



Assessing the Discrepancy between Halal Certification Progress and Raw Material Compliance in SPPGs

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Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the gap between halal certification status and raw material compliance in Nutrition Provision Service Units (SPPG) in Lampung Province, Indonesia. A descriptive mixed-method approach with a multi-case study design was employed involving 58 SPPGs. Quantitative data were obtained from halal certification status records, while qualitative data were collected through field halal audits, observations, interviews, and documentation. The findings showed that none of the SPPGs had obtained final halal certification status. A total of 42 units were still under verification, while 16 units remained in the application process. Field audit results identified several non-conformities, particularly the use of meat products without halal certification, untraceable supplier sources, and inadequate supplier documentation. The study indicates a significant gap between administrative halal certification processes and actual halal assurance implementation at the operational level. Limited access to halal-certified suppliers and insufficient halal literacy among operators were identified as major contributing factors. Therefore, strengthening supplier validation, raw material control, and internal halal monitoring systems is necessary to ensure sustainable halal compliance in institutional food services.

Keywords: halal certification; halal supply chain; meat product; raw material compliance; SPPG.

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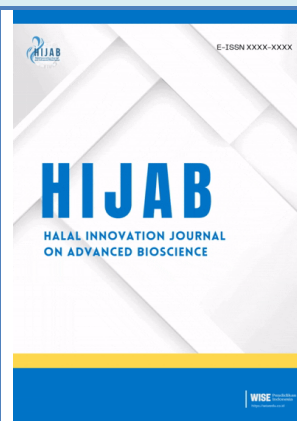
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INTRODUCTION

The consumption of halal and tayyib (wholesome, healthy, and safe) food is both a religious obligation and a fundamental right for Muslims. Unlike consumers in general who may prioritize taste and appearance, Muslims regard the halal status of food as a primary consideration in expressing obedience to religious teachings [1], [2]. The legal framework governing halal product assurance and food safety is derived from Islamic law, including the Qur'an, Hadith, and scholarly *ijtihad*. [1] In Indonesia, these principles are further reinforced through legal regulations in Indonesia that mandate halal assurance for products distributed within society through the implementation of the Halal Product Assurance Law. In practice, the halal assurance system also functions as an important mechanism to maintain consumer trust and ensure compliance with halal standards.

Implementation of this policy has been further strengthened through the role of the Halal Product Assurance Organizing Agency [3] in managing certification and supervision processes, as well as through the implementation of the Halal Product Assurance System (SJPH) as the primary instrument for maintaining the consistency of halal compliance in products [4]. The demand for healthy, halal, and nutritious food has increasingly developed into a lifestyle trend among Indonesian consumers [5]. The growing demand for halal-certified food has also increased the importance of halal assurance implementation within institutional food service sectors.

In the context of institution-based food services, Nutrition Fulfilment Service Units (SPPG) play a strategic role in providing food to the community in a structured and sustainable manner [6], [7]. SPPG are required not only to fulfil nutritional and food safety aspects but also to ensure the halal status of the products used. This is particularly crucial because raw materials, especially meat, are categorized as critical ingredients that significantly determine the halal status of a product [8]. Although administratively several SPPGs have obtained or are currently undergoing halal certification processes, actual implementation does not necessarily reflect the same level of halal compliance.

Preliminary observation suggests potential conformities: in the use of raw materials, particularly the continued use of meat that has not been halal-certified. This condition indicates a gap between halal certification status as a form of administrative compliance and the actual implementation of the Halal Product Assurance System (SJPH) at the operational level. This gap phenomenon indicates that halal certification should not merely be viewed as an administrative achievement, but must also be accompanied by consistent and integrated system implementation, particularly in raw material control and supply chain management [9], [10]. From the perspective of halal supply chain management, halal integrity must be maintained throughout the production and distribution process to ensure comprehensive halal compliance of products [11], [12]. Furthermore, consumer trust in halal products is strongly influenced by the consistency of implementation, rather than solely by the existence of halal certification itself [2].

However, studies integrating halal certification status with actual implementation practices in the field, particularly within institutional food service sectors such as SPPG, remain relatively limited. Most previous studies have primarily focused on regulatory aspects [6], [7], [13], consumer perceptions [14], [15], [16], [17], [18] or general management systems [8], [19], [20]. Therefore, empirical studies that reveal the actual conditions and practices in the field are still needed. Therefore, this study aims to analysis the gap between halal certification status and the level of compliance in raw material usage at SPPG. This analysis is expected to provide empirical

insights into the implementation of the Halal Product Assurance System (SJPH) in practice, identify factors contributing to non-compliance, and formulate strategic recommendations for strengthening a more effective and sustainable halal assurance system. Unlike previous studies that primarily focused on halal regulations or consumer perceptions [21] this study specifically investigates the discrepancy between halal certification status and operational compliance within institutional food service units under the MBG program.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive approach using a mixed-method design that combined quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative approach was used to analysis the distribution of halal certification status among Nutrition of fulfilment Service Units (SPPGs), while the qualitative approach was applied to examine the conformity of raw material implementation based on field findings. The research design was categorized as a multi-case study, as it involved several SPPG units as research objects. The study was conducted on 58 SPPGs in Lampung Province that had obtained, were undergoing, or had not yet completed halal certification. The research locations were selected using purposive sampling based on the availability of halal certification status data and raw material findings. The research subjects included:

1. SPPG units as institutional food service providers;
2. Meat raw materials as critical halal ingredients; and
3. Supporting documents, such as raw material supplier records.

This study involved two main variables, namely halal certification status and raw material compliance.

Data Analysis Techniques

a. Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including:

- Frequency;
- Percentage; and
- Distribution charts of halal certification status.

b. Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative data obtained from field audits were analysed using thematic analysis techniques by identifying recurring patterns of non-conformity in raw material usage.

c. Gap Analysis

The primary analysis in this study was a gap analysis conducted to examine the discrepancy between:

- Halal certification status from an administrative perspective; and
- Compliance with raw material usage in actual field implementation.

The gap was identified by comparing the ideal conditions required under the Halal Product Assurance System (SJPH) with the actual conditions observed during field halal audits.

To ensure data validity and reliability, the study employed:

- Source triangulation, involving certification documents and field audit findings; and

- Method triangulation, including observation, documentation, and interviews.
- Halal certification status from an administrative perspective; and
- Compliance with raw material usage in actual field implementation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Result

Data collection was conducted while all SPPGs were still undergoing the halal certification process. All units were still in the transitional phase, as presented in Figure 1 and Table 1

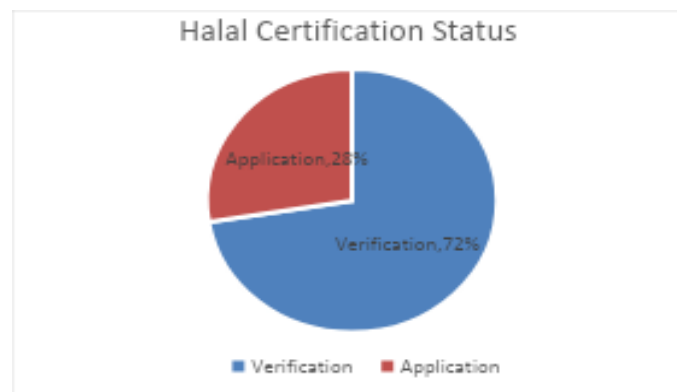


Figure 1. Percentage of Halal Certification status

The results indicate most units (72.42%) were still undergoing the verification process, while 27.58% remained at the application stage. These findings suggest that the implementation of halal assurance systems within SPPGs is still in a transitional phase. Field halal audits identified several recurring forms of non-compliance related to critical raw materials and supplier management, as presented in **Table 2**.

Table 2. Frequency of Non-Compliance Findings in SPPGs

Non-Compliance Findings	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Risk Level
Missing Halal Supplier documents	15	60	High
Untraceable supplier source	18	25	Moderate
Lack of Internal halal control system	11	15	Low
Total	44	100	

Field audit findings revealed several recurring forms of non-compliance related to halal assurance implementation in SPPG. As presented in **Table 2**, the most dominant issue identified was the absence of halal supplier documentation, accounting for 60% of the total findings. This indicates that many suppliers were unable to provide adequate halal-related supporting documents, such as halal certificates, supplier declarations, or traceability records.

In addition, 25% of the findings were associated with untraceable supplier sources. This condition demonstrates weaknesses in supplier traceability systems, particularly regarding the origin and verification of raw materials used in food preparation processes. Such limitations potentially increase halal risks within institutional food service operations.

Another finding involved the lack of internal halal control systems, which represented 11% of the total findings. This suggests that several SPPGs had not yet implemented systematic and integrated halal monitoring mechanisms in their operational activities. Overall, the findings indicate that supplier management and raw material traceability remain the primary weaknesses in the implementation of the Halal Product Assurance System (SJPH) within SPPGs.

Gap Analysis between SJPH Standards and Actual Implementation

A gap analysis was conducted by comparing the ideal conditions required under the SJPH framework with the actual conditions identified during field audits.

Table 3. Gap Analysis between Ideal SJPH Requirements and Actual Implementation in SPPGs

Aspect	Ideal Condition (SJPH)	Actual Condition	Compliance Score (%)	Gap (%)
Meat Raw Materials	Halal-certified meat used consistently	Some meat products uncertified	54	46
Supplier Validation	Certified and documented suppliers	Documentation incomplete	68.96	31.07
Internal Control	Systematic and integrated monitoring	Not systematically implemented	83.03	19.97

The gap analysis revealed varying levels of compliance across several critical aspects of SJPH implementation within SPPGs. As presented in Table 3, the highest compliance score was identified in the internal control aspect, which reached 83.03%, indicating that several SPPGs had begun implementing internal monitoring mechanisms related to halal assurance. Nevertheless, a gap of 18.97% still indicates that such monitoring systems have not yet been systematically and comprehensively integrated into operational activities.

Supplier validation demonstrated a compliance score of 68.96%, with a gap of 31.07%. This finding suggests that although most suppliers had been identified and documented, several SPPGs still experienced incomplete halal-related supplier documentation and limited supplier verification practices.

Meanwhile, the lowest compliance score was identified in the meat raw material aspect, which only reached 54%, leaving a substantial implementation gap of 46%. This indicates that the consistent use of halal-certified meat products remains a major challenge within SPPGs. Field findings revealed that some meat products used in food preparation processes were not supported by halal certification or adequate traceability documentation.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the largest implementation gap occurred in raw material control, particularly regarding halal-certified meat usage, while the smallest gap was identified in internal halal monitoring systems.

Compliance Level Classification

To evaluate the overall implementation of halal assurance practices, a simple compliance scoring system was applied based on four indicators: halal-certified meat usage, supplier documentation, supplier traceability, and internal halal control.

Table 4. Classification of Halal Compliance Levels among SPPGs

Compliance Level	Score Range	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Low Compliance	0–1	10	17.24
Moderate Compliance	2–3	9	15.52
High Compliance	4	39	67.24

The compliance level assessment revealed that most SPPGs demonstrated a high level of halal assurance compliance. As presented in Table 4, 67.24% of SPPGs were categorized within the high compliance level, indicating that the majority of units had implemented most SJPH requirements related to raw material management, supplier verification, and internal halal control systems.

Meanwhile, 15.52% of SPPGs were classified as having moderate compliance, suggesting that several aspects of halal assurance implementation had been fulfilled, although certain operational weaknesses were still identified during field audits. In addition, 17.24% of SPPGs remained within the low compliance category, reflecting substantial gaps in halal assurance practices and limited implementation of SJPH standards.

Overall, the findings suggest that although most SPPGs have demonstrated relatively strong halal assurance implementation, a number of operational and supply chain-related gaps remain evident, particularly regarding raw material verification and supplier traceability.

Cross-Tabulation Analysis

Cross-tabulation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between certification status and operational compliance.

Table 5. Cross-Tabulation between Certification Status and Operational Compliance

Certification Status	Non-Compliant Units	Compliant Units	Total
Verification Stage	16	26	42
Application Stage	4	12	16

The findings demonstrate that operational non-compliance was still frequently identified even among SPPGs that had entered the verification stage. This suggests that administrative certification progress does not necessarily guarantee consistent implementation of halal assurance practices in operational activities.

Interview Findings

Interview analysis identified several recurring themes contributing to implementation gaps.

Table 6. Emerging Themes from Interview Findings

Emerging Theme	Number of Mentions
Limited access to halal-certified suppliers	28
Lack of halal literacy among operators	15
Distance from halal-certified slaughterhouses	12
Weak supplier monitoring systems	2

Interview findings revealed that limited access to halal-certified suppliers was the most frequently reported challenge. In addition, inadequate halal literacy among SPPG operators contributed to weak implementation of supplier verification and internal halal control systems.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the dominance of SPPGs currently undergoing the validation process by Halal Inspection Bodies (LPH) reflects that business operators have begun responding positively to halal regulations and certification requirements. However, the absence of fully certified units also illustrates the complexity of fulfilling SJPH requirements, particularly regarding raw material verification, supplier validation, and internal halal governance. These

findings support previous studies emphasizing that halal certification implementation often faces both administrative and operational challenges, especially within developing institutional food service systems.

Field audit findings further revealed that supplier-related issues constituted the most dominant form of non-compliance identified in this study. The absence of halal supplier documentation emerged as the primary issue, indicating that several suppliers were unable to provide adequate halal supporting evidence, such as halal certificates, supplier declarations, or raw material traceability documents. Within halal assurance systems, supplier documentation functions as an essential mechanism to ensure transparency and maintain halal integrity throughout the supply chain[22]. Therefore, incomplete supplier documentation potentially increases halal risks and weakens the reliability of halal verification processes.

Another important finding was the inability to trace supplier sources, which reflects weaknesses in supplier traceability mechanisms. Traceability is one of the core principles in halal supply chain management because it enables verification of raw material origins and ensures consistency of halal compliance throughout production and distribution stages. The inability to trace supplier sources may compromise halal integrity, particularly for critical raw materials such as meat products that directly determine the halal status of the final product.

The gap analysis results further strengthened these findings. Among all evaluated aspects, meat raw material compliance demonstrated the lowest compliance score and the largest implementation gap. This indicates that the consistent use of halal-certified meat products remains the primary challenge in SJPH implementation within SPPGs. From the perspective of halal risk management, meat products are categorized as high-risk raw materials because contamination or uncertainty regarding slaughtering practices may directly affect the halal status of the final product. Therefore, weak control over meat raw materials represents a significant vulnerability within institutional halal assurance systems. Supplier validation demonstrated a moderate implementation gap, indicating that several SPPGs had begun implementing supplier management practices, although not yet comprehensively. In many cases, supplier verification processes remained limited to administrative identification and had not yet included systematic halal verification and monitoring. These findings suggest that halal assurance implementation still tends to be administrative in nature and has not yet been fully integrated into operational supply chain governance.

Meanwhile, internal halal control systems demonstrated the highest compliance score and the smallest implementation gap compared to other aspects. This finding indicates that awareness regarding the importance of halal monitoring and internal control has started to develop within SPPGs. Several units had already implemented basic monitoring activities related to halal assurance practices. Nevertheless, the persistence of implementation gaps indicates that such monitoring systems have not yet been systematically integrated into procurement, supplier evaluation, and operational supervision processes.

The compliance level classification also revealed that most SPPGs were categorized within the high compliance category. These findings indicate that, in general, awareness regarding halal assurance implementation among SPPG operators has developed relatively well. However, the existence of high compliance categories accompanied by various operational non-conformities suggests that halal assurance implementation may still be procedural and not yet fully internalized into day-to-day operational practices. In other words, administrative readiness does not necessarily guarantee comprehensive operational halal integrity.

This interpretation is reinforced by the results of the cross-tabulation analysis, which demonstrated that operational non-conformities were still identified even among SPPGs that

had entered the halal certification verification stage. These findings indicate that progress in halal certification processes does not always correspond with comprehensive compliance in raw material management and supplier traceability. This condition emphasizes that halal certification should not merely be viewed as an administrative achievement, but must also reflect the sustainable operational implementation of halal assurance principles.

Interview findings provide additional insight into the root causes of these implementation gaps. Limited access to halal-certified suppliers emerged as the most dominant challenge reported by respondents. This finding indicates that the primary barriers to SJPH implementation lie not only in organizational commitment but also within the halal ecosystem and supply chain infrastructure that have not yet fully supported implementation efforts. Several SPPGs experienced difficulties in obtaining halal-certified meat products because halal-certified suppliers and slaughterhouses remained limited and difficult to access.

In addition, low halal literacy among operators also contributed significantly to weak implementation. Limited understanding regarding halal assurance procedures, supplier verification, and traceability systems may reduce the effectiveness of halal governance in operational activities. These findings are consistent with previous studies emphasizing that halal literacy [23] and human resource competency are critical factors in ensuring the sustainability of halal assurance implementation.[24]

The issue of geographical distance from halal-certified slaughterhouses also demonstrates infrastructural limitations affecting halal assurance implementation. SPPGs located far from certified slaughterhouses tend to rely on local suppliers whose halal status cannot always be optimally verified. This condition potentially increases halal risks and weakens traceability mechanisms within the supply chain.[16]

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that the primary challenges of SJPH implementation within SPPGs are not merely administrative[25], but also operational, structural, and related to halal supply chains.[10] The implementation gaps identified in raw material control, supplier validation, and traceability systems demonstrate that halal assurance requires comprehensive integration across procurement activities, monitoring systems, and supply chain governance. Therefore, strengthening halal assurance implementation within SPPGs requires not only certification acceleration, but also the development of sustainable halal ecosystems, stronger supplier verification systems, systematic internal monitoring mechanisms, and continuous improvement of halal literacy among operators.

This study was limited to SPPGs in Lampung Province and focused primarily on descriptive gap analysis. Therefore, the findings may not fully represent the implementation conditions of SPPGs in other regions of Indonesia. Practically, this study contributes to the development of halal governance strategies for institutional food services under the MBG program by emphasizing the importance of supplier traceability, operational monitoring, and halal literacy improvement.

CONCLUSION

This study revealed that the implementation of the Halal Product Assurance System (SJPH) within Nutrition Fulfillment Service Units (SPPGs) remains in a transitional phase. Although most SPPGs had entered the halal certification process, none had yet obtained final halal certification status during the period of data collection. The findings indicate that halal assurance implementation in SPPGs has not been fully integrated operationally, particularly in the areas of raw material control, supplier validation, and supply chain traceability.

Field audit findings demonstrated that supplier-related issues constituted the most dominant form of non-compliance, particularly incomplete halal supplier documentation and untraceable supplier sources. The gap analysis further showed that meat raw material compliance had the largest implementation gap, indicating that the consistent use of halal-certified meat products remains the primary challenge in SJPH implementation. Meanwhile, internal halal control systems demonstrated relatively higher compliance levels, suggesting that awareness regarding halal monitoring has started to develop among SPPG operators.

The study also found that most SPPGs were categorized as highly compliant level. However, the persistence of operational non-conformities despite relatively high compliance classifications suggests that halal assurance implementation may still be procedural and administrative rather than fully embedded in day-to-day operational practices.

Interview findings identified several key factors contributing to implementation gaps, including limited access to halal-certified suppliers, low halal literacy among operators, geographical distance from halal-certified slaughterhouses, and weak supplier monitoring systems. These findings indicate that the challenges of SJPH implementation are not solely administrative but also structural and supply chain-related.

Overall, this study emphasizes that halal certification should not merely function as an administrative requirement but must also be accompanied by comprehensive operational implementation of halal assurance principles throughout the supply chain. Therefore, strengthening SJPH implementation within SPPGs requires sustainable halal ecosystem development, stronger supplier verification systems, systematic internal monitoring mechanisms, and continuous improvement of halal literacy among operators to ensure comprehensive halal integrity in institutional food services.

RECOMENDATION

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed to strengthen the implementation of the Halal Product Assurance System (SJPH) within Nutrition Fulfillment Service Units (SPPGs).

First, strengthening halal-certified supplier networks is essential to ensure the consistent availability of halal-certified raw materials, particularly meat products. Collaboration between government institutions, halal authorities, slaughterhouses, and suppliers should be enhanced to improve access to halal-certified supply chains, especially in regions with limited halal infrastructure.

Second, SPPGs should improve supplier verification and traceability systems by requiring complete halal-related documentation from all suppliers, including halal certificates, supplier declarations, and raw material traceability records. The implementation of systematic supplier monitoring mechanisms is necessary to reduce halal risks and maintain supply chain transparency.

Third, continuous halal literacy and training programs for SPPG operators are strongly recommended. Training activities should focus on halal assurance procedures, supplier validation, critical raw material identification, traceability systems, and internal halal monitoring practices. Improving human resource competency is essential to ensure sustainable halal compliance at the operational level.

Fourth, internal halal control systems should be strengthened through the development of standardized monitoring procedures, routine internal audits, and documented evaluation mechanisms. Integrating halal assurance practices into procurement, storage, processing, and distribution activities will help ensure consistent operational implementation of SJPH principles.

Fifth, policymakers and halal authorities should provide more intensive technical assistance and mentoring programs for SPPGs undergoing the halal certification process. Such assistance is important to support institutional food service units in fulfilling SJPH requirements comprehensively and sustainably.

Finally, future studies are recommended to expand research coverage by involving larger sample sizes, comparative regional analysis, and quantitative statistical approaches to further examine the relationship between halal governance, supply chain management, and operational compliance within institutional food service sectors.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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