

# PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE OF HALAL FOOD IN THE GLOBAL MARKET

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## ABSTRACT

*Halal food is food that is pure and wholesome, and that meets the standards of quality and safety that Islam teaches for self-care and mental well-being. For instance, food processing that involves contact with faeces (najis) violates the halal criteria. Halal food also requires that there is no contamination or impurity at any stage of its production, storage, cooking, refining, transportation, or handling of raw materials, in accordance with the Islamic perspective. The aim of this study is to evaluate the level of awareness and knowledge of halal food among the global consumers. This study was carried out using quantitative methods, namely through the method of survey by giving questionnaire forms to 115 respondents. The results of the study were analyzed descriptively and found that public knowledge of halal food in the global market is simplistic with a minimum value of 3.7, namely that food that has the Malaysian halal logo is safe and halal to eat and the establishment of global halal standards is very necessary to avoid misunderstandings, mistakes, misuse of halal certificates and losses for entrepreneurs.*

**Keywords:** *public knowledge, halal food, global market*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Halal food refers to items that are permissible according to Islamic law and do not contravene the rules set out in the Quran. These days, halal food can be identified through certifications issued by the relevant religious authorities in each country. Generally speaking, halal food is also determined based on ingredients like meat sourced from animals slaughtered according to sharia guidelines, permissible food sources, and clean production facilities. JAKIM (2023) serves as an important office that regulates halal matters domestically. Meanwhile, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation is an international organization which facilitate the development and harmonization of halal standards among its member countries. The OIC has established the Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC 2023), which is responsible for developing and issuing halal standards for various sectors, including food, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and textiles. The SMIIC also provides accreditation and conformity assessment services for halal products and certification bodies. Societal views of halal have evolved from personal considerations of permissible and prohibited items to include communal needs covering all walks of life. Nowadays, ensuring halal compliance is a top priority for companies and industries to

guarantee acceptability among the public. As a result, halal has become a business phenomenon that can influence a product's mass market potential, especially within Islamic consumer segments.

Going forward, adherence to Islamic dietary standards will remain important for food businesses seeking to tap the wider Malaysian market. Government authorities like JAKIM provide standardized halal logos supporting consumers in their purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, cross-border trade depends on coordination between certification bodies to mutually recognize halal accreditations.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

The word halal comes from the Arabic word contained in the Qur'an, namely '*halla, yahillu, hillan, and wahalalan*' which means justified or allowed (Zawanah, Munir & Abdul Muhaimin, 2008). According to Kamus Dewan (2014), halal means the law permits something to be done in Islam.

### **2.1 Halal Concept**

This concept is not limited to food alone, even covering pharmaceutical aspects as well as financial practices. According to Yusuf al-Qardhawi, halal is the beauty of Islam when it legalizes objects that are necessary for life and prohibits objects that are not useful while providing alternatives or other options for mankind. For example, Islam has forbidden the eating of carrion but provides many fresh meats that can be eaten. Islam has forbidden wine but there are many fruit juices that can be drunk (Mohd Al'Ikhsan & Siti Salwa, 2014). The process of preparation that does not comply with this syarak includes also the way of preparation, the equipment used during the time of preparation. So it should be ensured that when processing or storing the ingredients, it does not come into contact with or be placed near objects that are forbidden by syarak (Siti Salwa, Nurul Izzah, Mohd Al'Ikhsan, 2014).

### **2.2 The Global Market Potential of Halal Product**

The market for halal products is not limited to Muslims and Islamic countries alone. Countries such as Australia, New Zealand and South Africa despite having low Muslim populations still have the potential to contribute to the world halal trade. The demand for the halal market is expected to increase significantly, as a result of the increase in the number of Muslims around the world and the trend of Muslims becoming more aware of consuming halal food and products as a result of the increase in the level of education of Muslims. In addition, the non-Muslim community is also beginning to realize that halal is a symbol or benchmark for the quality and quality of a product issued by a company. According to the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), which quotes the source of the Canadian International Market Bureau, states that the number of Muslim residents presently is 1.8 billion. If each person spends US\$0.85 (RM3.23) a day, the halal product market is expected to reach US\$560 billion or RM2.12 trillion a year. In Malaysia alone with a Muslim population of 60 percent and if the spending of each individual is budgeted at RM1.00 a day, then the local halal product market is budgeted to be worth as much as RM5 billion a year (Zawanah, Munir & Abdul Muhaimin, 2008).

The global market potential of halal products is closely tied to the assessment of halal food consumption through demographic analysis within specific settlements and countries. This relationship is supported by the findings of Mian N. Riaz and Muhammad M. Chaudry (2018), who conducted a study examining the market index and consumption patterns of halal food within

a specific community. Their research highlighted the importance of understanding consumer behavior and preferences in shaping the demand for halal products. Additionally, another study by Mohd Al Ikhsan Ghazali and Siti Salwa Md. Sawari (2015) focused on the advantages of Malaysia's robust halal product guidelines, which adhere to existing Islamic religious laws. These guidelines not only facilitate effective monitoring of halal products within Malaysia but also enhance acceptance in export markets that recognize Malaysia's high halal standards.

Research exploring the nutritional aspects of halal food in Islam plays a significant role in addressing relevant contemporary issues and establishing links to the global market potential. Mohd Aizat Jamaluddin's study (2014) provides an in-depth examination of the criteria for determining halal and haram food, including specific considerations related to ongoing concerns such as the production of slaughtered meat. By elucidating these criteria, the research contributes to a better understanding of the nutritional aspects of halal products and addresses consumer doubts, thereby fostering greater acceptance and market potential for these products.

The management of halal certification has a direct impact on the performance of organizations operating in the halal food industry, particularly in Malaysia. A study conducted by Baharudin Othman and Sharifudin Md. Shaarani (2019) explored the practices of halal standards among food operators and their influence on organizational performance. The findings revealed a chain of interconnected activities, starting from inputs and progressing through various processes, ultimately leading to achievements. Moreover, the study emphasized the significance of effective internal controls within organizations to maintain high performance standards. This research highlights the importance of efficient halal certification management in driving the performance and success of organizations within the global halal food market.

In addition, there are studies related to the development of the halal food industry in the global market showed that the existence of several halal certification bodies has caused confusion among users of Islam. The study conducted by Ahmad Hidayat Buang in 2012 outlined various halal procedural and intensive approaches that have been implemented to assist the industry's comprehensive compliance with halal standards. From another point of view, it is about the halal market economy which is related to and studies the economic importance of the halal market in the era of globalization. Research study from Rafiuddin Shikoh Mian and N.Riaz's (2018) indicated they assessed mechanisms for instilling halal market economy dynamics during international manufacturing developments. On the other hand Amira Rashada Affendi, Ezani Yaakob, and Anis Husna's (2022) study explored the importance of halal in the halal food industry by examining the roles of halal executives. Their research found the effectiveness and success of the halal food industry relies on halal executives performing their roles effectively.

An in-depth analysis of Malaysia's legitimate food sector reveals the competitiveness of the halal industry within the global market. This aspect was discussed by Abdul Razak (2006), who explored the evolving nature of competitive halal food in the market. By examining Malaysia's position in the global halal industry, the research sheds light on the country's potential to tap into the growing demand for halal products worldwide. Understanding the competitive landscape is crucial for identifying opportunities and strategizing for global market expansion.

Globalizing Malaysia's halal standards on a world level is a significant aspect that warrants attention. Mohd Al'Ikhsan Ghazali and Siti Salwa Md. Sawari conducted research in 2015 to investigate the standardization of halal protocols worldwide. Their study emphasized the importance of harmonizing halal standards to address challenges such as differing interpretations, misapplication of certifications, and economic impacts resulting from discordant regulations. By achieving global recognition and harmonization, Malaysia's halal standards can enhance market access, foster consumer confidence, and facilitate trade opportunities in the global halal market.

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study is a survey study which is a specific research design that involves collecting data from individuals or groups through questionnaires or interviews. In this research we used quantitative methods that rely on numerical data and statistical analysis to draw conclusions. Surveys is a method used to collect the data. The data was obtained from a group of people who answered the surveys in a Google Form. This study aims to assess public knowledge of halal food in the global market. In addition, literature reviews were also being used to obtain results from printed materials such as journals, articles, and paper works. The question items were formulated using findings obtained from the literature reviews. Some of these findings are from primary references, while others are from secondary references. A total of 115 respondents involved in completing the questionnaire. The items were analyzed using a frequency level measurement scale as shown in the table below:

**Table 1:** Frequency Measurement Scale

| No. | Scale             |
|-----|-------------------|
| 1   | Strongly Disagree |
| 2   | Disagree          |
| 3   | Agree             |
| 4   | Strongly Agree    |

Resource: Louanglath, P.I 2017

The scoring scale used in the table below is based on the interpretation of minimum scores for the Likert Scale:

**Table 2:** Min Score

| Min Score | Scale  |
|-----------|--------|
| 1.00-2.33 | Low    |
| 2.34-3.67 | Medium |
| 3.68-5.00 | High   |

Resource: Louanglath, P.I 2017

### 4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study analyzed responses from 115 individuals who answered a survey on public awareness of halal food and its global marketing. The questionnaire consisted of two parts: Part A gathered demographic characteristics including age, sex, and races. The following section provides an overview of the respondents' demographics:

**Table 3: Respondents' demographics**

| No | Demographics           | Frequency | Percentages |
|----|------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| 1. | Age                    |           |             |
|    | 19 -29 years old       | 51        | 44.3        |
|    | 30-39 years old        | 29        | 25.2        |
|    | 40-49 years old        | 14        | 12.2        |
|    | 50 years old and above | 21        | 18.3        |
| 2  | Gender                 |           |             |
|    | Male                   | 53        | 46          |
|    | Female                 | 62        | 54          |
| 3  | Nation                 |           |             |
|    | Malay                  | 112       | 97.4        |
|    | Chinese                | 1         | 0.9         |
|    | Indian                 | 0         | 0           |
|    | Other                  | 2         | 1.7         |

Resource: 2023 survey

This study analyzed responses from 115 participants who completed the questionnaire. Results found most were Malay (97.4%), along with some Chinese (0.9%) and other (1.7%) ethnic groups. The sample comprised 53 men (46%) and 62 women (54%). The 19-29 age group made up 51 individuals (44.3%). Section B gauged public awareness of halal food worldwide.

| No | Public knowledge of halal food in the global market                        | 1 (%)   | 2 (%)     | 3 (%)      | 4 (%)     | Min |
|----|--|---------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----|
| 1  | Halal food in Malaysia has fulfilled the demands of sharia and legislation | 1 (0.9) | 7 (6.1)   | 42 (36.5)  | 65 (56.5) | 3.5 |
| 2  | The influence of halal pensions on the practice of halal skills            | 2 (1.7) | 3 (2.6)   | 33 (28.7%) | 77 (67)   | 3.6 |
| 3  | Food that has Malaysia's halal logo is safe and halal to eat               | 1 (0.9) | 4 (3.5)   | 23 (20)    | 87 (75.7) | 3.7 |
| 4  | We can give raw goods without worrying about doubts about them             | 7 (6.1) | 21 (18.3) | 34 (29.6)  | 53 (46)   | 3.2 |
| 5  | The price of halal food in Malaysia is very affordable                     | 4 (3.5) | 20 (17.4) | 47 (40.9)  | 44 (38.3) | 3.1 |
| 6  | The establishment of a global halal standard is very necessary to avoid    | 2 (1.7) | 1 (0.9)   | 25 (21.7)  | 87 (75.7) | 3.7 |

|    |   |              |              |              |              |     |
|----|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----|
|    | misunderstanding, confusion and misuse of halal certificates.   |              |              |              |              |     |
| 7  | All foods that have the halal logo in the global market can be eaten  | 23<br>(20)   | 16<br>(13.9) | 43<br>(37.4) | 33<br>(28.7) | 2.7 |
| 8  | Halal raw materials in the global market are very difficult to find   | 1<br>(0.9)   | 15<br>(1.3)  | 54<br>(47)   | 45<br>(39.1) | 3.2 |
| 9  | International industry needs to make Malaysia an example for the halal hub market   | 1<br>(0.9)   | 2<br>(1.7)   | 34<br>(29.6) | 78<br>(67.8) | 3.6 |
| 10 | The halal issue in Malaysia is from a regulatory angle because Malaysia does not have a Halal Deed that is applicable to the whole country. | 32<br>(27.8) | 38<br>(33)   | 38<br>(33)   | 7<br>(6.1)   | 2.2 |

Table 1.4: Public knowledge of halal food in the global market

Public knowledge of halal food in the global market is at a high level. This is because the highest minimum score is 3.7, namely that food with the Malaysian halal logo is safe and halal to eat and the establishment of global halal standards is very necessary to avoid misunderstandings, mistakes, and misuse of halal certificates (Al'Ikhsan & Siti Salwa, 2015). The findings of this study are supported by Baharudin, Sharilfudin, Arsiyah, and Nurul Hudani (2019), who stated that halal certification management has an influence on the nature of halal expertise. The study found that organisational performance is influenced by an interrelated chain starting from inputs, then translated in the form of processes, and finally producing achievements that are also supported by the internal control of the organisation. In addition, the findings of this study are also supported by Norazmadayu (2006), which states that more than half of the respondents, namely 294 people (73.5%) out of 358 people (89.5%) of respondents who are Muslim, chose the halal logo as the most emphasized information when looking at frozen cold food labels.

Furthermore, Muhammad Amir and Mohd Hafiz stated that this matter is important to ensure the personal needs of every Muslim in Malaysia are maintained by ensuring halal food and beverage products that coincide with Sharia law. Likewise, Zakiah, Amal Hayati, and Nurul Himmah (2011) confirm that the importance of halal aspects in every daily need of Islamic users in general and also food products in particular received attention from the Malaysian government. The issue of food is one thing that is important in Islam and must be emphasized by every individual Muslim because it involves physical and spiritual development. Finally, this study is supported by Nurauliani, Safura, Wan Shahzinda, and Wan Suraya (2019), who outlined that several initiatives have been taken by the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM), including monitoring and strengthening control of halal certification as well as use of the JAKIM halal logo to facilitate Islamic users in obtaining halal products in the market. Furthermore, Mohd Al'Ikhsan and Siti Salwa (2014) stated that the global halal product market shows an encouraging increase in line with the increasing number of Muslims in the world. This increase in the halal product market occurs continuously without showing any decline.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

Overall, the issue of halal food in Malaysia and halal food in the global market is an issue that should not be underestimated because it is also a hot issue in this era of globalisation. Among the issues of halal food in Malaysia discussed is regarding the public's belief that food that has the Malaysian halal logo is guaranteed to be clean and safe to eat. This can be proven from the number of research questions that have been answered by the public regarding food that has the Malaysian halal logo being safe and halal to eat. This has proven that the Malaysian halal logo is

no longer doubted by the community. Furthermore, the issue of halal food in the global market also absolutely cannot be overlooked because the establishment of global halal standards is very important today. This is said to be so because the halal logo is a form of proof that the products offered by an organisation have been approved through the halal auditing and approval process by the halal certification authority. Therefore, a legitimate halal logo is very important not only to make it easier for Muslims to have halal food but even in Surah Al-Maaidah verse 3, Allah SWT has said which means "It is forbidden for you to eat animal carcasses, flowing blood, all parts of pigs, animals that are slaughtered without mentioning the name of Allah and animals that die from strangling, beating, falling, goring, animals that are eaten by wild animals unless they have been slaughtered if they are still strong." Therefore, as Muslims we need to be wise in our food choices and stay away from foods that are prohibited by Allah SWT. Authorities such as JAKIM also need to play an important role in this issue to ensure that Muslims can enjoy halal food without hesitation.

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