

Strategy Implementation for Food Auditing and it's Impact: Case Study of Food Industry in Brunei

Nurhidayat Hj Abdullah¹, Dr Junaid M Shaikh^{2*}, Dr. Muhammad Salahuddin³, Nur Farhana Marjuni⁴

^{1,2,4}UTB School of Business, Universiti Teknologi Brunei, Jalan Tungku Link, Gadong, BE1410, Brunei Darussalam; E-mail: junaid9nine@gmail.com

³REPAS Hospital and Research Centre, Brunei Darussalam

Abstracts: Food industry auditing and obtaining certifications in health and safety manner is as important in any businesses especially Food services. A label that denotes adherence to Islamic values is the Halal certification. All businesses, including those in the food industry, should apply for this certification. In many countries, the halal food sector is expanding quickly. This research paper aims to ensure the food and safety standards through the implementation of Halal certification in Brunei Darussalam. The theoretical framework includes the meaning of food auditing, definition of Halal as well as summary of the application process of Halal certificate in Brunei. Case study method was used in this paper and qualitative approach was implemented. In order to accomplish the objectives of the research, qualitative data collection method is chosen by means of secondary data collection and interview session. Interview session with the restaurant owner is carried out with the purpose of achieving detailed expectations and perceptions towards the implementation of Halal certificate in the restaurant. In the future, it is hoped that more studies relating Halal certificate and health safety standards can be reviewed upon.

Keywords: Food, Industry, Halal Certificate, Audit, Impact And Strategy.

1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of food safety and quality audits are widely acknowledged in any business industries especially the food industry. The role of food auditing in the food industry has enabled both the public and private food sectors to develop numerous food safety and quality standards. Nowadays, food safety and quality audits are an essential part of the food industry and is due to numerous reasons mainly to obtain certifications and to evaluate the condition of premises and products. Additionally, the subject matter of Halal industry has now become the most growing industries globally which drives the emerging number of Muslim populations to increase ethical consumption especially during the Covid-19 pandemic (Rahman et al., 2017; Elarag, 2016). Therefore, the main focus of this paper includes one of the many certifications in the food industry auditing mainly Halal certification which focuses on the food safety and quality standards in the food premises and the products it used that meet the requirements of Islamic law. Halal food and Muslim are connected as Muslim custom and religion is governed by the guidelines and rules based on Islam. Since the 1990s, food restrictions, or halal, have become more significant in Muslim cultures as a result of the interaction between Islam, politics, and the market. (Fischer, 2011). It is seen that not only Muslim countries, other countries with Muslim populations have also been affected by the impact of Halal products (A.A Normat et al, 2008). Moreover, Muslim and non-Muslim consumers alike are becoming more knowledgeable about and interested in buying Halal items because these goods adhere to additional safety and quality standards that make it clear how food should be prepared, how it should be consumed, and how it should be handled (J. G. Vargas-Hernandez et al, 2010).

1.1. Research Background

The Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA) emphasizes more on the mandatory participation of the micro and small businesses, such as restaurants, to apply for the Halal Certificates and Halal Logo, which is why the most recent implementation of the Halal Certificate and Halal Logo (Amendment) Order of 2017 brings the topic of halal to light. This paper investigates how halal is regulated and practiced in Brunei, using a case study of a restaurant in Brunei Darussalam. The study in Brunei Darussalam is appropriate as there is limited research study that focuses

on Brunei Darussalam itself in terms of the safety and health accreditation especially in the interest of food services and its premises. The case study chosen for this paper is in the area of food services which is Aminah Arif Restaurant based in Brunei-Muara District in Brunei Darussalam. The restaurant is being chosen amongst other restaurants is because Aminah Arif Restaurant is a Muslim-owned restaurants that has been established and operated for over 25 years and the restaurant has a reputation of being the top-preferred restaurant by local consumers due to its traditional Malay food.

1.2. Research Purpose

The total performance of a restaurant can be attributed to a variety of elements, including management of finances, human resources, marketing tactics, food quality, and many other elements. A general safety plan and certification should also be taken into account. Many industries, including the restaurant business, hold the false belief that only large corporations should take a thorough look at their safety and health plan while smaller enterprises should not since the dangers are negligible and unimportant (Silliker, 2019). Therefore, the purpose of this research is to ensure the food safety and health through the implementation of Halal certification especially in food industry. Moreover, this research paper aims to become a guideline and an example where it is shown that Halal certification is a benchmark for the food industry in Brunei Darussalam and in addition to deepen the understanding of the process in applying Halal certification.

1.3. Research Questions And Limitations

In order to achieve the research purpose, the significant research questions include:

Main research question:

What are the safety and health impact of Halal Certification in Aminah Arif Restaurant?

Sub-questions:

1. What are the general Health and Safety standards and guidelines in the restaurant?
2. What are the perspective of consumers regarding Halal certificate and Halal logo in a restaurant?
3. How is the process of the Halal certification application?

While doing some research, it is found that limitations of this study include lack of previous research studies on the topic that is centered in Brunei Darussalam. When there is relatable topic with plenty of information, the paper is still an ongoing progress and have not been verified. It is also observed that most restaurants in Brunei Darussalam are reluctant to disclose information related to legal issues resulting in giving out superficial information that is impractical to the study even though it has been explained in the beginning that all information will be confidential and for educational use only.

The significance of this research is to protect the image of the food industry especially restaurants in Brunei Darussalam as well as increasing customer satisfaction and improve services standards. This study will provide a guide for the restaurants in Brunei and to fill the gap of future studies.

1.4. Restaurant Background

Aminah Arif Restaurant is a family dining restaurant based in Brunei Darussalam which was founded by a local woman with deep cultural background. The first restaurant was established in 1996 with less than 8 employees altogether when the restaurant first operated. Nowadays, they opened up to 4 branches throughout Brunei-Muara district. The restaurant is known for its authentic traditional food and cuisine of Brunei Darussalam such as Ambuyat and kueh-mueh. There is over more than 50 choices of food and drinks in the menu which comprises of numerous ingredients. As their targeted customers are mainly focused on families, the restaurant has designed their menu in sets and bigger portions which gives more uniqueness to the restaurant.

Aminah Arif restaurant has set their goals towards the involvement of the satisfaction of their customers as well as gratification of the employees. Moreover, the restaurant puts their values in its customers to provide better services and food quality by continuously expanding their effort in adapting and understand the market trends to ensure that the constantly changing demands of the customers are gratified. In addition, it is understood that the employees are essential component of the restaurant as they are the stakeholders that helps to increase profits and productivity of the business. Therefore, the owner of the restaurant manages with the employees by understanding their weakness and strengths, boosting the support for the employees by guiding them, and building their trusts and loyalty to ensure a better workplace environment in the restaurant.

Additionally, Aminah Arif Restaurant is a medium-sized company with the numbers of employees generally increases over the years and operates under guidance and instructions from the owner, managers, and shift leaders. The employees working shifts comprises of two shifts in a working day which are morning shift and evening shift for all operations including front and back services. There is one shift leader in each shift with the tasks of instructing and distributing job duty for other employees and importantly, each shift leader needs to ensure the employees are brief regarding the safety and quality of the food and services. When there are any problems, incidents or accidents arise during work shifts, it is the role of shift leaders to be responsible for reporting to the managers in an instant. Furthermore, the role of the operation manager includes managing the problems arise within the restaurant and the whole operations in the restaurant as well as managing all work staffs including arranging their work schedules. Additionally, the manager is responsible for identifying solutions to the issues that the shift leaders have highlighted. The owner of the restaurant will make the ultimate decisions if the issues are extensive and serious or if the solutions demand financial support.

Thus, it is reasonable enough to mention that the operations of the restaurant are pretty stable and smooth despite the sudden coronavirus pandemic. It is done so by continuously operating and managing the workflow in the front and back services with adaptive, modified health and safety guidelines and daily checklists. The restaurant also carried out general safety guidelines from the Ministry of Health (MOH) with the objective of ensuring the health and safety of customers and employees, in addition to ensuring the growth of the restaurant.

In addition, the owner herself is a Muslim abiding under the command of Allah SWT and thus, this strengthens the need for implementation of Halal certificate in the restaurant. Throughout years of operations, she considers herself and the restaurant being blessed with smooth business operations and plenty of fortune. With this, the owner is dedicated to make continuous contribution especially to the less fortunate and furthermore, to society such as donations. Moreover, it is in her belief that serving customers with pure intention and taking care of her employees such as giving them comfortable places to live are one of her top priorities in life.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Food Health and Safety Audit

The description of a health and safety audit is an expert assessment and a highly structured activity of the health and safety policies, systems and procedures of an organization which aims to document and address the accuracy of the current procedures and systems in delivering the expected outcomes while complying with the laws and regulations appropriately (PHS, 2022). Additionally, the documented reports can be utilized to enhance the food health and safety system by inspecting the situation and level of the system in the food industry as well as weighing the strengths and weakness of the organization (Food Docs, 2022).

It is important to conduct food health and safety audit to obtain certification as information are readily available everywhere resulting in consumers are becoming more health and safety conscious and mindful of the food safety laws and regulations especially in the risk of food contamination and cleanliness of the premise. With this behavior, consumers are more selective in their choices of purchasing and consuming especially in food preparations.

According to Food Docs, in order to maintain standards and continual improvement, a food safety audit is typically performed for the examination and verification of the food safety management systems level of a food sector. There are many reasons to pass the food safety audit, including certification audits for specific food safety

standards, evaluations of the condition of the premises and the performance of the food business, ensuring legal compliance, inspections in response to complaints, regulatory requirements, supplier requests, and advancing business goals (Food Docs, 2022).

There are few types of food safety audit which can be classified as internal or external audits and regulatory agencies in which are conducted according to their aims and objectives. Internal audits can be described as an audit that is inspected and administered by an experienced food safety professionals or by a managing employee within the food premises. In contrast, external audit is often described when audits are conducted by second- or third-party organizations which can be further divided to list of classifications. Firstly, the type of audit is first-party audit or internal audit where it is performed by employees within the organization to evaluate the level of food safety systems and highlighting the improvement points. This type of audit can be done routinely to allow readiness for any external audit and maintain food safety compliance. Secondly is the second-party audit which is also named proprietary audit where the audit is performed by primary organizations in directly related to the business such as supplier verification in which this type of audit is managed by going through the effectiveness of food safety management systems of the suppliers to evaluate the suitability of a new or existing supplier. The third type of audit is the third-party audit, which is conducted when obtaining certification or meeting new food safety requirements. This type of audit is handled by an independent audits and food safety auditing firm and allows them to perform a thorough evaluation of the system and operation status.

2.2. Introduction of Halal

The word "halal" is derived from an Arabic word that signifies "legal and permissible" in accordance with Islamic law, or Syariah. The Hadith-cited teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon Him) and his exemplary behavior are referred to in this. The contrary of Halal is Haram, which meaning banned, according to Roland (1996), who also mentioned this. Halal is a philosophy that urges Muslims to seek out and use goods and services that uphold cleanliness in all facets of their lives. (R.Husain et al, 2012). Halal food means the food are safe for consumption and is guaranteed produced in a clean environment as well as being the next benchmark for quality (W.M.W Omar, 2008). There are numerous Islamic teachings that relate to the Halal notion that are supported by references to the Al-Quran. One verse in Surah Al-Baqarah of the Al-Qur'an implores Muslims to consume only that which is permissible under Islamic law and to abstain from corrupted food that are misdirected by Satan. The meaning of the verse is as follows: "He has forbidden you only the Maitah (dead animal), and blood and the flesh of swine, and that which is slaughtered as a sacrifice for others than Allah (or has been slaughtered for idols, on which Allah's Name has not been mentioned while slaughtering). However, if one is compelled by circumstances without engaging in purposeful disobedience or exceeding proper boundaries, then he is not guilty of sin. Truly, Allah is Oft forgiving Most Merciful" (T.Q Karim, 1987)

Brunei imports the majority of its food items from its neighbors because it is a small yet resource-rich nation. Just under 1% of the nation's GDP comes from the production of food, and B\$143.6 million worth of food products are imported, ranking third in terms of overall imports (DEPD, 2019). In Brunei Darussalam, the Ministry of Religious Affairs is typically in charge of overseeing matters relating to Islam. The Brunei Islamic Religious Council (MUIB) is one Islamic council that falls under this ministry. According to the Islamic Religious Council Act and Kadis Court Cap 77 of Brunei Darussalam law, MUIB is the highest governing body in the country and has the authority to enact laws. It is the duty of this religious council with policy making to determine the direction of Islamic administration in Brunei Darussalam. As stated in Chapter 38 of the Islamic Religious Council and Kadis Courts Cap. 77, the main responsibilities and roles of MUIB are to support and counsel His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam in his capacity as the Head of Religion on all matters pertaining to Islamic affairs. In relation, the Islamic Religious Council has the relative authority to grant halal certification and labels to businesses, restaurants, and slaughterhouses, as well as to grant halal permits and labels to halal food products. MUIB is one reputable council that serves as a halal certification body. Any owner of a business who wants to apply for a halal certificate or halal permit should see it through the Halal Food Control Division (BKMH), which has the authority to handle the certification procedure. MUIB will eventually be the last to approve an application.

Despite the Halal Meat Act, Chapter 183 having been passed since 1999, Brunei implemented the Halal Certificate and Halal Label Order (HCHLO) in 2005. The Standard for Halal Food PBD 24:2007 was introduced in 2007, and ten years later, in 2017, an update to the HCHLO made obtaining the halal certification mandatory for all food and beverage manufacturers in which non-halal restaurants are excluded. The government has supported numerous multi-million-dollar programs in the halal industry to support regional halal industries across the nation. For instance, Ghanim International Corporation received permission from the government's Warifah Holdings to use the emblem of Brunei Halal brand for commercial purposes. (Muhamad et al., 2019).

2.3. Halal Certificate And Halal Label (Amendment) Order, 2017

Obtaining a Halal certificate is a process that ensures that the features and quality of the products and overall businesses for the Muslim population meet the requirements and guidelines of Islamic law. According to Global Negotiator, the Halal certificate is a document that offers its safeguard that the utilization and consumption of goods and services focused for the Muslim population fulfill the standards and guidelines of Islamic law, which are therefore fit for consumption in both Muslim-majority countries and in Western countries. (DIT, 2022).

One strategy for development envisioned in Brunei Vision 2035 is the expansion of the halal food sector and related enterprises. To accomplish this, the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA) implemented the mandatory halal standardization targeted directly at food businesses and restaurants to deliver Muslim customers more confidence to eat in the restaurants. This was accomplished through the Brunei Islamic Religious Council and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) (Al-Haadi, 2010). Despite the unusual goal of safeguarding the religious diet of Muslim population, there have not been many studies on how standardization affects commercial growth, particularly for food suppliers and businesses. Globally, the experiences of conventional food producers have been inconsistent, and small producers frequently bear the burden of compliance.

A development strategy to achieve Brunei Vision 2035 included the introduction of mandatory halal standardization for all food and beverage industries in 2011 (Izni Azalie, 2016). However, the Halal Certificate and Halal Label rules did not begin to focus on Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) until 2017. According to the Halal Certificate and Halal Label (Amendment) Order of 2017, which has been released in May 2017, all Food and Beverage (F&B) business operators, specifically those who create, distribute, and prepare meals, are required to apply for a Halal Certification. Thus, there is a time gap until November 2017. Any enterprises selling consumables to Muslims, including restaurants and home-based food businesses, are subjected to the Halal Certificate and Halal Label (Amendment) Order of 2017 (Azaraimy HH, 2017). Halal certification is divided into two categories: Halal Certificate for people who prepare and serve food in facilities or premises, such as hawker stalls and restaurants, and Halal Permit 9 (Label), which relates to companies that manufacture and produce food for supply (Azli Azney, 2017). There is also a punishment under the current Halal Amendment Order of 2017. If the businesses refuse to comply during the grace period, they will have to pay a \$8000 fine or two years in jail. (Azli Aney, 2017). The 2017 Order makes it mandatory for businesses involved in the preparation, manufacturing, and distribution of food to apply for a halal certificate or halal permit. The 2005 Halal Certificate and Halal Logo Order was initially introduced on a voluntary basis. For the three-year-long Halal Certificate, a fee of \$90 is required. In contrast, business enterprises were initially informed that they would be charged \$50 per product to apply the Halal Permit Label, which is valid for the lifetime of the product unless the preparations and ingredients are changed (Azli Azney, 2017). However, the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA) officially announced new price charges for Halal Certification and Halal Logo in December 2017, in order to take into account the size and scope of businesses that manufacture and produce food for supply.

2.4. Halal Certificate and Logo

The halal mark and halal certificate on a product are signs of its superior quality and assurance. As it has an impact on the consumer, this is crucial in food and beverages industry. The halal certification and halal logo are important to Brunei Darussalam when it comes to products on the market. The Halal Certificate and Halal Label Order of 2005 mandates that the halal mark be displayed on all food and beverage-related items and business premises. The procedure for halal certification in Brunei is governed by the Halal Certificate and Halal Label Order.

The terms of the Order were solely applied to things that were consumed as food and drink up to the most recent revision in May 2018. (Nor 'Adha Abdul Hamid, 2015). A halal certificate is required for commercial establishments like restaurants or eateries, whilst a halal logo is required for products. A Halal Certificate is necessary for companies that prepare food. This is a requirement for restaurants, cafes, food courts, and central kitchens that prepare meals. While halal licenses are only given to food-producing industries. Owners of food businesses in Brunei Darussalam are required to apply for both a halal certificate and a halal logo. The endorsement of non-food items, such as medications, cosmetics, consumables, and services (logistics), is only done voluntarily. According to the requirement by the Order, the owner of the business must appoint a minimum of two (2) Halal Supervisors to certify adherence to the halal standard. The authority restricting the endorsement of this emblem is the most important aspect of the Brunei halal logo. Below are the procedures of halal certification in Brunei as endorsed by Majlis Ugama Islam Brunei.

To recognize the expansion, the Halal Meat Act and its regulations, which were introduced in 1998, are among the earliest pieces of legislation governing halal concerns. The Act's purpose is to control the importation and supply of halal meat, as well as related issues. As the sector developed and attracted the attention of the country, it led to the creation of further regulations to satisfy the needs of the contemporary halal industry. The Public Health (Food Act) 2000 and the Public Health (Food) Regulations (R1, Chapter 182) under the Ministry of Health, the Halal Certificate and Halal Label Order 2005 and the Brunei Darussalam Standard for Halal Food PBD 24:2007 under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and the Public Health (Food) Regulations (R1, Chapter 182) under the Ministry of Health. Regardless of whether they arrived by land, sea, or air, all food goods imported into Brunei Darussalam are required to be registered by the government. This need is required to guarantee that imported and distributed food is both safe to consume and in accordance with laws and regulations. For instance, before a permit for importation is granted, three government organizations must evaluate imported fresh halal meat. These organizations are Animal Quarantine Services from the Ministry of Primary Resources & Tourism, Halal Food Control Division in the Ministry of Religious Affairs, and the Food Safety & Quality Control Division in the Ministry of Health. The Food Safety & Quality Control Division of the Ministry of Health must provide a permit for processed foods like sauces and spices.

Muslim countries use varied approaches to creating their own halal standards because of the various religious and legal understandings of what is halal. The Brunei Darussalam Standard for Halal Food 24:2007 or Piawai Brunei Darussalam 24:2007 is the halal standard that applies to food in that country (PBD 24:2007). As well as adhering to international food standards, this standard is established in accordance with Islamic beliefs. Additionally, the creation of this standard was done in order to clear up any misunderstandings and to prevent any resistance from the general population (Izri Izrein, 2016). All relevant requirements for producing quality and assurance products are contained in PBD 24: 2007. Additionally, a number of documents pertaining to standards and guidelines for the halal industry have been released, including PBD 26:2016 Guidelines for the Manufacture and Handling of Halal Cosmetic Products and GD24:2010 Halal Guidelines for the Manufacture and Handling of Medicines, Traditional Medicines, and Health Supplements. Generally speaking, PBD 24:2007 encompasses all necessary components, from the concept of halal food through the technique of slaughtering. As much as the government placed emphasis on the ingredients in order to adhere to the imposition of ISO, Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), Hazards Analysis Critical Control Points, and Veterinary Health Mark (HACCP). This adherence to industry best practices guarantees the safety of the local halal supply chain (BEBD, n.d) This clearly implies that these publications also function as a manual for potential investors looking to enter the local halal market. Multiple Acts and Orders in Brunei Darussalam also attest to the validity of the registered trademark for halal products, assuring its validity.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

It is often outlined that methods of methodology are vast. However, the main methods of methodology can be determined by these three methods which are qualitative approach, quantitative approach and mixed methods which comprise of both qualitative and quantitative approach (Nartea,2014). The quantitative method can be identified as the method which involves hypopaper testing, studying the relationships among variables by analysis, and investigate the analysis of statistical data (West, 2015). A qualitative method defines as findings that is

descriptive and often conceptual which is collected through the technique of using distributed questionnaires, interviews among participants or documented observations (Ivan, 2022).

A qualitative approach was used in this study as the intent was to learn and understand from the experiences of the participants whereas quantitative method requires data collection involving retrieving numerical statistical data while analyzing and testing hypopaper relationships. Therefore, the quantitative method was ruled out in this study as the method was not fitting. As the mixed method involves both qualitative approach and quantitative approach, the method was not used as it is not suitable where there is quantitative method being included with the addition of using statistical analysis was not an applicable method for the study.

As qualitative approach is used, it is applied to reach the meaning significance of organizational decision-making as viewpoints is observed and learnt from the study. However, there are other qualitative design approaches to be chosen such as ethnography study, narrative study, phenomenology study and case study. It is found out that an ethnography method would not be fitting in this study as it is determined that investigators use ethnography approach to investigate a specific culture by data collection of interviews and observations over a long period of time as this research paper is about food safety practice which is a broad subject and not restricted to a certain culture. Moreover, a narrative design is more inclined towards the interest of a researcher in exploring life stories of a subject (Temba, 2013). Therefore, in this research, narrative design is not fitting as the objective was to search the impact on a restaurant when the owner utilizes with the food safety regulations by obtaining Halal certificate in the restaurant. Another design in a qualitative approach is the phenomenological design where a researcher explores lived experiences of a subject and this design needs to collect an immense sample size to guarantee saturation (Moustakas, 1994). It is therefore decided that phenomenological design will not be fitting in this study. Furthermore, case study design in this qualitative approach is used when researchers need to find answers by engaging with participants to understand their perception in real life situations and events (Yin, 2014). According to Miles (2003), it is more preferable and appropriate to use case studies approach when investigating real-life situations to find solutions to a problem. For these reasons, the methodology used in this paper is a case study approach as this design is more suitable and fitting when acquiring a more thorough insight to perceive the specific research problem.

There are several types of data collection for qualitative approach such as interviews. Interviews are one of the most chosen methods when collecting valid and conclusive information for the purpose of finding solutions to the research questions and objectives. However, there are many different types of interviews. For instance, there are structured interviews, unstructured interviews which can become an in-depth type of interviews and semi-structured interviews. These types of interviews chosen ought to be aligned along with the main objective and the identity of the study (Saunders et al. 2003). It is decided that semi-structured interview is fitting in this research as the type of answers searched includes the opinions and beliefs of the participant whilst discussing freely in line with the prepared questions.

After all preliminary steps are taken to reach the interview session such as reaching and setting a date for the interview, the interview session is set in the main office of the restaurant and overall interview was conducted for 30 to 40 minutes in total. Throughout the interview, it is ensured that Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) guidelines by the Ministry of Health (MOH) was practiced by using face masks and social distancing.

The interview session with the owner will be used to conclude a deeper understanding into their thoughts and obtain extensive perception about health and safety of overall restaurant through the implementation of Brunei Halal certificate and how the Halal certification has an impact to the restaurant. In doing so, this will aid in achieving the main objectives and answering the research questions for this study and resulting in an in-depth version of the implementation of Brunei Halal certificate in the food industry. Moreover, the interview with the owner of the restaurant can gather data to discuss on the importance of Halal certification in other terms such as financials and during critical moments. Based upon the collected information from this session, the paper can build a proper support and frame a guideline for other restaurants to set example to.

While primary information is acquired directly from its original source to allow profound discernment that are pertinent towards a certain research problem, it is believed that more time and cost is needed to precisely answer

the remaining research questions. Therefore, secondary data is being utilized in this study as to have save time and finances. For these reasonings, secondary data is used as data collection method in this study as the data gathered can also be quick and easy to obtained. Secondary data can be accessed and readily available in numerous resources which includes information from online resources, journal articles as well as books. Additionally, it is renowned for its excellent quality, dependability, and comparability due to the fact that it was previously obtained by researchers who are subject-matter experts. A proposal has been made that the research start by gathering secondary data to develop a broad overview of the subject field before moving on to primary data for a more in-depth investigation. Secondary data, on the other hand, may have been gathered initially for reasons unrelated to the goals of the conducted research. Therefore, it is important to examine relevance and make sure the material meets the required dependability of the research's context when determining the terms and concepts that require additional information for the conducted research (Ghauri 2005, 91-105). Thus, part of the study is a combination of gathered collection from visitation of numerous webpages to access data information on Halal certification and its known examples of implementation along with the importance of safety audits in Brunei for restaurants. These data can be used to generally plan out the necessary steps, get ready for the Halal certification procedure and its effects on the case study, and then use that knowledge as a base to evaluate the primary data. In addition, despite the Halal business being one of the most talked-about subjects in recent news and internet articles, it has been discovered that many facts are irrelevant, necessitating caution when choosing which sources to utilize.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this chapter, main findings will be presented which is found relevant to the research questions. Methods used was qualitative approach where semi-structed interviews and secondary research was utilized. From the interview with the owner of the restaurant, insights and expectations on the process of applying Halal certification and implementing the standards and rules set by the Halal auditors can be collected and observed. Health and safety standards as well as goals and measures in the restaurant will be discussed. Limitations on applying the Halal certificate will also be mentioned. Moreover, another aspect which is secondary data collection that focuses on recommended practices and regulations from the authorities involved in the food industry will be reviewed.

4.1 Semi -Structured Interview

Some of the goals for health and safety are defined following a semi-structured conversation with the owner of Aminah Arif Restaurant. The owner of Aminah Arif Restaurant is generally aware of the advantages of implementing halal certification for their business. They are therefore free to support the idea of raising health and safety standards in accordance with Islamic law in order to reduce and manage danger when it arises.

Considering that Aminah Arif Restaurant is a medium-sized company with a staff of between 40 and 50 employees, it is critical to keep employee health risks to a minimum. Since working at a restaurant demands a high degree of expertise and training, it might be challenging to find a replacement if one employee becomes ill. Building a friendly and trustworthy workplace while accelerating business growth is one of the stated goals of Aminah Arif Restaurant. In order to reduce employee turnover, the owner gives occupational health and safety top priority. From the perspective of the owner, the repercussions of the restaurant failing a health and safety audit may include a temporary closure of the restaurant for at least three days and possibly up to a week. The outcomes will result in a significant loss of revenue, and it will be challenging to keep customers from coming to the restaurant when the restaurant closes. The owner believes that having a safety plan and certain certifications, particularly the Halal certificate, are crucial because they will demonstrate to the customers that the restaurant is certified in accordance with Islamic laws and that will give the customers some assurance, which then increases customer retention and loyalty.

Therefore, in accordance to the business owner, there are a total of two audits being assessed in the restaurant. Mainly the food premise inspection audit which is evaluated by Brunei Darussalam Food Authority (BDFa) from the Ministry of Health and another inspection audit by Halal Food Control Division from Ministry of Religious Affairs. Both inspections occurred on separate occasions where the food premise inspection will be done 2 to 3 times yearly while another audit is done for the application of Halal certification. Food premises inspections

are known to be implemented at any time and be done quite routinely. It is a fundamental routine checkup within the restaurant when there is an investigation for food borne disease outbreak and an occasion when there is a public complaint regarding health and food issues in the restaurant. There is a scoring method when the food premises inspections are being evaluated where the restaurant need to score 70% and above for the evaluation to be deemed satisfactory. While 51% to 69% score will be considered unsatisfactory. In this case, the manager of the restaurant will be provided with a counseling session with the authority in order to make room for improvements and the restaurant will be given certain period of time for a chance of rectification. Then, the restaurant will be re-audited to attain a score of 70% and above. However, failure to score the expected 70% or above will lead to the closure of the restaurant and the Licensing Authority will be alerted. In the case when the first inspection occurred and the restaurant has scored 50% and below, it will be considered as very unsatisfactory. This will lead to an immediate order for premise closure and the manager will be given a counseling session with the authority. The restaurant will not be resumed for 3 days until the day of re-inspection of the premise. When the restaurant has scored 70% and above during the re-evaluation, then the restaurant will be deemed satisfactory and allowed to resume business. In the case when the restaurant fails, the premise will remain closed for 7 continuous days. According to the owner of Aminah Arif restaurant, she takes pride in keeping her business reputation and ensures that the restaurant will not score below 70% when there is a food premise inspection. Otherwise, the restaurant will lose its reputation and closure of the restaurant means losses to her business. By maintaining the Health and Safety standards in the restaurant, customers feel assured on the food safety and this increases the satisfaction of customers.

The implementation of Halal certificate is mandatory for all businesses especially restaurants and eateries as the certificate ensures that food and beverages served are 100% halal. A fine of up to BND\$8,000 or/and two years of prison are the applicable penalties for any business that fails to abide with getting the required certificates in their premises. Therefore, Aminah Arif restaurant obliged with the requirements needed in accordance to the government laws. In the perspective of the owner, by getting the Halal certificate, she felt that the restaurant is more organized and hygienic as the certification standards audits the restaurant as a whole, not only the food itself. The certification covers the premises to ensure safety of customers and employees to dine and work in. Moreover, the certification audits the cleanliness of both the employees and the food products including all the ingredients used which benefits both the business and the consumers. The restaurant will undergo several food and premises audits which includes inspections on all their ingredients and products used before they are being officially certified by Halal Food Authority. As most of the Brunei population are Muslims, Halal certification gives the restaurant a label that guarantees the customers that the restaurant strongly abides by the Syariah Law halal guidelines. At the prospect of the owner, by showing the certificate in the restaurant, many locals as well as foreign diners have increased their confidence in dining and purchasing their products which will ultimately increase sales. As many are become aware of the advantages of halal-certified food, most diners preferred to dine in restaurants with Halal certification due to the established quality of food processing and preparation in comparison to the non-halal certified food restaurants.

It is the responsible of the supervisors appointed in the restaurant, by whom are called Halal Food supervisors, to make sure that all employees abide by the standard and procedure guidelines at all times. This will allow the restaurant premises and food quality are always in an excellent condition. Furthermore, it is the responsible of the supervisors to inform all employees when there are changes and adaptation in the standard and procedure guidelines which are usually informed by the owner or the Food Authorities.

When questioned about the flow of application for the Halal certification, the owner admittedly said that it was a bit complicated on her side. This is because they have to go through several government places for the application and there are numerous processes in between the application such as different kinds of documents to be prepared and undated on-site inspection. Each process usually takes time which usually ends up 45 calendar days to complete the whole process. However, this is due to their detailed and thorough inspection for each process. Lastly, the owner of the restaurant strongly suggested that all businesses and restaurants should adapt this procedure as in her opinion, Halal certification is a whole package when it comes to regulations in businesses and customers.

4.2 SECONDARY DATA COLLECTION

As a Muslim country, there is a high demand for halal food products and in food service industry in Brunei Darussalam. Therefore, it is important for food industries such as restaurants to pay more attention and priority on

branding the products as well as the rules and regulations implemented in the food premises. This will allow Muslim consumers to have high quality assurance and maintain the trust of the customers for customer retention. It is shown that certified Halal logo and Halal certification in food and beverages is a must to ensure that food and drinks are in accordance with Islamic principles. Moreover, the established standards and regulations from obtaining Halal certificate by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA) gives Muslim consumers their confidence in food and beverage consumption (Rezai et al, 2012).

In August 2019, Halal Label Certificate and Halal Label Order 2005 was implemented where all restaurant owners and food establishments are obligated to acquire Halal certificates for their businesses. This purpose of this mandatory obligation of the Order is to guarantee assurance for the public especially for Muslims that the food outlets and restaurants serve 100% halal food and products in their menu (Abu Bakar A, 2010). According to the director of Department of Syariah Affairs Halal Food Control Division from Ministry of Religious Affairs, Dato Seri Setia Haji Abdul Rahman Pehin Khatib Abdullah mentioned that most Muslim restaurant owners had made presumption and believed that they are exempt from the certification requirements due to the fact that they operate Muslim eateries. However, the question in this case comprises of regardless if these Muslim food business owners are fully conscious that the foods, they regularly employ are 100% halal or not. For example, some of its ingredients was perhaps been sourced and purchased from non-Muslim nations (Abu Bakar A, 2010).

In accordance to the Halal Label Order, there must be at least two halal food supervisors appointed in the restaurant. The application for the certificate is not restricted to Muslim business owner only but also to non-Muslim business owner provided that they appointed two Muslim halal food supervisors in the restaurant. According to the statement of Hajah Rabiatul Adawiyah Haji Ahmad, an Education Officer of Department of Syariah Affairs Halal Food Control Division under Ministry of Religious Affairs stated that it is better to have more supervisors in a premise. However, two supervisors are the minimum requirement for the Halal certificate application. There must be at least two halal supervisors appointed by the business owner and these supervisors must be approved by the Brunei Islamic Religious Council (MUIB) as they must pass a series of exams administered by MUIB (Abu Bakar A, 2010).

The process of obtaining Halal certificate is outline to the following. Firstly, the business owner should obtain an application form by visiting the Halal Food Control Division situated in the Department of Syariah Affairs, Ministry of Religious Affairs. Two halal food supervisors should be appointed by the business owner provided that they are both 18 years old and Muslim religion. There is a total of 12 documents required for the application process which includes copy of identity paper of the business owner, the applicant and halal food supervisors, 2 passport-size photos of the business owner and halal food supervisors, copy of health certificate of halal food supervisors, copy of registered business certificate (16 & 17), list of food and drinks menu items, ingredient list in menu items, halal certificate or letter of confirmation for ingredients, confirmation Paper for Chemicals and Packaging, such as Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HAACP), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), International Organization for Standardization (ISO) or Lab Analysis (where applicable), floor plan of the premise, location plan of the premise, copy of front page of the halal certification file. It is important that all these documents are prepared as application will be rejected until all documents are completed. Completed application forms and documents required are to be given to the authorities for approval and as soon as these application and documents are approved, the next step is a written halal examination for halal food supervisors. Following that, four people from Brunei Food Halal Authority will make a visitation and conduct a compliance audit to the premises to ensure that the standards are up to par. Lastly, when the auditing is satisfactory, the application will be passed on to the committee of Halal Certificate and Halal Label Inspection for authorization and to Brunei Islamic Religious Council (MUIB) for the final approval. It is to be taken note that the initial application process will take 11 days following the test results and on-site inspection require at least 3 days and lastly, the final certification can take up to 31 days to be completed. The entire process for the certification to be issued will take up to 45 working days. Therefore, business owners are urged to apply earlier to avoid rushing application period (Azli Azney, 2017)

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper has resulted in a guideline and insight of Halal certification for Aminah Arif Restaurant. The Halal Certification is based mostly on Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA) authorities' regulations and suggestions and

modified according to the global and market situations for food industry and services such as restaurants. With personal experience and thorough interviews with the business owner, it is shown that the implementation of Halal certification is an indicator of good practices for other restaurants as it levels up the reputation of the restaurant. Moreover, the impact of Halal certification to the restaurant clearly benefits both the owner and the business in terms of both materially and spiritually. The producers and consumers both profits spiritually and in terms of values from the certified Halal items. As there has been official documentation and visits by the Halal food audits, the future of the business safety strategies will be based on this health and safety policy, which will also act as a model.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Semi-structured interview questions for the owner of Aminah Arif Restaurant

1. Can you shortly describe the business idea of your company?
2. How has the business been going so far?
3. How many employees are there in your company and how have you managed your staffs?
4. How do you communicate with your employees in terms of important issues?
5. Do you know about safety standards and regulations in the restaurant industry?
6. What do you think about the importance of safety in your restaurant?
7. Are you aware of your responsibility to protect the health and safety of your employees according to the laws?
8. What do you think about the implementation of Halal certification?
9. In your opinion, do you think Brunei Halal certificate has its integrity for your business?
10. How has applied Halal certification affected your business?
11. The process of halal certification, is it quick and easy or is it complicated?
12. What would be the limitations when doing the Halal certification (regarding finance, etc.)

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