

Expectation and Effectiveness of the Halal Slaughtering Training Towards Employability among Blue Collar Workers

²A.R. Norhayati Rafida, ¹A. Siti Mashitoh, ¹A.R. Alina and ¹N.H. NurulHusna

¹Institute of Halal Research and Management (IHRAM),
Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), 71800 Bandar Baru Nilai, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia

²Faculty of Leadership and Management,
Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), 71800 Bandar Baru Nilai, Negeri Sembilan Malaysia

Abstract: Opportunities for Halal careers offer brighter prospect for blue collar workers, to become competent slaughterers towards fulfilling the mandatory Halal specifications. In Sarawak, Malaysia, competent meat slaughterers is seen as crucial to cater industrial demands for Halal meat. To what extent does the training fulfill the needs of the blue collar workers? What is their perception towards the Halal slaughter training? This paper aims at understanding the expectations of trainees towards the training; the effectiveness of module content and duration that took place in the training. This study employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Interviews are conducted to identify the expectation of trainees towards the training, Surveys conducted to measures the effectiveness level of content and duration of the programme among the 27 trainees. 95.5% of them agreed that the content of the module was effective and much needed in the context of meeting the industrial Halal needs. The duration of the programme was perceived as moderate (50%) while another 50% is at satisfactory level. The findings shows that Halal slaughter training is required to overcome issues of workers shortage Halal meat products. As education level influences the understanding level, the duration of the training is profoundly significant to ensure effectiveness among the blue collar workers. In conclusion, this module is effective towards bridging the theoretical and hands on skills of Halal Slaughterers for Malaysia Halal Meat Industry.

Key words: Halal • Policy • Certification • Employability • Blue Collar

INTRODUCTION

Halal certified product is considered an asset with high economic value which is related to the demand and needs from Muslim consumers around the world. In tandem with the increase of Muslim population from Muslim countries, the demands for Halal products also increase. The value of halal products was estimated to be around 150 billion USD a year [1].

Trade Description Order (Usage of the Term “Halal”) 1975, defines Halal as referred to any form, in the process of trade or commerce as an aspect of trading or part of an aspect of trading for food. ‘Guaranteed Halal’ or ‘Muslim

Food’ or any other terms that may be used to indicate or may be understood as the meaning to indicate as permissible to be consumed by Muslims and allowed in their religion for the referred food to be consumed, as follows [2]:

- does not stem from or consists of any part of or item from animals that are forbidden to Muslims by Islamic law, or animals that have not been slaughtered according to the Islamic law;
- is not prepared, processed or manufactured using equipment or utensils that are not free from impurities as defined by Islamic law;

Corresponding Author: A.R. Alina, Institute of Halal Research and Management (IHRAM),
Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), 71800 Bandar Baru Nilai, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia.
Tel: +6019-2623670.

- does not contain any substance that is considered impure in Islamic law; and that, in the preparation, processing or storage stage, does not come in contact with or is stored near any kind of food that does not meet the requirements of para(s) (a), (b) or (c) or any substances that are considered impure by Islamic law.

Muslim Consumers: A total of 1.6 billion Muslim consumers are found in 112 countries where 70 countries have Muslims as the majority, some countries where Muslim population is second in number and are heavily concentrated [3]. India is found to have greater in numbers for its population which is 952 million Muslims than China which is 100 million altogether. Muslim population can also be found in other non-Muslim countries like Russia, USA, France and Germany.

A substantial of 225 million dollars was spent on Halal Food by the European Union with a total Muslim population of 17 million, compared to the highly populated ASEAN Muslim Market of 261 million, which amounted to only 51 billion dollars. The global market highlights higher demand and income from food products and exports which has increased due to the needs for safety and quality globally from both Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

In 2004, the Halal Standard was introduced in Malaysia to secure a market share of Halal globally (MS1500:2004). Later, it was revised in 2009 known as MS 1500:2009. Not only the Muslim market demand Halal compliance, even non-Muslim countries, have made extra precautions of producing food and non-food in conformity with the Halal standard.

The importance of the Halal product business is proved when the term of Halal is provided in the Codex, well-known international organization of quality and ethics of agricultural products and food standardization "Codex Alimentarius", which belongs to the World Health Organization (WHO) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) since 1997 [4].

Institute of Halal Research and Management (IHRAM): It is operationalized under the Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM) which aims at increasing and ensuring the quality of knowledge and services generation, towards making IHRAM as the chosen Centre of Knowledge. It includes the aspects of planning, development, strategic structuring and development,

research and services related to sectors of the public, private, community, international agencies, international communities, media, corporate publication, promotion and marketing management.

The niche focus are on Islamic sciences and services, to meet the current industry and societal demands with the dynamic change of time and is used to address age old issues of *syubhah* meat status, with the current technological knowledge without compromising the *Syariah* values. In the contribution towards nation building and fulfilling the Malaysian agenda, continuous efforts have been planned to achieve a goal, where USIM is the university which integrate social sciences, Islamic sciences and technology.

IHRAM also coordinates strategic plans and actions towards achieving the mission of USIM to provide better income in careers with the right *Syariah* and technological know-how, besides fulfilling the obligatory societal duties of *da'wah* through knowledge from the ivory tower. IHRAM's uniqueness is in her role as the reference centre that will create links between the scholars and the local and international figures with the university, society, federal government and the public and private agencies or organizations [5].

Halal Job: Also known as Haljob, this is a collaborative project between the food industry and selected government agencies, supported by the Halal Industry Development Corporation (HDC), IHRAM, Global Integrity Products and Services Private Limited and Jabatan Agama Islam Sarawak (JAIS), Malaysia. This project aims to (1) educate Muslim youths in becoming skilled workers for the Halal industries as their source of income; (2) provide opportunity of knowledge advancement through the programmes organized by HalJob; (3) reduce dependency towards employment of foreign workers although cheaper may not necessarily be well trained; (4) instill responsibility towards the essentials of Halal values in life among Muslim youths; and (5) to upgrade the socio-economy and sustainability of better income for youths through the Halal Industry. HalJob aims to provide the know-how and opportunity in Halal food industry, slaughtering, cosmetics, pharmaceutical as well as logistics.

Services is not all about income generation and profit making; the Islamic approach and ethical values ensure that integrity is practiced and delivered in every aspect of life for a greater Muslim community. By having the HalJob

programme, the social life of youths could be upgraded by increasing the knowledge and ethics as practicing Muslims, through the improvement of earning power and independence. Poverty and higher rate of unemployment, may cause unresolved social problems.

The young generation left out from the mainstream of tertiary education and school dropouts, are among the target youth groups, which now have better career opportunities and choice, through HalJob. This programme consists of theory and practical session hands-on training. Being part of the Halal Slaughtering Programme, the module was designed to identify and train people in the food industry who are highly interested in seeking slaughtering as a promising career, with potential to be upgraded as Halal Executives, thus filling in the gap of professionalism and skilled-workers.

This study, therefore, is inspired to seek an understanding to what extent does the training fulfil the needs and interests of the blue collar workers? What is their perception towards the Halal slaughter training? It is found that process-based feedback led to significant performance improvements and information about expert processes [6]. Having had this view, this paper outlines two research objectives which include:

- To recognize the expectations of trainees towards the training;
- To identify the effectiveness of the content and duration that took place in the training.

Methods: This research employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches which uses interviews and the survey method respectively. The training began from the 27th January 2013 until the 2nd February 2013. The six days programme was carried out in order to complete the syllabus from the module.

Interview: According to the interviews, only 22 responses were obtained based on a structured questionnaire to understand the perception of the participants towards the preparedness and expectation over the module in HalJob programme. Since the educational background is diverse, the way this programme is perceived differs in terms of the knowledge of the topics given for the participants.

Survey: The survey method, however, measured the perception of the participants towards the effectiveness of the module from both content and time allocation

throughout the programme. The survey involved 22 trainees using the self-administered approach.

The questionnaire was established in three different sections. The first section emphasizes on the topic that they were highly interested and the second section measured the effectiveness of the content as well as time allocation in a 10 points scale from one to ten throughout the programme. The data was analysed using the Statistical Procedure of Social Science (SPSS) for its descriptive findings, effectiveness level of both the content and time respectively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Interview Analysis: The interviews and the survey involved 22 trainees with males being the majority (95.5%) and only one female trainee. This study found that seven participants (32%) had never attended any Halal slaughtering course before. It can be seen that JAIS enforcement makes an effort to strengthen and to build its capacity through such programmes on Halal certification among the industrial and producers of raw meat such as chicken, beef, goat and buffalo.

Apart from a keen interest to improve their *Syariah* knowledge on slaughtering, scientific information becomes the main reason for the majority of 20 participants to attend this training. Only one participant intended to become a qualified butcher and another one participated with the invitation given by JAIS, at the same time obeying the instruction from the company. The element of participation is seen as a driving force for participants to ensure the effectiveness of the program compared with the entries based on instructional commands imposed by regulating agencies to the industry by sheer enforcement and mandatory withdrawal of the Halal certification.

The majority of the trainees (n=17) showed positive response by which the importance and significance of the programme is highlighted. Five participants (29.4%) stated that such programmes are very important in order to increase the production of halal food, maintaining relationship between non Muslim employers with a Muslim butcher, gaining knowledge through experience of the other participants and the knowledge which can help customers in terms of rectifying complaints. Based on the understanding of the participants, this study could gauge the level of maturity and interests on the career direction and to further improve on the Halal slaughtering via effective techniques.

Table 1: Interest of Subjects in the Module

Topics	<i>f</i>	%
All topics	11	50
Slaughtering	7	31.8
Syariah	2	9.1
Fardhu 'Ain and Kifayah	1	4.5
Standard Halal dan Protocol	1	4.5

Table 2: Effectiveness Level of Content

Level of Effectiveness	<i>f</i>	%
Less Effective	-	-
Moderate	1	4.5
Highly Effective	21	95.5

This this HalJob Programme was unique, being done for the first time in Sarawak, the media was interested to capture the experience of the participants. Media coverage include a documentary done on this programme, by *TV Hijrah Malaysia for the Agen Halal* documentary series. The participants were interviewed regarding the learning outcomes that they obtained along the programmes. The study found that 17 participants (71%) required understanding of the slaughtering from both the technical and *Syariah* perspectives. Importantly, the study found four participants (17%) expressed the need of communication and teamwork skills to be part of the preparation of the module. This discovery became the basis of the module topics and modules that are to be built for future HalJob programme improvements. A total of 12% (two participants) expressed the hope to fulfill the individual duty of *Fardhu Ain* thus benefiting the local and global communities.

Survey Analysis: As shown in Table 1, the majority of the respondents perceived every subject as significant as part of the HalJob module (50%). As the module was specifically designed for slaughtering, 31.8% of the respondents perceived the subject of slaughtering as the second place of interest in the module. Two respondents were most interested in the *syariah* requirements, another one is interested to know the duty and responsibility of the individual worker in understanding the protocols and standards.

Effectiveness of Content and Duration of Training: This study found that the effectiveness of the module relies greatly on both content and allocation of time for each module in the programme. According to Table 2, the subjects offered in the module were perceived as highly effective (95.5%) as compared to only 4.5% for moderate

level of effectiveness (Table 2). In other words, the content of this training reached its objectives since it covers from theory to practice. An interactive kind of education is found to be effective which is based on practice and discussion [7]. In fact, interactive and informative elements are more effective than either informative or interactive meetings alone [8]. It is also found that the quality was significantly related to the content and communication quality [9].

It is consistent with the nature of the Halal slaughter module that, the understanding and knowledge of the module are based on the slaughtering and *syariah* theoretical knowledge and hands on practice.. Nevertheless, as the greater percentage is found for all topics, this highlights on the awareness of the respondents about the topics that they learned throughout the training, must not focus on one particular subjects. Instead, every subject contributes significantly to the effectiveness of the module as a whole.

In future, the emphasis of the module needs to include other aspects of knowledge, not only on *syariah* compliance, but also on the basic understanding towards *Fardhu 'Ain* and *Kifayah*, compulsory (*wajib*) versus permissible (*harus*), as well as the technical procedure in slaughtering exercises, which uphold the credibility and competency of every slaughterer.

As the number of foreign workers increases annually, HalJob programme is hoped to provide recognition on the skills and competency of local workers, with well-paying income, for services in this slaughtering business. The needs and demands of Halal food in the market should be seen as a strong platform for job opportunity among local workers and not for the foreigners who are willing to be paid much lower than the standard salary. Poor understanding of the Halal concept may lead to *syubhah* issues, hygiene and contamination that may potentially occur in the process of producing Halal food.

In terms of the duration of time allocated for the whole programme, the score on perception and effectiveness of course duration was only moderate. Only 11 respondents marked the time allocation as highly effective (Table 3). The other eleven respondents perceived the time allocation as moderate. This is caused by a certain amount of uncertainty and probably some dissatisfaction from the duration of trainings which took them away from work. Concerns by the participants were due to some employers pressuring them and requesting that time duration of courses like this to be shortened, as the slaughterhouses lack

Table 3: Effectiveness of Duration Allocated for the Training

Level of Perception	<i>f</i>	%
Low -	-	
Moderate	11	50
High 11	50	

slaughter persons and meat checkers to fulfil their daily operational activities. The effectiveness of overall treatment is greatly correlated with durations for its length that may vary from one to another [10].

Two factors affect the effectiveness of time allocation for the programme: (1) inadequate full time employed workers in the organization for respondents who are working, longer working duration may not be suitable as they are concerned about the nature of their slaughtering tasks, which require focus and concentration to ensure Halalness and (2) as the interests may also be developed during the programme, deeper interest may create dissatisfaction among the participants in which more time is needed for the learning and understanding process to take place.

These two factors, however, should be further analysed for a clearer picture about the time allocation for this programme. The programme can be too lengthy if it is not instilled with meaningful activities, such as hands-on sessions and demonstration. The group work with interactive method is the best way of learning especially for those who have lower level of education.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that the level of interests on Halal slaughtering program influence the effectiveness of the training respectively. Specifically, this study found that the effectiveness of the module relies greatly on both content and allocation of time for each module in the programme. As far as this study is concerned the Local Authority plays important role in creating such opportunities about Halal training in order to overcome the shortage of workers and at the same time developing the quality of blue collar workers in Sarawak, Malaysia. As the demand of Halal products increase, such training is one of the methods that creates opportunity and eventually upgrade the blue collar workers to the international level for greater challenges in global Halal market. Future studies are proposed to recognize experts' availability, logistics and abattoirs facilities, places and distance should be considered. Besides that, the syllabus of training needs to be continuously revised that suits workers whom education levels may vary.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

IHRAM conveys the highest gratitude to the funder of this project (USIM/KTP-FST (IHRAM)-51-50111), the Ministry of Higher Learning and financial assistance from MoHE and EPU for the Knowledge Transfer Programme project and all other contributing agencies that help make this project a success.

REFERENCES

1. National Commission on Muslim Filipinos, 2011. Halal Certification. <http://www.ncmf.gov.ph/halal-updates.html>. Accessed on 28th April 2013.
2. JAKIM, 2012. Halal Certification for Logistics Provider: Principles of Shariah and the Integration with Food, Pharmaceuticals and Cosmetics. [http://www.hdcglobal.com/upload-web/cms-editor-files/HDC-122/file/Halal_Certification_for_Logistics_Provider_Principles_of_shariah_and_the_integration_with_food_Pharmaceutical_and_cosmetic_halal_certification\(1\).pdf](http://www.hdcglobal.com/upload-web/cms-editor-files/HDC-122/file/Halal_Certification_for_Logistics_Provider_Principles_of_shariah_and_the_integration_with_food_Pharmaceutical_and_cosmetic_halal_certification(1).pdf). Accessed on 10th July 2013.
3. Handy, C., 2002. What's a Business For? Harvard Business Review. MA, USA: Harvard Business Publishing.
4. CAC/GL 24-1997, 1997. General Guidelines for Use of the Term Halal. <http://www.codexalimentarius.org/standards/lis-of-standards>. Accessed on 6th September 2013.
5. Norhayati Rafida, A.R., A.R. Alina, H.H. Hafiz and B. Saifol, 2012. Negotiating interests according to Islamic approach on halal certifications: challenges in creating jobs. World Applied Sciences Journal, 17(Towards the Traceability of Halal and Thoyyiban Application): 11-16.
6. Wendi, L.B. and E.C. Gwendolyn, 2002. What to do or what not to do?: Identifying the content of effective feedback. Proceedings of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society Annual Meeting, 46: 2074-2078.
7. Bero, L., R. Grilli, J. Grimshaw, E. Harvey, A. Oxman and M. Thomson, 1998. Closing the gap between research and practice: An overview of systematic reviews of interventions to promote the implementation of research findings. British Medical Journal, 317(7156): 465-468.

8. Forsetlund, L., A. Bjørndal, A. Rashidian, G. Jamtvedt, M.A. O'Brien, F.M. Wolf, D. Davis, J. Odgaard-Jensen and A.D. Oxman, 2009. Continuing education meetings and workshops: Effects on professional practice and health care outcomes. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, 15(2). DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD003030.pub2.
9. Hesbon, O.N., N.O. Dennis and M.M. Stephen, 2013. The influence of infrastructure, training, content and communication on the success of NEPAD'S pilot e-Schools in Kenya. *Information Development*. DOI: 10.1177/0266666913489698.
10. Norbert, F., D.H. Joan, N. Vorus and A. Frosch, 1999. The Effectiveness of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy: the Role of Treatment Duration, Frequency of Sessions and the Therapeutic Relationship. *Journal of American Psychoanalytic Association*, 47(3): 741-772.