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Halal Quality Management System: A Comparison between Halal and Kosher

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Abstract

This study discusses Ḥalāl and Kosher Food. How are these different dietary systems managed by food establishments? The management of Ḥalāl food has been studied from different perspectives. Management of Halāl food issues in Singapore adopts the 10 principles of Halāl Quality Management System set out by Islamic Religious Council of Singapore (MUIS) Halāl Certification Strategic Unit. However, no attempt has been made to systematically review the published literature on Halāl and Kosher food system management. It has been an industry practice for caterers to apply Halāl Certification even while they operate Non-Halāl kitchens. It is very challenging for caterers to maintain the Halāl Certification. The objective of Ḥalāl Quality Management System is to guide the Ḥalāl Certificate Holders in maintaining their Ḥalāl status. The principles developed contain very detailed guidelines to ensure that Ḥalāl integrity and traceability are maintained as well as no religious breaches. The Muslim worker in the company plays a very important role in ensuring that this system is followed. Thus, this reminds the Non-Muslims to be very serious whenever they are involved in providing Ḥalāl Food to the Muslim community.
Keywords: Ḥalāl, Ḥalāl management system, Ḥalāl certification, Kosher, Kosher Certification.

Introduction

In Singapore, Ḥalāl Certification is voluntary. Although voluntary, it has become an industry practice for caterers to apply for Ḥalāl Certification even though they operate Non- Ḥalāl Kitchen. Hence, even as the minority in the country, we as Muslims are not deprived of Ḥalāl food.
It is a very big challenge for caterers to maintain Ḥalāl Certification. The Ḥalāl Quality Management System, helps to guide Ḥalāl Certificate

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Holders to maintain management of Ḥalāl Food in their premise. This is to ensure that the Ḥalāl standards are always maintained and Muslims are not doubtful about the Ḥalāl status.

The Ḥalāl Quality Management System is benchmarked against internationally accepted certification standards. The 10 Principles developed helps to ensure that both Muslims in Singapore and Ḥalāl Certificate Holders practice and maintain proper handling and processing of Ḥalāl food they serve to the community.

Being the minority in Singapore, we are very blessed to have the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore, MUIS, to be part of our Government Institution[1]. Currently, there are no other religious bodies in the Government. MUIS is the sole custodian for Ḥalāl Certification. They are fully covered by the Administration of Muslim Law Act[2], AMLA. AMLA creates provision for the regulation of Muslim religious affairs and constitutes a council to advice on matters relating to the Muslim religion in Singapore and Syariah Court. (Attorney General Chambers, Administration of Muslim Law Act, 2018). Muslims can also rest assured as whenever a religious offence is committed, the penalty towards the certificate holder will be very severe. This assurance from MUIS gives security to the Muslims regarding the Ḥalāl Food. At the same time, it also serves as a reminder to the Non-Muslims to be serious as food service providers. The 10 principles are very detailed guidelines which happen behind the scenes of food service providers. The Muslim staff has to play their role diligently in order to ensure that Ḥalāl procedures are followed. There is no guideline given in Kosher Certification, except supervision by Rabbi.

Perceptions of Ḥalāl in Singapore

In Singapore, food stallholders hold the perception Ḥalāl as "No Pork No Lard". Additionally, Non-Muslims perceive Ḥalāl food as only for Muslim consumption and food must be blessed prior to consumption. They may not understand that Ḥalāl Food is for everyone.

With the Ḥalāl Exhibitions held in Singapore and the new economics promoting Ḥalāl food, there has been an increasing demand for it. Government agencies now require a Caterer to be Ḥalāl Certified before bidding for their tenders. This is especially so when caterers are

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[1] MUIS is a Government Institution in Ministry of Community and Youth.
[2] Administration of Muslim Law Act is a Statutory Act Governing Muslim Affairs in Singapore under Attorney General Chambers.

required to operate food stalls, for e.g. staff canteens or kitchen operators. On the other hand, no requirements have been stated for Kosher during such tenders. Kosher is considered as a special dietary requirement and only ordered upon request by the adherents of Jewish.

Dietary Requirements of Different Belief Systems
Different belief systems have different dietary requirements.

Figure 1: Different Dietary Systems

Islam	Judaism	Other Beliefs
• ḤALĀL • Ṭaiyyib	• Kosher • Pareve • Dairy	• Vegetarian • Vegan

What is Ḥalāl?
Does it only apply to food? How do we classify that food is Ḥalāl?
To answer all these questions, we have to go back to our Islamic tradition of Qurān and Sunnah. In Arabic, "حلال" means "permitted/allowed". Most food and drinks are considered as Ḥalāl unless forbidden in the Qurān or Hadīth of the Prophet (Muhammad) (pbuh).

Allah says in the Qurān:
"O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy." *(Qurān 2:168)*

Basic Concept of Ḥalāl Food
'Non- Ḥalāl', also traditionally known as '*Ḥarām*', means unlawful or unallowable. As the name implies, any food or drink which is classified as Non-Ḥalāl is prohibited for Muslim consumption. In general, all harmful things are Non-Ḥalāl. Examples of these include the meat of dead animals and birds, flesh of swine, intoxicating drugs and alcoholic beverages.

Figure 2: Concept of Ḥalāl Food

A	**A**nimals that live on land and sea
B	**B**lood and Birds of prey with sharp claws
C	**C**arnivorous animals
D	**D**ead Meat and Carrion
I	**I**ntoxicants and Food immolated unto Idols
S	**S**wine

Syubhah
Any food or drink which lies within the grey area and does not fall clearly under the Ḥalāl or Non- Ḥalāl category is classified as '*Syubhah*', alternatively called questionable or dubious.

One example of a *Syubhah* ingredient is lecithin. Lecithin can be derived from plants or animals. It is considered Ḥalāl if the lecithin comes from plants but Non- Ḥalāl should it come from pigs or animals that are not slaughtered in accordance with the Islamic law. Until the status becomes clear, Muslims should avoid consuming *Syubḥāh* food or drinks. The Prophet (pbuh) has given a guideline concerning *Syubḥāh* matters. It is reported by Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Daud, Ibn Majah and Darimi, as follows:
"What is Ḥalāl is clear. And what is Ḥaram is also clear. And in between those two is a dubious area in which many people do not know about. So, whoever distanced himself from it, he has acquitted himself (from blame). And those who fall into it, he has fallen into a state of Ḥarām".

Why is it so important for Muslims to consume Ḥalāl Food?
"O you who have believed, eat from the good things which We have provided for you and be grateful to Allah if it is [indeed] Him that you worship." (Qurān 2:172)

Allah commands His believing servants to eat from pure things that He has created from them and thank Him for it, if they are truly His servant.[1] Eating from pure sources is the cause for acceptance of supplication and acts of worship and hence, is a religious requirement.
In a Hadīth by Imam Ahmad that Abu Hurairah said; the Messenger of Allah said:
"O people Allah is Ṭaiyyib (Pure and Good) and only accepts that which is Ṭaiyyib". Allah has indeed commanded with the believers with what he has commanded the Messengers for what he said,

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[1] Tafsīr Ibn Kathir (English 114 surah's Complete)

[Allah said], "O messengers, eat from the good foods and work righteousness. Indeed, I, of what you do, am Knowing. (Qurān 23:51)

What is Kosher?

Muslims believe in the Qurān. On the other hand, Jews believe in Torah. There are mentions about the food that are permissible for Jews in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 17 of the Torah.

"Kosher" is a Hebrew word which means "allowed" and it relates to Jewish dietary law. Not all animals are edible; the animal must be Kosher slaughtered and their meat cannot be combined with dairy products[1].
Kosher food can be divided into three categories:

Meat
- The meat or bones of mammals and fowl,
- Soups or gravies made with them, and any
- Food containing even a small quantity of the above.

Dairy
- The milk of any kosher animal,
- All milk products made with it (cream, butter, cheese, etc.), and any
- Food containing even a small quantity of the above.

Pareve
- Foods are neither "meat" nor "dairy."
  Eggs are pareve, as are all fruits, vegetables and grains. Pareve   foods can be mixed with and eaten together with either meat or   dairy,
- Fish are pareve, but not eaten with meat due to health concerns outlined in the Talmud.

Kosher Certification or Kosher foods are carried out by Jewish. Non-Jewish are not allowed to prepare Kosher food. In the Jewish belief system, only the adherents or people that are obliged to follow Torah can prepare Kosher food. According to Jewish, Non-Jewish are not obligated to follow Torah, and will not have necessary knowledge to understand and prepare Kosher food.

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[1] This was taught to me by Rabbinate of Singapore M. Abergel at Synagogue Maghain Aboth during our Inter-Religious Community Meeting.

Can Kosher be an alternative to Ḥalāl Food?

There are many religions all over the world. With the growing population and the rise of Islamophobia, it may be difficult to look for Ḥalāl food in certain parts of the world where Muslims are minority. Kosher can thus be an alternative, but Muslims must be aware of what can be consumed. Muslims need to be aware that Ḥalāl options must still be the paramount choice. For example, in Germany and France where the Jewish Community is more than the Muslims, it may be easier to find Kosher options as compared to Ḥalāl options.

In Taiwan, their convenience stores also sell Kosher food only and no Ḥalāl Food. Hence, for Muslim soldiers who undergo overseas training in these countries, they will have to consume their meals in the Military Camps where the food is guaranteed Ḥalāl instead of heading out to find food.

It is part of the soldiers' training program to go for outfield training for a few days. During the training, soldiers need food that is nutritional to replace the lost protein and carbohydrates. In this case, energy bars can be used as a good replacement. Unfortunately, such energy bars are only Kosher certified and not Ḥalāl certified. This puts the Ministry of Defense in a dilemma because they still must offer a Ḥalāl alternative to the Muslim soldiers. In order to resolve this situation, the product manufacturer has to get the ruling from Muslim authority to give a religious guidance on this matter. The solution given to the product manufacturer is to fill in a *Ḥalāl* Questionnaire Form that contains complete details of the products specification and lab test results. If they do not wish to undergo this process, the Muslim soldiers must agree to accept the Kosher Certification for the particular product.

In the Qurān, Allah mentions in Surah Al-Maidah Verse 5:

"This day [all] good foods have been made lawful, and the food of those who were given the Scripture is lawful for you and your food is lawful for them. And [lawful in marriage are] chaste women from among the believers and chaste women from among those who were given the Scripture before you, when you have given them their due compensation, desiring chastity, not unlawful sexual intercourse or taking [secret] lovers. And whoever denies the faith - his work has become worthless, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers."

Does Kosher Certified Food conform to the International Standards of Food Safety and Food Hygiene similar to Ḥalāl Food?

No certification is issued for Kosher food. There is only a Letter of Certification (LOC) issued on consignment basis under the supervision of the Rabbinate. The auditors for this LOC are paid by the number of hours and manpower during the supervision. This service is meant to provide food that is in adherence for the faith believers as Kosher food is provided mainly for Jewish. Most governments allow this as a respect to the Judaism religion.

As the supervision is done by a private institution such as the Synagogue, it is not a recognized certificate service worldwide in comparison to the Ḥalāl certificate. However, today, it has become an increasingly popular choice for businesses to provide Kosher food for the Jewish faith believers. Currently, there are no requirements for Kosher food during importation to other countries.

What is vegetarian or vegan?

Vegetarian or vegan food is suitable for Muslim consumption. This dietary requirement is for non-meat consumers, due to health reasons or religious beliefs. Some religious beliefs forbid their believers to kill animals for consumption as killing is deemed to be cruel. However, when consuming vegan or vegetarian food, Muslims must ensure that the food does not contain or has been cross mixed with Non- Ḥalāl substances such as alcohol.

What impact does Ḥalāl Certification have on the business or consumer?

Although Ḥalāl Certification is stringent, it is aligned to International Standards such as ISO, IATA, TUV SUD and others. Ḥalāl Certification must conform to the ruling Government of the country as these certification bodies are registered with the Government. For catering companies involved in the aviation industry, they are also required to follow IATA standards and have a Ḥalāl certificate as airlines today offer meals which cater to Muslim passengers. Locally, companies providing catering services to any Government Institutions are required to provide Ḥalāl food and it is compulsory for them to have a Ḥalāl Certificate. However, there is no requirement to provide documents for Kosher food. Airlines with Ḥalāl requirements will conduct their audits which include Ḥalāl as part of their assessment. On the other hand, no audits are done for Kosher food in any airline report as the Jewish will supervise their own Kosher Food.

If Ḥalāl Certification is widespread, it will open a good market and source of income for the Muslims. Businesses owned by Muslims will also benefit from a better income when their products are exported overseas. The obligation of *zakah* that has to contributed yearly can also be used to help Muslim community. Ḥalāl aligned with International Standard

Benefits
There are benefits to having Ḥalāl certification aligned to international standards. This will allow producers to leverage on the global Ḥalāl market and hence, gain competitive advantage in the global market place. Additionally, Muslim consumers will also gain from greater product assurance and a bigger market as they can now consume products certified from internationally recognised Ḥalāl bodies. There is only a small investment cost that unlocks this huge potential growth in revenue for producers. Last but not least, companies can benefit from a potential increase in reputation as well when they are able to meet varied customer needs.

Recognition of Ḥalāl Mark
Internationally, the Ḥalāl Mark of one country may be recognised by another. For example:

i) MABIMS Agreement
'MABIMS' stands for the Unofficial Meetings of Religious Ministers in Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. Member countries are allowed to recognise the Ḥalāl Mark of one another.

ii) GCC- Free Trade Agreement
'GCC' refers to the Gulf Cooperation Council which comprises Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Oman. Member countries are allowed to recognise the Ḥalāl Mark of one another.
In Kosher certification, the Kosher Symbol is maintained through private agreements between companies that are Kosher Certified and the printing company. This is in contrast to Ḥalāl Certification, where the Ḥalāl Mark is a controlled item and has to be submitted to the authorities for acceptance. This is especially so for the Poultry Abattoir Scheme, where the Ḥalāl Mark is issued strictly by the Ḥalāl Certifying Authority. This allows for authorities to have complete control over labels.

In Singapore, Kosher Certification for poultry is only available at 1 abattoir – Hup Heng Poultry Industry. Due to its stringent nature of process, no other abattoir is willing to take up the challenge.

Ḥalāl is a requirement for food, as mentioned in the Qurān. There is also an important element of *Ṭaiyyib* (wholesomeness) in Ḥalāl, which pushes the certification bodies to craft the Ḥalāl Assurance System to be followed strictly according to Islamic law and is used during audits.

Ḥalāl Certification conforms to International Hygiene Standards and Food Safety requirements. Hygiene means the food is prepared hygienically whereas Safety means the food is safe for consumption. Due to the emphasis on these two factors, Ḥalāl certifying bodies today have come up with an improved Ḥalāl Assurance System that conforms to these international standards.

Hygiene and Sanitation

Hygiene has been given much emphasis in Islam and it includes the various aspects of personal hygiene, clothing, equipment and the working premises for processing or manufacture of food. The objective is to ascertain that the food produced is hygienic and not hazardous to health. Hygienic can be defined as free from *nājis*, contamination and harmful germs. All food shall be prepared, processed, packaged, transported and stored in such a manner that they are in compliance to hygiene and sanitary requirements of the relevant authorities.

Ḥalāl has very high integrity standards and has become an industry practice worldwide. For example, between MABIMS, one country can provide overseas certification for another if there is a need and this certification will be recognized by the receiving country. Businesses can use this platform to export their products as well. Additionally, as Ḥalāl certificates issued tend to be recognized worldwide, it is also a required document during importation.

Figure 3: Simplified Comparison of Ḥalāl to Kosher

	Ḥalāl	**Kosher**
Source of Ruling for Food	**Qurān and Hadith[1]**	**Kashrut[2]**
Certification Services	Registered Certifying Body in the Country recognised by Government[3]	Private Organisation: Synagogue.
Food Safety	Conforms to International Food Safety Standards (e.g. ISO 9000 or 22K) with religious guidelines	Conforms to the Divine Book as the Rabbinate deem fit.
Food hygiene	Conform to International Food Safety (e.g. HACCP) with religious guidelines	Standard practice by Divine Book and Rabbinate usually to Kosherise. Follows industry's practices.
Importation Requirement to another Country	Yes (To Asian Countries and Middle East[4])	No
Management System to empower Control System in Premise	Ḥalāl Assurance System in place and controlled by appointed Ḥalāl Team members	**No Management System is in Place. Rabbinate and his assistants will come to premise and supervise the food production.**
Certification	Ḥalāl Certificate issued	Letter of Certification
Marking	Allowed to use Ḥalāl emblem of the certifying body	Kosher label with indicator: Supervised by Rabbinate's Name. (Private Logo)
Slaughter of Animal for consumption	Yes Managed by Ḥalāl Team and Muslim Slaughterer	Yes Managed by Shochet to perform Schehita supervised by Rabbinate
Segregation of Equipment	No segregation is required for Independent Kitchen	Segregation of equipment is required during preparation of Kosher food
Can Ḥalāl be prepared in Kosher Kitchen and vice versa.	No	No

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[1] *Surat Al-Baqarah,* Verse 172
[2] Leviticus 11, Deuteronomy 14-17
[3] In Singapore Context this is under Administration of Muslim Law Act, Chapter 3 Release 2016, Clause 88 and 89. Ḥalāl Certification Condition Release 2016.
[4] Requirement under Emirates Authority for Standardization and Metrology (**ESMA**)

Figure 4: Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point vs Ḥalāl Quality Management Principles

HACCP VS Ḥalāl Quality Management Principles	
HACCP Principle 1- Conduct a hazard analysis.	**HALMQ Principle 1**- Establish the Ḥalāl Team
HACCP Principle 2- Identify critical control points.	**HALMQ Principle 2**- Define the product/ nature of business.
HACCP Principle 3- Establish critical limits for each critical control point	**HALMQ Principle 3** - Construct flow-charts
HACCP Principle 4- Establish critical control point monitoring requirements	**HALMQ Principle 4** - Identify Ḥalāl threats & their control measures
HACCP Principle 5- Establish corrective actions	**HALMQ Principle 5** - Determination of Ḥalāl Assurance Points, their Allowance Limits & Prescribed Practices (HAPs).
HACCP Principle 6- Establish procedures for ensuring the HACCP system is working as intended.	**HALMQ Principle 6** - Establish monitoring system for each HAP.
HACCP Principle 7- Establish record keeping procedures.	**HALMQ Principle 7** - Establish corrective actions for each HAP.
	HALMQ Principle 8 - Establish documentation & record keeping system
	HALMQ Principle 9 - Verify the Ḥalāl system
	HALMQ Principle 10 - Review the Ḥalāl system.

Figure 5: Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point and Kosher Principles

HACCP Vs Kosher	
HACCP Principle 1- Conduct a hazard analysis	Follow according to industry practices
HACCP Principle 2- Identify critical control points.	Follow according to industry practices
HACCP Principle 3- Establish critical limits for each critical control point	No flowcharts constructed for identification of process flow
HACCP Principle 4- Establish critical control point monitoring requirements	No critical points mentioned.
HACCP Principle 5- Establish corrective actions	No corrective actions established. If not in accordance to Kashrut, product is deemed unfit for Kosher
HACCP Principle 6- Establish procedures for ensuring the HACCP system is working as intended.	Procedures are established based on Rabbinic advice determine by Kashrut Laws
HACCP Principle 7- Establish record keeping procedures.	Record keeping is only for Receiving of Goods Production schedule for manufacturing products for Kosher Certification.

Figure 6: Basic Process Concept of Ḥalāl and Kosher in Food
Preparation Area

Types of Factors	Aspect to Consider	Questions to Ask: ḤALĀL	Questions to Ask: KOSHER
Internal	Ingredients	Is the meat used Ḥalāl?	Is the Meat Kosher?
	Processing Aids	Is ethanol used in making flavors Ḥalāl?	**Ethanol can be used in Kosher Production**
	Process	Is the process cross mixed with Non- Ḥalāl?	Is the process Separated for Kosher, Dairy, Pareve?
External	Equipment	Has the equipment come in contact with pork?	Are all equipment separated for Meat, Dairy, Pareve during the manufacturing process?
	Environment	Is the preparation of food prepared in hygienic and follows food safety guidelines?	Preparation of food is according to industry's hygiene standards.
	Physical Operation	Does the food come in contact with Non- Ḥalāl items?	Does the food cross mix with Non-Kosher products?

Both internal and external factors throughout the food supply chain must be

considered to render a product as Ḥalāl.

General Criteria of Ḥalāl Food

All ingredients must not be derived from Non-Ḥalāl sources.

Animals must be slaughtered according to Islamic rites.

All processes and ingredients must be free from *nājis* or filth (eg urine, faeces)

All process from preparation to transportation must be free from other processes that can deem the end product to be Non-Ḥalāl.

Determining of Ḥalāl Status for Internal Factors (Processing Aids)

Antifoams – can be chemically derived or from animal oil (lard) or from fatty acids from animal oil.

Bleaching agents – used to remove color pigment, usually obtained from wood or animal bones

Enzymes – used to break apart large organic molecules into smaller molecules and can be derived from animal, plants or micro-organisms.

Additives – commonly used in preparation and to increase food appeal; can be derived from animal fats or skin or inner lining of animal stomach (rennet) for making of cheese.

In order to determine the Ḥalāl status of the above products, a Ḥalāl certified premise has to use the guidelines set out in the Ḥalāl Management System. These guidelines are to be developed by the internal Ḥalāl Team, in order to minimize errors that can occur in Ḥalāl processes. Unannounced checks will be conducted from time to time to determine whether the company conforms to the standard. If there are any deviations or breaches found, there will be legal or enforcement actions taken on the company.

On the hand, according to the Rabbinic Council, the determination of the above is very much dependent how well versed the Rabbinic is on Kashrut Laws. The Rabbi attached to the company as its advisor will then have to advise the company whether the product can be accepted as Kosher. Hence, companies will have to keep engaging and paying the services of the Rabbi. This might open a can of worms as there are hefty costs involved, especially since the product will be recalled and deemed unfit for Kosher when there is any deviation detected.

Determining the Ḥalāl Status for External Factors Equipment
Usage of machine to debone or meat and poultry cutting.
Usage of Knife and scissors
Bins and trays used for transferring of raw materials from warehouse to kitchens.
Cooking ovens in shared kitchen.

Environments
Segregation of Preparation areas for Ḥalāl Meats and Poultry.
Food bank area for Ḥalāl and Non-Ḥalāl area.
Storage areas like chillers and freezers.
Dishing areas for Ḥalāl and Non-Ḥalāl.

Physical Operations
Differentiate workers for Ḥalāl kitchen and Non-Ḥalāl Kitchen.
Differentiate butchery operation area.

Ware wash for soiled crockeries; different ware wash machine to be use to segregate Ḥalāl wash and Non-Ḥalāl wash.

If any of the internal process ḤALĀL status are invalid, it will render the end product to be Non-Ḥalāl or doubtful (*syubhah*). In any Ḥalāl Certified premise, the Ḥalāl area has to be clearly defined and demarcated. This demarcation is to identify production lines, kitchen areas, storage areas, equipment, crockery, utensils and dishwashing facilities for the handling and processing of Ḥalāl products, menu items, raw materials, processing aids and additives. This will segregate between the Ḥalāl and Non-Ḥalāl processes. This is termed as Scope of Certification in the Ḥalāl Certification Conditions. (Singapore, 2016), Ḥalāl Certification Condition, Clause 1.10.

Scope of Certification- The scope of certification shall include (without limitation)
Transportation, receiving, storage and handling of raw materials and processing aids;
Areas of preparation, dishing, storage, transport, display and serving of food and drinks;
Collection, handling, washing and storage of equipment /utensils.

Due to the scarcity of land, a manufacturing plant can have a shared kitchen with both Ḥalāl and Non- Ḥalāl productions. Additionally, storage areas are also affected by this issue. Hence, companies have to maximize the space available to them in order to efficiently operate their business. In contrast, no demarcation is required for Kosher certification. Segregation will suffice, especially on usage of equipment.

Classification of Ḥalāl Kitchen and Shared Kitchen
What is Shared Kitchen?
In shared kitchens, the Ḥalāl caterer is required to show the minimum requirements for Ḥalāl compliance. The emphasis is for the caterer to demonstrate the minimum requirements within its production and operations to a consistent and satisfactory standard in order for them to be regarded as Ḥalāl compliant. As a shared kitchen involves Ḥalāl production & operations conducted within the same areas as a Non-Ḥalāl kitchen, it may involve sharing cooking equipment. Thus, this will require the caterer to ensure strict adherence to production / operation flow timetables and daily cleaning / sanitation programs to ensure

segregation and cleansing. Documented production & operation reports will also be required to demonstrate compliance by the caterer.

What is Ḥalāl Kitchen?

Separate Ḥalāl kitchens are becoming more common within established and newly constructed catering facilities. This is due to the increasing global demand for Ḥalāl food as businesses expand their networks and increase their strictness with Ḥalāl compliance. Separate Ḥalāl Kitchens requires the caterer to show preferred Ḥalāl requirements and be able to demonstrate and conform to these requirements with its production and operations to a consistent and satisfactory standard for them to be regarded as Ḥalāl compliant. Separate Ḥalāl kitchen operations should be approved and certified by the local Islamic authority whenever possible. A Separate Ḥalāl Kitchen involves Ḥalāl production & operations conducted within a completely segregated area within the same premises as a Non-Ḥalāl kitchen. This will involve dedicated kitchen cooking equipment & utensils and involve complete HACCP production flow segregation to ensure Ḥalāl compliance with no possible cross contamination likelihood with Non-Ḥalāl food or processes.

Ḥalāl Kitchen Minimum Requirements

In Ḥalāl Kitchen all sources of kitchen ingredients and materials are certified or permitted under Islamic Law. Caterers must demonstrate complete Ḥalāl understanding & compliance through its Ḥalāl policy, procedures & standards and is certified by the local Islamic Authority.

Scope of Certification

The scope can be specified by defining the physical location of the audit, the organizational units that will be examined, the processes and activities that will be included, and the time period that will be covered. Range of activities and the period (months or years) of records are to be subjected to an audit examination, including the details of the menu, ingredients / raw materials, additives, processing aids etc., to establish traceability and the scope of operations of the applicant.

The scope shall include but not limited to the entire process of procuring raw materials, processing aids, additives, storage, preparation, packing,

transportation and delivery of the products.[1] In the scope of certification, internal processes are inclusive. It is the duty of Muslim staff to ensure that the processes are followed without any lapses. Traceability of items is important in Ḥalāl Certified areas to determine the Ḥalāl status of a product from the beginning to the end product and then to the consumers. It will cause social tension should there be lapses that occur during the entire process.

In Singapore, if there are any of such issues that arise, the Office of Mufti will have to issue a Fatwa or religious guidance (*Irsyad*) with regards to the issue. This is in accordance with Administration of Muslim Law Act Chap 3, Clause 32.[2]: An act to issue Religious Ruling when community problem arises. A recovery procedure, such as a product recall, will have to follow after the Irsyad is issued.

For Kosher certification, rules are determined by Kashrut and defined by the Rabbi as the advisor of the company, who usually follows the industry's practices. Traceability is only done during receiving of equipment. Receiving logs have to be submitted for product identification as ingredients. This only applies to ingredients used as production for Kosher certified products. This is in comparison to Ḥalāl, where the checks are more thorough due to ISO certification. If the facility has a shared kitchen, a full site audit on the facility is required to determine that no deviation can happen. Facility coordinator or Muslim staff will be advised accordingly during audit on the audit outcome and they will have to perform the improvements recommended before their certificate is awarded.

Principles of Ḥalāl Management System.
In managing the Ḥalāl issues, we have a Ḥalāl Management System consisting of ten principles. These ten principles are used as a guide for the Ḥalāl Certified premises to overcome their challenges. The Islamic Religious Council of Singapore recommended the Singapore MUIS Ḥalāl Quality Management System (HalMQ), a set of systems-based Ḥalāl requirements that is benchmarked against international known standards such as ISO and HACCP.

Effective 1 January 2010, it has since been made compulsory for those certified to achieve the following objectives:

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[1] ḤALĀL Certification Condition Food Preparation Scheme release 10, www.muis.gov.sg

[2] Ibid

1) Enhance Ḥalāl compliance through a more structured and systematic approach.
2) Increase competitive advantage of certified companies.
3) Further increase credibility of Singapore Ḥalāl certification.
4) Meet rising expectations of Muslim consumers.
5) Widen the international recognition of Singapore Ḥalāl certification.

The ten principles of the Ḥalāl Management System are:

HALMQ Principle 1 - Establish the Ḥalāl Team.

HALMQ Principle 2 - Define the product /nature of business.

HALMQ Principle 3 - Construct flow-charts.

HALMQ Principle 4 - Identify Ḥalāl threats and their respective control measures.

HALMQ Principle 5 - Determination of Ḥalāl Assurance Points, their Allowance Limits and Prescribed Practices (HAPs)

HALMQ Principle 6 - Establish monitoring system for each HAP

HALMQ Principle 7 - Establish corrective actions for each HAP

HALMQ Principle 8 - Establish documentation system.

HALMQ Principle 9 - Verify the Ḥalāl system.

HALMQ Principle 10 - Review the Ḥalāl system.

The critical parts of this management system are principles 4-7. Principle 8 is the documentation for traceability.

Halal Quality Management System Plan										
		Principle 4			Principle 5	Principle 6				Principle 7
Location	Halal Threat	Process Step	Control Measures	HAP	Allowable Limits/ Prescribed Practice	Monitoring System				Corrective Action
						What	How	When	Who	Immediate Action	Call/Report
Procurement office	Items that are brought might not be Halal Certified or approved	Requirement to purchase item	a) Obtain Halal Certificate for meat/poultry item b) Obtain Halal Certificate,product specifications, detailed Halal Questionnaire and/or Lab analysis for non-meat and poultry items c) Attain Muis approval prior to procurement of All raw materials.	1	a) Zero Tolerance **All meat/poultry must have Halal Cert.** b) Raw Materials must have Halal cert or Halal Mark on product pakaging. All relevant documents must be in place before buying c) Allow to procure low risk item. Follow up with approval from Muis.	Halal Status of Raw Material	Halal Team conduct regular check Update procurement on recognised halalcertifying body for reference Advise procurement on product	For all procurement of new product	Halal Team Leader and procurement personnel	Meat/Poultry items from delisted supplier must get written approval from Muis to deplete the stock For non meat/poultry item, submit Halal Questionnaire for approval. Source for alternative supplier	Report to Muis get written approval to deplete all items and written approval for Questionnaire

From the perspective of Ḥalāl Quality Management System,

Procurement:
Minimum Requirements:
The Person(s) responsible for procurement to ensure that all meat products are Ḥalāl and slaughtered according to Shariah law with the appropriate certification.

Preferred Requirements:
All kitchen raw materials are Ḥalāl-certified and/or Ḥalāl-compliant. Incoming material specifications should reflect Ḥalāl status of raw materials.

Receiving Area:
Minimum Requirements:
Designated Ḥalāl receiving bay/dock and receiving equipment such as scales, bins and pallets
Designated Ḥalāl receiving area while materials are received and processed.
     Dedicated 'Ḥalāl Only' labeled storage required in each area to prevent cross contamination in the event of a shared kitchen storage. Include the correct signage and demarcate zones into different colours to facilitate the clear separation of Ḥalāl areas from non-Ḥalāl.
     High risk materials (i.e. Ḥalāl meats) should be segregated from Non-Ḥalāl materials, clearly labeled 'Ḥalāl Only'.

Preferred Requirements:
Separate Ḥalāl only storage facilities, dedicated solely for Ḥalāl materials. Similarly, dry goods storage facility should demonstrate the effective Ḥalāl label for all of its materials.

Principle 4 – Identify Ḥalāl Threats & their Control Measures
a.   Using the flow chart, the Ḥalāl Team shall identify and list all possible Ḥalāl threats at every stage of the operations;
b.   The Ḥalāl Team shall also identify and state the necessary control measures to eliminate/minimize these Ḥalāl threats.

Minimum Requirement:
All Ḥalāl food preparation is required to be segregated to prevent them from being mixed and contaminated with Non-Ḥalāl products. Any goods coming in contact with Non-Ḥalāl materials are considered *ḥarām* and therefore no longer able to be consumed.

Kitchens that operate under a Shared Ḥalāl kitchen operation will be required to demonstrate at every stage that all Ḥalāl food preparation is segregated from those involving Non-Ḥalāl materials, so as to prevent cross-contamination.

Shared kitchen equipment will require the caterer to ensure strict adherence to preparation/operation flow schedules to ensure Ḥalāl preparation is segregated from Non-Ḥalāl and the necessary cleaning procedures are employed. Processing aids and methods have to be carefully monitored to fulfill ḥalāl criteria.

Designated Ḥalāl-marked / color-coded kitchen utensils should also be used in the food preparation.

Principle 5 – Determine Ḥalāl Assurance Points (HAPs), their Allowable Limits & Prescribed Practices

a. The Ḥalāl team shall identify the HAPs in operations that are vital for ensuring the Ḥalāl status of products.
b. Allowable limits and prescribed practices shall be established for all HAPs.

Minimum Requirement

Fruit/vegetables and Seafood preparation – Does not require 'Ḥalāl' segregation in a Shared & Separate Ḥalāl kitchen operation providing items do not come in contact with Non-Ḥalāl materials.

Area in the kitchen designated / segregated for Ḥalāl preparation only. Indicated ' Ḥalāl Only' signage – (Ceiling mounted preferred).

Dedicated Ḥalāl marked preparation equipment. Use of green tape and paint for marking Ḥalāl equipment and utensils should be avoided if possible, as these materials collect dirt and deteriorate which may lead to FOD issues with Ḥalāl food from paint/tape chips.

Instead, Ḥalāl equipment can be identified by being engraved or tagged, while utensils like chopping boards can be colour-coded.

Principle 6 – Monitoring System

The Ḥalāl Team shall establish monitoring systems for each HAP, including who should act, when, how and what corrective actions shall be taken should there be a deviation from the specified allowable limits and prescribed practices.

The monitoring system shall be able to detect any sign of loss of control at the HAP. Some HAPs may be monitored by quantitative

measurements, e.g. voltage of stunning, or observation approach, e.g. Ḥalāl certification mark on packaging of raw material.

Staff assigned at each HAP shall be properly briefed and educated on the prevailing MUIS Ḥalāl Certification Conditions to ensure strict compliance.

A Shared Ḥalāl Kitchen conducting Ḥalāl food production and operations is required to ensure strict adherence to production flow schedules and daily cleaning / sanitation programs for production lines and equipment to prevent contamination with Non-Ḥalāl products through incorrect cleansing techniques.

Documented production and operation reports will be required to demonstrate compliance by the caterer.

Hygiene, sanitation and food safety is demonstrated in the production of Ḥalāl food and includes the various aspects of personal hygiene, protective clothing, equipment and food production areas.
Dedicated Ḥalāl-marked / colour-coded small kitchen utensils.

Area in the kitchen designated / segregated for Ḥalāl production only. Indicated 'Ḥalāl Only' signage – (Ceiling mounted preferred)
Dedicated Ḥalāl-marked preparation equipment.
Dedicated, trained Ḥalāl kitchen food handlers.

Principle 7 – Corrective Action

An example of corrective action for a religious issue will be, when soiled crockeries are cross-mixed between Ḥalāl and Non-Ḥalāl. In this case, a ritual cleansing has to be carried out. Under Ḥalāl Certification Conditions, only MUIS is allowed to perform Ritual Cleansing (i.e., *sertu*).

This is in accordance with Ḥalāl Certification condition Clause 3.8 that states:

> "All production lines, kitchen areas, cold rooms, chillers, equipment, crockery, utensils, dishwashing facilities, etc. that are used in the handling of Ḥalāl products, menu items, raw materials, processing aids and additives and have previously come into direct contact with pork, dog meat and/or their derivatives shall be declared and subjected to ritual cleansing by MUIS and/or MUIS-appointed agent"

However, in the case of aviation catering, Inflight Catering Centers, a special machine with ritual cleansing process has been installed and validated by Mufti of Singapore and delegates from various ministries. This is an exceptional case.

Principle 8 – Establishing Documentation and Record Keeping System.
All raw materials brought into Ḥalāl Certified premises must have proper Ḥalāl documents. Proper Ḥalāl documents according to Ḥalāl Certification conditions are:

> Every product, raw material, processing aid and additive stored, used, sold and which is within the scope of certification shall be properly packed, sealed and labelled with the product description, product code (if any), manufacturer's name and plant address for traceability and audit purposes.

Products, raw materials, additives and processing aids that are Ḥalāl certified bear a Ḥalāl certification mark on the packaging for ease of verification.A laboratory analysis report may be required by MUIS to confirm that the products, menu items, raw materials, processing aids and/or additives are all Ḥalāl. Declared and approved valid Ḥalāl certificates, questionnaires, specifications and/or laboratory analysis report for all raw materials and processing aids. Three months' records of purchase invoices and/or delivery orders for all raw materials, processing aids and additives. These shall be endorsed (with signature, name & date) by the Muslim Representative.

The Ḥalāl premise will utilise the above principles to suit their operation. Ḥalāl compliance audit inspections involve a systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining audit evidence (records, statements of fact or other information), which are relevant to the audit criteria (i.e. policies, procedures or requirements are verifiable) for objective evaluation to determine if the audit criteria are fulfilled.

Compliance here means that activities are carried out according to the established procedures as laid out in the premises of Ḥalāl procedures and operational requirements, the kitchen's Ḥalāl food safety policy and / or by the local Islamic authority. The audit should not create or lead to any questions or doubt.

An audit will be performed by a local Islamic Authority to determine and establish whether the Ḥalāl procedures, requirements and also the related results comply with the Ḥalāl Concept Criteria and whether the arrangements are implemented effectively and Ḥalāl in accordance to Shariah law (Law of Islam).

Ḥalāl Management Standards and Ḥalāl Concept Criteria
Ḥalāl management is the handling of all the functions and activities necessary to determine and achieve Ḥalāl compliance. Ḥalāl concept

criteria is defined as the organisational structure, responsibilities, procedures, activities, capabilities and resources that together aim to ensure that products, processes or service will satisfy stated or implied aims, i.e., in the production of Ḥalāl food.

A standard audit of the company's Ḥalāl system is conducted to:
• Determine the conformity of Ḥalāl system elements with their specified requirements.
• Determine the effectiveness of the implemented Ḥalāl system in meeting specified objectives.
Verify that non-conformities identified in a previous audit have been rectified as agreed.

Haram Analysis Critical Control Point (HrACCP)
HrACCP is a system which points out the potential critical points where Haram or najis materials may contaminate Ḥalāl materials. It also helps to prevent Haram materials to be used for the production of Ḥalāl foods .
There are 6 elements of a HrACCP system:
Identify and assess all *Ḥarām* and *Najis* materials.
Identify the critical control points
Establish the monitoring procedures.
Establish corrective actions.
Establish a record-keeping system.
Establish verification procedures.

Company Ḥalāl Policy Guidelines
This consists of general regulations of Ḥalāl food standard operating procedures for production and operation of Ḥalāl food, relating specifically to the kitchen's Ḥalāl classification.

Responsibilities of Muslim Representative
It is mandatory for any Ḥalāl Establishment in Singapore to have a Muslim Representative. Their roles and responsibilities among others are:
1. Advise the company / establishment on Ḥalāl food matters as well as cultural and religious sensitivities relating to them.
2. Monitor the Ḥalāl Assurance Points.
3. Verify and endorse all incoming products, raw materials and processing aids to ensure that they are Ḥalāl. As proof of this endorsement, the Muslim Representative shall endorse his / her

signature, name and date on the invoices and delivery orders of the products, raw materials, processing aids and additives

4. Attend to customers on Ḥalāl-related queries.

Locally, having a Muslim Representative is mandatory as he carries a big role within the Ḥalāl establishment. They are the first line of defense to ensure the Ḥalāl Status of any raw materials. Should the Muslim fail to discharge his duty diligently, the Ḥalāl process will fail and the company can be subjected to legal action. Every HAP has to be checked by the Muslim staff properly. Every HAP has a person in charge and these personnel are required to attend mandatory Ḥalāl Foundation Program training. This applies across all countries with Ḥalāl Certification. All HAPs must be managed by someone who minimally has a supervisory role so that he can exercise his power to correct the issues if need be.

On the other hand, every Kosher Certified company will have a Rabbinic Advisor or a supervisor attached to the Company. The advice is very much dependent on how well versed is the advisor to adhere the Kashrut and how observant is he as a mashgiach. Besides that, the advisor must possess a strong and ethical character because in business, companies want to reap profits from the certified product. Hence, they may offer benefits to the advisor for the sake of these profit. If the Rabbinic does not follow-up closely with the surveillance checks, the product may eventually be deemed not Kosher due to the lapses during production. This may create unnecessary losses to the company, especially if a product recall is activated. It is therefore clear that in Kosher Certification, it is very dependent on the experience of the Rabbinic to understand the Quality Assurance System and process flow. As a private body, they are not allowed to enforce and can only advise the company. This is in comparison to Ḥalāl certification where the certifying body is a Government agency who are able to take enforcement action during non-compliance.

Kosher Certification and Quality Assurance: External Factors
Equipment: Equipments are required to be segregated during all processes. All utensils used for Meat, Dairy and Pareve must also be separated. This is also a standard practice in food safety. However, each equipment must be sanitized during washing before it can be used for other purposes. If equipment is shared, it has to be Kosherised again by Rabbi before it can be used again. The food production is also deemed not Kosher if this happens. This creates room for control measures that has to be in place due to issues during production. Ḥalāl production does

not separate equipment according to category. However, if there is any cross mixing of equipment with Non-Halāl equipment, the equipment has to be ritual cleansed before it can be used for Ḥalāl production again. Dishing Area: Separate dishing areas are required for different meals.

Kosher requires that meat, dairy and pareve have separate dishing areas. They cannot be dished in the same area, plate or consumed at the same time. There is no restriction for this in Ḥalāl certification. The dishes only need to separate Ḥalāl from Non-Ḥalāl.

From Surah Al-Mā`idah, we understand that Kosher can be a replacement in the event where Ḥalāl food is not available. However, Muslims must be aware of the content in the food because they accept alcohol. Dairy products should be avoided because all cheese is Kosher regardless of its content. Cheese can be Non- Ḥalāl, depending on the source and ingredients inside the cheese.

From my experience in Taiwan, it was easier to get Kosher-certified products such as bread with jam. However, based on the knowledge I had, I avoided dairy products. I also avoided Vegetarian products because it is more dubious compared to Kosher.

Conclusion

Ḥalāl and Kosher processes are religious by nature and have to be maintained. Without maintaining the Ḥalāl process, food served for consumption can be Non-Ḥalāl or syubhah. As Muslims, it is obligatory for us to consume Ḥalāl food and avoid the syubhah. This can result in our prayers and supplication not being accepted by God. Kosher Certification is also determined by Kashrut. As the Jewish observe their religious law strictly, Kosher certification also needs to be credible and be done by a trusted body.

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