

Validation of Halal Food Products Based on Islamic Consumerism Concept

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Abstract

The Industrial Revolution 5.0 era today witnesses rapid growth in consumerism discourse in line with global, socio-cultural, and socio-economic changes. Alongside the rapid economic progress, the halal sector and products have become catalysts in boosting the country's economic power. This is because there is a noticeable increase in demand for '*halalan tayyiban*' characterized food over time to meet the needs of Islamic countries as well as non-Islamic countries. It should be realized that the understanding of consumerism not only revolves around goods but also encompasses non-material dimensions such as services and management. The increasing complexity of supply and demand is being intensely debated in the discourse on halal food product consumerism. Today's innovative food production and biotechnology transformations have an impact on current consumerism developments, leading to the emergence of new issues within the framework of Islamic consumerism. Therefore, this study aims to identify the parameters of Islamic consumerism in validating the halal status of food products produced. This study combines qualitative and quantitative methods to obtain more comprehensive and holistic findings. Content analysis was conducted alongside semi-structured interviews and later analyzed using Nvivo14 software. Two (2) forms of Islamic consumerism parameters were identified, namely (1) Elements of *Daruriyyat al Khams* (consisting of five items: preservation of religion, life, intellect, progeny, and wealth), and (2) Dimension of Islamic Consumerism (consisting of halal, *tayyib*, Sharia-compliant innovation, and Islamic ecosystem). It is hoped that the validation parameters of halal food products based on the concept of Islamic consumerism resulting from this study

are not merely a reaction to unraveling current consumerism dilemmas, but should be adopted as principles and practices that should be internalized by Muslims.

Keywords: Islamic Consumerism, Halal Products, *Maqasid Daruriyyah*, Innovation, Shariah Compliance

Introduction

Today, the attraction to the halal market transcends cultural and religious boundaries, making halal not only a religious guideline but an inclusive standard aligned with ethical and healthy lifestyles for diverse populations worldwide. This evolution demonstrates the dynamic nature of the halal phenomenon, transforming it into a global concept that goes beyond traditional considerations (such as animal slaughter, absence of alcohol, and pork-free) that impact various aspects of contemporary life. The halal products and industry are now inundated with bursts of innovation and technological sophistication. The phenomenon of halal products and industries has expanded beyond its original connotations, encompassing the entire production and service processes. This halal dimension is broadened to include aspects of content materials, production supply chains, processing, sales, to the entire process from production chains, production processes, packaging, serving, storage, marketing, to sales processes. All of these are closely related to consumerism issues that are the responsibility of all parties to ensure compliance with Shariah requirements.

Research Background

The issue of halal food and nutrition has become a heated debate both domestically and globally with the rapid development of technology and innovation in the food industry today. Among the innovations hotly debated in the food and medical industries is the use of alcohol as an additive in foods such as cakes, seafood dishes, and the like to extend the product's shelf life and enhance its quality (Latifah, 2018). Furthermore, transglutaminase enzymes and plasma powder are among the food additives sourced from blood, with high solubility and emulsifying abilities, low viscosity, and the ability to form strong, flexible gels that retain these characteristics. Additionally, they can enhance the texture of processed food products such as meat and fish (CAP, 2006).

Consumer concerns about the halal and safety of products in the market are heightened with the advent of GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms). GMOs are among the new products created through genetic engineering. GMO foods produce plants and animals with genetically modified structures and edits made in laboratories to incorporate genes from other organisms. This technology can overcome basic genetic barriers that occur not only between species but also across species between animals and plants (Hashim, 2019). Currently, a hotly debated issue is the production of cultured meat. Cultured meat is meat produced outside the animal body using tissue culture techniques, either through tissue culture or stem cells taken from animals. The tissue or stem cells are then placed in a suitable medium to allow them to proliferate and grow into meat. The medium contains all the nutrients and energy required by the tissue or stem cells to continue multiplying (Ramli, 2018).

In the context of Malaysia, various efforts have been implemented by the Malaysian Government to boost productivity and sustainability in agriculture through the generation and transfer of modern, efficient, and cost-effective technologies. Through Government Agencies such as the Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI),

the development of capabilities, the establishment of planting and farming systems have now progressed towards commercialization of technology, comprehensive quality management, and a culture of excellence to achieve recognition at both national and international levels. MARDI aims to enhance productivity in the crop, food, and livestock subsectors through research innovation, generation, and application of new or modern technologies towards greater competitiveness and sustainability. The following are some of the initiatives undertaken by MARDI (2023):

1. Hybrid rice production processes to produce high-quality and high-standard rice plants by crossbreeding two suitable species of rice adapted to weather and humidity conditions.
2. Production of fruit juices such as pineapple, mangosteen peel, and Sarawak golden eggplant, rich in vitamins and nutrients. For instance, pineapple juice has been found to reduce inflammation and body inflammation and has the potential to reduce cholesterol levels.
3. Research on animals for higher quality and safe food for humans. For example, the use of valid assessment kits for kelulut honey for the purpose of producing genuine kelulut honey. The uniqueness of kelulut honey is the presence of a new type of glucose called trehalulose, which is only found in certain plants.

Higher Education Institutions in this country also play a role in driving the development of halal food products. Concerted efforts are being made to assist communities through the transfer of knowledge and expertise in entrepreneurship and commercialization of innovative products resulting from the research of competent researchers. The establishment of the Malaysian Halal Consortium is evidence of the commitment of HEIs in this country through the synergy of four (4) halal research institutes at the University of Malaya, International Islamic University, Universiti Putra Malaysia, and Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (Utusan Malaysia, 2017). Most recently, the establishment of the Innovative Food Processing Center owned by Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT Website, January 31, 2024). The efforts of the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) in developing the Integrated Halal Information System are seen as empowering the halal industry in this country. Utilizing digital advantages, this halal database and verification system will offer information consistency, allowing easy and quick access to any halal certification information. This RM3.4 million system will benefit consumers in verifying halal certification for products, whether domestic or foreign (Muhamed, 2021).

The rapid pace of innovative and technological products in the food industry demands thorough research to ensure the public interest as consumers is safeguarded in line with the spirit of Shariah.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative method to obtain more comprehensive and holistic findings. Through literature review, content analysis is conducted to gather accurate and current facts discussed by past and contemporary Islamic scholars regarding the examined issues. Additionally, a semi-structured interview approach is carried out with stakeholders and authorities to acquire precise information regarding the procedures, processes, and implementation of fatwa issuance. The data obtained is then analyzed using Nvivo14 software.

Findings and Research Discussion

1. Principles of Islamic Consumerism in the Halal Food Industry

The halal industry, particularly the food industry, has become a major factor in boosting the economic power of nations. This is because the demand for food characterized by 'halalan tayyiban' has been increasing over time. It has been reported that by 2023, the global Muslim population has rapidly grown to exceed 2 billion (Munsif, 2023). Moreover, the annual increase in the halal market is now growing significantly, estimated to reach around 25% (Timan, 2011). The food and beverage (F&B) industry specifically represents the largest sector in the halal industry, contributing about 56% of the total spending of global Muslim populations (Noor, 2017). This phenomenon receives widespread support not only in countries with Muslim-majority populations but also in minority Muslim countries. As a result, various halal food products based on innovation and modern technology are rapidly expanding to meet global demand. This scenario undoubtedly raises issues regarding the consumerism of halal products, which are believed to adhere to the requirements of Islamic Shariah.

Consumerism can be understood literally as: (1) "people who use goods, services, or natural gifts for their satisfaction and livelihood"; (2) "someone who acquires or uses goods or services of the kind typically obtained for personal, household, and household use"; (3) "individuals who buy, or are given, use, maintain, dispose of products and services in their final form, in their efforts to achieve maximum satisfaction with limited income" (Yahya, 2002).

Meanwhile, the concept of halal originates from the Arabic root word ḥalla, yaḥillu, ḥillān, which means permissible, i.e., something that is allowed by Allah and not prohibited. (Ibn Manẓūr, 2003). Abu Zuhrah (1987) defines halal as something that is permitted or allowed by Shariah with the lifting or removal of prohibition from it. On the other hand, tayyib refers to qualities that are accepted by instinct, clean, beneficial, free from doubt, and do not bring any harm (al-Zuhaili, 2002; Ibn Kathir, 1999; Ibn 'Ashur, 1984). Among the Quranic verses that demand the consumption of halal and tayyib food is the saying of Allah SWT:

"O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy."
(Al-Baqarah: 168)

As for forbidden or muharramat food, it is prohibited in Islam. Muharramat (from its singular form muḥarram) originates from the word al-ḥaram, the opposite of halal, meaning something that is forbidden and prohibited to do, whether based on Shariah commands, laws, or human reasoning (Abu al-Baqa, n.d.; Abu Jib, 1998). In terms of terminology, haram is described as something prohibited by Shariah (Al-Zuhaili, 1997) or anything that Shariah explicitly prohibits from doing (Khallaf, n.d.; Abu Zuhrah, 1987). Essentially, everything prohibited by Shariah is deemed to bring harm and detriment. This becomes a principle in Islamic jurisprudence regarding the prohibition of something based on the capacity of harm it brings or the absence of existing benefits (Al-Anbari, 1997). It is clear here that the halal and haram aspects of food are viewed from the Shariah objective (Maqasid Shariah) perspective

that upholds human benefits and protects them from harm as consumers. The human benefit or interest that becomes the Shariah objective is divided into three types:

1. *Maslahah Ḍaruriyyat*: basic necessities of human life that must be fulfilled.
2. *Maslahah Ḥajjiyyat*: human needs that make their lives run smoothly without complications and difficulties.
3. *Maslahah Taḥsiniyyat*: complementary and supplementary needs that make human life more orderly and comfortable.

Under *Maslahah Ḍaruriyyat*, five (5) basic objectives are known as *Daruriyyat al-Khams*, aimed at preserving and protecting the basic aspects of human life. Without these five basic things, the quality of human life will be affected and lead to destruction (Zuhdi & Paizah, 2004). These five basic things include the preservation and protection of (1) religion, (2) life, (3) intellect, (4) progeny, and (5) wealth.

Therefore, in the development of innovative products and food, the elements of *Daruriyyat al-Khams* need to be examined and referred to as the main guidelines to ensure that the products meet halal standards in Islam. The halal status of food can be evaluated from four aspects (Faidah, 2017):

1. Halal from the perspective of the source of acquisition, whether from a halal source or otherwise.
2. Halal from the perspective of the original law of a substance or material in Shariah. There are Shariah evidence establishing the halal or haram status. For example, the prohibition of alcohol, pork, and blood is found in Shariah evidence.
3. Halal from the perspective of the production or innovation process. This includes mixing processes, preservation, pasteurization, freezing, and modification without mixing with substances that are haram according to Shariah.
4. Halal from the perspective of product maintenance processes. This includes packaging and storage processes that must comply with Shariah-established quality standards and ensure halal. *Tayyib* criteria must be considered from a quality perspective to avoid harm and danger.

2. Paradigm shift in the dynamic interpretation of the scope of *Daruriyyat al-Khams*
Maqasid Daruriyyah represents the fundamental and obligatory needs for human life to ensure stability and survival. Without upholding and protecting these demands, humans would live amidst chaos and destruction. The scholars of the past divided *Daruriyyat al-Khams* into five elements: (1) religion, (2) life, (3) intellect, (4) progeny, and (5) wealth (al-Ghazali, 1983; Anwar, 2021).

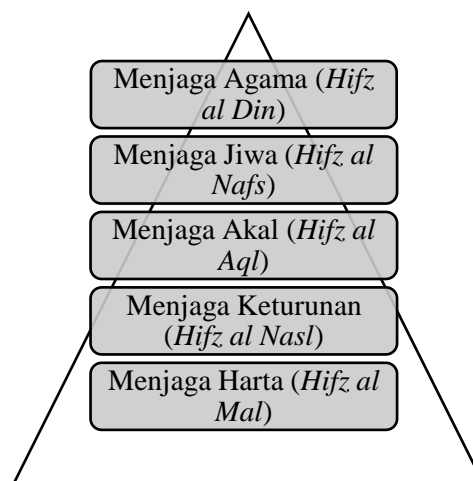


Figure 1: Daruriyyat al-Khams

However, contemporary scholars' thinking has expanded and shifted paradigms towards the traditional dimensions of Daruriyyat al-Khams, which provided dimensions of protection and preservation, to a more inclusive dimension of development and human rights. The difference between the traditional and contemporary dimensions of Daruriyyat al-Khams is as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1

Comparison of Daruriyyat al-Khams Dimensions (Awda, 2008)

No.	Classic Maqasid Dimension	Contemporary Maqasid Dimension
0	Dimensional Objective: 1. Preservation 2. Protection	Dimensional Objective: 1. Development 2. Human Right
1.	Preserving religion (hifz al din)	Preserving, protecting, and respecting the freedom of religion or belief
2.	Preserving life (hifz al nafs)	Preserving and protecting human rights
3.	Preserving intellect (hifz al aql)	Enhancing critical thinking, scientific research, prioritizing the pursuit of knowledge
4.	Preserving progeny (hifz al nasl)	Focusing on family protection and a greater concern for the family institution
	Preserving Honor (hifz al ird)	Protection of honor, human dignity, and human rights
5.	Preserving wealth (hifz al mal)	Prioritizing social concern, paying attention to economic development and growth, promoting human welfare, and bridging the gap between rich and poor

In the context of innovation and technology in food products, the application of the Daruriyyat al-Khams dimensions is not limited to the dimensions stated by the ancient scholars of preserving and protecting, but also applies the dimensions developed by contemporary scholars based on current realities. The following are examples of explanations of these dimensions:

1. Preserving Religion (Hifz al-Din). Innovative food products must ensure and certify their halal status and cleanliness from a Shariah perspective.
2. Preserving Life (Hifz al-Nafs). Innovative products must ensure consumer safety, both physically and health-wise. Moreover, innovative products must meet human nutritional needs and not pose health risks, taking into account potential health risks arising from their consumption.
3. Preserving Intellect (Hifz al-Aql). Innovations must consider the positive and negative effects on brain health and the psychology of the food consumed. Products must undergo research and studies on the content and effects of using specific ingredients.
4. Preserving Progeny (Hifz al-Nasl). Innovative products and technologies must consider the long-term effects of consuming such innovative foods on reproductive health and the well-being of future generations exposed to prohibited foods.
5. Preserving Wealth (Hifz al-Mal). The use of technology in food innovation must consider resource efficiency and environmental sustainability, while avoiding economic harm to producers or consumers.

3. Interview Analysis

Three agencies were interviewed using semi-structured interview method, and the interview results were transcribed and analyzed. The three agencies involved are as listed in Table 2.

Table 2

Agencies involved as research informants

Bil	Nama Agensi
1	Institut Penyelidikan Produk Halal, Universiti Putra Malaysia
2	Institut Penyelidikan dan Kemajuan Pertanian Malaysia (MARDI), Kementerian Pertanian dan Keterjaminan Makanan
3	Mardhiyyah Hotel & Suite, Shah Alam (Hotel Patuh Syariah).

Through the analysis of interviews conducted, two constructs contributing to the formation of validation parameters for halal food products based on the concept of Islamic Consumerism were identified: (1) the elements of Daruriyyat al-Khams and (2) the dimensions of Islamic Consumerism. Islamic Consumerism can be implemented when there is enforcement and monitoring of halal product innovations. The Daruriyyat al-Khams elements studied are (1) Religion, (2) Life, (3) Intellect, (4) Lineage, and (5) Property. Meanwhile, the Dimensions of Islamic Consumerism successfully identified four agreed-upon items: (1) Halal, (2) Tayyib, (3) Shariah-Compliant Innovation, and (4) Islamic Ecosystem. As for the forms of enforcement and monitoring that need to be implemented under Islamic Consumerism for innovative food products, they include (1) Inspection & Testing, (2) Halal Verification, and (3) Management and Systems. The depiction of the three constructs and indicators resulting from the conducted interviews is as shown in Figure 2.

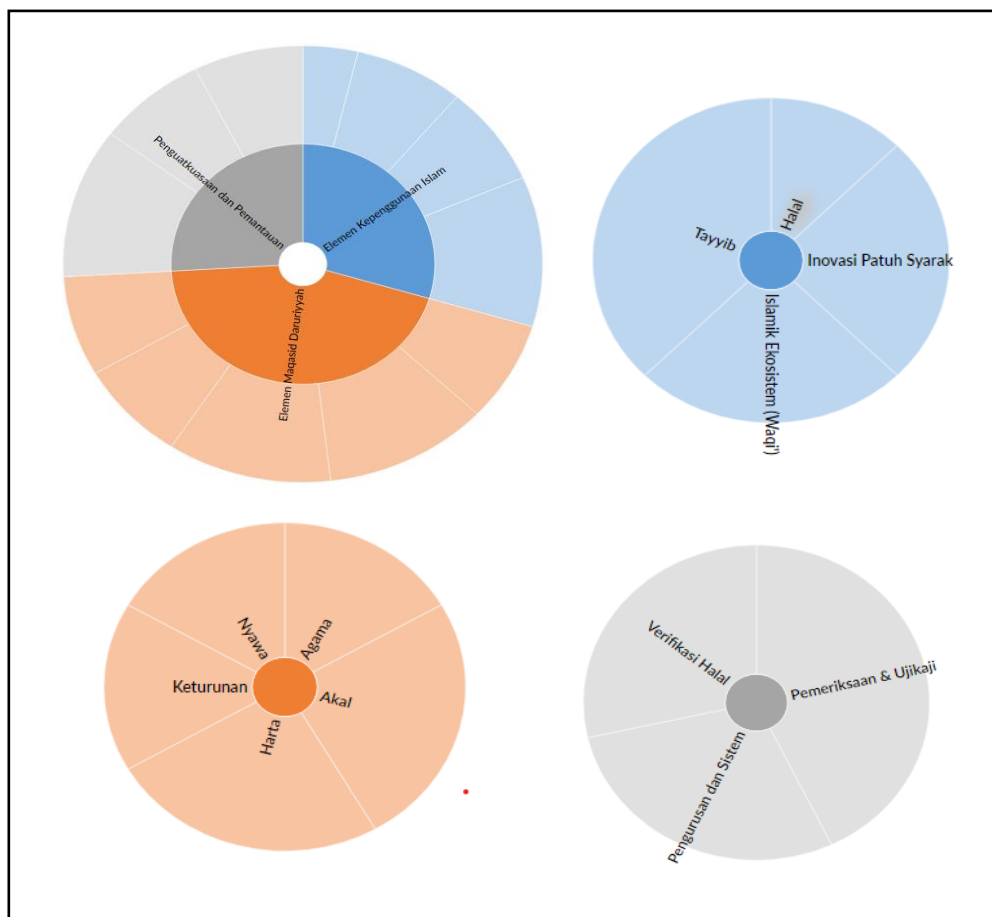


Figure 2: Constructs and Indicators of the Dimensions of Islamic Consumerism

From the perspective of the Maqasid Daruriyyah elements, the three respondents believe that safeguarding and protecting the Daruriyyat al-Khams, namely religion, life, intellect, progeny, and wealth, are objectives in the production of halal food products. It is clear from the conducted interviews that the Daruriyyat al-Khams dimension needs to be expanded to a broader dimension (Table 1) to meet the demands of contemporary reality. Below are some statements issued by the three informants.

Informant 3: Safeguarding and protecting religion through compliance with Shariah law.

Translate: "If issues arise with raw material suppliers having a crisis or withdrawing their halal status, Mardhiyyah Hotel will take steps to stop and eliminate raw materials from those suppliers."

Informant 1: Safeguarding and protecting lives by ensuring the quality and safety of products.

Translate: "Conducting tests on animals can also produce higher quality and safer food research for humans."

Informant 2: Safeguarding and protecting intellect by multiplying scientific research.

Translate: "Protein sources like chicken have been studied to determine whether the chicken is classified as dead due to slaughter or dead due to drowning."

Informant 3: Safeguarding and protecting progeny by focusing on human rights.

Translate: "Food suppliers can maximize halal products to ensure that halal raw materials are sufficient to meet the needs of the increasing Muslim population."

Informant 1: Safeguarding and protecting wealth by socio-economic concern.

Translate: "There are various other fruit innovations carried out by MARDI to reduce imported food ingredients."

The study findings also prove the existence of four important indicators that must exist in Islamic consumerism, namely (1) Halal, (2) Tayyib, (3) Shariah-Compliant Innovation, and (4) Islamic Ecosystem (Waqi'). Below are some statements issued by the three informants.

Informant 2: Halal.

Translate: "Commercially mass-produced chicken has a greater potential halal status, considering the recognition given by JAKIM, which is more trusted."

Informant 3: Tayyib.

Translate: "The care of halal raw materials should also be carried out by evaluating and examining purchased raw materials."

Informant 1: Shariah-Compliant Innovation.

Translate: "Innovations like this not only make it easier for people to consume but also, with its high vitamin and nutrient content, attract people's interest to buy it."

Informant 3: Islamic Ecosystem.

Translate: "Mardhiyyah Hotel takes the initiative to search for and switch to suppliers that are more trusted if there is any doubt about the sweet syrup distributor."

The study findings also demonstrate the need for enforcement and monitoring under the dimension of Islamic consumerism to ensure holistic realization in accordance with Islamic law. Enforcement and monitoring elements need to be established through (1) Inspection and Testing, (2) Halal Verification, and (3) Management and System. Below are some statements issued by the three informants.

Informant 3: Inspection and Testing.

Translate: "The use of imported raw materials such as sweet syrup requires stricter assessment."

Informant 2: Halal Verification.

Translate: "Animals requiring slaughter require verification from the veterinary department."

Informant 3: Management and System.

Translate: "Mardhiyyah Hotel has ensured with confidence that no questionable food items are allowed to be brought into the kitchen area by implementing the Halal Verification Form system."

Conclusion

Facing the modern era presents a significant challenge to Muslims to ensure that every aspect of their lives does not deviate from the true teachings of Islamic Shariah. Indeed, it demands a sense of concern and vigilance towards every new discovery or production in the name of innovative products and technology, especially in the realm of food and nutrition. Islamic scholars need to proactively engage in research to provide accurate answers to the community regarding the halal status of newly produced innovative products. Legal solutions based on the strength of Shariah arguments and supported by scientific validity are hoped to address the concerns and anxieties of the community as consumers. It is important to remember that the consumption of food has a significant relationship with an individual's faith, as explained by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This forms the basis for the meticulousness in choosing and consuming halal food, which is highly emphasized in Islamic law. The increase in faith and the acceptance of one's prayers are also influenced by the consumption of halal food. Consuming haram food also invites darkness into the heart.

Today, we witness that the halal industry sector, especially the food industry, has become a major factor in boosting economic power. In fact, food engineering has shown rapid development since its establishment as an individual research area in the 1970s, and even the 21st-century food industry faces new challenges that are more competitive. However, issues related to halal food are still not fully resolved because the production, processing, sale, and consumption chain are controlled by various legal and policy sources. Today's consumers are aware of the nutritional aspects obtained and tend to choose food with 'halal' and 'tayyib' statuses. The pressure and demands for halal food are no longer solely focused on Muslim consumers but also involve non-Muslim groups. Therefore, this study aims to develop a comprehensive model that contributes to halal policies in Malaysia under the portfolio of the Department of Standards Malaysia (DSM), Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation. Moreover, the research findings can serve as a guide to agencies involved in the development of halal innovation in Malaysia, such as the Halal Policy and Management Laboratory Center, National Halal Product Research Institute, Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) Standards, ISO9000 Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP), General Guidelines (MS 1500:2009), and others. Furthermore, it supports the government's efforts to become a global halal hub in food consumption by providing significant input towards strengthening the Malaysian Halal Standard (MS 1500:2009).

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