


# Chapter 12

## Assessing the Level of Understanding of Non-Muslim Restaurant Operators Towards Halal

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aimed to determine the level of understanding of non-Muslim restaurant operators in one of the 1st class city in the Philippines towards halal. 30 restaurant managers of casual dining restaurants participated in the conduct of this study. Descriptive type of research was utilized to determine the level of understanding of the restaurant operators towards halal. Results showed that overall, the respondents have high understanding towards halal. This study can serve as a reference to encourage the key players of the restaurant industries and the related government agencies to work hand-in-hand to see the potential of halal market in boosting the tourism industry of the locality.*

### INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of the global Muslim population, projected to reach nearly 3 billion by 2060, has significantly influenced various industries, with the food sector experiencing one of the most profound impacts. Central to this transformation is the increasing demand for Halal-certified products, which adhere to Islamic dietary laws that dictate permissible food preparation and consumption practices. While Halal

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food remains a religious obligation for Muslims, it has also garnered widespread appeal among non-Muslim consumers due to its associations with ethical sourcing, strict hygiene practices, and food safety. This growing demand has elevated Halal from a religious requirement to a dynamic global market force, contributing to the economic strategies of nations worldwide. Countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia have capitalized on this trend by integrating Halal certification into their national economic policies, positioning themselves as leaders in the global Halal industry. Their success has demonstrated the potential of Halal not just as a religious necessity but as a driver of trade, tourism, and economic growth.

In the Philippines, a predominantly Christian country, the Halal industry is emerging as a promising sector with untapped potential. The country is home to a significant Muslim population, particularly in regions like Mindanao and urban centers where diverse communities coexist. Additionally, the Philippines is becoming an increasingly attractive destination for Muslim tourists from Southeast Asia and the Middle East. Despite this growing demand, the availability of Halal-certified food establishments remains limited, which poses challenges for both domestic consumers and international visitors. Recognizing the economic opportunities presented by the Halal market, government agencies such as the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF) have launched initiatives to promote Halal certification and align local practices with international standards. These efforts aim to enhance the country's competitiveness in the global Halal economy while fostering cultural inclusivity. However, significant gaps remain in the Philippine restaurant industry's understanding and adoption of Halal practices. Many restaurant operators lack awareness of Halal certification processes and the potential business benefits associated with catering to this growing market segment. This study seeks to assess the awareness, readiness, and preparedness of restaurant operators in adapting to the increasing demand for Halal-certified food. By identifying barriers to Halal adoption and exploring opportunities for improvement, this research aims to provide insights that will support the growth of Halal-compliant businesses in the Philippines. The findings will contribute to national efforts to strengthen the Halal ecosystem, promote inclusive economic growth, and position the Philippines as a more attractive destination for both local and international Muslim consumers.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Halal food industry is growing rapidly due to the expanding Muslim population and the increasing awareness of food safety, hygiene, and ethical sourcing among consumers. "Halal," which means "permissible" in Arabic, refers not only to dietary laws outlined in the Qur'an but also to the entire process of food preparation,

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