

Halal Studies In Universities: A Way Forward To Manage Halal Business

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Abstract

The understanding of Halal among muslims has been limited to a mere permissible food theory for many decades. Today, this simple theory couldn't longer work with the large expansion of the halal realm as it enters new attractive global business. Halal brand products have grown in many areas of non-food business such as banking, pharmaceutical, trading, tourism, logistics and many more, which require strong halal knowledge management in tandem. Halal studies in universities seem as the right platform to prepare qualified people in the halal industries worldwide. This paper highlights visionary role played by educational institutions in countries like Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia, and other countries in building platform for comprehensive halal knowledge. Halal Product Research Institute of University Putra Malaysia and Halal Industry Research Centre of International Islamic University Malaysia for instance has embarked into strengthening halal knowledge through their courses, research, collaboration, product development and commercialization. In due discussion, maiden curriculum design for halal lead by the Universiti Malaysia Pahang will also be revealed. In another development, Malaysia has been leading the world for halal affairs since 2006 when it established the first world conference on halal called World Halal Forum (WHF) and latter in 2010 extended it to World Halal Research (WHR). European countries and United State of America has also given significant attention to halal studies or market especially for business purposes. In conclusion, with the halal annual transaction reaching nearly USD3 trillion now, halal definitely will soar into big business in the future and halal studies may undoubtedly be one of the most sought after course and universities' next course of action.

Keywords: Halal knowledge, business, halal industries, curriculum design, halal studies

Introduction to Fundamental Halal

Halal is an Arabic word (حلال) literally means lawful or permitted¹ and this specific Islamic term is well known by muslim people especially for food products and edible animal. In contrast, the haram (حرام) refers to unlawful or forbidden food and it is sinful to consume if taken with knowledge. For muslims, they would normally know that any food including beverages they consume must not come from haram sources such as pork and dog and thier by-products, alcohol, intoxicants, blood and blood by-products². On the other hand, the animal that can be prepared for meat supply must be properly slaughtered and strictly adhered to Islamic guidelines.³ Halal animals which are slaughtered not in the name of Allah is categorically unlawful like those dead animal, the carnivorous and birds of prey. Based on the Quran, muslim are required to take only lawful (halal) and good (tayyib) food only for their meal⁴.

The fundamental understanding of halal food has undoubtedly help the muslim consumers in traditional food consumption especially in the muslim countries. However, the situation has drastically changed in the last few decades as muslim consumers take halal into greater awareness. The issue of halal food has arisen due to massive production of food and by products in the muslim market that require serious attention to the contents and ingredients of food⁵. The latter has dragged the halal issue from the simple undestanding to the complicated one. There has been alot of cases where unlawful (haram) food were served to the muslim in the eateries and shops. Many canned food for instance are obviously containing ingredients which are unknown halal status and sometimes questionable⁶.

Halal has also made a way to new realm of non-food products such as cosmetics, personal care products, pharmaceuticals and food ingredients⁷. In addition, it also enters service industries such as banking, tourism, logistics, animal husbandry, fashion, tourism and the like. To ensure these sectors remain in the halal enclave, and handled by qualified personnel, the knowledge of halal must be academically designed and the right place is in the higher learning instutions such as universities and colleges.

Halal Industry and Awareness

Global halal industry has consistently been on the rise in many parts of the world at least for a decade already. The market for halal food around the globe is getting bigger by years. There is

¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halal>

² <http://www.islamforlife.co.uk/haram%20list.htm>

³ Halal Slaughter Guidelines has been mostly standardized by leading halal affairs organizations in Malaysia namely JAKIM and Department of Standard Malaysia (SIRIM), Indonesia, Thailand, Brunei, International Halal Integrity Alliance (IHI) and others. <http://hdcglobal.com>

⁴ Quran 1:172

⁵ Utusan Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur 15 Julai 2005

⁶ <http://www.islamforlife.co.uk/haram%20list.htm>

⁷ Malaysian Standard MS 2200: PART 1:2008, Malaysian Standard MS 1500:2009 and Malaysian Standard MS 1514:2009 Copyright 2009

an emerging interest among Muslim consumers everywhere to consume halal products and this becomes a good sign for global halal market. A research conducted by the World Halal Secretariat estimated that the global Halal products market is estimated at a whopping USD 2.3 trillion (not including banking), which USD1.4 trillion (67 per cent) of this market represents food and beverages. Pharmaceuticals on the other hand make up USD506 billion (22 per cent), with cosmetics and personal care amounting to USD230 billion.⁸ A worldwide published report by A.T. Kearney (2007) revealed the following: “Since Muslims are the fastest growing consumer segment in the world, any company that is not considering how to serve them is missing a significant opportunity to affect both its top and bottom line growth. Although there are political and social pitfalls to consider, the opportunity is so vast and far-reaching that they greatly outweigh the risk. With many of the world’s consumer segments reaching a saturation point, the Muslim consumer is fast becoming a new outlet to build a base for future growth”⁹.

From this big growth scenario in halal business, it seems that many food and non-food including cosmetics, logistic, pharmaceutical and relevant industries will go halal in the future. This means more human capital will be needed to administer this business in the global stage. It is estimated that total Muslims in Europe will reach 54.7 million in 2010 and the average level of awareness in the world is in increase. For example, meat and meat-based awareness level is 94-98% while processed food is about 40-64%. Pharmaceuticals and cosmetics and personal care are starting to increase between 18-30% awareness level¹⁰.

Halal affairs is now a global news everywhere, in muslim countries and non-muslim countries alike. Browsing the latest global development in halal, Japan has begun processing halal meat of reputable Kobe-beef to Middle East market while all Brunei eateries are now to be halal certified to maintain their business.¹¹ Ugandan government under its Halal Bureau has introduced Halal certification for local food and beverages manufacturer. New Malaysian Standard of halal pharmaceutical products (MS 2424:2020 (P) which was released recently, has become the world’s first incorporated general guidelines of its kind.¹² Prior to this, Department of Standards Malaysia has gazetted MS1500:2009 and MS2200:2008 e.g. Malaysian Protocol For The Halal Meat Production. More halal improved products are being introduced in the Malaysia market following the ongoing demand. The latest example is the country’s first Takaful insurance that pays at the early stages of various critical illness.¹³

Various countries has taken halal into greater concern by preparing more platform for meeting, discussion and trade missions¹⁴. Malaysia for instance, has inaugurated international meeting on halal with the holding of the first World Halal Forum (WHF)¹⁵ in 2006 and later extended to

⁸ Halal Journal, Issue July+Aug 2010, p. 27.

⁹ In Executive Review 2010 World Halal Forum, Feature article, p.13 .

¹⁰ In Executive Review 2010 World Halal Forum, Feature article, p.15 .

¹¹ Brudirect, 12 March 2011.

¹² Bernama, 2 March 2011.

¹³ Known as i-Early Payout CriticalCare Rider (i-EPPC). It pays 10-20% costs at early benign stage, based on severity.

¹⁴ OIC Today, vol 27/2010 p. 15.

¹⁵ WHF is a global conference dedicated to halal affairs with carrying various themes effecting muslim and non-muslim stakeholders around the world,. Started in 2006 in Kuala Lumpur, (special WHF also held in the Hague

World Halal Research (WHR). Business platforms for halal products are also promoted annually in Malaysian International Halal Showcase funded by Halal Development Corporation (HDC) Malaysia. Thailand and Brunei are also in the halal streamline with their comprehensive commitment to halal affairs by conducting more halal exhibitions and fairs as well as halal research, development and commercialization. Turkey, Pakistan, Iran and the Gulf countries are heavily involved in the halal mainstream business especially in meat supplies and food production. A special website search engine based on halal assessment called 'imhalal'¹⁶, the first in the world, has been developed for internet users to identify whether the access to any website or its content is permissible (halal) or otherwise (haram).

On the other hands, non muslim countries such as Rusia, Colombia, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, UK and America are gradually recognizing halal as niche economic sector which is expected to be a great market force in the coming decades. More food outlets are servicing halal in the UK¹⁷ while some universities refectories in the US started servicing halal food for their muslim consumers.

Halal Studies

As an academic term, halal studies can be referred to scientific knowledge with multidisciplinary program which is based on halal concept or halal framework. The term has yet to be established in the academic world as a body of knowledge but the specific demand for halal knowledge will definitely make the way for this field of study to grow in the near future. The need for good understanding of halal has become a big topic in the business world as a result of expansion of rapid halal business in the world.

As halal moves from its traditional understanding to the modern one due to booming halal business, a special attention has to be given to this area of study. Halal from its simple knowledge in the past could not cope well with the advance technology in food production today. Other areas of non-food production has been following the trend and obviously become more complicated than ever before. How can industry players manage their halal business efficiently and keep this niche industry in a right path?. The answer lies in the specific body of knowledge called Halal Studies that can be taught properly in the higher learning institution. A day course in halal slaughter or halal packaging or marketing are no longer adequate to propel halal business to greater high. To be succesful in halal commercial arena is not as simple as selling or trading halal

2009 and London 2010) it is scheduled annually and run by Kasehdia Sdn Bhd. Malaysia. Since 2010, the WHF is extended with World Halal Research (WHR) Conference and Malaysian International Halal Showcase (MIHAS).

¹⁶ **I'mHalal.com** is a search engine designed in respect of the culture of muslims.^[2] The search engines algorithm differs from regular search engines because the relevancy of the results are based on the culture, mindset and lifestyle of Muslims. The engine doesn't index content such as pornography, nudity, cartoons of Muhammad or anything else that might be "haram" according to the Sharia. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ImHalal>

¹⁷ Daily Mail of London (Sept 2008) reported that many British supermarkets, fast-food chains, hospitals, schools, pubs and sporting arenas such as Wembley Stadium, were serving some halal meat and poultry without notifying the public. A large share of meat sold in Britain comes from New Zealand, where the most slaughterhouses have practiced halal slaughter since many years back.

food, but more it goes deeper into its elements of intrinsic values of currencies, halal transaction and good business practices. Halal is now definitely growing and “We need to think beyond industries and move to the larger realm of a Halal economy...a value-based economy rooted in fairness, integrity and trust”.¹⁸

Academia as Halal Players

Before a decade ago, Islamic matters was the prevailing discussions and topics in the mainstream media and academic world especially in Malaysia. In the education sectors, a lot of academic programmes offered courses related to Islamic studies in business, banking, administration, education and so forth. But when halal affairs has taken the centrestage in the recent time, halal has become the mainstream with increasing support from the public. Halal by default, has multifaceted spectrum encompassing various sectors in the peoples dealings especially for muslim community at the beginning¹⁹.

In line with this increasing halal awareness, the halal industry and halal business players have to be supported by good manpower and resources who have robust knowledge in halal. Simple halal knowledge seems inadequate in the real halal business. When this is the current need for supporting comprehensive knowledge of halal, the higher education institutions (HEI) are the right venue for such demand. Some leading world HEI and halal-focused institutions involved in halal education, research and commercialization as in the Table 1:

Table 1
Halal Institutions involved in halal affairs

No	Institutions	Offer
1	Halal Product Research Institute, Putra University Malaysia ²⁰	Master's degree and Doctorate specializing in Halal
2	Halal Research and Management (IHRAM) Islamic Science University of Malaysia (USIM)	Executive course for undergraduate in halal affairs and research in halal products in collaboration with Department of Islamic Development (JAKIM)
3	Halal Development Corporation, Malaysia	Halal promotion in collaboration with Malaysian HEI's
4	International Islamic University, Malaysia	Advanced research and development in Halal product
5	Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP)	Bachelor in Halal Administration and

¹⁸ Keynote Address by the PM of Malaysia in the WHF 2010.

¹⁹ <http://www.ehalal.org/concepthalal.html>

²⁰ Halal Products Research Institute (HPRI) has been established officially on 1 July 2006 resulting from restructuring Halal Food Institute to undertake research and development (R & D) in the halal products industry. The establishment of the Halal Products Research Institute serves as a one-stop center or 'one-stop center' approach through a comprehensive, balanced and multifaceted to study all aspects of halal products in national and global levels.

		Management (Curriculum development stage) / Halal research
6	Central Laboratory and Scientific Information Center for Halal Food Development (CELSIC), Chulalongkorn University (Halal Science Center(HSC) Thailand ²¹	Comprehensive studies in Halal products, research and commercialization. A well known laboratory for its reputation.
7	Colombia Halal Institute, Colombia	Comprehensive studies in Halal products, research and commercialization
8	Halal Industry Research Centre, Pakistan	Centre involved in Halal products analysis and research.
9	Halal Science Centre Institut Pertanian Bogor Indonesia ²²	Comprehensive studies in Halal products, research and commercialization. A reputable institution for halal research

#The list above is somehow not inclusive due to limited source of reference.

University Malaysia Pahang's (UMP) Halal Curriculum

UMP takes its maiden step to bring forward the halal affairs into the academic circle for good knowledge management structure. Lead by the Department of Human Science UMP, the faculty has established special academic task force to develop a programme so called Bachelor of Science in Halal Administration. The UMP will also offer Halal Studies in its post graduate programmes in due time. By establishing this specific degree in halal administration, the halal industries will be able to better manage their halal business with knowledgeable manpower. Halal and non-halal factories in the near future for example can employ these graduates to help them in establishing halal management system in house according to the halal standard. Private, government and state agencies can also benefit from the newly existed halal management expert group in the market. In the latest development in Malaysia, the Halal Act²³ will be introduced in 2011 and this means stricter regulations will be imposed and the halal companies can take this opportunity to employ experts in halal to manage their halal business.

²¹ Central Laboratory and Scientific Information Center for Halal Food Development (Halal-CELSIC) at the Faculty of the Allied Health Science, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, is the core Halal science network of the country. This Halal-CELSIC, to date, has expanded its linkages in more than 10 laboratories based in several universities and institutions throughout the country. Halal-CELSIC, later, in collaboration with scientists from several faculties of Chulalongkorn University succeedingly concurred to establish the newly formed "Halal Science Center" (HSC) of Chulalongkorn University.

²² IPB has established Halal Science Centre in 2008 to support halal inspection and certification processes based on valid laboratory analysis results, to establish research collaborations for developing detection methods of haram contaminants/materials, and to provide scientific informations regarding haram materials in national and international level.

²³ The Government is to introduce the Halal Act next year which, among others, only recognises Halal certificates and logos issued by the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM). Halal Act will be imposing severe penalties to manufacturers who fail to comply. Currently, offences related to Halal certification and logo is governed under the Trade Description Act 1972 - Trade Description (Use of Expression Halal) Order 1975 with punishment of up to RM200,000 fine or 2 years imprisonment or both.

This specially developed halal programme for UMP combined the two important element of study e.g the fundamental knowledge of halal and its science and business components applications. This is to ensure that students graduated from this programme have the knowledge capacity in dealing with halal bussiness in the future. The proposed curriculum design is expected to be introduced later this year once endorsed by the Ministry of higher education. Details as shown in the Table 2;

Table 2

Programme content of Bachelor of Halal Administration Curriculum, UMP as proposed)

Faculty's Core Subjects	Programme's Core Subjects
Introduction to Human Capital Development,	Introduction to Science of Halal
Introduction to Communication and Technology	Introduction to Shariah
Professional Ethics	Islamic Principles
Research Methodology	Islamic Mu'amalah
Statistics for Human Sciences	Halal Business
Creative Thinking and Problem Solving	Usul Fiqh
Final Year Project I	Halal Resources
Industrial Training	Islamic Banking and Finance
Industrial Training Report	Food Safety & Hygiene
	Qawaid Fiqhiyyah (Legal Maxims)
	Global Halal
	Halal Manufacturing
	Halal Product and Services
	Halal Guidelines and Database/ Information System Design for Halal
	Biotechnology
	Halal Institutions
	Fiqh Halal wa Haram
	Halal Assurance System
	Halal Audit System and Consultancy
	Legal Issues in Halal

On other development, in support of Malaysian government efforts to produce halal vaccines under the initiative of 9Bio, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) and the Finlay Institute of Cuba created history by involving in high impact research o halal products with the signing of the agreement for the collaboration and joint production of the halal tetravalent meningococcal ACW135Y vaccine²⁴. The government support the effort with the establishment of RM350 mil Institute for Natural Product, Vaccines and Biologicals.²⁵ HPRI of University Putra Malaysia has successfully developed a special device that can detect the pig DNA in the food contents. This device called HaFYS – Portable Porcine DNA Detector²⁶, could be the first in the world, and the most sought after device for pork content in food for now.

²⁴ Standards and Quality News, Jul-August 2004

²⁵ New Straits Times, Malaysia 2006-09-05, The Halal Journal Issue 35 July+Aug 2010

²⁶ The HaFYS Porcine DNA Test kit is an innovative technology product that can detect the existence of porcine DNA in food and non-food products using portable Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR). The easy-to-operate portable PCR machine performs the sample digestion/DNA extraction, PCR reaction and detection at the press of one button. The Executive Review 2010, The 5th World Halal Forum.

UMP has also launched its first Central Laboratory that can be used to promote more research in halal products as well as contribute more advanced research in halal studies. Students who follow the programme will be involved in carrying out more scientific experiment to enrich their halal understanding.

Conclusion

Halal business for muslims is considered a religious commitment in the first place. The stronger the commitment the bigger the efforts needed for making halal at the business centrestage. According to reports by WHF and WHR, the coming decades will see continuous mushrooming of halal businesses around the globe. Many new business sectors, one after another, be it small or big, are trying hard to be in halal niche haven that have been enjoying good return of investment. As halal goes to its greater height and more complex, the business must be managed properly and according to halal guidelines in every aspects of business. Halal management has to be taught to prepare resourceful persons in the field to strengthen the halal knowledge in business.

Halal needs advanced studies to cope with the demand of halal business stakeholders. The lack of structured halal knowledge in the business world may give bad impact in the long term and this must be tackled now.

Halal studies will have to be catalyst and booster for halal business. Higher education institutions all over the world must take the responsibility to prepare adequate manpower for halal industries. Halal studies in the form of bachelor, master and doctoral studies specialised in halal must be developed and introduced in the near future. University and industry must work hand in hand to promote halal as a brand of distinction and quality. This asset class will become lifestyle choice in the future.

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