

Mapping Out Halal Certification in Indonesia and Malaysia: Challenges, Opportunities, and Comparative Advantage

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Abstract

This study sought to map out the institutions and processes of halal certification in Indonesia and Malaysia by investigating the history, procedures, challenges, and opportunities. Data were gathered through interviews with those working in halal certifying related institutions, such as MUI and BPJPH in Indonesia, and JAKIM in Malaysia, in addition to several halal auditors from universities in both countries. A close reading of primary documents issued by halal certification institutions and secondary documents, academic articles, and online resources was conducted to better understand the issues at hand. The results suggest that while historically halal certification in Indonesia and Malaysia came from two different trajectories, the two finally converged in acknowledging the important role of the state and government in terms of Muslim consumer protection in relation to their halal needs. Nonetheless, their differing evolutionary paths, which was partly the function of the relative status of Islam in both, had eventually shaped the character of their halal certification. Originating from an organic civil society movement, halal certification in Indonesia traversed through a more stable and culturally consolidated process, while in Malaysia, it took the political highway with its attendant ups and downs. If Indonesia managed to create “umbrella halal law” overseeing other lesser provisions, Malaysia had to accept the fact that federation had some imprint on its vast array of dispersing halal provisions, if often compensated with some mending for improvement. Finally, the character and size of the population of each contributed to making Indonesia be more inward-looking and Malaysia outward-looking in their halal certification management.

Keywords: Halal certification, challenges, opportunities, comparative advantage.

Introduction

The global halal industry has grown exponentially due to the significant growth of the Muslim population, their awareness of Islamic rulings on halal and haram [1], the increase of purchasing power among Muslim consumers [2], and the expansion of halal market itself that has now included non-Muslim as both consumers and players [3]. The steady rise of halal demand has accordingly created a variety of international halal assurance initiatives, especially through the establishment of halal certification bodies and the ratification of halal laws in different countries, Muslim and non-Muslim alike [4].

The implementation of halal assurance system is essential in order to ensure the effective and efficient production of halal products and services [5], the key component of which is a halal certification process [6]. Halal certification is the process of certifying products or services to be compliant with the shariah law [7], in terms of permissibility, in addition, in certain cases, to other standards of quality [8], such as health, hygiene, environmental friendliness, and respect for animal welfare. While initially it was enforced on products and services for Muslims' consumption, primarily due to religious requirements, halal certification is now considered a certification standard for quality in general [9].

Halal certification, however, did not actually start in the Muslim countries, but in the United States in the mid-1960s, initiated by food and technical Muslim experts, primarily to serve the need of Muslims in fulfilling their religious obligation and to preserve their identity in the midst of other, non-Muslim, communities [6]. In the beginning, halal certification applied almost exclusively to food products and beverages, but over time it began to include nonfoods, such as cosmetics and pharmaceutical products, and even services, such as logistics, travel, and tourism [3,10,11]. Today, halal certification is the prerequisite for entering the global halal market [6]. Furthermore, the present halal market is non-exclusive to Muslims but has gained increasing acceptance among non-Muslim industry players and consumers, who associate halal with ethical consumerism [8]. Thus, halal accreditation serves as a benchmark for food safety, quality assurance, and other useful indicators, not only for Muslim but also non-Muslim customers [12], [13]. Unexpectedly, the largest exporting producer of halal and poultry, for instance, were non-Muslim countries, such as New Zealand and Australia [3].

This paper aims to map out the halal certification process in Indonesia and Malaysia, probe the historical development, identify its institutions and procedures, scrutinize the challenges and opportunities, and, finally, weigh on the comparative advantage to one another. It is important to study halal assurance system whose implementation is essential to ensure the effective and efficient production of halal products. Halal assurance system is developed based on three zero's concepts, which are zero limit (no haram material used in the production), zero defect (no haram product is produced) and zero risk (no disadvantageous risk should be taken by the producer or company). Consequently, the structure for halal assurance systems plays a vital role in integrating the processes that assist the establishment of value within firms and across the supply chain [5].

Methods

This study of halal certification in Indonesia and Malaysia was conducted through a combination of interviews, document analysis, and literature review. Interviews were undertaken with

personnel who were working in halal-related institutions in both countries, including MUI and BPJPH in Indonesia, and JAKIM in Malaysia, in addition to some halal auditors in universities, such as Universitas Airlangga and Universiti Putra Malaysia. Official documents analyzed were those officially issued by both governments and halal certifying institutions, accessible in print and online. The literature review was accomplished by surveying a number of secondary sources, especially relevant published academic articles, gained through <http://link.springer.com>, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/>, <http://tandfonline.com/>, and <https://scholar.google.com/>. Issues addressed included the evolution of halal certification efforts, institutions, and procedures, in addition to some challenges faced and opportunities expected. All gathered data were then confronted with each other, which eventually led to a comparative analysis that delineated the relative comparative advantage of halal certification management in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Results and Discussion

History of Halal Certification in Indonesia and Malaysia

In terms of its origin, the initiative for halal certification in Indonesia and Malaysia came from two different paths. In Indonesia, the idea of halal certification was generated within, and subsequently run, by the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI, *Majelis Ulama Indonesia*), which was a non-governmental socioreligious institution, while in Malaysia, it was cultivated by government and used to be the only one in the world with the government full support in this respect [14]. The more likely reason for that was the different status of Islam within each state [15]. While both are equally Muslim countries, Malaysia has made Islam as the official religion of the state, and Indonesia is politically secular, in that it treats all officially recognized religions, including Islam, on an equal footing [16]. Consequently, the next trajectory of halal certification in Indonesia and Malaysia, once again, took different dynamics.

In Indonesia, the history of halal certification has taken a relatively linear route, consisting of two major phases, namely before and after the promulgation of Law No 33 of 2014 about Halal Product Assurance (UUJPH, *Undang-Undang Jaminan Produk Halal*) [17]. Before UUPJH came into existence, MUI was the sole institution responsible for halal certification in Indonesia [9]. Two of its sub-body, LPPOM MUI (the Assessment Institute for Food, Drugs, and Cosmetics, *Lembaga Pengkajian Pangan, Obat-obatan, dan Kosmetika*), established in January 1989, and the Fatwa Commission, played a major role in this task. LPPOM carried out the examination of the ingredients contained in a product, while the Fatwa Commission determined the compliance of the product at hand with the Shariah law [18].

In so doing, MUI signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which was followed by the issuance of the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs (Keputusan Menteri Agama, KMA) No 518 of 2001 and KMA 519 Year 2001, which strengthened MUI position as the halal certifying institution with an authority to examine/audit, issue fatwa, and publish a halal certificate. In addition, LPPOM-MUI worked hand in hand with BPOM (Agency for Food and Drugs Control, *Badan Pengawasan Obat dan Makanan*), Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises, Trade Ministry, Ministry of Industry, Marine and Fisheries Ministry, Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, and several universities. Regardless, it was MUI that had the full authority for halal certification, while its relation with the other institutions was largely

coordinative as well consultative [14]. Halal Certification Standard of LPPOM MUI was based on the Halal Assurance System Concept on Food, Drugs, and Cosmetic (HAS 23000), Guidelines of Halal Assurance System Criteria of Slaughterhouses (HAS 23103) and Requirements of Halal Food Material (HAS 23201) [14].

When UUJPH came into existence, the Indonesian government had since taken over the authority for halal certification in the country [19]. Based on the mandate of the new law, the Indonesian government, in October 2017, established a state-owned institution, namely BPJPH (*Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Produk Halal*, Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency) as the new main body responsible for halal certification [20]. The promulgation, in Indonesia, of Law No 33 2014 on Halal Product Assurance has brought about legal certainty in terms of halal assurance, especially through halal certification. Sociologically, the presence of such law created a sense of comfort and safety in society, especially Muslims, about production and consumption. Economically, the same law of Halal Product Assurances opened up new revenues and business possibilities [21].

Although the authority for halal certification in Indonesia has formally been transferred, on the basis of Law No 33 of 2014, from MUI to BPJPH, this does not necessarily rule out the significant role that MUI could play in the future [22]. MUI has been successful in building its highly respected reputation as a trusted halal certifier, domestically and internationally, through its LPPOM [9]. In fact, MUI had created a viable model of halal certification institution that BPJPH inherit and may improve it where necessary. Therefore, while retaining much less authority than it had previously had, MUI could still maintain a vital role, as stated in Article 10 of UUJPH, about halal auditor certification, stipulating halal status of a product, and LPH accreditation.

Meanwhile, the evolution of halal certification in Malaysia, including its institutions, nomenclatures, regulations, and scope of authority, has been unstable and confusing, to say the least, and it was further complicated by the fact that Malaysia is a federal state that acknowledges the existence of dual government at the central and state level, which has accordingly affected the management of halal certification. Institutionally, it started in 1968, when the Malaysian Council of Rulers decided that there was a need for a body that could mobilized the development and progress of Muslims in the country. As a result, the Secretariat of the National Council for Islamic Affairs of Malaysia was formed to protect the purity of faith and teachings of Islam. The Secretariat was later expanded to become the Religious Division, under the jurisdiction of the Prime Minister. Given the important role of the body to maintain and preserve the interests of Muslims, this religious division was then upgraded to become the Islamic Affairs Division (BAHEIS, *Bahagian Hal Ehwal Islam*), which began to issue halal recognition letters for food and consumables, produced by local entrepreneurs, in Malaysia since 1974. Starting in 1994, Halal certification was no longer in the form of recognition, but in the form of a certificate, together with Halal logo, to be used or displayed on the goods. On January 1, 1997, the Islamic Development Department of Malaysia (*Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia*, JAKIM) was established by the government to take over the role of BAHEIS [23,24]. Irrespective of further internal dynamics [25], today JAKIM is the core body that controls the administration of the Malaysian halal certification and issues halal logos [1,9]. However, apart from JAKIM whose jurisdiction is on the federal level, the State Islamic Religious Department (JAIN, *Jabatan Agama Islam Negeri*) or State Islamic Religious Councils (MAIN, *Jabatan Agama Islam Negeri*) are

also accepted bodies for halal certification on the state level. If JAKIM has the authority to issue a halal certificate for domestic and multinational products, JAIN/MAIN is to issue a halal certificate for domestic products only [9,12,26]. Prior to the year 2009, there used to be different halal logos that the states applied. However, the Malaysian government then did some harmonization and adopted only Malaysia halal logo for all states [9].

To complicate even further, in addition to JAKIM, JAIN, and MAIN, there are other public institutions that deal with halal related matters, namely Halal Industry Development Corporation (HDC), Ministry of Domestic Trade, Co-operatives and Consumerism (MDTCC), Ministry of Health (MOH) and Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI). Together, these seven agencies share huge responsibility for halal assurance in Malaysia, and they all play a certain role, albeit, intriguingly, acting according to their own terms of reference [24]. Apologetically, the involvement of so many different agencies in handling halal industry was due to its broad scope, in which a jurisdiction overlap is inevitable. Objectively, however, it is the absence of a single legislation, which specifically regulates this industry as a whole, that led to the involvement of the various government agencies in it [26]. However, the two main agencies that are often associated with Halal certification in Malaysia are JAKIM and HDC. JAKIM is focused on halal certification and compliance with halal standards, while HDC is focused on the development of local and global halal industry and marketing of halal products [23].

Malaysia does not have Laws concerning halal products, but it has 13 sets of provisions to support halal certification and also 9 standards for the development of the halal industry: 1) Trade Act of 2011 (Trade Law of 2011), 2) Food Act 1983, 3) Food Rules of 1985, 4) Regulations on Food Hygiene of 2009, 5) Animal Rules, 6) Animal Act of 1953, 7) Animal Regulations of 1962, 8) Animal Slaughtering, 9) Public Livestock Progress of 1983, 10) Law on Public Livestock Progress of 1983, 11) Law of Kastam 1967 (Prohibition of Import in 1998), 12) Law of Kerajaan Tempatan 1976 (Deeds 171), and 13) Local Government Act (PBT), Act/Enactment of Islamic Administration; and Trade Stamp Certificate 1976 [12]. In addition, there are more than 20 certificates that can be referred to the halal certification in Malaysia, formulated for different government agencies with different rights and powers [12,23,24]. There is no 'umbrella law' that serves as the supreme law of halal related matters in Malaysia.

Halal Certification Procedure in Indonesia and Malaysia

The promulgation of UUJPH was a milestone in the history of halal certification in Indonesia, distinguishing its two major phases. Prior to the existence of UUPJH, halal certification in Indonesia was voluntary, administered by a non-governmental institution, i.e., MUI. After the advent of UUPJH, halal certification in Indonesia became mandatory. In fact, when it is fully implemented, Indonesia would be the first country in the world to require halal certification for every product in its market [17].

The establishment of BPJPH in 2017 by the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia was a fulfilment of one of the mandates of UUJPH. BPJPH will facilitate the general administration process of halal certification [27], including registration, testing, and certification process. Based on the UUJPH, the procedure for obtaining a halal certificate will involve BPJPH, LPH and MUI. First, business actors must submit a complete document as well as a written application for a

halal certificate to BPJPH. Business actors can also choose LPH based on the preference or proximity of their business location to the LPH and BPJPH. BPJPH then determines LPH who has the right to test the halal of the product within a maximum period of 5 working days from the date the complete application document is submitted. The next stage is checking the halal production process by halal auditors at the business location. If there are ingredients or materials that are vague in terms of their halal status, further testing will be carried out in the laboratory. After obtaining the results, LPH will give the report to BPJPH, which will then be submitted to MUI. MUI would determine the legal status of the product in the fatwa commission session, held no more than 30 working days after MUI received the documents from BPJPH. Once the decision was made, the final document regarding the establishment of halal status of the products is then signed by the MUI to be the basis for BPJPH in issuing halal certificates, within 7 working days after MUI's final decision. The issuance of the halal certificate must then be published by BPJPH; thus, its use can be monitored by the public.

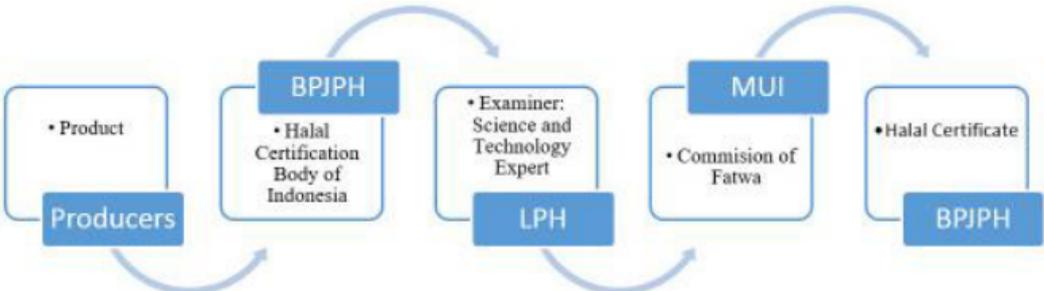


Figure 1. The Process of Halal Certification under BPJPH [17]

While initially it was planned that by October 17, 2019, UUJPH would be fully implemented but, due to lacking some supporting legislation and infrastructure, BPJPH has yet to wait longer before it could finally operate as expected. In the meantime, the halal certification process in Indonesia is de facto run by MUI, during this transitional period [17]. Overall, the registration steps are the same as before the promulgation of UUJPH, with one notable addition, in that the applicant must, at the same time, send the application to both BPJPH and LPPOM MUI.

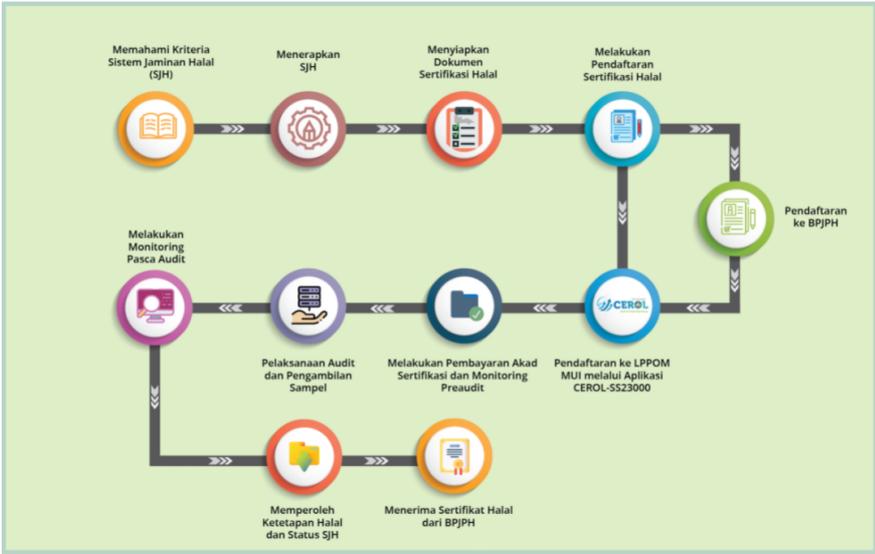


Figure 2. The Process of Halal Certification during the Transition Period (<https://www.halalmui.org/mui14/main/page/prosedur-sertifikasi-halal-mui>)

The transfer of authority for halal certification from MUI to BPJPH yields a number of significant impacts [17]. First, with the government overseeing halal certification, the process is expected to be more efficient, transparent, and accountable, as it can orchestrate all related parties to work in tandem and share the responsibility. Second, the cost is expected to be less expensive since the government has more schemes that can help the applicants, especially when they are classified as micro and small businesses, as stated in Article 44 of UUJPH. Third, the handling of halal certification by government will facilitate more effective multinational cooperation's due to the relatively high degree of accountability and trust, including mutual recognition of halal certificates between countries, thus eliminating the practice of recertification of products from abroad, which was common in the old system.

In Malaysia, while halal certification is carried out by public institutions, be it on the federal or state level but, unlike in Indonesia, it remains voluntary [28]. Nonetheless, Malaysian government involvement in the halal certification since its inception has made the country highly respected worldwide, and its halal certification is one of the best internationally [26]. Some of the reason for that was inclusion of some evaluating measures that, while not immediately halal-related, improved the quality of the certified product, such as the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) standard of quality, and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) to enhance to the credibility of halal food in the market, in addition to Good Hygiene Practices (GHP) and the Malaysian Standard MS1500:2004 [1]. Within the array of disperse provisions, the enactment of the Trade Description Act 2011 and two relevant subsidiary legislations, namely the Trade Description (Certification and Marking of Halal) Order 2011 and the Trade Description (Definition of Halal) Order 2011, has been commendable for they have been able to define more clearly the halal concept and to situate better the relations of several halal certification bodies in existence [28,29].

According to the MPFMHC 2014 [30], there are three groups of professionals involved in the process of halal certification, namely the halal auditors, the halal executives, and the halal certification panel. The halal auditors, with qualifications in either Islamic or food technology science, carry out the halal audit. The halal executive, who must be Malaysian Muslim citizens and having a background in Islamic Studies or has undergone a halal executive training, is the person in charge and responsible for managing the halal certification application put in by the company/industry. The halal auditor, after receiving an application from a halal executive of the applicant company, would review the documents, ensure fee payment, conduct compliance audit at the premise, prepare the report, and submit the results to the halal certification panel during their meeting for approval. When performing an onsite audit, the halal auditor would make the necessary report. Any nonconformance must be recorded and detailed out in a Non-Conformance Report and corrective action must then be taken by the halal executive. Once the corrective action is completed and all requirements are fulfilled, the halal executive will resubmit the completed halal certification application to the halal auditor. The final stage of the halal certification process is to forward the application to the Malaysia Halal Certification Panel (HCP) for approval. The decision made by the HCP is final and shall be recorded and kept for future reference. The applicants will then be notified of the status of their application [28].

In February 2006, the e-halal system was launched to enable an online application for halal certification. The purpose of this system was to enhance productivity in the halal certification

process, to give priority to halal certification applications from the industry, and to also serve as a database of companies, businesses, restaurants, hotels, and products. In April 2014, the e-halal system was rebranded as MYeHALAL, which segregated the halal application into seven different categories: (i) Food and Beverages Products; (ii) Consumable Products; (iii) Food Premises; (iv) Cosmetics and Toiletries; (v) Pharmaceuticals; (vi) Logistics; and (vii) Slaughterhouse (under the monitoring and supervision of JAKIM for domestic as well as international products). This application is accessible through JAKIM's website [28].

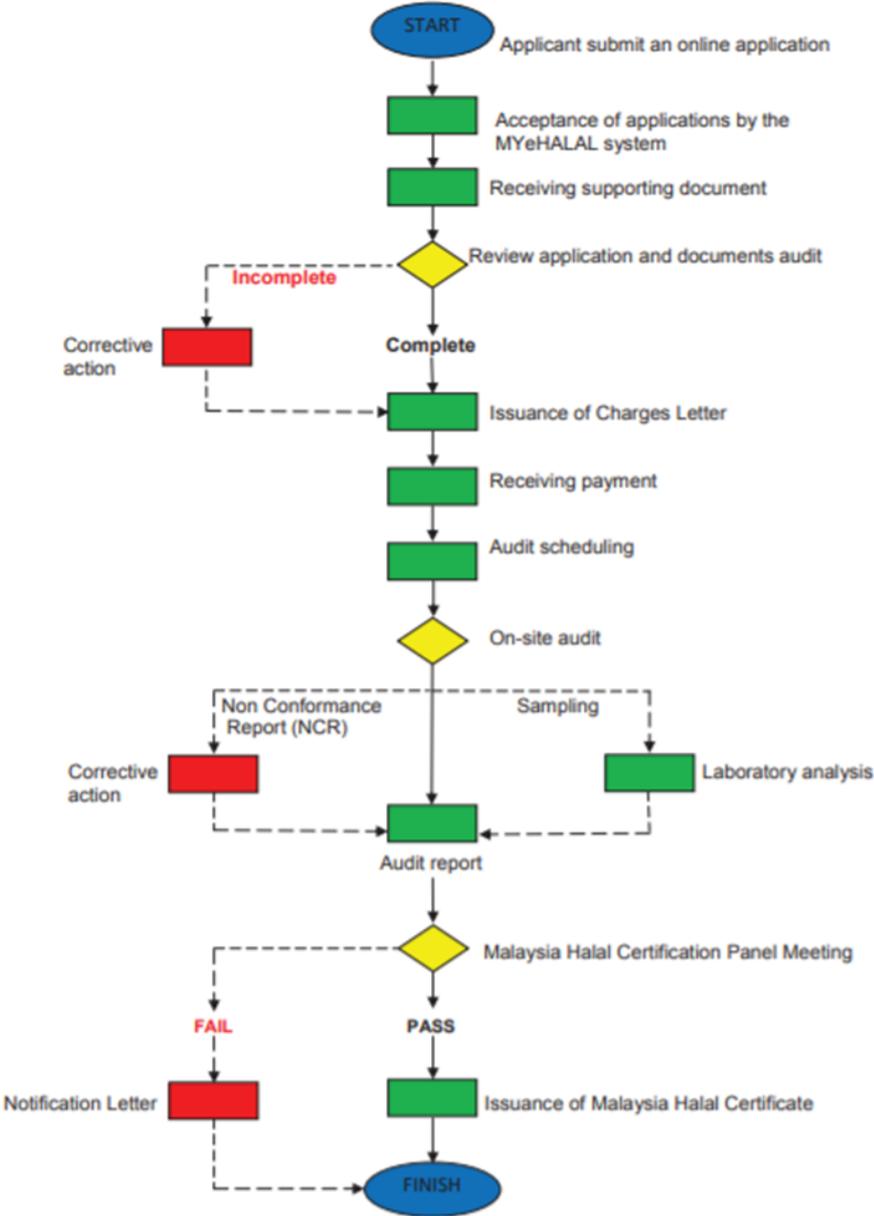


Figure 3. The Process of Halal Certification in Malaysia [30]

Challenges, Opportunities, and Comparative Advantages

There were two types of challenges that halal certification process faced in Indonesia and Malaysia. Internal factors were those emerged in relation to employers or employees within the organization, while external factors were factors that came from outside of the organization

[28]. Internal factors, in this regard, were those related to the halal certifying institutions, such as quality of human resources and services, and legal infrastructure. Meanwhile, external factors problems were those faced or generated by applicants and competitors.

Of the internal factors, the most frequently mentioned were the low competence that the employees of the certifying institutions demonstrated, particularly in terms their job performance. For instance, lack of manpower was lamented quite often in Malaysia, and it led to workload, and eventually mental stress. On different occasions, lack of manpower was mentioned to be the main reason for poor communication between halal executive and halal auditors. Moreover, halal auditors' incompetence and lack of skills and knowledge in performing their task, especially when asked certain questions by applicants, had discouraged entrepreneurs to proceed further with their application. Many viewed that such incapable auditors were due to disparity in the recruitment process by Federal and State governments in Malaysia. It became more complicated with the introduction of new schemes, such as halal certification for logistics and pharmaceutical industries that required further learning. Many believed that, if not immediately addressed, this lack of competency could ruin the credibility of the halal authority. Interestingly, the above issues did not apply to Indonesia, as suggested by some Malaysian, stating that the auditors of *Majelis Ulama Indonesia* (MUI) were knowledgeable in terms of, for instance, the cosmetic scheme, and were fully trained. Similar views expressed in terms of the practicality of online application for halal certification, comparing between MYeHALAL System in Malaysia and MUI's CEROL system in Indonesia, the latter of which was deemed more reliable. The halal executives voiced out their dissatisfaction with MYeHALAL system, which seems to be outdated and very unstable, as they had often faced technical problems with the system, such as its saving capability and the absence of the person in charge. On the other hand, MUI's CEROL system was thought to be much more user friendly. In addition, the applicants in Malaysia were also required to submit the application manually, which was hassle for the halal executives [6,8,23,28,31].

In terms of legal infrastructure, many applicants complained about the fact that Malaysian halal certification did not have "umbrella law", which coordinated the wide array of halal provisions. This was a consequence of the fact that halal related matters in Malaysia were governed by different entities with different rights, duties, and powers as well as conflict of jurisdiction. While JAKIM was the main body involved in halal certification and enforcement in Malaysia, it was, however, supported by several other agencies, in which each agency has its own role, jurisdiction and legislation [26,28]. This issue did not occur as much in Indonesia since halal certification was run by MUI/BPJPH, acting as the supreme leader of halal assurance in Indonesia in general. Any relations and cooperation's that MUI/BPJPH had with other agencies were mostly coordinative and consultative, and the final decision was within the authority of MUI/BPJPH. Thus, after submitting the application, halal certification applicants in Indonesia did not have to bother with what transpired behind the main door of MUI/BPJPH.

About issues pertaining to applicants especially related to inability to fulfill the requirements of halal certification there was a perception that halal certification was money and time consuming, and complicated. In addition, the lack of proper knowledge in terms halal certification process among applicants was equally rampant in both countries [5,6,28]. The same can be said with respect to offences and violation against halal certification provisions. However, the mental

impact that such offences brought about among the consumers was arguably different in the two countries. Malaysian consumers were seemingly more affected than their Indonesian counterparts, which accordingly affected how each perceived the halal authorities and institutions in their respective countries. While in Malaysia JAKIM was often blamed for any offenses occurred in Malaysia, to an extent that consumers might build up some distrust, in Indonesia consumers tended to be more relaxed, and treated such an offense simply as an accident and no representative of something normal and pervasive. This may have something to do with the immediate, or lack of, actions taken by the authorities [23,26,28,32,33].

In terms of competition with other foreign halal certifications, the attitude of Indonesian halal authorities also seemed to be more relaxed than those in Malaysia, more likely due to the different size of domestic halal market in both countries. The sizeable domestic halal market in Indonesia generated some sense of security among its halal authorities, while in Malaysia export was so targeted, for a larger revenue, given the relatively small domestic halal market that it had. Furthermore, Indonesian halal authorities were seemingly confident about the reliability and accessibility of its halal certification considering, among many other, the fact that many companies from Malaysia applied for the halal logo from MUI, because they thought MUI provided proper guidelines, its documentation checklist was comprehensive, and its halal auditors were competent. Comparatively, it was probably justifiable to state that Indonesian halal certification was more accessible than the one in Malaysia, provided the general perception that the latter was much stricter, which was not necessarily a bad thing, for it also required the satisfaction of other standards not directly halal related, but more about refined quality of products. Besides, Indonesian halal logo could be used in Malaysia [8,8]. Finally, self-perception of Malaysian halal certification as the pioneer might contribute something to creating a sense of being chased; meanwhile, as a late comer, Indonesia had no such qualm and, instead, was always eager to catch up.

Regardless, there were commendable assets in Malaysian halal certification that should make Indonesia envy, namely its international campaign through an institution such as HDC and its commitment to produce the best, by including measures that not immediately halal related, such as such as the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) standard of quality, Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), and Good Hygiene Practices (GHP). The combination these are more likely to be more profitable in the future.

Conclusions

Indonesia and Malaysia are equally Muslim countries, but they adopted two different political arrangements, especially about Islam. The unitary state, Indonesia opted to appreciate unity in diversity thus choosing a secular orientation that allowed all recognized religions, including Islam, to be on an equal footing with the rest, regardless of its ascendancy. Malaysia, on the other hand, chose to make Islam as its officially political garb. This political choice had impacted how halal certification was managed in both. In Indonesia, on the one hand, halal certification began as a civil society movement and only much later, when it had been relatively solidified through MUI efforts, it started to render it to the government. In Malaysia, on the other hand, halal certification took a high, if winding, road in its attempts to accommodate the halal needs of Muslims there. Therefore, relatively protected from the fast pace of political Islam of the state, halal certification in Indonesia took a cultural approach in consolidating its halal aspirations by

building a strong foundation upon which further development, albeit gradual, might launch. Malaysia, on the other, proceeded speedily to an extent that progress was more important than solidity. As a result, halal certification in Indonesia was able to solidify by creating mother law to which all other halal provisions refer. Meanwhile, in Malaysia, perhaps under the influence of its federal system, halal certification took a forward direction without a little chance to consolidate internally. The absence of mother law on halal in Malaysia had resulted in the fact that a range of halal provisions that came into existence were, at times, overlapping and conflictual with each other. If the leader institution of halal certification in Indonesia was supreme and the rest follow suit, in Malaysia the Federal government and the States were seldom in competition with one another. Similarly, while the evolution of halal certification in Indonesia took a linear and much simpler route, before and after the promulgation of UUJPH, its Malaysian counterpart often experienced sudden turns, following the dynamic high politics of the state. Eventually, this has impacted the management of halal certification in both, including the mechanism of and attitudes to facing challenges and seizing the opportunities. While halal certification in Indonesia seemed to be more reliably accessible, even in the eyes of many Malaysian Muslims, the halal certification in Malaysia, while aiming at the finest, in the name of a refined quality, was often perceived as strict yet riddled with problems and anxiety.

Data Availability

Most, if not all, of data here, read, studied, and interpreted were available and accessible online. As can be seen in the bibliography, each reference has a link to trace.

Conflicts of Interest

“The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper. Any analysis and interpretation presented thereby carries no prejudice to anyone or anything, but completely the consequence of the available data leading to a certain understanding. Therefore, any conclusions made are contestable and open to criticism and revision, as evidence leads”.

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