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APPLICATION OF THE ELEMENTS OF HIFZ AL-NAFS IN INNOVATIONS OF HALAL FOOD IN MALAYSIA

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Abstrak: The advancement of technology has led to the development of innovative halal food products, raising concerns regarding their safety and potential health impacts. Consequently, this study explores the application of the *Hifz al-Nafs*, a critical aspect of the *Maqasid al-Shariah*. The preservation of life is considered a main priority in the production of innovative food products. However, there remains a gap in the literature concerning the application of *Hifz al-Nafs* in the innovation of halal food in Malaysia. The primary objective of this qualitative study is to explore the integration of life preservation principles in the production of innovative halal food, specifically within the Malaysian context. Data was collected through a review of authoritative studies related to the topic of this research. The findings indicate that the element of *Hifz al-Nafs* is practically applied in the production of innovative halal food products, particularly those recognized as halal by JAKIM. This study suggests the need for more focused research on all five elements of *Maqasid al-Daruriyyah* to ensure the protection of public welfare and avoid any harm (*mafsadah*).

Kata kunci: *Hifz al-Nafs*, Innovation, Halal Food, Malaysia

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INTRODUCTION

Muslims are obligated to consume food that is halal and does not pose harm to human health. Food serves as a fundamental necessity for human survival. The preservation of life is essential for safeguarding the interests of *maslahah* and avoiding harm for the entire Muslim community. Each person is responsibility to protect their lives from any threats and dangers that could lead to harm and degradation. In alignment with advance of the technology and innovation, food has undergone a phase that encourages individuals to think innovatively, resulting in the production of diverse forms of innovative and modern halal food. Nevertheless, adherence to the preservation of life must be emphasized throughout the food manufacturing process, from raw materials to consumer delivery. The discussion of the elements of *hifz al-nafs* (preservation of lives) is extensively examined within the framework of *maqasid al-daruriyyah*. The discourse on the preservation of life must be considered within a broader context, including food quality, food safety, and food security.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative literature review approach. Data is gathered by reading trustworthy sources, such as original reference books, articles, journals, and official websites of relevant organizations. The collected data is analysed using both inductive and deductive methods.

HIFZ AL-NAFS IN THE DISCUSSION OF *MAQASID*

The preservation of life is a significant topic among scholars of *maqasid*. Life is a trust from Allah SWT that must be safeguarded, as stated in the Quran:

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِىْ حَرَّمَ اللّٰهُ اِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ

> "Do not take a human life made sacred by Allah except with legal right" (Surah al-Isra', 17:33)

The verse illustrates that Allah has commanded humans to protect life as a sacred duty, emphasizing that individuals should safeguard their own lives and the lives of others, provided there is no valid justification for taking a life. In Islam, specific guidelines have been established to determine the halal (permissible) and haram (forbidden) status of various foods. These guidelines are crucial for upholding and preserving the five fundamental aspects of *maqasid*: religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property (Hipni, 2020). The application of the principles of *maqasid al-shari'ah*, particularly from the perspective of *al-daruriyyah al-khams*, holds significant importance in discussions surrounding halal food.

This application plays a vital role to ensure a community of Muslims who are not only aware of but also actively concerned about the consumption of halal food. In the context of this study, the element of *hifz al-nafs* will be examined in depth, focusing on its practical application in the development and production of innovative halal food options that align with these principles.

Human beings require food to sustain life and to perform daily activities effectively. The food consumed must be nutritious, of high quality, and safe for consumption. Everyone is prohibited from exposing themselves to harm and should also refrain from causing harm to others (Wahbah al-Zuhaili, 1986). The concept of preserving life is closely related to food, as food is one of the essential resources for human existence. A healthy body is a direct result of a balanced and nutritious diet. Any substance that may risk human life must be avoided and not absorbed into the body. As faithful Muslims who are conscious of their duties to Allah SWT, prioritizing personal safety and well-being is crucial to prevent any form of harm (*mafsadah*). This understanding underscores the importance of making informed choices about the food we consume, ensuring that it aligns with both our health needs and our religious obligations.

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ELEMENT OF LIFE PRESERVATION (*HIFZ AL-NAFS*) IN MALAYSIAN HALAL CERTIFICATION

One of the principles of *maqasid al-daruriyyah al-khams* is the preservation of life, which is a crucial element to be integrated into human life. Malaysia, recognized for its commitment to food safety, has developed specific control systems such as the Malaysian Halal Management System (MHMS 2020). This system details the general requirements of halal assurance systems (HAS) for large and medium enterprises, the general requirements for internal halal control systems (IHCS) for small and micro enterprises, and the specific requirements for halal assurance and internal halal control systems based on the certification schemes for these industries.

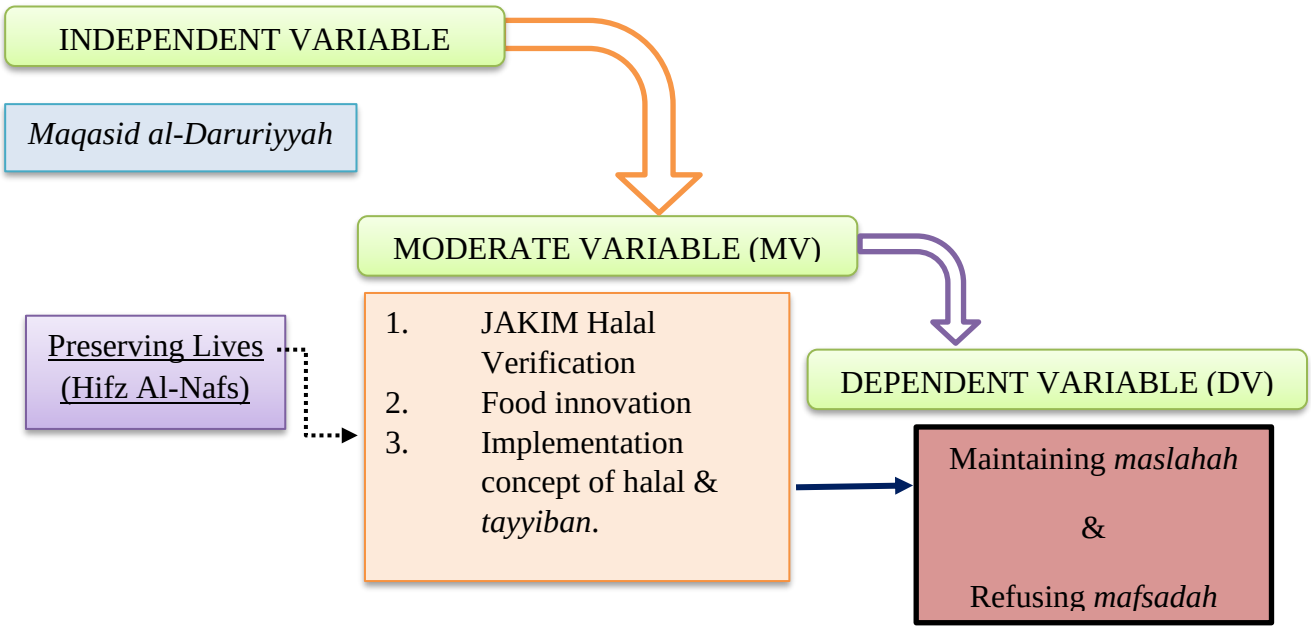
Various measures can be implemented to ensure human health and maintain food safety, which are essential for preserving bodily health. Food poisoning, resulting from weak food control systems, can lead to illnesses such as abdominal pain, diarrhoea, vomiting, nausea, and fever, which can cause dehydration and, in severe cases, death due to bacteria such as Salmonella and Escherichia coli (E. coli).

The application of the element of *hifz al-Nafs* within the Malaysian Halal Management System (MHMS 2020) can be identified through the establishment of general requirements for halal assurance systems (HAS) in the management and control of raw materials. The control of raw materials plays a critical role in determining food safety levels. For instance, raw material sources, such as meat that are not clearly classified, may raise doubts and lead to uncertainty regarding the safety of the slaughter management process. Ensuring clear sourcing and proper management practices is vital to uphold the standards of halal certification and protect public health.

The application of the element of life preservation (*hifz al-nafs*) is not only assessed from a purely Shariah perspective; it also encompasses a more dynamic range of aspects that require evaluation by qualified authorities, such as scientists and laboratory technicians. In the context of halal analysis, the halal assurance system (HAS) has established specific guidelines for companies or halal certificate applicants to undergo laboratory analysis. This process aims to prevent the use of hazardous chemical substances, such as those involved in meat processing that require DNA testing and alcohol content analysis.

Moreover, there are various other factors to consider, such as the physical characteristics of animals, including skin and fur, which must be sampled and analysed in a laboratory setting, as these attributes cannot be assessed through mere visual inspection. Additionally, the traceability system outlined within the internal halal control system (IHCS) serves as a minimal control measure to maintain halal assurance. This system ensures that every step, from raw materials to the end consumer (often referred to as "farm to fork"), can be clearly tracked. This traceability is essential for guaranteeing the integrity of halal products and ensuring consumer safety, reinforcing the importance of thorough monitoring and accountability throughout the entire supply chain.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



To achieve the goal of *maqasid al-Daruriyyah*, the three important items such as obtaining JAKIM's halal verification, conducting research on the use of innovations on food using innovative and modern equipment, as well as implementing the concept of halal and *tayyiban* distribution will be able to ensure that the elements of mafsadah and rejection of harm can be realized.

PRESERVATION OF LIFE IN HALAL FOOD INNOVATION

Innovation refers to the creative and risky behaviours undertaken by business firms that lead to significant changes in products, processes, organizational structures, and ways of working, all aimed at enhancing the performance or effectiveness of the organization (Suraiya & Ahmad Raflis, 2013). Food innovation is essential because it is anticipated that every business entity aiming to remain competitive and continue to grow must implement specific innovations, whether in products, services, processes, administration, marketing, or market strategies (Suraiya Ishak et al., 2015). Furthermore, the halal innovation industry has the potential to create new value that meets the demands from the growth of halal products and services (Sharifah Zannierah Syed Marzuki et al., 2018). Moreover, the awareness of food safety can also engage non-Muslims in contributing to the success of halal food (Ibid, 2018).

Every form of food consumed by humans can significantly affect an individual's health, both physically and mentally. Islam is grounded in laws designed to protect the welfare of humanity in both this world and the hereafter. It has established specific guidelines for choosing food (Razidah Othman Jalaludin et al., 2018). In the context of innovation and food technology, the application of the principles of *daruriyyat al-khams* extends beyond the dimensions outlined by classical scholars, which focus on preservation and protection. It also incorporates contemporary scholarly interpretations that consider current realities.

The preservation of religion and *hifz al-nafs* in the production of innovative food must encompass consumer safety in both physical and health aspects. Additionally, innovative products should meet human nutritional needs without harming consumer health and must consider any health implications that may arise from their consumption (Sumayyah Abdul Aziz et al., 2024).

As time goes by, the demand for innovative food has experienced a significant increase. This surge is driven by the need for quality food, characterized by meticulous processing, clean food preparation, and safe manufacturing processes (Herman Shah Anuar et al., 2018). Such conditions have led to an upsurge in the production of innovative food among manufacturers to meet consumer demands. Although this shift in food production brings various positive impacts for the country's economy, it is crucial to carefully examine the production of innovative food to ensure the optimal preservation of human life against any potential harms (*mafsadah*) that could threaten safety. To produce halal innovative food, it is essential to maintain strict controls over the entire production process, starting from the raw materials.

Ingredients derived from animal sources or non-vegan options, such as gelatine, are widely used in the production of pastries, sweets, and dairy products due to their ability to create appealing textures. In the pharmaceutical sector, gelatine is extensively utilized in the manufacture of gel capsules (Prager, 2018). Gelatine is a substance extracted from animal collagen, sourced from bones or skin. There are also types of gelatines derived from animal bones and fish (Hassan et al., 2020). Therefore, food producers must be committed to creating products free from gelatine derived from haram animal sources, such as pork, which is commonly used in other countries.

Additionally, harmful food ingredients, such as additives and preservatives with high chemical content, must be examine carefully. While these substances are widely used in food production, their safety is not guaranteed. Common food additives found in various products include butylated hydroxyanisole, butylated hydroxytoluene, and calcium propionate. It is crucial for producers to be aware of the implications of these ingredients on consumer health and to seek safer alternatives that align with halal standards.

Food additives are used in a variety of food products due to the numerous benefits they confer, including emulsification, stabilization, and enhancement of flavour. However, their effects on health can be harmful, leading to issues such as skin diseases, respiratory difficulties, and digestive disorders, particularly when consumed in excessive and uncontrolled quantities (Kate Onissiphorou, 2023). The numerical coding system for food additives, introduced for the purpose of classifying additive categories, was established by the Codex Alimentarius Committee. This numbering system serves as a unique system for the identification of food additives.

Table 1: E-Number Coding System According to Food Additive Class

E-Number Code	Additive Class
E100 – E199	Colorings
E200 – E299	Preservatives
E300 – E399	Antioxidants, acidity regulators

E400 – E499	Food conditioners (thickeners, stabilizers, emulsifiers)
E500 – E599	Acidity regulators, anti-caking agents
E600 – E699	Flavor enhancers
E700 – E799	Antimicrobials
E900 – E999	Other additives (glazing agents, sweeteners)
E1000 – E1999	Additional chemicals

Source: (Codex Alimentarius International Food Standards, 2023).

Food producers must be advanced in seeking safer alternatives to avoid the use of synthetic food additives. Mushroom flavouring powder represents one of the best alternatives to chemical-based food flavourings. Furthermore, this mushroom-based food innovation is a safer and healthier option that is also easily digestible (Belyaeva et al., 2022). Additionally, several food innovations have emerged to address the use of haram substances, such as plant-based gelatine. This bean-derived gelatine meets the needs of individuals adhering to a plant-based (vegan) diet, as well as Muslim consumers, while also accommodating the increasing demand for gelatine (Stephen Daniells, 2023). This indirectly reduces reliance on animal-derived gelatine, whose halal status may be questionable.

Moreover, genetically modified organisms (GMOs) require careful examination. Although genetically modified foods are often surrounded by controversy among consumers, the technological advancements in this area can serve as effective alternatives for ecosystem management. For instance, the development of insect-resistant vegetables through genetic modification can reduce the reliance on pesticides. This approach not only minimizes chemical use in vegetable production but also promotes better ecosystem maintenance. Additionally, farmers have observed an increase in vegetable yields when employing genetic modification techniques (Nations, 2001).

Fruits and vegetables that have been genetically modified using pig genes are considered haram, even if the final products do not exhibit any external signs of this modification. If the use of such genetic modifications is not properly labelled (Ashraf et al., 2018) and classified, Muslim consumers will be unable to discern whether the products are halal or haram through visual inspection.

Food producers employing genetic modification techniques are advised to enhance the legal framework governing this technology to prevent unintended harm to humans and the environment. Furthermore, all GMO applications should be labelled to ensure that the objectives of *maqasid al-Shari'ah* are protected from any form of violation (Siti Hafsyah Idris et al., 2020). Therefore, in the process of producing innovative food, particular emphasis must be placed on the use of haram substances, even if this necessitates thorough laboratory research to safeguard human life from hazardous sources that could cause harm to the human body.

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FOOD SAFETY AND PRESERVATION OF LIFE

Food safety has emerged as a significant phenomenon for the global population, of which 25 percent are Muslims. Consequently, the importance of maintaining food safety is a primary focus that needs attention, as it is closely linked to cleanliness and purity are the key components of the halal and *tayyiba* discourse. Food safety encompasses the hygiene of food handlers, clothing, equipment, and the premises where food is prepared. This aims to prevent the risks of illnesses and cross-contamination that could harm consumers. Food safety not only protects food during its production but also aims to enhance consumer health and provide balanced nutrition.

There are five essential elements to consider in discussions regarding food safety: clean food, food that does not harm health, fresh food, nutritious food, and food that is low-risk (Musfirah Syahida Mohamad et al., 2015). All five elements must be evaluated to mitigate harm and fulfil the principles of preserving life. Clean food, particularly concerning the preparation of raw materials such as meat, must adhere to specific procedures. For instance, meat is still considered raw if it has not undergone heating processes that eliminate harmful chemicals and bacteria (Mahdi Fakhar et al., 2016).

The increase of food products containing high levels of chemicals poses health risks, and consumption should be minimized to prevent exposure to harmful substances. According to a study by the National Institutes of Health in the United States, the intake of processed foods, snacks, and fast foods can contribute to mental deterioration, necessitating psychiatric treatment and mental health support (Joel Fuhrman, 2018). Technological advancements and innovations drive the modification of foods into more appealing forms. However, these changes must preserve nutritional content to ensure the freshness of the food. In addition, fresh fruits that are processed into juice lose beneficial fibre essential for human digestion. Similarly, over cooked of vegetables can reduce their water content (Joanne L. Slavin & Beate Lloyd, 2012). Thus, encouraging the consumption of fresh foods is crucial to maintaining their nutritional and vitamin content.

For Muslims, food serves not only as a source of energy for sustaining life but also as a means of maintaining overall health by selecting nutritious options. Nutritious foods include those that provide essential nutrients, such as vegetables and fruits rich in vitamins, minerals, and fibre. In line with technological advancements and innovation, healthy foods can be obtained in more appealing and creative ways. One example of food innovation by local entrepreneurs is the production of crispy vegetables by using the hydrator technologies. These products not only generate income but also encourage individuals to consume nutritious vegetables for their health (Intan Suhana Che Omar, 2022).

Any food exposed to bacterial growth and not subjected to specific cooking methods is more likely to fall into the category of high-risk foods. Foods categorized as risky include cooked meat and poultry, products containing raw eggs, such as mayonnaise, and dairy products (Tash Blythe, 2018). Efficient food handling is crucial for safeguarding human life from the risks associated with harmful bacteria such as Salmonella, E. coli, and Listeria. Consumers must be smart when selecting potentially risky foods by observing the packaging, the cooking methods employed, the food preparation techniques, and the storage practices of food producers to mitigate and prevent risks to health (Tracy, 2023).

CONCLUSION

Understanding food safety, food security, and food quality can be applied in the context of preserving life, which is a significant area of discussion within the framework *of maqasid al-daruriyyah*. Various methods and strategies can be employed to prevent harm. One applicable element is the five key factors previously discussed. Food safety encompasses not only the external assessment of food products but also the entire process from raw material preparation to the final product consumed by the consumer. This process must be precise and regulated to ensure that the objective of preserving life is achieved.

Islam strongly encourages its followers to advance and remain competitive in line with the times. However, innovations in food must adhere to the regulations established by Islamic law and align with the primary goals of *maqasid al-khams*, which include the preservation of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property. The application of the preservation of life (*hifz al-nafs*) in the context of innovative food production is relevant and compatible with advancements in technology and science. It is hoped that the empowerment of *maqasid al-shari'ah* in halal food production can serve as a guideline for society, particularly for stakeholders in the halal industry in Malaysia.

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