

The Sustainability of Halal Supply Chain in Japan: Perspectives of Halal Certification Bodies (HCBs)

Norlena Hasnan

University Utara Malaysia Kuala Lumpur
41-3, Jalan Raja Muda Abdul Aziz, 50300 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
norlena@uum.edu.my

Youji Kohda

School of Knowledge Science
Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology
1-chōme-1 Asahidai, Nomi, Ishikawa 923-1211 Japan
kohda@jaist.ac.jp

Abstract

With the tremendous growth of the halal industry, many non-dominant Muslim countries particularly Japan, have shown interest to tap into the halal market. To ensure the availability of halal products, therefore, it is crucial to have a comprehensive and well-managed halal supply chain. Integrating both “halal” (permissible) and “tayyib” (wholesome) throughout all the phases in the supply chain indicates that halal-certified companies need to comply with certain sustainability practices which are aligned with the halal certification systems. Nevertheless, there is always curiosity among the customers on the halal integrity across the supply chain and they will feel more confident if the products are halal certified. Apparently, halal certification bodies played a significant role to enhance the sustainable performance measures in the halal supply chain. Currently, there are more than 30 halal certification bodies (HCBs) in Japan. Their backgrounds are diverse from Muslim local residents and community members in Japanese cities and individual Muslim academics specializing in agriculture and food systems, to Japanese businesspersons who are familiar with Islamic countries and religious organizations. Despite the vast opportunities, inevitably there are numerous challenges faced by the HCBs that may influence the sustainability of the halal supply chain in Japan. Hence, this motivates this paper to explore the management of the halal certification process and how it may affect halal supply chain sustainability. Based on the in-depth interviews with 5 established HCBs, this paper aims to explore the sustainable practices and the challenges in the halal supply chain that may contribute to the betterment of the halal industry in Japan.

Keywords

halal industry, halal certification bodies, sustainability, halal supply chain, Japan

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Biographies

Norlena Hasnan is an Associate Professor of Operations Management from University Utara Malaysia Kuala Lumpur (UUMKL). Previously, she was attached to the School of Management and Logistics, College of Business, University Utara Malaysia, Sintok, Kedah. She was also the former Dean of Academics at UUMKL from 2019 to 2021. She obtained her doctorate degree from the University of Birmingham, UK. She has taught subjects for both undergraduates and postgraduates in Operations Management courses. In addition, she has been actively involved in research and consultation projects. Among her research interests are service management, service innovation, supply chain management and operations performance.

Youji Kohda is a Professor at the Graduate School of Knowledge Science at Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (JAIST), Japan. His areas of research specialities include internet service, service science, and business

innovation. Since April 1, 2022, he has been appointed as a Vice President for Graduate School Affairs & Tokyo Satellite Affairs, Executive Dean for the Graduate School of Advanced Science and Technology, and Director of Education for Working Professionals-Tokyo Satellite at JAIST. Before arriving at JAIST, he worked at Fujitsu and Fujitsu Laboratories for 25 years. He was engaged in research on Internet services and was granted numerous Japanese and U.S. patents.