

## HALAL FOOD QUALITY: AN ANALYSIS OF RELEVANT GUIDELINES AND REGULATIONS IN MALAYSIA

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### ABSTRACT

*The world has seen rapid growth the development of halal food industry in recent years. At the same time, issues regarding the quality of halal food are also increasing, such as inconsistent flavours, portions, and incomplete orders. Hence, relevant halal food guidelines and regulations must also emphasise the tayyiban aspect of food. In this regard, the tayyiban aspect is related to food quality, where the guidelines and regulations must not only ensure the food is halal, but also the quality must fulfil the required standards. This paper attempts to examine existing guidelines and regulations in Malaysia related to halal food, such as the Manual Procedure for Malaysia Halal Certification (Domestic) 2020 (MPPHM 2020), Clean, Safe and Healthy (BeSS), Food Regulations 1985 (PPM 1985), Food Act 1983, Trade Descriptions Act 2011 (APD 2011), and Consumer Protection Act 1999 (APP 1999). This study utilises content analysis on documents related to the guidelines and regulations. The results of the study found that the guidelines and regulations adequately cover the essential aspects in assuring acceptable food quality. While there are areas that can be improved, overall, sufficient guidelines and regulations are already in place.*

**Keywords:** Halal, Tayyiban, Food Quality, Food Guidelines, Food Regulations

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Halal is a religious concept is highly influential in the life of Muslims. Aside from halal, Islam greatly emphasises the concept of *tayyiban*, particularly on food. Preserving human beings' physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being is essential in Islam (Man & Abidin, 2014). Allah SWT commands human beings to consume halal and *tayyiban* food. According to the Quran in surah al-

Baqarah verse 168:

*“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”*

From a holistic standpoint, the food consumed must comply with Islamic principal requirements, which are halal and *tayyiban*, which include safety, cleanliness, nutrition, and quality for human consumption. Food that is halal and *tayyiban* is prepared systematically and within a safe environment. Allah SWT also mentioned in Surah al-Mu’minun verse 51:

*“O messengers, eat from the good foods and work righteousness. Indeed, I, of what you do, am knowing”.*

It is clear that Allah SWT stresses the importance of *tayyiban* in all aspects of life, including the quality of handling food from raw materials to the point of consumption. Many works of literature discuss quality as one of the most important aspects of *tayyiban*. Thus, issues concerning the quality of halal food must be addressed to ensure that the halal food industry is constantly one step ahead.

In the halal food industry, there have been several issues regarding food quality, such as irregular amounts (Zainal, 2021), meal flavours, and incomplete orders. These issues indicate that the food quality produced is still poor and requires special attention. Furthermore, if the food quality is inconsistent, consumers may not know what to expect and would stop purchasing unreliable food.

There are several food-related guidelines and regulations in Malaysia. Nevertheless, to what extent do these guidelines and regulations specify the quality of halal food? Are present guidelines and regulations able to resolve the issue of halal food quality?

With these questions, this article attempts to examine the concept of food quality in the context of halal food. Therefore, this study highlights the critical aspects of food quality that have been covered by relevant guidelines and regulations, which helps address issues related to food quality in today's halal food industry.

## 2. THE CONCEPT OF TAYYIBAN AND FOOD QUALITY

### 2.1 *Tayyiban Concept*

The etymology of *tayyiban* is (طاب يطيب طيباً) *taba-yatibu-tiban*, which means "pure, clean, good, beautiful, delicious, halal, fertile, and abundant grass" (Kamus Besar Arab-Melayu, 2006). While the Kamus al-Quran (2012) states that it is something that tastes good, is free of impurities or filth, is free of abomination, and has an honourable nature. According to al-Wasit's dictionary, *tayyiban* is anything tasty and loved by the senses or the soul, or something that is not hazardous, painful, or nasty. The antithesis of *tayyiban*, which signifies filthy and harmful, is *khabaith* (evil). It refers to poor things that are filthy and detrimental to the body, as well as according to Sharia law (Ibn Kathir, 1990).

There are 12 verses in the Qur'an regarding *tayyiban* that are associated with food, namely surah al-Baqarah (2: 168 & 172), al-Nisa' (4: 160), al-Ma'idah (5: 4, 5, 6 & 88), al-A'raf (7: 160), al-Anfal (8: 69), al-Nahl (16: 144), Taha (20: 81) and al-Mukminun (23: 151). There are various food-related interpretations of the word *tayyiban*. For example, Ibn Kathir (1990) defined *tayyiban* as halal, good, beneficial for the body, and beneficial according to habit and sharia. According to Shihab (2002), *tayyiban* is food that is not dirty in terms of substance or is not combined with faeces and is tasty. Meanwhile, al-Qurtubi (1999), al-Sayuti (1990), and Ibn 'Ashur (1984) all agreed that *tayyiban* is clean, pure, safe, harmless, and of high quality. The manner of acquisition and good bounds according to humans are also included in Hamka's (2012) definition of *tayyiban*.

The contemporary definition of *tayyiban* is safety, nutrition, and quality (Bujang et al., 2020; Idris et al., 2020; Selim et al., 2019). Hassan et al. (2020) advocate *tayyiban* for product safety, nutrition, quality, hygiene, purity, and health. Meanwhile, Supian et al. (2018), Bujang et al. (2018), and Hashim et al. (2017) introduced an authentic feature to *tayyiban*. Arif and Sidek (2015) mentioned that *tayyiban* means good, delicious, and delectable. The ultimate goal of *tayyiban* is to create a pleasant sensation and produce clean and pure food (Alzeer et al., 2018). At this point, quality, along with sanitation, safety, and nutrition, are some of the components that contribute to food *tayyiban*, based on all the definitions related to *tayyiban*.

### 2.2 *Food Quality*

Accordingly, the spirit of food quality lies based on the *halalan tayyiban* concept in Islam. Quality is considered one of the features of *tayyiban* in many

literatures (Mokti & Kamri, 2020). The link between them can be found in the word quality, as well as other words that have significance in the context of food quality (Bujang et al., 2020; Bukhari et al., 2020; Hassan et al., 2020; Osman et al., 2020; Raffi & Hasan, 2019; Selim et al., 2019; Aghwan, 2018; Saad & Ramli, 2018; Bujang et al., 2018; Hashim et al., 2017; Anuwar & Roslan, 2016; Achmad & Irawanto, 2016; Ashikin & Hasan, 2016; Syahida et al., 2015; Man & Abidin, 2014; Abdul & Azhar, 2014; Kasmawati, 2014; Mohamad & Backhouse, 2014; Normalina et al., 2013; Shafii & W.S.K, 2012; Arif & Ridzwan, 2011; Yunus et al., 2010).

Quality is a degree of excellence, usually high or of quality, as defined by the language (Kamus Dewan, 2015). According to quality expert Deming W. Edwards (1982), quality is a predicted level of consistency and reliability with quality standards that suit the consumer. The notion of quality is also related to putting the requirements of the consumer first. It is something that must provide individual satisfaction, such as sensory elements that can satisfy the tastes of most consumers (Abdullah, 2012). Although it is a broad phrase, consumers' assessment of food quality is based on their personal preferences (A. Rohr et al., 2005). In the end, the effectiveness of food components in achieving consumer needs, utility, and expectations is evaluated. Consumer expectations include the quantity, size, or weight of the food.

In Islam, quality is always related to the word *itqan* (diligence), which means doing something in the best way. The Prophet SAW said:

*"Verily Allah loves when one of you does something work, it does well, perfect and thoroughly."* (Hadith narrated by al-Baihaqi)

In the context of food, quality can be assessed based on the effectiveness of food components in fulfilling consumer needs or utility and expectations. Various factors are considered essential in meeting consumer expectations. Delicious palatability<sup>1</sup>, fresh ingredient selection, proper cooking procedures, and meal presentations are some of them (Yunus et al., 2010). Consumers' expectations and perceptions also involve taste, smell, freshness, and appearance (Savov & Kouzmanov, 2009). Similarly, Raffi and Hasan (2019) and Idris et al. (2020) define quality based on food taste, presentation, and texture. Aside from that, pleasant taste and smell, being beneficial, fresh, natural, clean and pure, possessing a taste associated with a particular ethnic group or country, manner of food preparation, and food preparation or processing are all examples of

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<sup>1</sup> Palatability refers to something that a customer finds acceptable in terms of his mouth, mind, and even feelings (Ferree, 1918).

quality food criteria (Ismail et al., 2018). Saghir (2014) also mentioned the degree of excellence involves nutritional and hygienic aspects in food handling equipment, such as microbial interventions, that are then passed to the food.

Food quality can be interpreted through the expression of phrases, such as 'good, delicious, tasty' (Arif & Sidek, 2015), 'whatever the soul or the senses enjoy' (Mannaa, 2020), 'all kinds of delicious and desirable flavours and colours and beautiful appearance' (Idris et al., 2020), 'newness' (Mahbubi et al., 2019), 'good physical shape' (Aghwan et al., 2016), 'appropriate to our tastes, whether in terms of smell, taste and appearance' (Salamon et al., 2021), and 'creates comfortable feeling' (Khan et al., 2021).

To sum up, this study focuses on the primary criteria agreed in the literature to demonstrate food quality, namely taste, the freshness of ingredients, and food presentation. The first criterion is regarding excellent taste. According to Delwiche (2004), the temperature, along with other sensory qualities such as taste, smell, and sight, influenced how the perceived flavour of food is rated. Therefore, the temperature might be regarded as one determinant that enhances meal satisfaction. The second criterion is freshness. It refers to the state of food when it is still fresh and appears to be linked to crispness, juiciness, and scent (Bashir et al., 2015). The final criterion is food presentation or appearance, which also plays a role in determining food quality. Presentation refers to how appealing the food is presented and adorned. Plating food and arranging dishes require skills and techniques (Namkung, 2007). Meanwhile, appearance refers to food size, shape, defects, and colour. Appearance is a factor that highly affects consumers' first impressions (Molnar, 2009). Food appearance is determined by whether promised standards, such as meal size, are met. The three criteria are used to evaluate whether a cuisine meets the consumers' expectations. Table 1 summarises the criteria of food quality based on research findings.

**Table 1.** Criteria of Food Quality Literature

| No. | Food Quality Criteria    | Literature  |
|-----|--------------------------|---|
| 1.  | Taste                    | (Salamon et al., 2021; Idris et al., 2020; Raffi & Hasan, 2019; Ismail et al., 2018; Saghir, 2014; Shaharudin et al., 2011; Yunus et al., 2010; Savov & Kouzmanov, 2009). |
| 2.  | Freshness of ingredients | (Ismail et al., 2018; Shaharudin et al., 2011; Yunus et al., 2010; Savov & Kouzmanov, 2009)   |
| 3.  | Food presentation        | (Salamon et al., 2021; Idris et al., 2020; Raffi & Hasan, 2019; Aghwan et al., 2016; Saghir,  |

2014; Abdullah, 2012; Shahrudin et al., 2011; Yunus et al., 2010; Molnar, 2009; Savov & Kouzmanov, 2009; Rohr et al., 2005)

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The focus of this study is to identify the quality criteria of halal food and review the existing guidelines and regulations relating to food quality aspects. A qualitative approach was used for data collection and analysis. For the data collection, literature on food quality was identified and collected. The literature provided the criteria to determine food quality. The literature review identified three criteria referring to food quality: taste, the freshness of ingredients, and food presentation. These aspects were analysed based on the existing guidelines and regulations in Malaysia.

### 4. FINDINGS

A total of six documents regarding guidelines and regulations that cover food quality aspects were identified, namely the Manual Procedure for Malaysia Halal Certification (Domestic) 2020 (MPPHM 2020), Clean, Safe and Healthy (BeSS), Food Regulations 1985 (PPM 1985), Food Act 1983, Trade Descriptions Act 2011 (APD 2011), and Consumer Protection Act 1999 (APP 1999). All aspects of food quality contained in the guidelines and regulations were elaborated in detail.

#### *a) Manual Procedure for Malaysia Halal Certification (Domestic) 2020 (MPPHM 2020)*

The MPPHM is a comprehensive manual that must be complied with to receive a halal certificate in Malaysia. It is an initial and mandatory reference for a business that wants to obtain a halal certificate from the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM). The MPPHM is the basis of the requirements, regulations, and procedures in compliance with halal food that is *tayyiban*. In addition, it is considered an essential guide for JAKIM Examining Officers and the State Islamic Religious Department (JAIN)/State Islamic Religious Council (MAIN) for approval and inspection purposes. MPPHM has been amended four times, beginning in 2005, 2011, and 2014, and the latest is in 2020.

Under part IV (certification requirements), the food quality criteria listed in MPPHM 2020 are related to appearance (size and quantity): the measurement and weight of the product shall meet the content or quantity as stated on the

product label. This is to ensure that all halal-certified food also stresses on food quality in terms of quantity to protect consumers from being deceived.

**b) Clean, Safe and Healthy (BeSS)**

BeSS is a form of recognition that encourages food establishments to keep their facilities clean, serve safe food, and provide consumers with healthier meal options. The BeSS 2012 edition is the first edition to be introduced before the latest edition in 2019. BeSS recognition was first introduced to mobile food businesses popularly known as food trucks in March 2016. Inspections are conducted by the Ministry of Health (MOH) or local authorities. The benefits of this certificate are also provided at no cost and are part of the MOH's promotional programme. Food safety and nutrition are the primary components of BeSS. Four elements are highlighted through these components: maintaining a clean premise, providing safe food, promoting healthier food, and providing appropriate food serving sizes (Akhiruddin, 2020).

The food quality criteria stated in BeSS involve guidelines for the selection of fresh raw food, such as fish, eggs, poultry, meat, shrimp, cereals, grains and processed foods. An example of a fresh meat selection guide is that the fresh meat must be bright red, odourless, not slimy, and low in fat. Although BeSS is an additional certification for entrepreneurs, it promotes confidence that the food sold is of good quality. Consumers can benefit from the usage of fresh raw ingredients in ways other than satiety.

**c) Food Act 1983**

The purpose of the Food Act 1983 is to protect the public from any types of endangerments or fraud in the production, sale, and consumption of food and any subject related to it. The Food Act was first enacted in 1974 and then revised in 1983. The last time it was amended was through Act A1266, which came into force on 30 June 2006. It is a Malaysian law enshrined act that falls within the competence of the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs (KPDNHEP). Under this act, consumers are protected, and food premises are subjected to Food Regulations 1985, Food Hygiene Regulation 2009, Food (Issuance of Health Certificate for Export of Fish and Fish Products to the European Union) Regulations 2009, and the Food Irradiation Regulations 2011.

This Act is significant because it allows the MOH to conduct comprehensive food inspections. The authorities at the MOH are well-versed in food labelling, hygiene, and food safety. Although halal food products are not the primary

goal and are not explicitly addressed in the Food Act 1983, this section indirectly considers cleanliness, purity, health, and quality food, which are part of *tayyiban*. However, section 15 can still assist consumers in determining whether the food contains prohibited ingredients. That is where the right content label should be placed.

The Food Act 1983 establishes food quality criteria for labelling violations, which covers cases where food sold is not as labelled or, in other words, not as expected by the consumer. The inconsistencies in weight and quantity of the food are examples of these violations. Section 16 contains a list of the rules: False labelling, etc. Any person who prepares, packages, labels, or sells any food in a manner that is false, misleading or deceptive as regards to its character, nature, value, substance, quality, composition, merit or safety, strength, purity, weight, origin, age or proportion, or in contravention of any regulation made under this Act commits an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years or to fine or to both.

**d) Food Regulations 1985 (PPM 1985)**

Food Regulations 1985 is also a regulation under the Food Act 1983, which is the parent act (Act 281). On August 26, 2016, it was revised and gazetted, and it went into effect on September 1, 2016. This restriction, however, does not apply to the preparation, manufacturing, or packaging of food for export outside of Malaysia. There are 399 rules in total that have been established. All these regulations are in place to safeguard consumers against unapproved and potentially hazardous food.

These rules address sample collection techniques, labelling (form and manner of labelling, size and colour of letters, date of marking, and declaration of component strength), food additives and added nutrients, and food packaging. Meat, fish, milk, vegetables, fruits, sweets, eggs, oils, tea, coffee, and other food are all individually restricted. This rule also includes the lard rule (182) and other laws of a similar nature. Meat, minced meat, vegetables, and fruits, for example, are regarded as fresh according to specific parameters based on the emphasise of the product.

The rules that apply are as follows:

- i. (No. 141) (1) Meat or fresh meat shall be the edible part of the skeletal muscle of an animal, other than fish, that is normally used for human consumption and that was healthy at the time of slaughter. It may contain accompanying and overlying fat together with portions of bone,



skin, sinew, nerve and blood vessels that normally accompany the muscle tissue and are not separated from it in the process of dressing. It may be accompanied by edible organs.

- ii. (No. 144) Minced meat or ground meat shall be fresh, chilled, or frozen meat that has been disintegrated by mincing or chopping.
- iii. (No. 210) Fresh vegetable shall be vegetable that is not dehydrated, dried, canned or frozen and shall not be withered, shrivelled or discoloured.
- iv. (No. 225) (1) Raw fruit or fresh fruit shall be the fruit that is not dried, pulped, dehydrated, frozen, canned, candied or pickled. It shall not be withered, shrivelled or discoloured. (2) Raw fruit or fresh fruit may contain permitted colouring substances used in grading or identifying raw fruit as specified in sub-regulation (5) of regulation 21. (3) For the purposes of this regulation, edible food grade wax may be used in the cleaning and preparation of raw fruit for sale.

*e) Trade Descriptions Act 2011 (APD 2011)*

APD 2011 is a statute incorporated in Malaysian law that falls under the purview of KPDNHEP. It aims to promote healthy business transactions in general and firmly bans any behaviour involving fraud or any attempt to cause uncertainty or ambiguity in such transactions. The Trade Descriptions Act 1972 was repealed, and this Act was enacted to replace it. The APD 2011 was enacted to regulate halal issues and arrangements in Malaysia. It went into effect on January 1, 2012 and is still in effect today.

The Trade Descriptions (Definition of Halal) Order 2011 and the Trade Descriptions (Certification and Halal Marking) Order 2011 were both enacted under the APD 2011. Section 29 of the APD 2011 states that KPDNHEP could grant JAKIM complete authority to handle applications and issue halal certificates. This implies that JAKIM can enforce laws and bring legal action against any offence of misuse of the halal logo.

The food quality criteria stated in the APD 2011 relate to confusion in advertisements, which can lead to consumers feeling deceived when they receive food that is not same as expected. For example, the advertisement portrays burgers in large sizes, but in reality the burgers are smaller than they should be.

The rules can be referred to under the part of false or misleading statements in advertisements: 18. (1) No person shall make any false or misleading statement in any advertisement in relation to any goods or services. (2) Where any person is charged with an offence under this section, the onus of proving that the statement made by him is true or not misleading shall be upon the person charged.

Regardless, legal action can only be taken by KPDNHEP and not by the consumer directly. Consumers can, however, file a complaint with law enforcement agencies.

*f) Consumer Protection Act 1999 (APP 1999)*

The Consumer Protection Act 1999 (PPM) is the primary law in Malaysia that protects consumers. This Act covers all forms of goods and services that are offered or provided to consumers. The Act prohibits deceptive and misleading conduct, false representation, and unfair practices that could lead to consumer confusion or misinterpretation. It also advocates for unfair contract conditions and delinquency concerning these terms. On November 15, 1999, the APP 1999 (or Act 599) went into effect, providing statutory measures for consumer protection. Since then, five adjustments have been made in 2002, 2003, 2007, and 2010. Act A1598, enacted in 2019, was the most recent amendment. The application of this Act is supplemental and does not influence any other law that governs contractual relationships. The Tribunal of Consumer Claims was established through the APP 1999 to hear, understand, and resolve consumer claims. Legal action can only be brought by KDNHEP and not directly by the consumer.

The APP 1999 protects consumers in various ways, including the safety of goods and services, unfair contract terms, credit sale transactions, and guarantees in the delivery of goods. In the meantime, the Food Act 1983 and the Food Regulations 1985 are specific legislation that deals directly with food goods. The food quality criteria stated in the APP 1999 are about false or misleading representations. Details can be referred to as follows:

No person shall make a false or misleading representation that--

- a) the goods are of a particular kind, standard, quality, grade, quantity, composition, style or model;
- b) the goods have had a particular history or particular previous use;
- c) the services are of a particular kind, standard, quality or quantity;
- d) the services are supplied by any particular person or by any person of a particular trade, qualification or skill;

- e) a particular person has agreed to acquire the goods or services;
- f) the goods are new or reconditioned;
- g) the goods were manufactured, produced, processed or reconditioned at a particular time;
- h) the goods or services have any sponsorship, approval, endorsement, performance characteristics, accessories, uses or benefits;
- i) the person has any sponsorship, approval, endorsement or affiliation;
- j) concerns the need for any goods or services;
- k) concerns the existence, exclusion or effect of any condition, guarantee, right or remedy; or
- l) concerns the place of origin of the goods.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The table below summaries the findings about the substance of relevant guidelines and regulations. According to the table, the quality factor that is most covered is food presentation (size and quantity), followed by the freshness of ingredients, and taste is an uncovered aspect in any guidelines or regulations.

**Table 2:** Distribution of Food Quality based on Relevant Guidelines and Regulations

| <b>Guidelines and Regulations/Criteria of Food Quality</b> | <b>Food Presentation</b> | <b>Freshness of Ingredients</b> | <b>Taste</b> |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| MPPHM 2020   | /                        | NA                              | NA           |
| BeSS   | NA                       | /                               | NA           |
| PPM 1985   | NA                       | /                               | NA           |
| Food Act 1983  | /                        | NA                              | NA           |
| APD 2011   | /                        | NA                              | NA           |
| APP 1999   | /                        | NA                              | NA           |

Source: Researcher Analysis

Two guidelines and four regulations highlight the quality element of food. Although the food quality criteria are rarely mentioned in the guidelines, the halal food industry seems to be highly committed to maintaining the quality of the food produced. For that reason, although the quality element is less emphasised in the relevant guidelines, its application in the halal food industry is commendable and satisfactory.

The freshness of ingredients and food presentation (size and quantity) are two critical criteria. However, these criteria are less emphasised by manufacturers, so they are included in the guidelines and regulations concerning food. Although food presentation (size and quantity) is seen as less critical to manufacturers, they still need to be given attention to avoid consumers being deceived. Therefore, it is highly desirable to be prioritised over other criteria.

Food presentation (size and quantity) is addressed in the MPPHM 2020, APD 2011, APP 1999, and Food Act 1983. The measurement and weight of the product shall meet the content or quantity as declared. This is because the act of purchasing food among consumers is also influenced by the food standard. It is inappropriate if negligence, such as giving small portions or incomplete food sets, is allowed to continue. Furthermore, online sales are increasing, making it difficult for consumers to re-switch their food. Accordingly, manufacturers must be more attentive and cautious in producing high-quality food, especially when meeting the promised food standards. The aspect of compliance with the standard is closely related to one of the consumers' rights, which is to acquire accurate and complete information through verbal communication, labelling, or advertising.

The same goes for the fresh material source criterion. The freshness of ingredients is mentioned in both BeSS and PPM 1985. It proves that there are initiatives from the authorities to encourage the use of fresh ingredients in food production. The freshness of ingredients helps identify the difference between one food from another. This is because using fresh ingredients boosts the dish's quality, such as taste. Therefore, BeSS has provided guidance for selecting fresh ingredients. According to PPM 1985, freshness is also emphasised in selecting specific raw commodities, such as beef. In general, obtaining fresh raw materials is a plus, but it also costlier than purchasing non-fresh ingredients.

The other criterion, which is not addressed in the guidelines or rules, is taste. Taste is subjective, allowing manufacturers to be creative in their food production. It is also considered less of an issue on the basis that it is always the focus of manufacturers. It is also less risky compared to other food quality criteria because it does not harm consumers if the foods are not tasty. Most manufacturers strive to improve their food quality due to increasing competition from time to time. In addition, consumers place a higher value on food quality, particularly its taste, than other criteria. Food taste quality could influence consumer interest, demand, and satisfaction<sup>2</sup>. A high consumer

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<sup>2</sup> Customer satisfaction is a key indicator of an organisation's past, present, and future performance, and it has long been a point of focus for exhibiting professionals and scholars (Kannan, 2017).

satisfaction will have a long-term effect on halal food businesses.

Overall, it can be concluded that the food quality guidelines and regulations studied have their own focus and tendency to emphasise food quality criteria. The regulatory emphasis on food presentation (size and quantity) highlights the importance of this criterion since it is a quantifiable factor. At the same time, it does not deny the importance of the other two halal food quality criteria. The ability of halal food manufacturers to balance these three criteria not only highlights the concept of comprehensive halal food quality but also shows the importance of halal food quality in fulfilling the concept of *halalan tayyiban*.

## 6. CONCLUSION

According to the findings of the exploratory investigation, current guidelines and regulations have a rigid system for creating food products and set a benchmark for food quality. The quality component of halal food production must be at an ideal level. Therefore, related authorities should play a more proactive, efficient, and competent role in addressing halal food quality issues. More emphasis should also be placed on the application of existing legislation.

Similarly, manufacturers must recognise the relevance of guidelines and regulations governing their businesses based on market and consumer needs. They must also be more sensible and consumer-friendly to ensure a decent and fair sale and buy relationship and profit. Meanwhile, consumers should be aware of their rights to avoid being tricked and mistreated by profit-driven traders.

According to the findings, food quality norms and regulations are generally acceptable, especially in food presentation (size and quantity). On the other hand, the effectiveness and compliance of manufacturers with the rules must be re-evaluated. In this context, researchers look at related lawsuits, among other things, to raise consumer awareness of the several types of protection available to them when dealing with food quality issues.

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