (4.1%) of the total German population to nearly 5 million (6.1%). Meanwhile, the remainder of the German population declined from 77.1 million to 76.5 million. Pew Research Center (2017) further stated that immigration has been a major influence on the growth of Germany's Muslim population. However, even if there is no further immigration, Muslim immigrants will continue to increase as a segment of Germany's homegrown population in future decades yet to come because German Muslims generally are much younger and have a higher birthrate than that of the native Germans all together (Figure 2).

Figure 2. *Map of European Countries with the Largest Numbers of the Muslim population.*
*Note: Adapted from Comparative Analysis of British and French Muslim Communities, Moisa, N. (2019)*



As Figure 2 illustrates, whereas Germany, France, and the UK have the largest numbers of Muslim immigrants in Western Europe, the greater numbers in both France and the UK, in particular, can be ascribed to the historical former colonial relationship between them and the Muslim countries they had colonized in the earlier centuries. This past colonial history positions Islam to stand as the second-largest and fastest-growing religion in Western Europe, which has been rising three times faster than the growth of the non-Muslim European population. This growth is due to the record high immigration rates during the past three decades, as well as higher birth rates among Muslim immigrants juxtaposed with the Christian-affiliated and nonreligious European demographic groups (Moisa, 2019). With the increased number of Muslim immigrants in Europe, there is a comparable increase in the demand for halal food products; therefore, the halal market in European countries is foreseen to grow substantially to meet those demands – a demonstration of acculturation of halal food.

Some Muslim scholars argue that the term "halal" should only apply to the meat that is obtained from halal-qualified animals and poultry that are slaughtered in methods that conform with Islamic dietary laws. However, the term "halal" is often used more broadly to include other food and beverage products. The word "halal" (Arabic: حلال, *ḥalāl*) in Arabic denotes the kind of food and beverage that are permissible or lawful to consume according to the Qur'an (the Muslim sacred scripture) and the Sunnah (the traditions of the Prophet Mohammed). According to prescribed halal dietary laws, any quantity of alcohol, pork meat, porcine by-products, animal blood, animals that are dead or fallen sick before being slaughtered, animals that are not slaughtered by invoking the name of Allah, and carnivorous animals and game birds are lawfully considered "haram" (Arabic: حَرَام, *ḥarām)*, or impermissible for consumption by Muslims. Whereas Muslims are required to costume hallah food and beverage following the Islamic halal jurisprudence, in the past few decades, halal food products have been steadily gaining greater acceptance and popularity among non-Muslim consumers in Europe and the U.S. Over the years, halal food has been transformed from an exclusive food source for Muslims and an indication of an obligatory religious observation into a global trademark of high-quality assurance food known for its cleanliness, wholesomeness, purity, safety, and reliability. Before slaughtering halal animals, they undergo thorough health checks and safety inspections to ensure compliance with halal meat standards and suitability to be certified for human consumption. As a result of this quality assurance protocol, the reputation of the halal trademark has been attracting numerous non-Muslim consumers, especially a young cohort of European and American millennials and generation "Z" consumers who are seeking better and healthier food alternatives to fast food and exceedingly processed food products. (Riaz & Chaudry, 2019; Halawa, 2018, Halawa, Ai, & Ma, 2017; Sakr, 1997; Kittler, Sucher, & Nelms, 2012). According to the World Halal Forum, the global halal food and beverage market volume are currently estimated at $ 1.4 trillion annually (Farouk, Pufpaff, & Amir, 2016).

Generally, the dietary practices of the immigrant's native home or culture often diverge from that of the dominant host country or culture (Dekker, et al., 2011) Shortly after World War II, the first generation of Muslim immigrants who landed in Europe were mostly legal immigrants from Turkey to Germany. To obtain scarce fresh halal meat at the time, there were not too many choices available to them except to depend on the limited local halal meat butcher shops. Decades later, when they are settled in the host European countries, Muslim immigrants did not only acculturate their practice of Islam in their host European countries but also established their halal food traditions of slaughtering permissible animals and preparation of halal meat, both of which represent their Islamic religious beliefs, cultural values, and Muslim identity. Ascribed to globalization and the latest immigration trends, immigrants from diverse ethnic groups and cultures are present in almost all the developed Western European countries resulting in a significant increase in ethnic food consumption, including halal food (Ayyub, 2015). Fryers, Melzer, & Jenkins, 2003 argued that "culture" is a set of socially acquired values, beliefs, attitudes, and practices shared among members in a group and passed down from one generation to another within that group. Culture includes one's beliefs and the value system of one's community that are maintained by people and bond them together

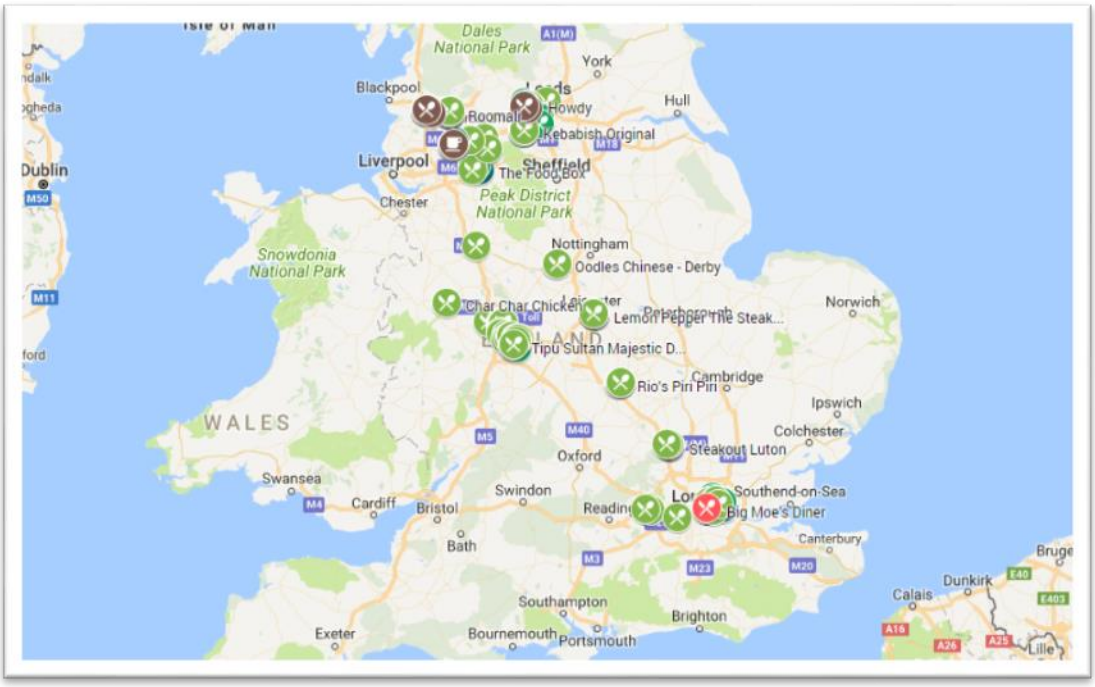
into a close-knit social structure. Muslim immigrants in Europe may not hail from the same derivation or speak the same language; however, they share common cultural characteristics, including history, beliefs, values, food (halal food), and Islamic faith and identity. Bhugra, 2004 suggested that the enduring characteristics of an individual's cultural identity and value system are difficult to change or substitute over time by adopting a different cultural identity or a set of personal characteristics and social skills acquired from the dominant host culture or country. Immigrating to a host culture or county may result in full assimilation and immersion in the host culture or country or develop a "bicultural identity," which is a process that might be challenging and it might take a longer time to develop. Furthermore, it can be impacted by multiple sociocultural contexts such as the geographical relocation and availability of a support system in the new environment from compatriots from the same culture (Park & Scott, 2022). As a result, the bicultural identity may develop from both the immigrant's homegrown culture and the host country's culture leading to shaping halal food into an enduring component of a Muslim's multicultural identity that has been shaped and maintained in the dominant host culture or country. In that framework, identity development is an essential process in the immigrant's experience, and assuming that "we are what we eat" halal food can play a significant role in the formation, manifestation, and preservation of this developed multicultural Muslim-European identity (Brown, 2016).

As evidence of effective acculturation of halal food in European countries, findings from multiple studies suggested that halal meat market activity across Europe has been experiencing significant growth in production, sales, and consumption; however, the demand for halal meat differs from country to country. In the UK and France with the largest Muslim population in Europe, there has been steady robust growth over the past 10 years, whereas in Germany the halal meat market is burgeoning and is projected to expand with to the growing number of the post-World War II Turkish-German immigrant population, as well as the recent years' inflow of Muslim immigrants from Syria and other Muslim countries. This halal food product market expansion has been growing throughout Europe as a result of the rising consumption of halal meat and poultry. This market expansion reflects rising incomes among the second and third-generation European Muslims. Another indication that halal meat and poultry products have been increasingly available in local non-ethnic meat stores, particularly in the mainstream supermarket chains and fast-food restaurants. Notably, the consumption of halal meat products by non-Muslims has been also increasing at various rates across Europe (Bergeaud-Blackler, 2004; Bonne & Verbeke, 2007; Campbell, Murcott, MacKenzie, 2011).

As further evidence of the acculturation of halal food in Europe, in the UK, in 2009, the Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) fast-food restaurant chain introduced a pilot halal food market initiative in a small number of its franchised restaurants in selected neighborhoods in London that are densely populated by Muslim immigrants. KFC franchisees offered a menu serving certified halal-slaughtered chicken. The pilot market test was an instant success and has since been expanded to include many more KFC franchises across the UK. Similarly, the Associated Dairies (ASDA) and Tesco supermarket chains started selling certified halal-labeled meat from pre-stunned animals in 2000, then from 2007 to 2010, respectively, they have also sold meat obtained from non-stunned animals in several of their in-store halal meat butcher shops. The ASDA supermarket chain aimed at appealing to their rising Muslim and non-Muslim customers capitalizing on the quality assurance and safety of the non-stunned Halal Meat Certified (HMC) (Figure 3). The halal meat market in the UK is rapidly growing because consumers trust the local halal meat and poultry prepared by the Muslim butchers employed by the ASDA supermarket chain. Because the halal meat and poultry market adopted the ASDA's non-stunned slaughtering of animals methodology, it has been enjoying a considerable annual market growth since 2010 (Lever & Miele, 2012). HMC follows the EU standards of Meat Hygiene Services (MHS). MHS only operates in EU-approved licensed slaughterhouses under the supervision of authorized veterinarians from MHS. Under UK law, the MHS has legal responsibility for ensuring animal welfare, health, and cleanliness. Their stamp of approval is a legal requirement that is essential to certify that meat is fit for human

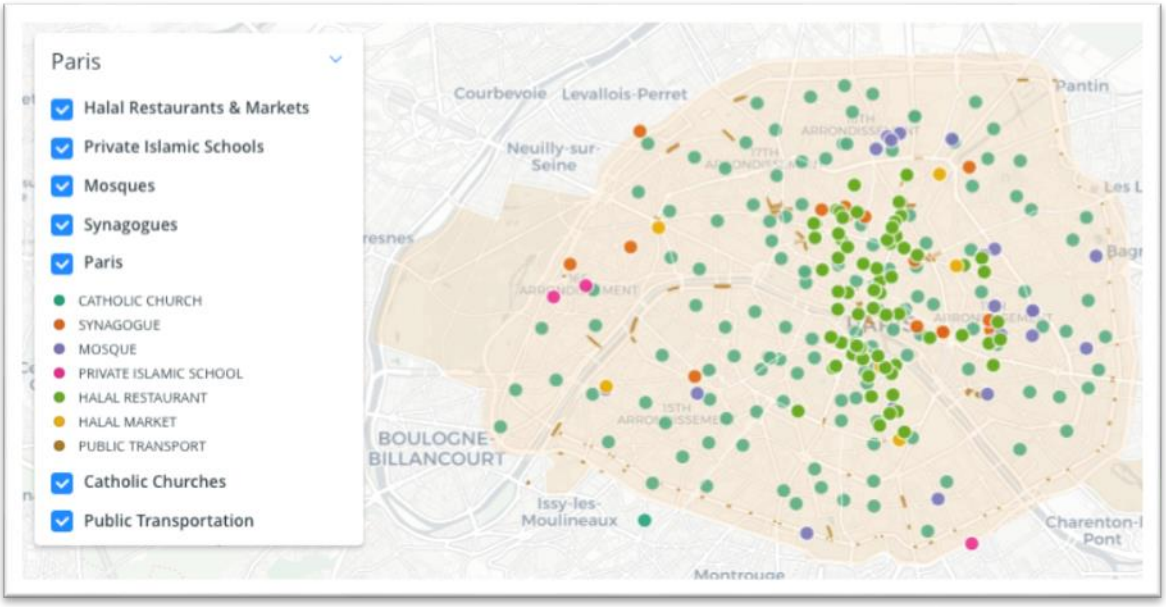
consumption. MHS does not operate with any meat processing plants that are not EU-approved (Halal Monitoring Committee, UK, 2022).

Figure 3. *Prevalence of Non-Stunned HMC Certified Halal Meat Markets and Restaurants in the UK. Note: HMC (Meat Hygiene Certified). Adapted from: Bing.com images (2017)*




In France, the connection between France and Muslims dates back to the conquest and colonization of Algeria in 1830. This conquest ushered in the beginning of France's long former colonial presence in other Muslim countries. The colonization of Muslim counties in West Africa and Equatorial Africa, the protectorates in Morocco and Tunisia in North Africa, and the 132-year occupation of Algeria resulted in millions of them becoming Muslim-French citizens. However, throughout these years, French Muslims maintained their observance of Islam, Islamic identity, and halal food traditions. In mainland France, Muslims represent (5.6%, 5.72 million) of the population above 15 years of age (Figure 1). The preponderance of Muslim immigrants in France is mainly derived from Maghrebi (North African) origin, which represents (82%) of the total Muslim population in France, of which (43.2%) are Algerians, (27.5%) are Moroccans, (11.4%) are Tunisians, (9.3%) is sub-Saharan Africans, and (8.6%) are Turkish. (El Karoui, 2016; Tribalat, 2013). Regarding acculturation of halal food products in France, second to Christianity, Islam constitutes the second most widely proclaimed religion in France. As a consequence, France has the largest Muslim population in Western Europe (Figure 1). This considerable French-Muslim population size can be attributed to the steady flow of Muslim immigrants from Northwest Africa (Maghreb) and the Middle East. According to 2016 population estimates, the Muslim population living in France is approximately 5.7 million, which represents neatly (8.8%) of France's total population (Pew Research Center, 2017; Maillard, 2005). There are also large numbers of immigrants from West Africa and Turkey (Goddard, 2007). Due to the growing demand of the Muslim population in France, since the 1970s, the halal meat, poultry, and restaurant markets have been increasingly growing, especially in the capital city, Paris, where the majority of immigrants live (Figure 4).

Figure 4. *Prevalence of Muslims and Halal Food Markets and Restaurants Across Paris, France. Note: Adapted from Visualizing French Muslims: NULab Project by Nugent, C. (2019)*




As an indication of the acculturation and expansion of halal food across Europe, similar to the UK, the halal meat market has been rapidly growing over the past few decades, as the trademark "halal" has become fundamental to the religious and cultural identity of many young French Muslims. Whereas ethnic meat stores still represent major retail outlets for purchasing halal meat and poultry in most major European countries, including France, the certified halal-labeled meat and beverage products are rapidly expanding and becoming ubiquitously available in supermarket chains and fast-food restaurants, as well as conventional sit-down table service restaurants. Subsequently, the expansion of the halal food product market in European countries has necessitated an increase in the number of halal food certification agencies with each agency having its halal marketing strategies and interpretations of what constitutes authentic halal meat, promoting the trustworthiness of its certification policies that comply with standard slaughter methods, where all animals and poultry are not stunned before slaughtering them according to animal welfare and adherence to the Islamic dietary regulations (Lever & Miele, 2012). Among some of the leading European-based halal food certification agencies are The Muslim Food Board in the UK; Halal Food Council of Europe (HFCE) in Brussels, Belgium; European Halal Food in Brussels Belgium; Nestlé in Vevey, Switzerland which has a global presence; Carrefour in Massy, France which has a global presence; Halal Italia in Vicenza, Italy; Isla Délice in Argenteuil, France; Halal Certification Services (HCS) in Osnabrück, Germany; and Halal Control (HC) in Ruesselsheim, Germany (Market Research, 2022).

Because of the acculturation and expansion of halal food production and consumption in Europe, some European countries have established their state-owned halal product industrialists that are exporting their products to the Islamic world. However, the halal food issue, especially halal meat in Europe was not without opposition and controversy. The most controversial issues regarding halal meat in Europe have been focused on the rituals and methods of slaughtering, including animals' fasting before slaughtering, the spatial positioning of the animal during slaughtering, the exact location and level of the neck incision during bleeding, and stunning of animals ahead of slaughtering employing electrical or carbon dioxide gas to stun them (Żurek, Rudy, Kachel, & Rudy, 2021; Abdullah, Borilova, & Steinhauserova, 2019). In some European countries, halal slaughtering of animals generated tension and years of debate between Muslim and non-Muslim citizens, especially among NGOs that advocated for

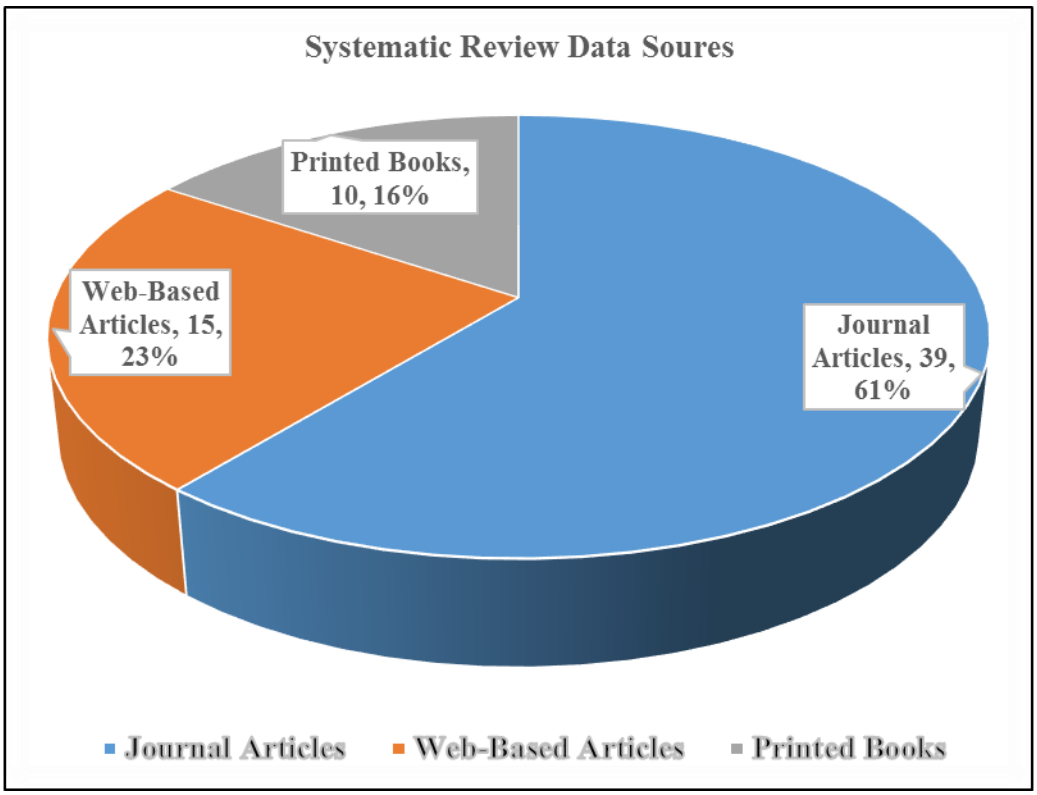
better treatment and animal welfare. The dispute extended further among Muslims over the literal interpretation of the Qur'an juxtaposed with the broad interpretation of the Sunnah regarding the halal slaughtering of animals (Lever & Miele, 2012). In a move that was condemned by Muslim and Jewish groups in Europe as a violation of their protected rights of freedom of religion, in 2014, Denmark enacted a non-stun ban on the religious slaughter of animals. Similarly, in 2019, the Dutch parliament passed the "Meat Inspection Act" prohibiting the halal rituals of slaughtering animals before stunning them. The Danish and Dutch laws stipulate that "all animals and birds" must be stunned first before being slaughtered to prevent subjecting them to unnecessary pain. The Muslim communities in Europe opposed the Danish and Dutch laws on the ground that they contravene the Islamic standards of "*dhabīḥah*" (Arabic: ذَبِيحَة), i.e., the "*slaughtered animal*" ritual method of the halal slaughtering that requires that the animals and birds be fully conscious. One of the arguments for advocating for this law was that there is growing European concern that halal food divides European citizens and violates norms of animal welfare. The second argument was that the Islamic halal method of slaughtering animals is a disguise to surreptitiously introduce Islam into Western societies. In contrast, unlike Denmark and the Netherlands, in the UK and France, there has been no public or private divide nor debate over that issue. Stunning and non-stunning of animal options are not state-imposed and both options are broadly available (Bowen, 2021; McAuley, 2018; Brown, 2014; Tagliabue, 2011).

## *Materials and Methods*

### Data Collection

The present study employed an evidence-based comprehensive systematic literature review (SLR) methodology of major electronic bibliographic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), Crossref, and JSTOR was performed employing search terms, including halal food, the halal market economy, Muslim immigrants, European countries, and non-Muslim consumers of halal food. Further, the data search included printed books, trustworthy fact-based newspaper retrospective articles, and credible web-based sources obtained from Google Scholar; all of which have provided thorough data search tools. An SLR – alternatively known as – research synthesis is a research methodology designed to provide a comprehensive, objective, and evidence-based synthesis of relevant findings presented in an SLR manuscript (Crowther, Lim, & Crowther, 2010; Khan, Kunz, & Antes, 2003; Egger, Smith, & Altman, 2001). Data collection inclusion criteria were based on (1) identifying relevant articles that were evaluated to be consistent with the study question, (2) deemed appropriate for the research topic, (3) credible, and (4) complete. The exclusion criteria encompassed (1) replicated articles, (2) unrelated articles, (2) articles that did not address the association between halal food, acculturation, colonization, and Muslim immigration to European countries, and (3) articles without full manuscripts. A total of sixty-four articles qualified for inclusion in the present review (Figure 5). The extracted data from the review were combined and critically examined to identify, evaluate, and select relevant findings harvested from the studies included in the SLR. The two-part study question examined (1) whether there is evidence-based consensus in the reviewed literature on the acculturation of halal food in European countries, and (2) whether there is adequate evidence presented in the synthesized data to support or otherwise negate the hypothesis that Muslim immigrants and erstwhile colonization played a role in affecting the acculturation of halal food process in Europe, which was corroborated by findings from the reviewed literature. The SLR aim was to synthesize an impartial body of evidence-based findings to provide the reader with a greater understanding of the state of knowledge of the historical timeline and development of the acculturation process of halal food in European countries.

Figure 5. *Classification of the sixty-four reviewed articles distributed over three data sources presented in numbers and percentages (%)*




## *Results*

As Fig. 5 describes the classification of a total cross section of sixty-four selected articles for this research. The articles were reviewed and critically evaluated for relevance and quality. The extracted data were synthesized and evidence was summarized and included in the present review. Of these sixty-four articles, 39 (61%) were peer-reviewed journal articles, 15 (23%) were authenticated web-based articles, and 10 (16%) were printed books. Founded on the synthesized evidence, the results of the present study corroborated the hypothesis that the centuries-old Muslim immigration to European countries coupled with the erstwhile colonization of those European countries of Muslim-majority countries across Africa, Asia, and the Middle East have suggested that there is a direct causative relationship between Muslim immigrants, colonization, and the acculturation and expansion of halal food in the Christian-majority Western European countries. This halal food acculturation process was a result of the direct interaction between Muslim immigrants and the host European countries on one hand, and the former colonial powers and the colonized Muslim counties on the other hand. The adoption of newly acquired eating behaviors is an integral component of the process of dietary acculturation that continues to evolve throughout the immigrant's experience in the dominant host country (Satia, 2010; Satia-Abouta, Patterson, Neuhouser, & Elder, 2002). The results further suggested that despite the diversity in cultural backgrounds, geographies, and languages, the widely disparate immigrant groups across Europe have had discernible effects on the acculturation of halal food. Whereas Muslims have inherent cultural and language differences, they also have been consistent and uniform in following their practice of halal food consumption according to universal Islamic dietary rules. Throughout history, the adherence to halal food consumption has been unchanged regardless of where Muslims reside or what country they travel to, which is one of the central drivers for effective acculturation and expansion of halal food in the host

counties. Pettinger, Holdsworth, & Gerber, 2004 argued that religious beliefs are among the most influential cultural factors that shape the consumer's behavior regarding cultural or ethnic food. According to Bonne & Verbeke, 2007, other determinants leading to the acculturation of halal food in France include the positive personal attitude towards the consumption of halal meat as a healthy choice, peer influence on consuming halal food, and the perceived control over consuming halal meat, which may predict the intention to consuming halal meat among Muslim peers. Consistent with these findings, research on Turkish Muslim immigrants in Germany found similar results employing the theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Sherwani, Ali, & Ali, 2018).

## *Discussions*

Acculturation of hall food in European countries has been increasingly developing over the past eight centuries in various respects and is projected to continue. Except for the limited debate and controversy over the issue of whether to stun or not stun animals before slaughtering them in Denmark and the Netherlands, findings from the present SLR presented corroborating evidence in support of the hypothesis that acculturation of halal food in European countries has been effective and has been developing for centuries. And as the European and global Muslim population continues to grow, acculturation and expansion of halal food are projected to continue to grow for the foreseeable. With the robust expansion of halal food production and consumption in Europe, there is a corresponding growing need to further expand the European halal food industry not only to meet the increasing local demands by European Muslim and non-Muslim consumers but also for exporting their halal products to Muslim majority countries. In recent decades, the halal food industry in Europe was invigorated by the steadily rising demand for the quality assurance provided by the halal certification quality assurance granted by third-party agencies to verify that halal meat products, slaughtering methods of animals, and supply chain are conforming with prescribed halal standards. This halal certification was one of the significant factors that facilitated the acculturation and greater acceptance of halal food products in European countries (Aniqoh & Hanastiana, 2020).

As a sign of effective acculturation of halal food, research findings revealed that non-Muslim consumers in European countries were found to be positively associated with halal food product preference, ethnocentrism, and willingness to purchase and consume it. The growing halal food acceptance by non-Muslim consumers constitutes strong evidence of operational acculturation, which can be ascribed to the confidence that halal food is cleaner, and healthier, and provides high-quality assurance authenticated by the halal certification protocol. Additional evidence of effective acculturation is that the halal food and beverage market in Europe has been gaining greater market acceptance and expansion in major European countries, including the UK, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, and Russia. Further evidence of effective acculturation of halal food is that some European are bourgeoning into major exporters of halal-certified food and beverage products to Muslim-majority counties, including Indonesia, Malaysia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Having the largest Muslim population in Europe, currently, Franc and the UK are the foremost consumers of halal food products. Further evidence of acculturation, since 2010, the Halal Food Council of Europe (HFCE) has certified more than 400 European halal food product companies. Moreover, as an indicator of effective acculturation, the European halal food industry, including halal meat and poultry, halal product supplements, and halal beverages is estimated to grow by (5.29 %) during the 2022-2027 forecast period. This forecast positions the European halal food market economy to realize the potential of being a key economic sector. International European-based food companies such as Nestlé, Tahira Foods, and Unilever have for years offered a variety of halal products in Europe and a myriad of global Muslim countries (Fitriya & Hanastiana, 2020; Lada, Tanakinjal, & Amin, 2009; Wilkins, Butt, Shams, & Pérez, 2019; Ahmed, Najmi, Faizan, & Ahmed, S., 2019).

One of the earliest evidence of effective acculturation of halal food, especially lamb and goat meat, poultry, and cooking styles can be traced back to medieval Andalusia as a result of the presence of the Muslim Moorish culture, which can be readily observed in nearly every street corner of southern Spain, especially in the distinctly Muslim-influenced three Andalusian cities of Cordoba, Granada, and Seville. Amalgamated with the indigenous culture of Catholic Spain, this is early evidence of the Muslim-influenced cuisine and notable architectural styles that are hard to be unnoticed. This influence occurred as a result of the nearly 800-year Islamic reign over the Iberian Peninsula. Moors who affected most of this influence are an ethnic group of mixed North African Arab, Spanish, and Amazigh "Berber" ancestries. In 711 AD, they arrived at the Iberian Peninsula as a regiment of the invading Muslim army. After the conquest, they settled down there and established the Islamic Andalusian Civilization up until they were expelled from Spain and resettled as refugees in the Maghreb region mainly in Northern Africa. Presently, Moors are recognized as an Arab-Amazigh ethnic group in North and West Africa (Zeidan, 2021; Pradana, Huertas-García, & Marimon, 2020; Dozy, 2014; Capelli, Onofri, Brisighelli, et al., 2009; Bosch, Calafell, Comas, Oefner, Underhill, & Bertranpetit. 2001).

## *Conclusions*

The present research has examined whether halal food has been effectively acculturated in European counties and whether Muslim immigrants and former colonization of Muslim majority countries have contributed to facilitating that acculturation. Based on the analysis of the synthesized data extracted from the present SLR, it can be concluded that eight key factors have contributed to the effective acculturation of halal food into the European counties, including (1) the 711-1492 AD conquest and occupation of the North African Muslim territorial army of the Iberian Peninsula in southwestern Europe for nearly eight centuries. This was the earliest direct interaction between the Islamic Civilization with the Latin Western Civilization and the first introduction of halal food to European countries through southern Europe, (2) the former lengthy colonialization of numerous European countries of Muslim countries in North and West Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia, (3) the relative geographical proximity of Europe to the Muslim North African and Middle Eastern countries, which facilitated both legal and illegal immigration to Europe, (4) the1990s global trade liberalization and World Trade Organization (WTO) deregulation policy that fueled the demand for inexpensive non-European immigrant workers, (5) the greater acceptance of the non-Muslim European consumer of halal food as a healthier alternative to fast food and ultra-processed food products, (6) the steadily decline of birthrates among the European populations that necessitated opening the doors for accepting a non-European immigrant workforce to replace the aging and declining numbers of European workers, (7) the global implementation of the Halal Certification protocol, which is a document issued by qualified certifying agencies that guarantee that halal products, primarily food and beverage marketed under the halal label to both Muslim and non-Muslim consumers meet the requirements of Islamic halal food jurisprudence and are considered to be hygienic, pure, and safe for consumption. The halal certification label affixed to food and beverage products has been an efficacious marketing strategy that has attracted numerous non-Muslim consumers who are inclined to purchase and consume halal products for their reputation for being safe, hygienic, and convenient, which are having a significant positive influence on the non-Muslim consumer's acceptance and purchasing behavior, and (8) in more recent years, the adversative attitude of some Western Europeans toward Muslim immigrants has been shifting. Findings by Bell, Valenta, & Strabac (2021) revealed that negative attitudes regarding Muslims and immigrants have decreased in Western Europe. Meanwhile, the negative attitudes have increased considerably in Eastern Europe, not necessarily for being Muslims but for being immigrants who are perceived to be competing with Eastern Europeans over job opportunities. Research findings by Kaya, 2019 explained the contradiction between Western and Eastern Europeans' attitudes toward Muslim immigrants in religious terms. The findings showed that despite the decline in individual religiosity in Europe, the European countries with a high-profile presence and influence of a national church may lead to rejection of Muslim immigrants and increasing anti-Islam and anti-Muslim immigrant

prejudice. Conversely, countries without a high-profile presence of a national church may lead to more tolerance and acceptance.

### *Recommendations for Future Research*

Turaeva & Brose, 2020 underscored the importance of studying and discussing all aspects of the halal market and food consumption in non-Muslim countries. And that it is as important to further examine the role of the socioeconomic and anthropological dimensions of the halal product economy and food consumption in secular and non-Muslim societies. To be effective, future research should focus on the premise that the traditional halal food concept has been evolving, and to keep abreast of this evolution, it should move beyond addressing the halal concept from the standpoint of the religious and cultural values exclusively. In agreeing with the above-stated perspectives, and in light of the current scarcity of available peer-reviewed literature on the non-Muslim consumer's knowledge, behavior, and consumption pattern, there is a need to examine these relevant issues in cross-sectional and/or longitudinal studies to better understand the factors that influence the non-Muslim consumer's behavior toward halal food consumption. Of particular interest is to study the impact of the fragmentation and lack of uniformity between the local and national halal product regulating and certificating agencies on the expansion of the halal food product market in non-Muslim countries. Findings from these recommended future areas of research would contribute to advancing halal marketing strategies, enhancing public understanding, and standardizing the halal food certification process and labeling to be tailored for both non-Muslim consumers and secular societies.

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