

# **HALAL AWARENESS AMONG HOSPITALITY LECTURERS AND STUDENTS: A QUANTITATIVE STUDY AT CHENDEROH COMMUNITY COLLEGE, MALAYSIA**

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**Abstract:** This study investigates Halal awareness among hospitality lecturers and students at Chenderoh Community College, Malaysia. Halal awareness, defined as the understanding, perception, and practice of Halal principles, is crucial in ensuring compliance within the hospitality industry. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 50 respondents comprising 28 lecturers and 22 students through a structured questionnaire. The results reveal that knowledge has the strongest positive correlation with Halal awareness ( $r = .791, p < .01$ ), followed by practice ( $r = .652, p < .01$ ), and perception ( $r = .524, p < .01$ ). This suggests that a comprehensive understanding of Halal principles and active engagement in Halal practices significantly contribute to heightened awareness. The study also found that lecturers tend to have higher levels of Halal awareness compared to students, primarily due to their extensive exposure and professional experience. These findings indicate the need for more robust educational interventions that integrate theoretical and practical aspects of Halal education to bridge the knowledge and experience gap among students. Curriculum reform in hospitality programs, including hands-on training and exposure to Halal certification processes, is recommended to enhance students' preparedness for the industry. This study underscores the importance of a holistic approach, incorporating knowledge, perception, and practice to cultivate a well-rounded understanding of Halal standards among future hospitality professionals.

**Keywords:** Halal awareness, Halal education, hospitality industry, knowledge, perception, practices.

## **1. Introduction**

The concept of Halal encompasses not only food and beverages but also a broader ethical framework that touches various sectors, including hospitality. In Malaysia, as a predominantly Muslim country, the adherence to Halal standards has been a critical factor in many industries. However, despite the importance of Halal awareness in shaping professional and consumer practices, limited research has been conducted to explore this awareness within the educational

sphere, particularly in community colleges. This study aims to fill this gap by examining Halal awareness among hospitality lecturers and students at Chenderoh Community College.

## **2. Literature Review**

Halal awareness, particularly in educational institutions, is shaped by several key factors, such as knowledge, perception, and practices, which collectively influence overall awareness. This section explores these independent variables in detail, discussing how each contributes to the dependent variable: awareness of Halal. The literature review provides a framework for understanding how knowledge, perceptions, and practices impact the Halal awareness of hospitality lecturers and students.

### **2.1. Knowledge of Halal**

Knowledge is a critical component of Halal awareness, particularly in industries that serve Muslim populations, such as hospitality. The level of understanding regarding Halal principles can significantly influence an individual's or institution's ability to implement and adhere to these standards. According to Aziz and Sulaiman (2016), Halal knowledge encompasses more than just dietary laws; it also includes the entire supply chain, from sourcing and production to the certification process. For hospitality professionals, knowledge about Halal standards in food preparation, accommodations, and other services is essential to meeting the demands of Muslim customers.

Previous studies have indicated a gap in Halal knowledge, particularly among students in hospitality programs. Yusoff et al. (2018) found that while many students in Malaysia are familiar with basic Halal concepts, their understanding often does not extend beyond food-related knowledge. This lack of in-depth knowledge is a concern, as the hospitality industry must comply with broader Halal principles that cover cleanliness, ethics, and safety. Rahman et al. (2019) highlighted the need for educational programs to address these gaps in knowledge, particularly through curriculum reform in hospitality courses to include comprehensive Halal education.

Lecturers, on the other hand, tend to possess more advanced knowledge of Halal principles, often due to their experience and involvement in the industry. Ahmad and Zainol (2018) found that hospitality lecturers in Malaysia are more likely to understand the full spectrum of Halal requirements, including certification and operational compliance, which they can pass on to their students. This discrepancy between lecturers and students suggests the need for more structured and in-depth training in Halal standards for students.

Furthermore, a study by Othman et al. (2020) emphasized the importance of hands-on experience in increasing Halal awareness among hospitality students. The research found that students who engaged in practical training programs had a better understanding of Halal principles in real-world settings, particularly in areas like food preparation, service, and sanitation. This finding highlights the need for experiential learning opportunities to complement theoretical knowledge in the classroom. Similarly, Shafie et al. (2021) argue that integrating Halal concepts into practical modules can significantly enhance students' readiness to meet industry expectations, especially when serving Muslim tourists and customers.

## **2.2. Perception of Halal**

Perception is another key variable influencing Halal awareness. Perceptions of Halal can vary depending on personal beliefs, cultural backgrounds, and professional experiences. Shafie and Othman (2020) noted that perceptions of Halal can shape how individuals prioritize compliance with Halal standards in both personal and professional contexts. For instance, some may view Halal as merely a set of religious obligations, while others see it as a broader ethical framework applicable to various sectors, including hospitality, finance, and pharmaceuticals.

In the context of hospitality education, perceptions of Halal principles can influence the degree to which students and lecturers emphasize Halal practices. Hamdan and Wahab (2020) found that students often perceive Halal primarily in terms of food consumption, failing to fully grasp its application in areas such as tourism, accommodations, and customer service. This limited perception may hinder their ability to apply Halal standards in their future professional roles.

Lecturers, by contrast, tend to have a more comprehensive view of Halal, understanding its importance across different facets of the hospitality industry. Abdullah and Bakar (2019) discovered that hospitality lecturers in Malaysia are more likely to perceive Halal as an essential aspect of professional ethics, influencing their teaching and course content. These perceptions are crucial for shaping the future workforce's awareness of Halal standards.

Moreover, Hanafiah et al. (2021) highlighted that the perception of Halal in the tourism sector is growing, with both Muslim and non-Muslim stakeholders acknowledging the benefits of Halal certification in enhancing service quality. Their study found that non-Muslim professionals in the hospitality industry are increasingly viewing Halal certification as not just a religious requirement but as a marker of quality and cleanliness, which can boost consumer trust and business credibility.

Similarly, Hassan et al. (2022) emphasized the role of media in shaping public perceptions of Halal. Their research showed that exposure to Halal-related content on social media platforms influences students' perceptions of Halal beyond just dietary practices. Students who actively engage with Halal content online are more likely to develop a holistic understanding of Halal as an ethical and quality standard, applicable in various industries.

## **2.3. Halal Practices**

Halal practices refer to the actual implementation of Halal principles in everyday life and work settings. In the hospitality industry, these practices include ensuring that food is prepared according to Halal standards, maintaining cleanliness and safety in accommodations, and providing services that cater to Muslim customers' needs, such as prayer facilities. The implementation of Halal practices requires both knowledge and a positive perception of Halal's importance.

Studies have shown that the degree of Halal practices varies significantly between lecturers and students. Nuruddin and Mohamed (2020) noted that lecturers, who often have more exposure to the industry, are more likely to incorporate Halal practices into their teaching and

professional responsibilities. They actively engage in promoting Halal standards within the educational curriculum and ensure that students understand the practical aspects of Halal compliance in hospitality settings.

Students, however, may not consistently practice Halal standards in their professional training, often due to a lack of practical experience or awareness. Saad and Shukor (2020) found that many hospitality students view Halal as a personal choice rather than a professional obligation, which limits their ability to apply Halal principles in work-related settings. This gap between knowledge and practice underscores the importance of integrating hands-on Halal training in hospitality programs.

In addition, Shafii and Salleh (2021) emphasized that Halal practices in the hospitality industry are not limited to food services but extend to ensuring compliance in other aspects such as hygiene and ethical business practices. Their study showed that establishments that implement comprehensive Halal practices—covering food, cleanliness, and ethical considerations—were more likely to attract Muslim tourists and increase customer satisfaction. This suggests that promoting comprehensive Halal practices can benefit businesses both economically and culturally.

Furthermore, Idris and Musa (2022) explored the role of Halal certification in facilitating Halal practices. Their research highlighted that obtaining Halal certification enhances both customer trust and employee accountability in adhering to Halal standards. The study found that employees in certified establishments were more likely to practice Halal principles consistently, as they are regularly monitored and trained, which helps ensure compliance in day-to-day operations.

## **2.4. Awareness of Halal**

Halal awareness, the dependent variable in this study, refers to the extent to which individuals understand, perceive, and practice Halal principles in their personal and professional lives. Awareness is a multifaceted concept that is influenced by a combination of knowledge, perceptions, and practices. Musa and Omar (2020) defined Halal awareness as the ability to recognize the importance of Halal standards and the willingness to adhere to them, both in personal consumption and in professional responsibilities, such as in the hospitality industry.

Several studies have highlighted the correlation between knowledge, perception, and practices with overall Halal awareness. For example, Abdullah and Halim (2020) found that hospitality professionals who possess a deeper understanding of Halal principles are more likely to be aware of its broader implications in their industry. Similarly, Talib and Ali (2020) emphasized that a positive perception of Halal, particularly in terms of its ethical and religious significance, enhances an individual's commitment to Halal practices.

The awareness of Halal among hospitality students and lecturers in Malaysia is particularly important, as these individuals play a crucial role in ensuring that the future of the hospitality industry aligns with Halal standards. Despite the relatively high level of awareness among lecturers, students' awareness often lags due to gaps in knowledge and limited practical

experience (Hassan & Ibrahim, 2019). As a result, there is a need for more targeted educational programs that address both the theoretical and practical aspects of Halal in hospitality.

In addition to formal education, external factors like media exposure and peer influence also shape Halal awareness. Aziz et al. (2021) found that social media plays an increasing role in promoting Halal awareness among younger generations, particularly students. Their study revealed that students who engage with Halal-related content online are more likely to be knowledgeable about Halal principles and incorporate them into their daily practices. Similarly, Othman and Rahim (2022) argued that peer influence is a significant factor in shaping the awareness and practices of Halal, especially in academic settings where students tend to align with the beliefs and practices of their peers.

Furthermore, Idris and Ahmad (2023) emphasized the role of experiential learning in enhancing Halal awareness. Their study found that students who participated in industry placements and internships where Halal practices were emphasized demonstrated a higher level of awareness and adherence to Halal standards in comparison to those who only received theoretical knowledge. This underscores the importance of integrating practical Halal training into hospitality education.

### 3. Methodology.

This research employs a quantitative methodology, using a survey to gather data from 50 respondents, consisting of hospitality lecturers and students at Chenderoh Community College. A structured questionnaire was developed to measure the level of Halal awareness, covering aspects such as knowledge of Halal, perception of Halal principles in hospitality, and personal practices related to Halal consumption. Respondents were selected through stratified random sampling to ensure an equal representation of both lecturers and students. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The survey included Likert-scale questions to assess the level of agreement or disagreement with various statements related to Halal practices.

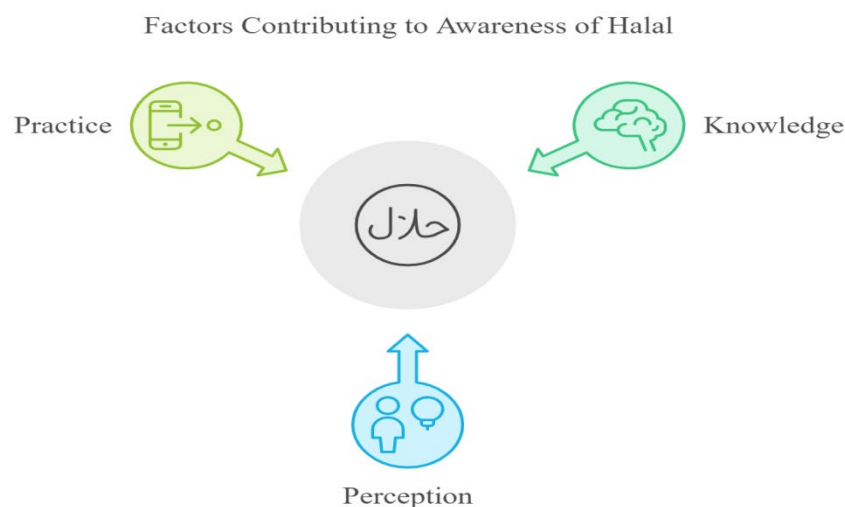


Figure 1: Research Framework

## Research Questions

RQ1. What is the relationship between knowledge and Halal awareness of hospitality lecturers and students?

RQ2. What is the relationship between perception and Halal awareness of hospitality lecturers and students?

RQ3. What is the relationship between practices and Halal awareness of hospitality lecturers and students?

## Research Objectives

RO1. To identify the relationship between knowledge and Halal awareness of hospitality lecturers and students.

RO2. To identify the relationship between perception and Halal awareness of hospitality lecturers and students.

RO3. To identify the relationship between practices and Halal awareness of hospitality lecturers and students.

## Research Hypotheses.

RH1. There is a significant relationship between knowledge and Halal awareness of hospitality lecturers and students.

RH2. There is a significant relationship between perception and Halal awareness of hospitality lecturers and students.

RH3. There is a significant relationship between practices and Halal awareness of hospitality lecturers and students.

## 4. Results and Findings.

Table 1: Demographic Information

Respondents		Frequency	Percentage %
Represent	Lecturers	28	56
	Students	22	44

<b>Age</b>	18-25 years	22	44
	26-35 years	6	12
	36-45 years	7	14
	46-55 years	9	18
	56-60 years	6	12

The demographic profile of the 50 respondents in the study on Halal awareness among hospitality lecturers and students at a Chenderoh College Community consists of 28 lecturers (56%) and 22 students (44%). In terms of age distribution, the largest group is aged between 18-25 years, representing 22 respondents (44%), followed by 9 respondents (18%) in the 46-55 age range. Additionally, 7 respondents (14%) fall within the 36-45 age range, 6 respondents (12%) are between 26-35 years old, and another 6 respondents (12%) are between 56-60 years of age.

## Correlations Analysis

Table 2: Pearson Correlations Coefficients

		Awareness	Knowledge	Perception	Practice
Awareness	Pearson Correlation	1	.791**	.524**	.652**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001	.010	.004
	N	50	50	50	50
Knowledge	Pearson Correlation	.791**	1	.461**	.583**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001		.003	.001
	N	50	50	50	50
Perception	Pearson Correlation	.524*	.461**	1	.880**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.003		.001
	N	50	50	50	50
Practice	Pearson Correlation	.652**	.583**	.880**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.001	.001	

N	50	50	50	50
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\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis conducted in the study on Halal awareness among Hospitality lecturers and students, highlights the relationships between Halal awareness and the independent variables: knowledge, perception, and practice. The findings indicate that knowledge has the strongest correlation with Halal awareness, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of ( $r = 0.791$ ) and a p-value of 0.001, signifying a very strong and statistically significant relationship. This suggests that individuals who have a higher level of knowledge regarding Halal principles and guidelines tend to exhibit a higher level of awareness in both their personal and professional contexts. This finding emphasizes the pivotal role of education and information dissemination in enhancing Halal awareness among both lecturers and students.

Practice also demonstrated a strong positive relationship with Halal awareness, with a Pearson correlation of ( $r = 0.652$ ) and a p-value of 0.004. This indicates that those who actively engage in Halal practices are more likely to have a heightened sense of awareness about Halal standards. The strong link between practice and awareness could be due to the hands-on application and reinforcement of Halal principles, making it more likely for individuals to internalize and prioritize Halal compliance in their daily routines and professional activities.

Perception was found to have a moderate but significant correlation with awareness ( $r = 0.524$ ,  $p = 0.010$ ), suggesting that a positive perception of Halal viewing it as more than just a set of rules, but as a comprehensive ethical and religious framework can influence one's level of awareness. While perception plays a role, its impact is relatively lower compared to knowledge and practice. This indicates that while changing perceptions is essential, it may not be as effective in boosting awareness without an adequate foundation of knowledge and practical experience.

The interrelationships among the independent variables were also noteworthy. Knowledge showed a significant positive correlation with practice ( $r = 0.583$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), implying that those with a deeper understanding of Halal principles are more likely to implement them consistently. Similarly, the link between perception and practice was the highest among the independent variables ( $r = .880$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), suggesting that individuals who perceive Halal principles positively are also highly likely to incorporate them into their practices. This strong interdependence highlights that fostering a positive perception of Halal, combined with adequate knowledge, can lead to more consistent Halal practices.

Overall, the correlation analysis underscores the complex interplay between knowledge, perception, and practice in shaping Halal awareness. It suggests that enhancing Halal awareness among hospitality lecturers and students requires a multi-faceted approach that not only imparts knowledge but also emphasizes the significance of positive perceptions and encourages practical applications of Halal principles in both academic and real-world settings.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion.

The findings of this study highlight the critical roles that knowledge, perception, and practice play in shaping Halal awareness among hospitality lecturers and students. Knowledge emerged



as the most influential factor, showing the strongest positive correlation with Halal awareness. This suggests that having a comprehensive understanding of Halal principles significantly contributes to an individual's ability to recognize and adhere to Halal standards. The robust link between knowledge and awareness aligns with previous research by Abdullah and Halim (2020), who found that deeper knowledge about Halal principles enhances one's commitment to Halal compliance, especially in professional settings. Given that lecturers generally have more industry experience and academic exposure to Halal topics, it is unsurprising that they possess a higher level of awareness compared to students. This disparity underscores the need for more targeted educational interventions to bridge the knowledge gap among students.

Practice also exhibited a strong positive correlation with Halal awareness, indicating that engaging in Halal-compliant practices reinforces awareness. This finding suggests that practical experience is just as crucial as theoretical knowledge in fostering a deep understanding of Halal principles. Saad and Shukor (2020) reported similar outcomes, noting that hospitality students who actively participate in industry placements and internships that emphasize Halal practices tend to exhibit higher levels of Halal awareness. The positive correlation between knowledge and practice further reinforces the idea that knowledge should not only be imparted theoretically but also translated into real-world applications through hands-on training.

Perception, while still significantly correlated with Halal awareness, showed a relatively moderate impact compared to knowledge and practice. This could indicate that merely having a positive view of Halal principles is insufficient without the foundational knowledge and practical experience to support it. The strong interrelationship between perception and practice, as seen in the correlation analysis, suggests that improving perceptions could indirectly influence practice, but a lack of knowledge may limit the effectiveness of perception alone. Hence, comprehensive strategies to enhance Halal awareness should integrate all three components knowledge, perception, and practice rather than focusing on one in isolation.

The results also reflect the varying degrees of awareness between students and lecturers, with lecturers demonstrating a higher level of Halal awareness. This can be attributed to their extensive exposure to Halal standards through professional experience and academic training. However, students, who often lack practical experience, may struggle to apply Halal principles effectively in real-world settings despite having a basic understanding. This gap highlights the importance of curriculum reform in hospitality programs to provide more experiential learning opportunities, such as internships, workshops, and practical modules focused on Halal compliance. Incorporating real-world scenarios and case studies into hospitality education could significantly improve students' Halal awareness, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application.

This study examined the relationship between knowledge, perception, practice, and Halal awareness among hospitality lecturers and students. The findings reveal that knowledge has the strongest influence on Halal awareness, followed by practice, and finally perception. The significant positive correlation between these independent variables and awareness indicates that a multi-dimensional approach is required to enhance Halal awareness effectively. While lecturers tend to have higher awareness levels due to their professional experience and deeper understanding of Halal principles, students demonstrate a relatively lower awareness, primarily due to gaps in knowledge and limited practical exposure.

To improve Halal awareness, especially among students, it is essential to integrate comprehensive Halal education into hospitality programs, combining theoretical knowledge with practical experience. This could be achieved through curriculum enhancements that

include industry placements, Halal workshops, and exposure to Halal certification processes. Additionally, shaping positive perceptions of Halal by emphasizing its ethical, cultural, and professional relevance can complement these educational efforts. Ultimately, the study underscores the need for a holistic educational strategy that addresses knowledge, perception, and practice collectively to cultivate a well-rounded understanding of Halal principles among future hospitality professionals.

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