



Practices and Challenges of Halal Restaurants in Metro Manila

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Received date: 22 July, 2022, Manuscript No. JTRH-22-22-70032;

Editor assigned date: 25 July, 2022, Pre QC No. JTRH-22-22-70032 (PQ);

Reviewed date: 09 August May, 2022, QC No. JTRH-22-22-70032;

Revised date: 16 August 2022, Manuscript No. JTRH-22-22-70032 (R);

Published date: 23 August, 2022, DOI: 10.4172/2324-8807.10000986

Abstract

Halal in the Quran means lawful or permitted, and the Muslims are known as halal food consumers. Besides, one of their main concerns is the difficulty of finding Halal restaurants in the Philippines. Most of the halal restaurants operate without halal certification which is vital and guarantees that the restaurants follow the 12 standard operating procedures set on Halal documentation, management responsibility, raw materials, facilities, tools and equipment, location, premise, exterior area, pest control, staff policy, staff characteristics, and waste management. The main objective of this research is to know the practices and challenges that occur in the existing certified (international and national) and non-Certified halal restaurants in metro manila and to gain an in-depth understanding on the importance of halal certification by conducting a survey involving 22 respondents from selected cities in metro manila, namely Ermita and Quiapo, Manila, and Makati city. A mixed-method was used in evaluating the data gathered. Based on the findings, halal restaurants comply with 12 standard operating procedures in halal certification. However, some of the challenges they encounter include unawareness of the existing certifying bodies in the Philippines, lack of workforce, and insufficient halal suppliers, inaccessible locations, unnoticeable signages, and high equipment maintenance costs. Although the halal restaurants practice the standards operating procedures, it is still recommended that the government agencies involved in the halal industry in the country to intensify its halal certification campaign to encourage more restaurants to be certified and enhance their existing capabilities to improve their operations.

Keywords: Halal; Halal certification; Practices; Challenges; Halal restaurants

Introduction and Statement of the Problem

The halal food industry is essential to worldwide Muslims. Five percent of the Philippine population is composed of Muslims. Their food demands have changed considerably and are particular in the food that they will eat. They need to be sure that the food they take will not be detrimental to their health but instead aims to improve their

mental state and quality of life. Since one of the Muslim's concerns is the difficulty of finding halal Restaurants, an evaluative study of the practices and challenges of Certified (international and national), and non-certified halal restaurants in the selected cities in metro Manila was undertaken. This study also includes the importance of Halal Certification, which would promote satisfaction and trust among consumers.

In Islam, eating is considered a matter of worship (Kittler, Sucher and Nahikian-Nelms [1]). Halal in the Quran, which means lawful or permitted guides Muslims' customary practices, and consuming halal food constitutes an essential aspect of their religion. The Article II (Section 8, paragraph H) of the Republic Act No. 9997 states that the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos must promote and develop the Philippine Halal Industry and accredit halal-certifying bodies such as the halal International Chamber of Commerce and Industries of the Philippines (HACCIP), Inc. for the benefit of not just Muslims but non-Muslims as well.

Dubé, Hai Juan, and Lijun [2] wrote that the Halal food industry refers to "the methods of how goods and services are produced and delivered in a manner that adheres to the Shariah law and also avoiding practices prohibited by the principles of Islam" (p. 2). On the rise of the Muslim population, it is fundamental for restaurant owners and managers to meet or exceed their consumers' expectations. The findings of the study seek the improvement of halal certification practices of existing halal restaurants.

The study findings are beneficial to halal business owners who can use this study as an advantage in the halal food business. This study will widen their awareness of the growing halal food industry and in choosing their target market, to the managers who can be more aware of the fundamentals of the halal food industry. This study would also help managers understand, apply, and implement halal practices, and to understand the Islamic law basis of the halal standards; to the guests, who are either Muslims or non-Muslims, can use this study as a reference if restaurants follow the proper halal standards and practices. Non-Muslims consumers can benefit from the information that the restaurants know about Halal food's health benefits; the existing halal restaurants can be enlightened about the practices and challenges they encounter and improve and prevent those possible disputes. This study can be a catalyst in accommodating a mass number of strict Muslims and Non-Muslims who patronize certified halal restaurants.

Halal restaurants are now emerging in the food business industry in the Philippines. Having several certified halal restaurants would help in attracting local and foreign tourists. The researchers conducted this study in the selected cities in metro Manila to answer these following questions:

What is the level of agreement on halal certification practices as performed by the restaurants in terms of halal documentation; management responsibility; raw materials; location; exterior area; premise; facilities; tools and equipment; staff characteristics; staff policy; pest control; and waste management?

What are the problems encountered by halal restaurants in terms of halal certification practices?

Based on the study's findings, what are the proposed improvements to the halal certification practices of the restaurants?

Scope and Limitations

This study focuses on the Halal food industry and practices. The internationally-based certifying body, JAKIM (Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia), or Malaysia's department of Islamic development and locally-based certifying body, halal International Chamber of Commerce and Industries of the Philippines (HACCIP), Inc. were mentioned and the standards they set.

This study aimed to evaluate the certified (international and national) and non-certified halal restaurants in the selected cities in metro Manila particularly Ermita and Quiapo in Manila City, and Makati City to identify the problems encountered and to propose improvements on their practices based on the halal standards of halal International Chamber of Commerce and Industries of the Philippines (HACCIP), Inc., to gain more customers. Because of the limited standards set by the halal International Chamber of Commerce and Industries of the Philippines (HACCIP), Inc., the researchers benchmarked the halal certification practices in Malaysia by Razalli, Yusoff and Roslan's [3]. The respondents of this study were the managers or officers-in-charge of different halal restaurants.

Review of Related Literature and Studies

Restaurant industry in the Philippines

The Philippines is considered as one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. From its global perspective, the restaurant industry is regarded as one of the fastest-growing sectors, and it is apparent that it has developed very well in this country. Mendoza and Carpio [4] claim that it is because of the strong economic performance and high consumer confidence that made the industry well-developed. Managers need to have strategic plans to excel in this highly competitive industry.

Filipinos enjoy eating, and that is the reason why several restaurants are scattered around different cities. Filipinos also consider eating out as a means of family bonding, socializing with friends, and relaxation after a long day of work, according to Claridades [5].

Halal food

"Halal" is an Arabic word which means "lawful" or "permitted" as prescribed by Islam (Shariff and Abd Lah [6]. The meaning goes beyond being pork-free but involves what is suitable to be consumed. It must adhere to a high standard of hygiene and cleanliness and must not be detrimental to one's health. Examples of halal food are milk (from cows, sheep, camels, and goats), honey, fish, fresh fruits and vegetables, legumes and nuts, and grains such as wheat and rice. Animals that are slaughtered according to Islamic rites are also considered halal such as cows, sheep, goats, deer, moose, chicken, ducks, and game birds.

Practicing Muslims are not allowed to consume particular food and ingredients, which is called "Haram." Haram means forbidden in Arabic and the opposite of halal food. It includes pigs, boars, dogs, monkeys, blood and blood products, carnivorous animals with claws and fangs, and any by-products of these animals, such as pork gelatin or enzymes used in cheese making. If the source of any by-products is in question, it is avoided Kittler, Sucher and Nahikian-Nelms [1]. It also consists of almost all reptiles, insects and pests, alcoholic beverages, and animals that were dead before slaughter and improperly slaughtered Edelstien, [7]. The drinking of stimulants such

as coffee and tea are prohibitive; however, these are practiced only by the most devout Muslims.

Mashbooh is the term for food, which is questionably halal or haram. A Muslim is discouraged from consuming a portion of food, which is considered as mushbooh. Food with combined halal and Haram ingredients such as baked goods made with lard or pizza with bacon, ham, or pork sausage topping, is prohibited (Kittler, Sucher and Nahikian-Nelms [1].

Halal Acceptance and Awareness

In Islam, eating is considered to be a matter of worship. Muslims are expected to eat for survival and good health. Food is never thrown away, wasted, or treated with contempt, as mentioned in Kittler, Sucher, and Nahikian-Nelms [1] study.

The halal food industry is multiplying globally. It is essential to the worldwide Muslims to ensure hygiene, cleanliness in whatever they consume, use, and purchase. It also became one of the critical sectors contributing to societal development and national growth (Bohari, Cheng and Fuad [8]. Halal food has massive potential in obtaining Non-Muslims as a target market in terms of health concern; and to break down the cultural barrier between Muslims and Non-Muslims (Abdullah, Ismail, Mathew, Raudah and Nurazizah [9]. Higher demand for halal food and products based on Islamic dietary requirements increases the awareness of Muslims worldwide.

Food must not be prepared, processed, or manufactured using ingredients that were not free from anything impure, according to Hukum Shariah. All food is considered halal except for Haram, consisting of pork and its by-products; animals improperly slaughtered or dead before slaughtering; animals killed in the name of anyone other than Allah and drinks such as alcohol and intoxicants except for medical purposes. Currently, the biggest market for halal products in Southeast Asia and West Asia (Abdullah, Ismail, Mathew, Raudah and Nurazizah [9].

Code of Halal Slaughtering Practices for Poultry

This code of halal slaughtering practices for poultry was prepared by the bureau of agriculture and fisheries products standards in collaboration with a multi-stakeholder Technical Working Group. This includes the Philippine national standard for establishments conducting halal slaughtering processes. This document indicates these following requirements:

Management: The management shall have adequate information about the farm or the production area. There should be a committee composed of Muslim members who would ensure effective implementation of the halal quality assurance system. The halal poultry process flow, which includes the production capacity, farm current disease status, feeding regime, medication usage and supplement, source of day-old-chick, and understanding of the critical control point, should be recorded. A prayer room for Muslim workers should also be provided.

Personal hygiene: All staff in the abattoir and processing plant should be medically examined and have undergone vaccination programs before employment. They should also be trained in their hygienic responsibilities and the standards they have to follow. All visitors should wear clean and protective clothing. There should also be a system distinguishing the segregation of the uniforms and shoe attire used in the abattoir.

Premise: The receiving area should be clean and sanitized at all times before arrival. The layout of the premise should permit proper process flow, proper employee flow, and reasonable hygienic and safety procedures. The premise should be effectively separated and well-insulated from a pig farm. The Slaughtering area should be dedicated to halal slaughtering processes only; thus, pets and other animals are refrained from entering.

Pre-slaughter: The poultry species chosen should be per Islamic rites. The poultry should be healthy, alive, and free from any unhealed wounds and diseases. It should also be handled humanely and allowed adequate rest for at least 30 minutes before slaughtering.

Transport of poultry from farm to abattoir: The poultry species must be put in a plastic crate with proper space and humane handling. The hauler truck used should be disinfected appropriately before the loading of the species. The distance of poultry farms to the abattoir should not exceed 50 Km radius and that the transport vehicle should be used solely for halal animals only.

Handling of live poultry: The poultry species should be handled with care and should not be thrown, dropped, or knocked over. They should be lifted with both legs and hung onto shackles in a manner that does not cause them avoidable excitement or suffering.

Slaughterer/slitter: The slaughterer should be a practicing Muslim competent to perform the halal slaughtering process. He or she should have undergone specialized training on halal requirements, methods, and procedures and should be accredited by the national commission on Muslim Filipino.

Slaughter tools and equipment: The tools and equipment are to be used for halal slaughtering only. The knives or blades should be sharp and free from blood or other impurities. Moreover, the tools and equipment should also be kept clean and sanitized every after-batch slaughter.

Slaughter procedure: The slaughtering process should begin with the positioning of the poultry laid on its side (if applicable, its neck), preferably in Qibla's direction. "In the name of Allah" ("Allah is Great") (Bismillah Allahuakbar) should be recited before slaughtering. It should be done with a simple swipe across the neck without damage to the spinal cord. It should sever the trachea, esophagus, carotid arteries, and jugular veins in one stroke to bring about immediate and massive bleeding.

Post-slaughter: The processing should include bleeding, scalding, de-feathering, washing, eviscerating, and chilling (air or water spin). The bleeding should allow the blood to be drained out thoroughly. The water used in the dressing process should be clean and continuously flowing. After washing, the species should undergo evisceration to remove the internal offal and allow post-mortem inspection, which will be performed by a qualified veterinarian.

Post-mortem inspection: A trained Muslim inspector shall be appointed to check if the animals are adequately slaughtered according to Shariah Law. If there are any species found to be improperly slaughtered, they should be removed from the conveyor line.

Storage: The storage should be kept clean and pest-free. Slaughtered poultry should not be placed on the ground and should be segregated from non-halal products. They should be kept at a recommended temperature. The recommended temperature for the chillers should not exceed 37.4°F or 3°C. The First-in, First-out system should also be observed.

Packaging: All packaging materials should be halal, free from najis, and should be carried out cleanly and hygienically.

Labeling: The container should be marked legibly and includes the date of slaughter, date of production, date of expiry, halal marking, name, and address of the establishment, specific cuts, the yielded weight, and name of the accredited halal certification body.

Transportation: All transported slaughtered poultry products should be categorized and labeled as halal. Lastly, the vehicle should be accredited by a controlling authority.

Halal Certification

Studies on halal certification in the food industry revealed that halal certification could promote satisfaction, confidence, and trust among consumers. Halal has also become a strategic move by many industries and companies to attract customers Mat nor, Osman and Rosnan . In assuring Muslim and non-Muslim consumers on the halal quality, a system of halal certification and verification is seen to be a key element. The halal certification did not start in the Muslim countries but rather in the United States in the mid- 1960s by Muslim food and technical experts as a necessary safety measure for Muslims living in Non-Muslim society to preserve their Muslim identity and fulfill their religious obligation according to Noordin, Noor, and Samicho in 2012.

In Malaysia, JAKIM (Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia) or Malaysia's Department of Islamic Development is the main regulatory body that governs halal certifications. This entity also imposes legal requirements and operating standards to ensure businesses' adherence to the halal regulations. It should also report doubtful cases of halal or non-halal status of products (Shariff and Abd Lah [6]. Halal certification involves examining food processes: preparation, slaughtering, ingredients used, cleaning, handling, and processing right down to transportation and distribution Abdullah, Ismail, Latif, Mohamed and Sharifuddin [10]. The entity defines halal food as food not made of or contained any part of an animal that is forbidden by Shariah Law. It should be free from any "Haram" or unlawful element. The food is considered as "Haram" if the source is also "Haram" or potentially harmful to the mind, body, and soul of a person (Abdullah, Ismail, Mathew, Raudah and Nurazizah [9].

On the other hand, according to Lawphil [11], Article II (Section 8, paragraph H) of Republic Act No. 9997, the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF) is entitled to promote and develop the halal industry in the Philippines and accredits halal certifying bodies for the utmost benefit of Muslim Filipinos and in partnership with appropriate agencies, individuals and institutions here and abroad. It also sets criteria and guidelines in both local and foreign bodies that seek to certify Philippine products, whether food or non-food, as halal for commercial purposes. One of the halal certifying bodies accredited by the National Commission on Muslim Filipino is halal International Chamber of Commerce and Industries of the Philippines (HICCIP), Inc. According to this entity, this set of guidelines and procedures must be followed:

Food Establishment Certification

These guidelines focus on the non-certified halal restaurants. Every applicant must strictly comply with the provisions of the Philippine national standards on Halal and to the Halal certification guidelines and procedures.

First, all raw materials, ingredients, and other products used in the establishments must be halal-certified and from halal or halal-certified sources. Second, all utensils and equipment used by the establishment must not be contaminated or used for Non-Halal products. Utensils and equipment previously used for non-halal products must be cleansed by the personnel assigned by halal international chamber of commerce and industries of the Philippines, Inc.

Another requirement is that if the establishment has other branches or franchises, each interested branch must apply for a similar certification. Fourth, the management must establish a halal assurance system wherein an establishment granted with a Halal certification must employ at least one permanent Muslim staff as a halal assurance officer for a medium-scale establishment; while, two or more halal assurance officers for a big-scale establishment. The officers would monitor the compliance with the Philippine national standards on halal and adherence to the halal assurance system. They also must undergo training on halal auditing and monitoring from any concerned body recognized by the halal international chamber of commerce and industries of the Philippines, Inc. In no case shall the halal assurance officer, while still employed, be assigned by the management to any other job. Lastly, any change or modification in the operation of the establishment must be first communicated to the halal international chamber of commerce and institute of the Philippines, Inc., before its effectivity.

Halal Certification Practices

These Halal certification practices are based on the research study conducted in Malaysia by Razalli, Yusoff, and Roslan [3]

Halal documentation: Every Halal establishment should have documents indicating the company name, address of manufacturers, suppliers of ingredients, and products, which is to be certified. It should also explain the manufacturing processes and procedures of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).

Management responsibility: The management should ensure effective implementation of the internal Halal control system and appoint a Muslim Halal Executive Officer to check if Halal procedures are fulfilled. The management should also be responsible for the employees' activities and behaviors and brief them on their duties and responsibilities. The establishment should also have a minimum of two Muslim workers.

Raw materials: All raw materials should be from Halal certified sources. The animal-based ingredients that will be used for food preparation should be slaughtered according to Shariah law, and there should be an adequate number of Halal ingredients.

Location: The establishment should have a distance of a 5 Km radius from pig farms and waste disposal areas and must be situated in the most sustainable location.

Exterior area: The establishment should be located in a clean surrounding and conforms with Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP). It should also have an excellent exterior area, which would influence a customer's decision to visit the premise.

Premise: The establishment should ensure protection against pest infestation and cross-contamination. The ventilation, drainage, and lighting system should be in good condition.

Facilities: The wet and dry ingredients should be separated and well-arranged in a systematized storage room. The storage for halal ingredients and materials should also be separated from Haram ingredients and materials. The establishment should have a parking area allotted for the suppliers and manufacturers in receiving the supplies. The water supply, storage, freezing room, sinks, toilets, and transportation should be free from najis or filth, and the cleanliness and sanitation of the restroom, dining area, kitchen, and storage area should be maintained.

Tools and equipment: There should be separate tools and equipment for Halal ingredients. It should be clean and free from najis or filth. The utensils, plates, and equipment should also have Halal logos.

Staff characteristics: The employees should be aware of the code of ethics and good hygiene practices. They should be culturally fit and confident in providing quality service.

Staff policy: All staff should be required to have an annual vaccination at any health center and should be able to present medical certificates. They should always wear decent and clean uniforms with halal logos. An open wound and ill staff should not be allowed to work until he recovers.

Pest control: The establishment should conduct quarterly pest control on the premises and monitor and check the variety of chemicals used to control insects and rodents.

Waste management: The establishment should practice good waste management and store harmful chemical substances away from halal ingredients or raw materials Figure 1.

Conceptual Framework

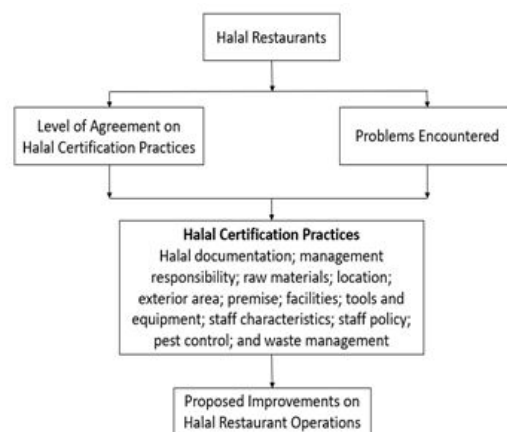


Figure 1: Practices and challenges of halal restaurants in metro manila.

The above-mentioned conceptual framework is drawn to visualize how the researchers gathered the information from the halal restaurants in selected cities in metro manila. These are interrelated as the researchers used an arrow-down process starting from the profile of the restaurant wherein it differentiates the Halal restaurants according to the kind of certification, forms of business ownership, types of service, number of years in existence, number of employees, and average number of daily customers.

Second, it identifies the level of agreement on the halal certification practices of selected halal restaurants in metro manila, whether they agree or disagree.

Third, if there are problems encountered by the Halal restaurants to be able to provide solutions in addressing their problems, fourth, to enumerate the halal certification practices derived from the framework of Razalli, Yussoff, and Roslan [3] and use it as a guide to compare the level of agreement as performed by the restaurants, lastly, to propose an improvement on the existing restaurants based on the categories stated.

Research Method

The research design applied was descriptive-evaluative, which carefully assessed the worthiness of the current study or the present condition of halal restaurants, and a mixed approach was also used. The quantitative approach placed heavy emphasis on using formalized standard questions and pre-determined response options. In contrast, a qualitative approach focused on collecting a specific amount of primary data from relatively small subjects (Hair Bush and Ortinau [12]). Survey questionnaires were used as research instruments in gathering the data of Halal Restaurants in the selected cities of metro manila.

The study was conducted in the halal restaurants in Ermita and Quiapo, Manila, and Makati City. These specific places are significant locations for Halal businesses. Ermita, Manila, is an essential place for education, culture, and commerce. A large portion of the city’s employment and business sector is concentrated in it while Quiapo, Manila, is home to a sizeable Muslim population in Manila. It is known as the old downtown of manila, located at the very heart of the city, and crowded with people, and Makati City is the country’s undisputed financial center and commercial hub and the most preferred location of investors. These places were chosen to conduct the study because most of the halal restaurants are concentrated in these locations. Some of these places have a large portion of Muslims in the area and most diverse religious establishments.

Samples and Sampling Technique

In this study, the sampling technique used is purposive to evaluate the practices of existing halal restaurants. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique in which researchers rely on their judgments when choosing members of the population to participate in the study. It was used to achieve the objectives of the study.

The sample size was twenty-two managers or officers-in-charge from different Halal restaurants. A population of halal restaurant managers or officers-in-charge was chosen because they are the ones who are familiar with the halal practices of their establishments.

Research Instrument

Survey questionnaires were used to gather information regarding halal practices and standards from the respondents, specifically the

managers of different halal restaurants. The survey questionnaire has two sections:

The first section indicated the level of agreement on halal certification practices in terms of halal documentation, management responsibility, raw materials, location, exterior area, premises, facilities, tools and equipment, staff characteristics, staff policy, pest control, and waste management- moreover, the second section, the questions about the challenges they have encountered per category.

Data Gathering Procedures

The researchers asked permission if they could survey with the managers or officers-in-charge of existing halal restaurants in metro manila to evaluate their knowledge about Halal standards and practices. The initial identification of whether they are certified or non-certified restaurants was through observation if they have halal logos displayed on their establishment. Observations were also done during possible interviews to support the result of the survey questionnaires.

Analysis of Data

Descriptive statistics were used to evaluate the managers of various halal restaurants, which provide simple summaries about the sample and the measures. Mean was used to identify the level of agreement on halal certification practices, and for the measurement on the level of agreement, the respondents were asked to rate indicators under each variable using the Four-point Likert Scale. While the thematic analysis was utilized to analyze the problems they encountered.

Research Results

Level of agreement on halal certification practices

In Table 1, majority of the respondents strongly agreed with a mean of 3.59 on the practice which indicates that the establishment has necessary Halal documents such as a letter of intent, BIR registration certificate, company profile, and flowchart of company operation, SEC or DTI registration certificate, environmental compliance certificate, establishment layout, sanitary permit, and list of address of branches or franchises. The second and third practices they strongly agreed with yield a mean of 3.50, indicating that the establishment has a complete and valid list of materials with halal certification and documents including the company name, address of manufacturers, suppliers of ingredients, and products which is to be certified. In unison, the majority of the respondents strongly agreed with a mean of 3.47. These results show that restaurateurs or entrepreneurs know that necessary documents serve as a basis to prove that their establishment is complying with the halal certification practices.

Halal Documentation	Mean	Verbal
		Interpretation

The establishment has necessary Halal documents such as a letter of intent, BIR registration certificate, company profile, and flowchart of company operation, SEC or DTI registration certificate, environmental compliance certificate, establishment layout, sanitary permit, and list of address of branches or franchises.	3.59	Strongly agree
The documents indicate the company name, address of manufacturers, suppliers of ingredients, and products, which is to be certified.	3.5	Strongly agree
The establishment has a complete and valid list of materials with Halal Certification.	3.5	Strongly agree
The documents available explain the manufacturing processes and procedures of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) and good manufacturing practices (GMP).	3.45	Strongly agree
The establishment has an inventory of the materials in the warehouse or storage area.	3.41	Strongly agree
The establishment's documents undergo and comply with the Philippine government's standards under the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos and Halal certifying bodies.	3.36	Strongly agree
Composite mean	3.47	Strongly agree

Table 1: Level of agreement on halal documentation.

Note: Legend: 4.00-3.26=Strongly Agree; 3.25-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.76=Disagree; and 1.74-1.00=Strongly disagree.

Table 2 presents the level of agreement on management responsibility. Results indicate that the respondents strongly agreed with a mean of 3.68 that the management takes responsibility for the activities and behaviors performed by the employees. Second is the management ensuring sufficient resources (*i.e.*, human resources, facility, financial, and infrastructure) are provided with a mean of 3.59. The managers, chefs, waiters, and other staff are well-trained on halal principles. Its applications were the third management responsibility, which they strongly agreed with a mean of 3.55.

Regarding the overall agreement on management responsibility, the respondents strongly agreed with a mean of 3.45. These results indicate that most Restaurant Managers or Officers-in-charge strongly agreed that as the management takes responsibility for the employees' activities and behaviors, one should be a leader and a role model to their subordinates and know the right and wrongdoings inside the workplace. The management is responsible for providing oversight for customers regarding all the supply chain elements, from sourcing the raw material, handling, processing, storing, transporting, preparing, and delivering the food to the customers. Halal restaurant managers must be fully aware that the whole process in the premise must be following the judgments of Halal and Haram Marzuki, Hall and Ballantine.

Management Responsibility	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The management takes responsibility for the activities and behaviors performed by the employees.	3.68	Strongly agree
The management ensures sufficient resources (<i>i.e.</i> , manpower, facility, financial, and infrastructure) are provided.	3.59	Strongly agree
The managers, chefs, waiters, and other staff are well-trained in Halal principles and their applications.	3.55	Strongly agree
The management has an internal halal management committee to supervise and ensure effective implementation of the internal halal control system, conform to halal standards and practices, and consistent in providing quality products and services.	3.41	Strongly agree

The management hired a minimum of two Muslim staff as halal assurance officer to monitor the compliance to the Philippine national standards and adherence to halal assurance system.	3.27	Strongly agree
The management requires halal assurance officer to undergo training on Halal auditing and monitoring from any concerned institution duly recognized by a certifying body accredited by the Philippine accreditation bureau under the department of trade and industry.	3.18	agree
composite mean	3.45	Strongly agree

Table 2: Level of agreement on management responsibility.

Note: Legend: 4.00-3.26=Strongly Agree; 3.25-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.76=Disagree; and 1.74-1.00=Strongly disagree.

As shown in Table 3, the respondents strongly agreed with the mean of 3.68 on the practice wherein the establishment's suppliers and ingredients are halal certified or certifiable. The second raw material practice with the same mean of 3.64 (strongly agreed) shows that the

halal animal-based ingredients used for food preparation of the establishment are following Shariah law and the processed materials, additives, and other products used are Halal or Halal certified. Generally, the majority of the respondents strongly agreed on the raw materials with a mean of 3.56. These indicate that having Halal certified suppliers and ingredients is the most crucial component when running a Halal business. Having certified suppliers and ingredients would provide higher customer confidence.

Raw Materials	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The suppliers and ingredients are Halal certified or certifiable.	3.68	Strongly agree
The animal-based ingredients used for food preparation are considered Halal or have been slaughtered according to Shariah law.	3.64	Strongly agree
Processed materials, additives, and other products used are Halal or Halal Certified.	3.64	Strongly agree
There is an adequate number of ingredients from Halal certified suppliers.	3.55	Strongly agree
All Fresh fish and seafood, including shellfish in the food processing or preparation, require Halal approval by a trained Halal supervisor before being labeled Halal.	3.50	Strongly agree
There is a separate storage for Halal and Haram ingredients.	3.36	Strongly agree
Composite mean	3.56	Strongly agree

Table 3: Level of agreement on raw materials.

Note:Legend:4.00-3.26=Strongly agree;3.25-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.76=Disagree; and 1.74-1.00=Strongly Disagree

Results showed in Table 4 revealed that the respondents strongly agreed with a mean of 3.91 that an establishment's location attracts Muslim and non-Muslim customers to dine, followed by the accessibility of the establishment and suitability of area and hygiene

for the restaurant which both strongly agreed with a mean of 3.77. The establishment is situated on a safe area is the third practice in terms of location, which they strongly agreed with, obtaining a mean of 3.59. In terms of the overall agreement on location, the respondents strongly agreed with a mean of 3.61. These results emphasize that the establishment's location was taken into consideration by the owners or managers to be open to both Muslim and Non-Muslim consumers and be suitable for their desired dining experience.

Location	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The location of the establishment attracts Muslim and non-Muslim customers to dine	3.91	Strongly agree

The establishment is located in the most accessible location	3.77	Strongly agree
The area is suitable and hygienic for the restaurant	3.77	Strongly agree
The establishment is situated in a safe area	3.59	Strongly agree
The establishment is situated in the most sustainable location	3.36	Strongly agree
The establishment has a distance of a 5-kilometer radius from waste disposal areas	3.27	Strongly agree
Composite Mean	3.61	Strongly agree

Table 4: Level of agreement on location.

Note: Legend: 4.00-3.26=Strongly agree; 3.25-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.76=Disagree; and 1.74-1.00=Strongly disagree.

In Table 5, the level of agreement on the exterior area strongly agreed that the signage of the establishment catches the attention of customers at 3.68. The second data on the exterior area strongly agreed with a mean of 3.55, which indicates that a good exterior area influences customers' decision to visit the restaurant. Lastly, the

respondents also strongly agreed to establish a welcoming feel and design related to the cuisine being practiced with a mean of 3.45. Generally, most of the respondents strongly agreed on the practices in the exterior area with a mean of 3.52. The signage of an establishment is an essential aspect for influencing the customer decision in visiting, and with that signage, a potential customer should be able to determine what type of establishment or what kind of cuisines they are offering.

Exterior Area	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The signage of the establishment easily catches the attention of customers	3.68	Strongly agree
The establishment has a good exterior area that influences the customer's decision to visit the premise	3.55	Strongly agree
The establishment has a welcoming feel, and the design is concerning the cuisine that is being practiced	3.45	Strongly agree
The establishment is located in a clean surrounding and conforms to Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP)	3.41	Strongly agree
The establishment displays its Halal logo outside the premise for the customers to know and be confident in patronizing their food	3.41	Strongly agree
Composite mean	3.52	Strongly agree

Table 5: Level of agreement on exterior area.

Note: Legend: 4.00-3.26=Strongly agree; 3.25-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.76=Disagree; and 1.74-1.00=Strongly disagree.

It is revealed that halal restaurants strongly agreed that their establishment regulates proper process flow, proper employee flow, good hygiene, and safety practices with a mean of 3.73. The establishment follows this provides safety features including fire exit signs, fire exits, fire extinguisher, emergency lights, and other safety

equipment, and the other is that the ventilation, drainage and lighting system of the whole establishment is in an excellent condition wherein the respondents both agreed with a mean of 3.64. In terms of over-all agreement on-premise, the respondents strongly agreed with a mean of 3.56. Table 6 highlights that the establishments know the importance of having a proper process flow, employee flow, and they are trained on the proper hygiene and safety practices in connection with Halal as being healthy and safe.

Premise	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The establishment regulates proper process flow, proper employee flow, good hygiene, and safety practices	3.73	Strongly agree

The ventilation, drainage, and lighting system of the whole establishment are in good condition	3.64	Strongly agree
The establishment provides safety features, including fire exit signs, fire exits, fire extinguishers, emergency lights, and other safety equipment	3.64	Strongly agree
The establishment ensures protection against pest infestation and crosses contamination during operations	3.55	Strongly agree
The premise has a separate crate for each type of ingredient	3.55	Strongly agree
The establishment is free from any pests or insects within the vicinity of the restaurant	3.27	Strongly agree
Composite Mean	3.56	Strongly agree

Table 6: Level of agreement on premise.

Note: Legend: 4.00-3.26=Strongly agree; 3.25-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.76=Disagree; and 1.74-1.00=Strongly disagree.

The level of agreement of the respondents on facilities, as seen in Table 7, signifies that the respondents strongly agreed with the mean of 3.64 on the practice wherein the cleanliness and sanitation of the restroom, dining area, kitchen, and storage area are well-maintained. The second practice, which indicates that the wet and dry ingredients

are separated and well-arranged in a systematized storage room, and the third practice which specifies that the storage for halal ingredients and materials are separated from haram ingredients and materials both resulted with a strongly agreed mark with a mean of 3.59. Generally, most of the respondents strongly agreed on the practices on facilities with a mean of 3.49, which considers the restaurant's cleanliness. Not only ritually clean but also hygienically clean. They should be free from any contamination. The ritual cleansing process shall adhere if the facilities are contaminated with materials classified as najis.

Facilities	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The cleanliness and sanitation of the restroom, dining area, kitchen, and storage area are well-maintained	3.64	Strongly agree
The wet and dry ingredients are separated and well-arranged in a systematized storage room.	3.59	Strongly Agree
The storage for Halal ingredients and materials are separated from Haram ingredients and materials	3.59	Strongly Agree
The water supply, storage, freezing room, sinks, toilets, and transportation are free from najis or filth	3.50	Strongly Agree
The establishment has a parking area allotted for the suppliers and manufacturers in receiving the supplies	3.09	Agree
Composite Mean	3.49	Strongly Agree

Table 7: Level of agreement on facilities.

Note: Legend: 4.00-3.26=Strongly agree; 3.25-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.76=Disagree; and 1.74-1.00=Strongly disagree.

In Table 8, the respondents strongly agreed that the tools and equipment used are clean and free from najis or filth with a mean of 3.82. The second practice states that the respondents strongly agreed that the tools and equipment are appropriate for the preparation of Halal dishes, with a mean of 3.73; followed by the practice indicating

that the establishment restricts using Haram utensils, plates and equipment in Halal dishes with a mean of 3.45 (strongly agree). Generally, most of the respondents strongly agreed on the practices on tools and equipment with a mean of 3.37. Table 8 highlights that the basic rule of a kitchen is that the tools and equipment should be free from najis and filth. It is essential to consider the sanitation of every utensil to be used to avoid the possibility of contamination with Non-halal or haram utensils.

Tools and Equipment	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The tools and equipment used are clean and free from najis or filth	3.82	Strongly agree
The tools and equipment are appropriate for the preparation of Halal dishes	3.73	Strongly agree
The establishment restricts using Haram utensils, plates, and equipment in Halal dishes	3.45	Strongly agree
The tools and equipment used for Halal food are separated from Haram tools and equipment and have their storage area	3.14	Agree
The packaging materials used for the takeout meals are from Halal certified sources	3.09	Agree
The utensils, plates, and equipment have Halal labels/ color-coded	3.00	Agree
Composite Mean	3.37	Strongly agree

Table 8: Level of agreement on tools and equipment.

Note: Legend: 4.00-3.26=Strongly agree; 3.25-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.76=Disagree; and 1.74-1.00=Strongly disagree.

Based on the statistics presented in Table 9, the respondents strongly agreed that the employees are aware of the code of ethics and good hygiene Practices and the other is that the employees are modest and display leadership both with a mean of 3.82. The third practice indicates that the employees are culturally fit and confident in

providing quality service with a mean of 3.73 (strongly agree). The respondents strongly agreed with a mean of 3.64 that the employees are well-trained in terms of giving service to the guest in the dining area. The majority of the respondents strongly agreed on the practices on staff characteristics with a mean of 3.68 in which the respondents know that staff with good manners is needed to attract more customers. The managers strive to cater to their fellow Muslims and Non-Muslims and serve high-quality Halal products. With these qualities on hand, they know that they will attract more customers.

Staff Characteristics	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The employees are aware of the code of ethics and good hygiene practices.	3.82	Strongly agree
The employees are modest and display leadership.	3.82	Strongly agree
The employees are culturally fit and confident in providing quality service.	3.73	Strongly agree
The employees are well-trained in terms of giving service to the guest in the dining area.	3.64	Strongly agree
The employees practice courteousness in attending guest requests and complaints.	3.59	Strongly agree
The employees are action-oriented and detail-oriented.	3.50	Strongly agree
Composite mean	3.68	Strongly agree

Table 9: Level of agreement on staff characteristics.

Note: Legend: 4.00-3.26=Strongly agree; 3.25-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.76=Disagree; and 1.74-1.00=Strongly disagree.

The majority of the respondents in Table 10 strongly agreed with a mean of 3.77 about a situation wherein an open wound and ill staff could affect the product quality and not allow it to work until he recovers. The second practice indicates that decent and clean clothing are worn by anyone who enters the production area with a mean of 3.64 (strongly agree). Moreover, the respondents strongly agreed with the practice that smoking, eating, and drinking are not allowed in the

production area with a mean of 3.59. To conclude this table, the majority of the respondents strongly agreed with a mean of 3.46. They were stating that in any Halal restaurant, a staff who is ill or has an open wound should not be allowed to report to work because this may lead to cross-contamination and may also affect the quality of service that a restaurant is giving. The staff would not be focused and will be inattentive to guests' needs. Managers should take this matter seriously. Staff highly appreciates good management practices such as better communication between staff and the management and being involved in decision making.

Staff Policy	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Open wound and ill staff that could affect the product quality is not allowed to work until recovers.	3.77	Strongly agree
Decent and clean clothing are worn by anyone who enters the production area.	3.64	Strongly agree
Smoking, eating, and drinking are not allowed in the production area.	3.59	Strongly agree
The staff is required to have an annual vaccination at any health center approved by the government and has medical certificates before starting work in the establishment.	3.55	Strongly agree
All staff is only allowed to be at their specific or assigned area.	3.45	Strongly agree
The staff wears proper uniforms with Halal logos.	2.77	Agree
Composite Mean	3.46	Strongly agree

Table 10: Level of agreement on staff policy.

Note:Legend: 4.00-3.26=Strongly agree;3.25-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.76=Disagree; and 1.74-1.00=Strongly disagree.

Most of the respondents represented in Table 11 strongly agreed with a mean of 3.77, that the chemical used for pest control is handled only by the pest controller and not by any staff to avoid cross-contamination. The three practices which indicate that establishment regulates pest control to keep the excellent condition of the premise,

the establishment monitors and checks the variety of chemicals used to control and kill insects and rodents, and the boxes of the ingredients are carefully checked and monitored by the hygiene department, all resulting with a mean of 3.73 (strongly agree). As a whole, majority of respondents strongly agreed with a mean of 3.72 in which an individual who is not trained or familiar with the chemicals used for pest control should not handle those things simply because he or she does not know how to use them and it might just harm someone else or him/herself as well.

Pest Control	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The chemical used for pest control is handled only by the pest controller and not by any staff to avoid cross-contamination	3.77	Strongly agree
The establishment regulates pest control to keep the good condition of the premise	3.73	Strongly agree
The establishment monitors and checks the variety of chemicals used to control and kill insects and rodents	3.73	Strongly agree
The establishment conducts quarterly pest control on the premise	3.68	Strongly agree
The pest control team always checks the storage area	3.68	Strongly agree
The boxes of the ingredients are carefully checked and monitored by the hygiene department	3.73	Strongly agree
Sub mean	3.72	Strongly agree

Table 11: Level of agreement on pest control.

Note: Legend: 4.00-3.26=Strongly agree;3.25-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.76=Disagree; and 1.74-1.00=Strongly disagree.

Results in Table 12 present that respondents strongly agreed with a mean of 3.77 that the establishment practices proper waste management. The second practice specifies that the establishment manages the waste disposal area at the premise to achieve efficient

cost savings and better financial return, and the other is that harmful chemical substances are correctly stored and away from Halal food both with a mean of 3.73 (strongly agree). These results show that the Halal restaurants adhere and comply with sanitation procedures based on the Halal certification practices in terms of waste management. According to Abdullah and Yusoff (2012), halal certification and green waste management are interrelated as the former focuses more on the Islamic principles, hygienic, quality, and safety aspects of food

and its preparation, while the latter focuses on reducing the negative impact of human activities to the environment.

Waste Management	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
The establishment practices good waste management	3.77	Strongly agree
The establishment manages the waste disposal area at the premise to achieve efficient cost savings and better financial returns	3.73	Strongly agree
Harmful chemical substances are stored properly and away from Halal food	3.73	Strongly agree
The establishment implements measurements in managing the waste effectively	3.68	Strongly agree
Sub mean	3.73	Strongly agree

Table 12: Level of agreement on waste management.

Note: Legend: 4.00-3.26=Strongly Agree;3.25-2.51=Agree; 2.50-1.76=Disagree.

Problems encountered by Halal Restaurants

The following are the problems faced by halal restaurants in terms of halal certification Practices:

Halal documentation: Some existing restaurants are unaware of their certifying body. Some also stated that they have a hard time processing the requirements for the establishment's required documents.

Management responsibility: There is a lack of employees. One establishment said that they lack specifically the chief cook.

Raw materials: An insufficient number of Halal-certified suppliers, which leads to a shortage of halal ingredients to be used, only added to the challenges encountered.

Location: The locations of some restaurants are inaccessible for most of their customers. Their area is also polluted by the jeepneys strolling around the streets, and there are also children loitering.

Exterior area: Some of their signages are too small, and there are no Halal logos displayed in some establishments. The exterior area is unappealing, but they have no other choice.

Premise: There are no problems encountered in terms of premise.

Facilities: There is a high cost of maintenance, especially on power. The space for the parking area is restrictive and is incapable of accommodating several customers.

Tools and equipment: There are no problems encountered in terms of tools and equipment.

Staff characteristics: The staff improperly attends the customers' needs, and they cannot handle customer complaints well.

Staff policy: Some of the staff are always absent, and they tend to request cash advancement. Most of the staff as well does not have any Halal logo on their uniform.

Pest control: Some of the chemicals used for pest control are ineffective. The nearby premises do not have a system for pest control, which leads to the infiltration of pests and insects in their

establishment. The drainage system outside also becomes the source of pests.

Waste management: Sometimes garbage trucks tend to forget to pass by their establishments, which lead to tons of garbage left unattended.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The respondents strongly agreed that they are practicing the standards set in terms of Halal documentation, management responsibility, raw materials, location, exterior area, premises, facilities, tools and equipment, staff characteristics, staff policy, pest control, and waste management while some of the problems they face are unawareness of the existing certifying bodies in the Philippines, lack of workforce, insufficient halal suppliers, inaccessible locations, unnoticeable signages, and high equipment maintenance cost.

In order to improve the operational practices of the halal restaurant, it is highly recommended to comply with the Halal Documentation such as a letter of intent, BIR registration certificate, company profile, and flowchart of company operation, SEC or DTI registration certificate, environmental compliance certificate, establishment layout, sanitary permit, and lists of addresses of branches or franchises which are very much crucial for an establishment's existence. Based on the results and the actual observation, most restaurants do not have an internal halal committee or officers. Restaurant managers strongly agreed to have an internal halal committee, for they are the ones who will observe and ensure effective implementation of the internal halal control system for the establishment to provide quality products and services. In terms of management responsibility, restaurant managers should orient their employees regarding Halal certification's legitimate purpose. During the data gathering, some employees, even their managers, are unaware of the real meaning and purpose of the certificate. They thought that it is just a standard certificate wherein it is stated there that the establishment is a Halal restaurant. Most of them consider that having such a certificate simply means that their restaurant's products observe the absence of pork, carrion, and blood on their menu. There should be a halal logo displayed within the establishment's entrance, and their certification should be placed at the cashier area or somewhere that could be easily seen. Managers should also conduct a self-evaluation for the entire team, for it will measure their competencies about their halal practices in the restaurant.

Restaurants should also have a hygiene officer who would inspect per month because, in some restaurants, other employees do not comply with the safety and sanitation rules, are not in their proper uniform, and do not observe personal hygiene.

The restaurant managers should also provide uniforms with halal logos for the staff. Another factor for a successful halal restaurant business is hiring a majority of Muslim employees, especially the cooks because they are familiar with the proper ways when it comes to halal food and practices; in terms of Raw Materials, managing a Halal restaurant must conform to the Shariah law: ingredients, food processes, practices, and raw materials, specifically suppliers. Establishments may try "Pure Halal Meat shop" by Halal International chamber of commerce and industries of the Philippines or other Halal suppliers certified by a certifying body accredited by the national commission on Muslim Filipino. From the business name "Pure Halal Meat Shop," there is no doubt that this supplier conforms to the Shariah law, and it is wholly sanitized; in terms of premise, restaurants should be consistent, and their establishments must have basic safety features like fire extinguishers, emergency lights, and fire exit signs. Managers should also consider the improvement of their ventilation system and conduct maintenance checks annually; having a proper ventilation system replenishes the air inside the restaurant, specifically in the kitchen. In accommodating a large number of customers, restaurants may allot a separate area designated for parking. In staff policy and characteristics, the staff must not only practice proper hygiene and be aware of the code of ethics. They need to practice courtesy in attending guest requests and complaints. Moreover, lastly, be well-trained in terms of giving service to the guests in the dining area. In terms of Facilities, a great restaurant must not only have legal documents, responsible management, a hygiene officer, a well-oriented staff regarding halal certification, and staff who practices good hygiene but be equipped with proper facilities that would make the business operate well. Facilities should be monitored, such as water supply, storage, freezing room, sinks, toilets, and transportation, free from najis or filth; for the tools and equipment, they must also be free from filth, and once in a Halal kitchen, kitchen tools must be appropriately segregated according to its use. Besides, respondents strongly agreed that tools and equipment must strictly be segregated from those used for non-Halal ingredients, which are for sanitation purposes.

When operating a business, specifically a restaurant business, as an owner, one must also consider the establishment's waste management, for this will reflect on the establishments' reputation on sanitation. No customer wants to see plastics of garbage piled up in front of the restaurant, and it is not enticing to the guests. During the fieldwork,

the researchers observed that most restaurants in Quiapo, Manila, have their trash of plastics piled up in front of their restaurant.

Although the halal restaurants practice the standards operating procedures, it is still recommended that the government agencies involved in the halal industry in the country to intensify its halal certification campaign to encourage more restaurants to be certified to enhance their existing capabilities to improve their operations.

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