# ḤALĀL ASSURANCE SYSTEM: POSITIONING OF FOOD SAFETY AND ASSURING ḤALĀL STANDARDS

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**Abstract:** Islām sheds light on every facet of our lives. There has been presented a brief and comprehensive guideline for mankind, it is not only restricted to spiritual actions, but it allows Muslims to live their lives as stated in Quran and Sunnah; consume wholesome food and consider the permissibility of actions, intentions, and consumptions. Islam has drawn a boundary line around our lives and ordered all the Muslims to restrict up to that line, not to cross the boundary or otherwise will be punished hereafter. That boundary is called Harām and includes prohibited item i.e. Pork, alcohol and swine flesh etc. At now the debate on Halāl consumption is a hot topic among all the consumers and practitioners of respective industry. Although Halāl is clearly defined or stated in the Islamic guideline, but some new shapes or trends in the industry like stunning makes it doubtful for the consumption. Positioning of the food safety is also a grey area till now. Some researchers view that assurance of food safety is a separate topic than Halāl assurance, but some others view that, if one assures the Ḥalāl assurance as guided in Islām he/she has no need to indulge in safety measures or hazard analysis. On the global view, there are many ambiguities regarding Halāl and Harām food preparation. In this study researchers tried to state the prevailing issue in Halāl industry and then address the spiritual guidelines or standards from sources of Islam. At the end of this study, recommendations are made as to adapt a HACCP style program for Ḥalāl assurance system. This study aims to prove its hypothetical

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statements in the light of Qurān and Sunnah. Islām teaches us, how to slaughter animal and what should be pre-slaughter measures to assure the animal welfare. Animal welfare is also a core concern of Islām, while conducting slaughtering procedures, and preparing food for consumption. Today we are much concerned about food production when it comes to Ḥalāl and Ḥarām; also this study focuses on food safety assurances.

Keyword: Ḥalāl, Ḥarām, Food Safety, Food, HACCP, Hygiene, Standard.

With the inception of livelihood on the earth, the concept of safe and unsafe developed. Islām has defined clearly the concept of Ḥalāl and safe to consume. To establish and promote this concept and practice, it is first important to shed light on its need and significance. In contemporary practices, the rules and boundaries of Shariah are completely ignored. Being Muslims, and targeting the Muslim consumers, to make a product Ḥalāl and to earn Ḥalāl through it, it is of extreme importance to consider the laws and principles of Shariah at every step of the business and profit making. Right from the phase of manufacturing till the point where the product or service is delivered to the target consumer, every step must be taken in the light of Islāmic Principles and within the boundaries laid down by Shariah.

#### Introduction

Globalization takes us to the new era; it introduces many kinds of technologies as well as new trends in food industry, international trade and traveling. As a result, confusions and contamination in food industry is increasing day by day. (1) Food safety assurance is quite difficult today, because of complicated processing and multiple ingredients involved in food products. (2) For the assurance of food safety researchers said Ḥalāl food is free from contamination and this can consume. (3) So, if we assure Ḥalāl, we can easily assure that it is free from contamination and wholesome for consumption. The food production methods of Ḥalāl also follow the necessary food safety requirements. (4) There are certain guidelines which are observed, while considering Ḥalāl food assurance system: these deals with the food safety, health conditions and physical quality characteristics of food. Important characteristics include wholesomeness, purity, good quality and permissibility as in Qurān and Sunnah. Ḥalāl consumption is compulsory and mandatory for Muslims around the globe. (5) No matter the

geographical state of living, ethnic diversity, Muslims are ordered to eat Ḥalāl and be focused on their religious norms, consider that weather the consumption follows guidelines of Islām.

Pew Research Center examines that Muslim population in 2010 was about approximately 1.6 billion, which is 23.4% of the total population of the world. Similarly, it is estimated that 74% of the Muslims are living in Muslim majority countries, and remaining 26% are living in Muslim minority countries. (6) Ḥalāl market is attractive for Muslims and Non-Muslims equally, because of food safety and hygiene assurance. (7) H-Media estimated that Ḥalāl market on globe having value of USD720 billion in 2009 and it is increasing continuously; it was estimated at USD547 billion in 2006. So, to be a part of it, can be beneficial for Muslims and Non-Muslims as well. (8)

Ḥalāl certification is a new way to assure Ḥalāl status of food products. Aim of certification body is to assure weather product is Ḥalāl or not. Furthermore it assures that all the procedures taken and ingredients are in compliance with Shariah. By obtaining Ḥalāl certification, companies obtain the trust of their costumers; and for this they use a Ḥalāl label on their packages. <sup>(9)</sup> Ḥalāl logo eliminates the ambiguity of consumers by giving necessary assurance. <sup>(10)</sup> There are different bodies offering Ḥalāl certification in the market. These bodies reflect different Ḥalāl standards in their respective countries. <sup>(11)</sup> It is primarily important that certification bodies have competent skills and abilities to compete in the current market, and certify Ḥalāl productions. <sup>(12)</sup>

Riaz and Chaudhry stated that in late 1980s; certification of Ḥalāl food was started and after that increases rapidly. (13) The process of Ḥalāl food certification is a farm to fork process, it started from the poultry or cattle farms and then it comes to the plant of production; in which slaughtering, may take place. However, it is notable issue of the absence of government bodies, it is owned and controlled by private sector, and various institutions operate the industry. (14) If targeted company accepts; anybody can issue a Ḥalāl certificate, so the key is acceptability of Ḥalāl label or logo. (15) IHIA (International Ḥalāl Integrity Alliance) estimated that around 300 bodies are playing in the industry, in which 120 are registered and competent enough to issue a Ḥalāl logo. It is also worthy to be discussed that in harmonization of certification process and setting Ḥalāl standards there are a minor

contribution from Arabic countries, that are the real representatives of large Muslim market. (16)

There are standards for Ḥalāl assurance in Islām, which animal can be slaughtered, how slaughtering may take place, what kind of procedures should be adopted etc. According to Islām there is only two primary sources Qurān and Sunnah, and two are extracted from them named as Ijma and Qyas. (17) In this study researcher focuses Islāmic sources for ḥalāl standards. Although there are many standards for Ḥalāl assurance, which were prepared for the easement of producers, but they are not concerned here. So in this paper we did not indulge in all those standards like MS-1500 or PS-3733 etc.

There are multiple translations of word Ḥalāl, some translated it as permissible where some said lawful, allowed, legal, trustworthy, valid are also the meaning of Ḥalāl. (18) Numerous times it appears in Qurān and the term is used for lawfulness of the things (16:116). JAKIM (2011); HSA (1993) referred Ḥalāl as the way of slaughtering done as per the laws of Islām; stated in Qurān and Hadith, should be supervised by local Islāmic authorities. According to Islām the animal who is going to be slaughtered should be alive and sound minded, at the pint of cutting neck slaughterer should mention the name of God.

"And eat not of that whereon Allah's name hath not been mentioned, for lo! it is abomination. Lo! the devils do inspire their minions to dispute with you. But if ye obey them, ye will be in truth idolaters"

Death of the animal should be caused by the circulation of blood and consequent cerebral anoxia. (20) Likewise, there are multiple standards in the books of Islām. Consumption of Ḥalāl is obviously a core concern of a Muslim but almost we all are negligent in obeying the religious dictates.

Negligence in religious dictates

There are some sins which are the root cause of other sins and as such should find their place at the top of our list, but strangely enough we don't consider them as sins, neither pay them our attention nor place them on our list i.e. regard them as sins. This is the great omission on our part.

The Qurānic verses pinpoint such a disease which is not included in our list. It is engrossment in worldly affairs and we do not reckon it as a disease at all. Confiscating property of others, committing adultery, and not saying one's prayers are considered as sins or disease, but engrossment in the world is not so considered by anybody; although it is so common that everybody is lost in it. It is universal that every other sin appears to be its offshoot. For instance, if somebody neglects saying his prayers, it is because he is lost in the worldly affairs and cares little for his religious dictates. (21) Neglect shown towards fasting, payment of Zakat is also due to the same cause. So is the case of being busy in evil doing. It does not need much elaboration to explain this point, little thinking over it leads one to the conclusion that all sins spring from one's absorption in this disease. Except for pious, devoted and learned people, the rest of the people have all adopted a way of life which keeps them hankering after worldly gains. (22)

The religious people today are observing religious rites just to the extent of saying their prayers in a casual manner, and growing their beards a bit longish, although they may have usurped the property of others and may be doing them harm in other matters also. Islām teaches us the complete, full of manner, and ethical behavior of living in this world, welfare is not just restricted to the human beings but it is concerned with the animals also, state of animals and treatment with them should be humane and careful. Other aspects which may influence the behavior of animal are considered like psychological stress etc. So it is crystal clear that Islām does not bound to the spiritual actions, the eternal beliefs and pure intention are guided. If one involves in worldly affairs and neglect the religious norms he/she will never achieve a true progress in their life.

#### Means of Progress

It is observed that those nations which are now considered civilized and have corrected their morals also, are following no religion and are lost in worldly affairs are yet making progress. The opinion expressed above about the degradation of Muslims therefore does not appear to hold. The explanation of this is that in their apparent civilization, these nations have adopted the morals of that were being followed by the religious people. Thus the basis of their civilization, as a matter of fact, of every civilization is the teachings of religion. The argument going in the favor of our conclusion is that the Non-Muslim themselves admit that whatever they have learnt has

come from Muslims and the Muslims learnt how to live from their religion. (23)

Slaughtering Practices

As mentioned above in introduction all practices are clearly explained in Islāmic manuscripts.

"O' you who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves unjustly except it to be a trade amongst you, by mutual consent. And do not kill yourselves (nor kill one another). Surely, Allah is Most Merciful to you"

Making false claims about a product or offering or selling it on the basis of lies is totally prohibited and unaccepted in Islām, Similarly, malpractices in processing and even in delivery of the good is not allowed in Islām. [25] Islām sheds light on every facet of processing, industries and trade. Here we discuss some standards for Ḥalāl food processing and a conclusive note will be made on the hypothetic statement that food safety is automatically assured with Halāl assurance.

Entire process of slaughtering consists of multiple stages, it starts from the purchasing of animal and transport of animal to the slaughter houses. So at the first stage we are very much concerned about animal welfare, during their transport to the slaughter houses, after that place of slaughter and utensils are core concerns regarding standardization. At second stage, the main process of slaughtering need some careful measures which make animals Ḥalāl and Ḥarām. After slaughtering some critical points are important to discuss regarding storage, packing and delivery.

Although there are many standards like ISO 22000 (International Standard Organization) and HACCP (Hazard analysis critical control points) for food safety and FSSC (Food Safety System Certification) a complete scheme from farm to fork, which assures the food processing, quality, packaging and delivery, they are purely concerned about safety from chemical, biological and physical hazards. We are here to develop a Ḥalāl assurance program and critical control points for Ḥalāl food, which would be safe from Ḥarām and any kind of contamination, either it is related to chemical, biological or physical hazard.

Zibah is the method or the act of slaughter also known as zibah-al-Ikhtiyaariy by which an animal or a bird is slaughtered by a Muslim by saying shahada or tasmiya, Bismillah Allahu Akbar. If the slaughter is not done by zibah method, any meat or derivatives from such carcasses cannot be deemed to be halāl or permissible for Muslims to consume.

There are multiple standards in Shariah for slaughtering of animals some of them will be discussed here.

#### 1. Animal Welfare

"A good deed done to an animal is commendable as a good deed done to a human being while an act of unkindness to an animal is as bad as an act of cruelty to a human being" (26) Similarly Imam Bukhari and Imam Muslim also narrated a Hadith as "You will not secure faith until you have loved for one another and had mercy on those who live upon the earth" (27) From the above scripts it is clear that one cannot secure his/her faith until he/she may have mercy on the creatures of earth.

There was a rich tradition of our Prophet (SAW) concern for animals, it is important that the halāl concept is addressed from a holistic approach dealing with issues as animal rearing, health, handling, and transport and slaughtering. Islām emphasizes on animal welfare so with the reference of shariah this research includes animal health, veterinary services, farming and living conditions, feeding and transportation etc.

The first standard is food processing must be about source of the food means animal, it is clearly described in Hadith that you should treat your animal humanely. International Ḥalāl integrity alliance (IHIAS 0500, 2010) stated a widely-accepted expressions of general principles, endorsed as listed below:

- 1. Freedom from hunger and thirst.
- 2. Freedom from discomfort.
- 3. Freedom from pain, injury and disease.
- 4. Freedom to express normal behavior.
- 5. Freedom from fear and distress.

A detail standard is developed by international ḥalāl integrity alliance, Malaysia. Here we are just concerned to invoke the importance of animal welfare. (28)

The animal which is selected for slaughter must not be anaesthetized, it must be conscious and alive when it is slaughtered. (29)

The animal or bird should be alive and healthy at the time of slaughter. Animal skin or fur, and bird feathers must be clean prior to slaughter and be free from faces, mud or other unhygienic substances. Stunning is not used to kill the animal or the bird. (30)

# 2. Slaughterer

Slaughtering is not allowed until the slaughterer is adult and a Muslim by his faith, A licensed Muslim slaughterer should slaughter by pronouncing shahada or tasmiya as "Bismillah Allahu Akbar";

Leave the animal like lambs, sheep and goats and other similar sized animals in situ for at least 20 seconds. Bovine and other similarly sized animals must be restrained in situ for 60 seconds. Poultry and other birds must not be subjected to any further processing for at least 20 seconds. During the aforementioned period they must not be further injured, nor subjected to unnecessary stress or pain. Indeed, it is desirable that efforts are made to calm them during this period. The slaughterer must clean the knife after slaughter of every animal or bird and must check that the knife still conforms to above rules. If damaged, the knife must be replaced. If it is no longer razor sharp, it must be sharpened. Note that the knife must not be sharpened in sight of animals awaiting slaughter.

# 3. Saying the name of ALLAH

GOD name must be mentioned at the time cutting the neck of the animal.

"And eat not of that whereon Allah's name hath not been mentioned, for lo! it is abomination. Lo! the devils do inspire their minions to dispute with you. But if ye obey them, ye will be in truth idolaters"

The slaughterer must pronounce aloud the Arabic words, Bismillah, AllahuAkbar (in the name of Allah, Allah is the greatest) in a reverential tone, when slaughtering. When slaughtering is carried out in a mechanized plant, say for, poultry slaughtering, because of expediency of machinery and fixed blade operation, licensed Muslim slaughterer should be present to do

the rendition of shahada. Generally it is accepted that a healthy young male can recite shahada approximately fifteen hundred times per hour. It is therefore, suggested that we have 2-3 Muslim slaughterer at the slaughtering station/s of medium abattoirs. These slaughterers would also slaughter with full recitation of shahada, and status will be harām if any bird/animal missed by the slaughterer.

#### 4. Blood Flow

Blood must be flowed freely from the neck of the animal, this method of bleeding lead to the death of the animal. The slaughterer or supervisor must ensure that all the flowing blood has been drained from the chicken or ovine or bovine carcass. No dorsal cut is allowed, since this method would slice or sever the spinal cord and the bird or the animal is rendered incapacitated to convulse to drain the flowing blood out of the carcass.

"Say: I find not in that which is revealed unto me aught prohibited to an eater that he eat thereof, except it be carrion, or blood poured forth, or swine flesh - for that verily is foul - or the abomination which was immolated to the name of other than Allah. But whoso is compelled (thereto), neither craving nor transgressing, (for him) lo! thy Lord is Forgiving, Merciful"

#### Neck Cutting

The act of slaughter must be done with a simple swipe across the neck. (33) The cut should not be any deeper than necessary to sever the carotid artery, jugular vein and windpipe and must not sever the spinal cord.

The knife to be used must be razor sharp; the blade must be straight and smooth, and free from any serration, pits, notches or damage. The length of the blade must be at least four times the width of the neck of the animal to be slaughtered. The blade must not flex noticeably whence in use.

The Jugular vein, windpipe and carotid artery should be cut by a single swipe of a sharp knife, without damage to the spinal cord. (34)

#### 5. Position of the animal

Small animals like chicken and other small birds must be restrained

either in an upright or prone position at the time of slaughter. Comparatively larger animal like lamb, sheep, goats, calves and other similar sized animals must be saved from injury and any kind of hassle at the time of slaughter so they should place on a cradle for slaughter and if hung on shackles all efforts are made that they do not injure or bruise themselves. Larger bovines, equines, deer and similar sized animals must be restrained in a standing position for slaughter.

#### Food Safety Assurance

As it is clear that anything which is hazardous is prohibited in Islām, Ḥalāl itself means healthy and safe for consumption, all the above standards are leading to food safety, and dictated to make food safe from any contamination. It is defined in ISO Standard (ISO22000, 2005) "The basic food safety concept is this: food will not harm the consumer so long as intended use guidelines are followed when it is prepared or eaten. Conversely, food is potentially harmful whenever it has been exposed to hazardous agents and intended use guidelines have not been followed." (35)

#### HAS (Ḥalāl Assurance System)

As hazard analysis critical control 7 principles here we develop 7 principles for Ḥalāl Assurance System HAS, which includes hazard analysis principles and ḥalāl slaughtering standards. A comprehensive assurance plan on HACCP style.

# 1. Check for Shariah compliance at the time of slaughter

Potential hazards associated with animal health, veterinary, handling and slaughtering procedures, and measures to control those hazards are identified. Animal must be allowed to slaughter and fit for processing.

# 2. Identify critical control points

These are points in a food's production – from its raw state through processing and shipping to consumption by the consumer – at which the potential hazard can be controlled or eliminated. Examples are cooking, cooling and packaging.

# **3.** Establish measures for each point

When control points are identified it is necessary to assign a measure to every critical control point. Address how you will remove the threat or vulnerability to maintain food safety and halāl assurance.

## **4.** Develop a monitoring body

Like there should be a governing body or supervisory who are well informed about all standards and literate of Shariah maxims.

## 5. Contingency plan

Prepare a contingency plan for the worst cases, like if assigned limit does not met to the control point what will be the second line of action.

# **6.** Verification of the system

Verify at each step that your developed CCPs (Critical Control Points) are working properly or not.

#### 7. Documentation

At last document, all the procedures and measures for counter check and future reference.

### Conclusion

Through the detailed study and research, we found that food safety and hygiene is inter related to the Ḥalāl assurance, if an organization assure its products Ḥalāl integrity, company may confident about the food safety and wholesomeness of the food. Islām always care for the health and safety issues of humans. Allah (SWT) descends the rules for the safety of creatures, and ordered us to take good care of ourselves. In the above research in is concluded that there are detailed maxims of Shariah regarding food safety and hygiene, named as Ḥalāl standards. As Ḥalāl is clearly defined or stated in the Islāmic guideline, but some new shapes or trends in the industry like stunning makes it doubtful for the consumption, in this situation we should assure the principles of HAS (Ḥalāl Assurance System) so that we can save the edifice of spiritual life of a Muslim.

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